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THE FORT MYERS

LOCAL GUIDE

*A thoughtful introduction to life, local traditions &
real estate in Southwest Florida.*

CURATED BY CARLA MENENDEZ

October – November 2026

five star*
REAL ESTATE LEADERS

LOCAL INSIGHT • CONFIDENT DECISIONS • A PLACE TO CALL HOME

CARLA MENENDEZ | REALTOR | FORT MYERS & SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

A local perspective, beyond the listing.

Fort Myers is more than a place on a map. It is a mix of riverfront history, established neighborhoods, newer communities, local traditions, warm-weather living and a growing Southwest Florida lifestyle.

I created this guide for people who are curious about Fort Myers—whether you are visiting, thinking about relocating, considering an investment, or simply wondering what everyday life here can feel like.

WHY THIS GUIDE

My approach is simple: **education first, pressure never.** Real estate decisions become easier when you understand the area, the numbers, the questions to ask and the trade-offs that matter to you.

FORT MYERS	Historic character, established neighborhoods, downtown energy, parks and access to everyday services.
SOUTH FORT MYERS	A convenient area to explore for shopping, dining, schools and access to major routes—compare the exact location and commute.
NORTH FORT MYERS	A different pace and a range of residential options. Drive times and access to your regular destinations are worth comparing.
CAPE CORAL	Canal living and a broad range of homes. Flood exposure, insurance, utilities and commuting can vary significantly.
LEHIGH ACRES	A wide range of residential choices. Evaluate infrastructure, commute, amenities and the individual property.
ESTERO & BONITA SPRINGS	Worth exploring when access to the southern part of the region, shopping, recreation and different community styles are priorities.

LOCAL TIP

Two homes in the same city can have very different costs and day-to-day convenience. Compare the exact location, insurance, flood information, commute, property condition and future plans.

Three local traditions to put on your calendar.

A small taste of the community moments that make Fort Myers feel like home.

October 9–11

ALREADY HAPPENED

Orchid Show + O.C.T. Plant Sale

Edison & Ford Winter Estates • 2350 McGregor Blvd.

The Orchid Show begins with judging on October 9 and continues through October 11. On October 10–11, visitors can enjoy plant vendors and free workshops focused on orchids, cacti and tillandsias. A lovely weekend for garden lovers and anyone who enjoys one of Fort Myers' signature historic settings.

October 31

Annual Fall Festival

Edison & Ford Winter Estates • 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

A family-friendly fall day with craft vendors, food and drinks, music, pumpkin activities and the chance to climb the historic Banyan Tree. The festival itself is free; individual activities may have fees.

November 26

47th Annual Fort Myers Turkey Trot

Thanksgiving Day • 7:30 a.m.

A long-standing Fort Myers tradition hosted by the Fort Myers Track Club in partnership with the Edison & Ford Winter Estates. The 5K starts on McGregor Boulevard and finishes at the Estates, with a Tot Trot following. Pre-registration is required.

LOCAL NOTE

Event schedules, admission details and registration requirements can change. Check the official event source before heading out.

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*“The little traditions are often
what make a place feel like home.”*

A PERFECT FORT MYERS SATURDAY

A few of Carla's favorite local ways to slow down, eat well & enjoy the season.

01 Start at the Farmer's Market

The best way to start a Saturday in Fort Myers? Take your time at the local Farmer's Market. Wander, discover something delicious, and enjoy the kind of morning that makes you appreciate the community around you.

02 Brunch at Ella Mae's Diner

After the market, head downtown for brunch at Ella Mae's Diner. It's a classic Fort Myers stop with a fun, nostalgic feel and comforting breakfast favorites—a lovely place to keep the morning going.

03 Coffee at Green Cup Café

For a coffee stop, Green Cup Café is one of my favorites. And if you see Rob, ask him about the mushroom plate. You won't regret it. This is the kind of local recommendation you get when you know the people behind the counter.

CARLA'S TIP

Try something you may not normally order. That's part of the fun of exploring local places!

04 One More Sweet Stop: Belgian Yummies

Before you call it a day, make room for a banana crêpe at Belgian Yummies. Their Nutella banana crêpes are the perfect little treat after exploring downtown—and yes, I highly recommend it.

05 Trade the Museum for a Little Fresh Air

I know everyone will tell you to visit the Edison & Ford Winter Estates—and you absolutely should. But if you want to experience Fort Myers like a local, don't miss the chance to enjoy the fall weather with a family bike ride at Lakes Park. Slow down, ride the trails, enjoy the trees and make a few memories together.

CARLA'S TIP

Lakes Park offers bike rentals on weekends, so it's an easy add-on for a family Saturday. Check current rental hours before you go.

“The little traditions are often what make a place feel like home.”

CARLA MENENDEZ MARTINEZ, REALTOR® • FIVE STAR REAL ESTATE OF FLORIDA LLC

Local recommendations reflect Carla's personal perspective. Hours, menus & availability can change; verify before visiting.

A confident purchase starts before the offer.

A home can be beautiful and still be the wrong fit. Before you fall in love with a property, organize the questions that can affect your monthly cost, risk and long-term flexibility.

FINANCING	Review pre-approval, estimated cash to close, monthly payment and any HOA or CDD fees.
INSURANCE & RISK	Request an insurance quote early. Review flood information, roof age, wind mitigation and required inspections.
PROPERTY COSTS	Estimate taxes using the likely post-purchase situation—not only the seller's current bill. Confirm utilities and maintenance.
LOCATION	Test your commute at realistic times. Consider access to work, schools, healthcare, groceries and the activities you actually enjoy.
CONTRACT & INSPECTIONS	Understand deposits, deadlines, inspection rights, financing terms and the consequences of missing a deadline.
LONG-TERM FIT	Think about resale appeal, future plans, space needs and whether the property supports the lifestyle you want.

MY ROLE

I'm here to help you compare—not pressure you into a decision. If you tell me what matters most to you, we can build a search around your priorities and then evaluate the properties that actually fit.

The numbers matter. So does the story behind them.

INVESTOR SNAPSHOT

INCOME	Verify realistic market rent, vacancy assumptions, tenant-paid utilities and lease restrictions.
EXPENSES	Include taxes, insurance, repairs, maintenance, management, HOA fees, utilities and reserves.
PROPERTY	Review condition, permits, roof/HVAC age, flood exposure, insurability and rental/zoning requirements.
EXIT PLAN	Consider resale demand, likely buyer pool, holding period and how sensitive the return is to changing costs.

IF YOU ARE SELLING

A strong sale begins before the listing goes live. Pricing should be grounded in recent closed sales, condition, location, features and current competition. Presentation, repairs, photography, showing access and a thoughtful offer-review strategy can all influence the result.

A NOTE FROM CARLA

“My favorite part of real estate is helping people understand the decision—not simply helping them make one.”

Let's make it a confident one.

Whether you are exploring Fort Myers for the first time, planning a move, looking for an investment, or preparing to sell, I'm happy to be a local resource.

BUYING

Tell me what you want your next home to make possible.

INVESTING

Let's identify the numbers and due-diligence questions worth reviewing.

SELLING

Let's talk about preparation, positioning and a pricing strategy.

RELOCATING

Let's narrow the area around the lifestyle and priorities that matter to you.

This guide is for general educational and lifestyle purposes. Event information should be confirmed with the event organizer before attending. Real estate, insurance, tax, lending and investment decisions depend on individual circumstances and current property-specific information.



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 EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY