

Escape from New York

Because even the most loyal New Yorker needs to flee the greatest city on earth sometimes.



Tampa

Take the tour and leave the cannoli

Tampa was home to decades of mob operations, and Scott M. Deitche (author of *Cigar City Mafia*) conducts Mafia-themed tours, during which you can see where mobsters like George “Saturday” Zarate were gunned down. The 90-minute tour makes for a nice walkabout, as all the sites are within blocks of each other. Upcoming tour dates are August 27 and September 10—see the website for dates through May. → King Corona, 1523 E 7th Ave (813-358-3455, cigarcitymagazine.com). \$30.

Chomp on a Cuban stateside

Tampa has one of the largest Cuban populations in the U.S., and Columbia, the oldest restaurant in Florida, serves up the best Cuban sandwich you’ll find outside Havana itself. The bread is from a beloved bakery, La Segunda, the ham is lean and the ingredients are oh-so fresh. Try the 1905 martini (named for Columbia’s opening year) and the 1905 salad, and imagine yourself in the midst of the mob heyday. → 2117 E 7th Ave (813-248-4961, columbiarestaurant.com)

Dip into what’s on draft

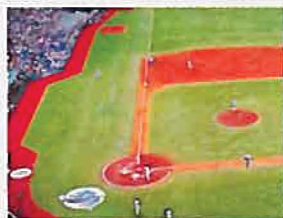
There’s a good reason *USA Today* named Tampa the No. 3 beer city in the country: there are 26 craft breweries in town. At Cigar City Brewery, you can take an hourly tour (\$8), and the variety of brews on tap (25-plus) is staggering (try the Cubano-Style Espresso), which is apt since you’ll be staggering well before last call. → 3924 W Spruce St (813-348-6363, cigarcitybrewing.com)

Get into some gator meat

Ulele offers up exciting eats in a historic,

INSIDER SECRETS

Locals give it to you straight.



“The best place to be alone is at a Rays game.”
—Mark

“Any body of water, no matter how small, might be occupied by an alligator. Be aware!”
—Corinne

“Ybor City is hipster central, in a good way. There are cool thrift stores and amazing busking musicians.”
—Page

“Go for ramen bowls, buns and drinks at Ichicoro Ramen.”
—Robin



repurposed pump house. The alligator hush puppies (gator with ham, bacon and jalapeños) are off-the-charts good, or you could try another reptile delicacy: Florida Jumpers (a.k.a. crispy fried frog legs). The less adventurous can nosh on tasty seafood like the Gouda grouper and wash it down with a home-brewed honey lager. → 1810 N Highland Ave (813-999-4952, ulele.com)

Stay down on the water

The chic and centralized Aloft hotel is just off the 2.4-mile Riverwalk along the Hillsborough River. It features a sleek deck with a pool (completely gator-free), which overlooks the water and the Moorish minarets of the bucolic University of Tampa campus. Party without leaving your hotel on the weekends, when a DJ spins a few feet from the cozy cocktail lounge. → 100 W Kennedy Blvd (813-898-8000, alofttampadowntown.com)
■ Ed Condran

FUN FACT

During the Prohibition era, Tampa was one of the country’s top sellers of illegal liquor, especially at drugstores, where pharmacists prescribed people “medicinal” alcohol.