

# colorful places

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## DEPARTMENTS:



You're carefully navigating your Jeep through northern Mozambique's Gorongosa, in search of the elusive African lion. You stop to listen and in the distance, you hear the roar of the beast. Kicking up dust as you drive, you follow the sound until you spot the lion's pride. There, in the center, stretched out in all his glory to a full eight feet in length, and rolling his head in the way only the king of the beasts can do, is the magnificent lion you have come to see. He spots your Jeep and roars again...

Sound fun? Now imagine going on your very own safari, right in Florida. Amazingly, you can, at [Lion Country Safari](#) in West Palm Beach. America's first cageless drive-through zoo, Lion Country Safari is a 320-acre preserve and a leader in wildlife conservation, providing a variety of expansive habitats in which endangered and threatened species can live and reproduce. Visitors get to drive through, in the comfort of a vehicle, and at their own pace, to spy some of the world's most exotic animals. *Jambo!* "Welcome" to Lion Country Safari.

Divided into seven sections, each replicating a distinct habitat of the earth, [Lion Country Safari](#) lets you decide what part of "the world" to visit on your excursion — no passport required. Want to see elephants lumbering past your car? Head straight for the Serengeti Plains, where these floppy-eared pachyderms share space with wildebeest, gazelles and more. The grasslands of Las Pampas are home to giant land tortoises, llama, deer, and the Brazilian tapir — called a "living fossil," and most closely related to both the rhino and the horse. A horned antelope called the gembok, and another antelope that specializes in running through water will intrigue visitors to the Kalahari Bushveldt, named after Southwest Africa's dry plateau. African sheep and exotic antelope await you in the wooded Ruaha National Park. Snap pictures of the Asian water buffalo while driving through the India's Gir Forest. And one of the more popular areas is the Hwange National Park, where rhinos, zebras, giraffes and chimps provide even more photo opportunities.



[Lion Country Safari](#) also entices families with its Safari World Amusement Park, offering boat rides on "The Jungle Queen," a petting zoo, waterpark, amusement rides, miniature golf, and a giraffe feeding area. Pack your walking shoes and sunscreen, it's time for an animal adventure!



While animals roam free at Lion County Safari, 1,100 tropical birds fly free at [Jungle Island](#). The brainstorm of an Austrian feed store owner who found he could easily train birds, Jungle Island is South Florida's mecca for beautiful and exotic birds, and "the best trained bird show in the world." It's also home to a highly entertaining number of primates, including Peanut Butter and Pumpkin Pie, twin Indonesian orangutans born in 2003.

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As if that weren't enough to entice a visit, you'll also meet Godzilla, an Asian water monitor; friendly macaws Boomer and Ray; Hercules, the "liger," (half lion, half tiger); the peanut-loving gibbon, Watson; and a 2,000-pound "crocosaurus." Follow a winding trail through lush tropical foliage, native coral rock and shady tree hammocks to discover the beautiful Miami environment enjoyed by [Jungle Island's](#) feathered and furry residents. Don't miss the opportunity to visit the adjacent Japanese garden built by the founder of Ricoh, who fell in love with Miami in the 1950s and created a stellar park of harmony and beauty. Admission is complimentary.

Does the thought of going to a place "where the humans are caged and the monkeys run wild" sound too intriguing to pass up? Then head straight for [Monkey Jungle](#), a 30-acre reserve in south Dade County where 400 primates have the run of the place. Monkey Jungle's design was an innovation, the catalyst behind many of today's zoological park designs.

Animal behaviorist Joseph Dumond released six Java monkeys into the south Miami jungle over 70 years ago. Today, that Java troop numbers over 80, and is one of the main draws to the park. The troop forages through dense forest, foraging for food, and is also skilled at gathering crabs and shellfish along the mangrove-lined coast.



Over 30 species inhabit [Monkey Jungle](#), including orangutans, gibbons, spider monkeys, and colobus. You might just find yourself wanting to monkey around a bit, after spending a day with these fascinating creatures in their natural habitat. At the very least, you'll likely be motivated to cheer on Monkey Jungle in its bid to help the primate world. If you prefer a watery environment for family adventures, [Miami Seaquarium](#) has many dolphins, sea lions, manatees and whales who agree! Key Biscayne, in beautiful Biscayne Bay, is the spectacular setting for Miami Seaquarium, a family favorite since 1955.

Bottlenose dolphins thrill adults and children with their acrobatic show. Dare to be in the Splash Zone if you don't mind getting wet! A unique below-water vantage point provides the view you'll never get otherwise. Keep your eyes open for baby dolphin, too; depending on what time of year you visit, you might get lucky and see one of these adorable offspring.



Salty the sea lion is a real comedian, and steals the show each time he performs. Have your camera ready! And [Seaquarium](#) visitors over "a certain age" will find a smile creeping across their faces when they recognize the lagoon where the original Flipper television series was shot. Can you imagine a whale walking on water? Lolita the killer whale will show you how. Thrill-seekers will naturally gravitate toward Crocodile Flats and the Shark Presentation, while a 750,000-gallon saltwater aquarium holds an unusual guest once an hour. One Miami-based diver has the most unusual job in the city: slowly swimming through the "Main Reed" tank, hand-feeding countless tropical fish, moray eels and loggerhead turtles.

Looking for more biological diversity? Your family will never forget a visit to [Miami Metrozoo](#). This famous wildlife haven boasts over 1,300 different animals in a spacious 740-acre setting. You may not be able to count the Italian honeybees (There are between 10,000 and 15,000), but you can definitely count the times you laugh while feeding the giraffes their favorite treats. The giraffe feeding station has become one of the more popular areas of the zoo. These guys will really stick their necks out for a treat.



Koalas, Komodo dragons, condors, a New Guinea singing dog, clouded leopards, meerkats, squirrel monkeys, whistling ducks, giant hummingbirds... the list of fascinating finned, furry and feathered animals is nearly endless at [Miami's Metrozoo](#).



When your family is ready for a sunny adventure into the animal kingdom, remember that Florida's East Coast is where the wild things are.

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