



THIS IS A FIELD GUIDE FOR PEOPLE WHO LIKE TO

# GET THEIR HANDS DIRTY

AND EXPERIENCE A PLACE

# THROUGH TASTE.

For the heirloom-tomato chasers who can't drive past a farm stand without doubling back. For the casual connoisseurs whose eyes light up when "biergarten" enters the conversation. For anyone who'd love to trade their smartphone screen for an outdoor scene (at least for the afternoon). Use these pages to plan your next u-pick adventure, uncover lesser-known local gems and find your way around.

**READY TO VENTURE OUT AND SAMPLE  
FLORIDA'S BEST? LET'S GO!**

# U-PICK CITRUS

NOVEMBER THROUGH FEBRUARY

WITHOUT A DOUBT, THIS IS THE FRUIT  
THAT PUT FLORIDA ON THE MAP.

So no matter what, citrus will always be a major part of our (agri)cultural DNA. Cultivating everything from sugar-kissed honeybells and tart tangerines to ruby red grapefruits and classic Florida navels, our local growers are still responsible for a big share of Florida's harvest. Peak season typically stretches from November to February—just in time to brighten up the winter months.



ENJOY A CRAFT BEER THAT CELEBRATES POLK COUNTY'S CITRUS PAST—AND PRESENT—WITH EVERY PINT.

*Flip to the breweries section to learn more.*

## RIDGE ISLAND GROVES | Haines City

Off the beaten path? Yes, but isn't anything worth taking the time to find? Just follow the orange blossom perfume to Florida's Sun Ridge, where the Ritch family has been cultivating citrus since 1992. Complete with an on-site packing house, Ridge Island Groves offers visitors a unique look at a (pesticide-free) working grove and hydroponic garden. Hop on a golf cart for a guided tour of the tangerine, grapefruit and orange groves, take a behind-the-scenes look at the packing process and pick your own fruit along the way. Don't leave without a solid pass through the Groves' farm stand-style gift shop, where you'll find crates piled high with Ridge Island produce, fresh-squeezed juice and free-range eggs. They're even churning out their own ice cream, including an orange soft serve that's so good, Creamsicle® cream pops will never be the same again.

*Check back with Ridge Island throughout the season for other u-pick opportunities. This produce powerhouse is also a sweet spot for u-pick blueberries and peaches. Closed in summer.*

## OPEN OCT-MAY

8-10 varieties of citrus  
Hydroponic vegetables





## FLORIDA'S NATURAL GROVE HOUSE

### Lake Wales

Learn how Florida's Natural oranges journey from crate to carton and sample the different varieties of juice straight from the source. Part gift shop, part visitor center, the Grove House is open seasonally from October through May. (Fun fact: This supermarket staple started as a cooperative of local citrus growers in 1933.)

## LANG SUN COUNTRY GROVES *Haines City*

Snagging a slice of Mary Lang's world-famous grapefruit pie is reason enough to stop by this quaint cafe. Lang's also produces 150 gallons of fresh juice every day and offers fruit shipping within the United States. (Trust us: Nothing says "I love you" like a box of honeybells.) Open October - May.



### **Want to learn more about citrus history?**

Set out on a DIY Citrus Label driving tour. Visit the Polk County History Center for a list of landmarks from Polk's citrus production past.

## WEBB'S CANDY FACTORY SHOP *Davenport*

This is the place for kitschy souvenirs, homemade key lime ice cream and Webb's Florida-famous goat milk fudge. One glimpse of the industrious confectioners hand-dipping gourmet chocolates and it clicks: there's a reason they still do things the old-fashioned way. (Fun fact - the original turn-of-the-century chocolate barrel is still used today.)

## DAVIDSON OF DUNDEE *Dundee*

Davidson of Dundee is a definite stop for anyone who secretly yearns for the days of coconut patties and Charleston Chews®. This family-owned factory has been making delicious candies and jellies out of citrus juice since the 1960s. Ask for the tour (with free samples) to see how these sweets come to life. Open year-round, but hours vary by season.



**Send a little sunshine home.** Ship your favorite fruit anywhere in the continental U.S. (except California) to loved ones — or yourself. Order in person at Ridge Island Groves or Lang Sun Country Groves.

Also available online at [ridgeislandgroves.com](http://ridgeislandgroves.com) or [langsuncountry.com](http://langsuncountry.com).

HOW TO PICK AN ORANGE

**TWIST  
AND PULL**





# U-PICK BLUEBERRIES

MARCH THROUGH JUNE

**WHEN YOU THINK FLORIDA,  
YOU THINK ORANGES.**

But blueberries are having their moment in the Sunshine State, too. Florida is now one of the top-10 blueberry producing states in the nation, and Polk County is definitely doing its part. So grab your basket (and that blue-ribbon pie recipe handed down from your great-Aunt Ethel) and find your way to the fields.

## **SHORT AND VERY SWEET.**

We'll admit—blueberry season comes and goes faster than you can say “baked blueberry buckle.” But hey, nobody wants year-round franken-fruits either, right? We promise these juicy little gems are worth the wait. The season can fall anywhere between late March and early June.

## **TAKE YOUR PICK.**

Ready to roll up your sleeves and get to it? Check out some of our favorite u-pick spots. Remember: Harvest schedules aren't always predictable. Call ahead to make sure the berries are ready before you go.

## **LAKELAND BERRIES AT SHADY OAK FARMS *Lakeland***

What was once a u-pick muscadine vineyard is now a family-owned blueberry operation that offers up a unique opportunity to reflect and reconnect with the land that feeds us. The 10-acre farm features five different blueberry varieties along with a host of other herbs and vegetables for guests to enjoy. Pack a picnic to enjoy by the pond when your berry buckets are full. Feeling inspired? Buy an Emerald or Jewel blueberry plant to take home and harvest yourself.

## **RIDGE ISLAND GROVES *Haines City***

Polk County's citrus darling also boasts acres of blueberries. We might have to award them bonus points for having ice cream on-site. You can read more about Ridge Island at the beginning of this guide.



## LONESOME OAK BLUEBERRY FARMS

### *Winter Haven*

On top of taste, the best thing about organic berries is that you can enjoy them straight off the bush. Check their Facebook page for u-pick updates throughout the season.

## OPONAY FARMS *Lakeland*

With views overlooking Lake Hancock, this might be one of the prettiest places to fill your basket. Blackberries, peaches, strawberries (and more) are also available seasonally.

## LUNA BERRY FARMS *Auburndale*

Take your pick from 35 acres of plump blueberries on this peaceful property in Auburndale. Frozen blueberries and local honey are also available.

## WHITEHEAD'S BLUEBERRY FARM

### *Winter Haven*

One of the few u-picks open during the week as well. No time to visit the fields? Call ahead and pick up your berries when you're ready.

## JAMES BLUEBERRY FARM *Bartow*

A Bartow staple for more than 100 years, James Blueberry Farm has a deep-rooted reputation for quality. Once known for their peppers, turnips and cattle, the farm is now beloved for blueberries.

## LATE BLOOM BLUEBERRY FARM

### *Haines City*

A hidden treasure located just one mile east of Highway 27. The farm is open daily but closes to the public when it rains.



*For the most up-to-date u-pick schedules, visit these farms on Facebook before you visit in person.*



## TRUE BLUE WINERY *Davenport*

If you missed out on blueberry u-pick season (or prefer your blueberry experience to pack more of a punch), we've got you covered. Head to True Blue Winery — a combination winery and bistro situated alongside a working blueberry farm. Sample wine flights and become the person who can confidently say that a wood-fired pizza dotted with meatballs and banana peppers pairs perfectly with a semi-dry blueberry varietal.

**OPEN  
NOV-MAY**



# U-PICK PEACHES

MARCH THROUGH JUNE

## WAIT, AREN'T PEACHES A GEORGIA THING?

Thanks in large part to agricultural gurus from the University of Florida, peaches are now a Florida thing, too. Over the years, they've successfully developed several new varieties that require fewer chill-hours to ripen on the tree. Unlike their northern relatives, Florida peaches are a bit firmer but just as sweet, making them ideally suited for cobblers, crumbles and other baked treats. Another bonus? Florida peaches are ready to enjoy two months earlier than their Georgia cousins. Peach season usually stretches from late March to early June.



*Florida peaches and blueberries usually come into season around the same time — excellent news for cobbler aficionados who know that two fruits are better than one.*

### **RIDGE ISLAND GROVES** *Haines City*

Flip to the citrus section for the full scoop on Ridge Island. Remember that amazing ice cream we told you about? It also comes in peach.

### **JOYNER PEACH ORCHARD** *Lakeland*

Located on the corner of Drane Field Road and Hamilton Road in Lakeland, this family-owned and operated peach orchard also doubles as an event site. (Yep, it's that pretty.)

### **OPONAY FARMS** *Lakeland*

Few things feel more like spring than feeling the warm breeze on your face as you pick peaches from a lakeside orchard. Warning: You might be tempted to stay here all day.







# LOCAL BREWS BREWERIES

## YEAR ROUND

Mmm, beer. For eleven months out of the year, it's the only frosty thing around. In the interest of stoking your beer cheer, we've rounded up our favorite local breweries, all of which pack passion, hops and a dash of local flavor into every pint. Food trucks and live music are frequent guest stars to the area's rising craft beer scene, ensuring bites and bands are never in short supply. So pull up a stool, sit back and enjoy.

### THE FLORIDA BREWERY *Auburndale*

Built in 1973, The Florida Brewery is the second oldest brewery still in operation in Florida. They specialize in lager beers with a smooth, crisp taste. Only open on Saturdays.

### SWAN BREWING *Lakeland*

The latest addition to Lakeland's craft beer scene, Swan Brewing offers lakefront views and microbrews just a few blocks from downtown. Kick back in the taproom or relax on the patio as you sip on a selection of more than 20 core, seasonal and small-batch beers.

### BREW HUB *Lakeland*

In addition to creating signature brews like Keybilly Island Ale, this real-deal commercial operation partners with craft brewers across the country to brew, package and distribute on their behalf. Sample fresh beer from brands across the country—as well as your own backyard.

### GROVE ROOTS BREWING CO. *Winter Haven*

Brimming with authenticity and local love, this brewery celebrates place just as much as a good pilsner. With names like "Rind & Shine" and "6am Pickers" scrawled onto the chalkboard tap list, there's no question Grove Roots is serious about bringing Polk County's citrus heritage to life. With an outdoor biergarten, bocce court and growing stash of classic board games, this kid- and dog-friendly establishment has quickly become a local favorite. Sink into an Adirondack chair for the most laid-back history lesson you'll ever have.

### FRONT PAGE BREWING COMPANY *Bartow*

Front Page Brewing Co. is a kid and dog-friendly brewery in downtown Bartow. The brewery's Beer Menu is always up-to-date. The menu includes beer brewed by Front Page as well as guest beers and ciders.

### DISSENT CRAFT BREWING COMPANY *Lakeland*

Dissent Craft Brewing in Lakeland is all about building outspoken ales with the highest quality ingredients to change the way you experience beer. From grain to glass, from process to pour, Dissent Craft Brewing Company is changing the way you experience beer.



Scan here to learn more about the  
Central Florida Beer Pass.



FRESH FROM POLK

# GARDEN GROWN

YEAR ROUND



## BOK TOWER GARDENS' EDIBLE GARDEN & OUTDOOR KITCHEN

### Lake Wales

Kohlrabi? Arugula? Bok choy? It all grows here. Created in partnership with the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS), Bok Tower Gardens' Edible Garden and Outdoor Kitchen is out to prove you can grow more than you think in the Sunshine State. As part of its mission to spread the joy of backyard gardening, the Gardens routinely hosts chef-led demonstrations highlighting seasonal produce harvested from the surrounding raised herb and vegetable beds, grape arbors and fruit orchard. Bringing the kids? Don't miss Hammock Hollow, a children's garden featuring three acres of hands-on, nature-driven play. As always, please check Bok Tower Gardens' website for event times and details.

[boktowergardens.org](http://boktowergardens.org)

## FARMERS MARKETS

From farm-fresh duck eggs to local honey, there's no end to what's blooming, brewing and baking at local farm stands across the county.



### Bartow Farmers Market

Wed, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

### Winter Haven Farmers Market

Every Saturday

June - Aug: 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Sept - May: 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

### Downtown Lakeland Farmers Curb Market

Sat, 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

(Closed in August)

### International Market World

Fri - Sun, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

### Lake Wales Farmers Market

2nd and 4th Saturday,

9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

### Central Florida Welcome Center Farmers Market

Thurs, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

(Open November - April)



# FRESH MAP

FIND FARM TOURS & U-PICKS

## Citrus

- 1 Ridge Island Groves**  
6000 Old Polk City Rd.  
Haines City
- 2 Florida's Natural Grove House**  
20160 US Highway 27,  
Lake Wales
- 3 Lang Sun Country Groves**  
5900 US Highway 17  
Haines City
- 4 Davidson of Dundee**  
28421 US Highway 27  
Dundee
- 5 Webb's Candy Factory Shop**  
38217 US Highway 27  
Davenport

## Blueberries

- 1 Ridge Island Groves**  
6000 Old Polk City Rd.  
Haines City
- 7 Lakeland Berries at Shady Oak Farms**  
3320 Shady Oak Dr. E.  
Lakeland
- 8 Lonesome Oak Farms**  
2851 Thornhill Road  
Winter Haven
- 11 Oponay Farms**  
5135 Hancock Lake Rd.  
Lakeland
- 12 Luna Berry Farms**  
3132 K-ville Ave.  
Auburndale
- 13 Whitehead's Blueberry Farm**  
1024 Macon Rd.  
Winter Haven
- 14 Late Bloom Blueberry Farm**  
115 Scenic Highway  
Haines City
- 15 James Blueberry Farm**  
St. Augustine Rd.  
Bartow
- 16 True Blue Winery**  
604 Pink Apartment Rd.  
Davenport

## Peaches

- 17 Joyner Peach Orchard**  
3830 Hamilton Rd.  
Lakeland
- 11 Oponay Farms**  
5135 Hancock Lake Rd.  
Lakeland

- 1 Ridge Island Groves**  
6000 Old Polk City Rd.  
Haines City

## Breweries

- 18 Grove Roots Brewing Co.**  
302 Third St. S.W.  
Winter Haven
- 19 The Florida Brewery**  
202 Gandy Rd,  
Auburndale
- 20 Brew Hub**  
3900 Frontage Rd. S.  
Lakeland
- 21 Swan Brewing**  
115 W. Pine St.  
Lakeland
- 22 Front Page Brewing Company**  
190 S Florida Ave.  
Bartow
- 23 Dissent Craft Brewing Company**  
125 S Kentucky Ave.  
Lakeland

## Garden Grown

- 24 Bok Tower Gardens**  
1151 Tower Boulevard  
Lake Wales
- 25 Bartow Farmers Market**  
Broadway & Main  
Bartow
- 26 Winter Haven Farmers Market**  
Ave. D & Fourth St. NW  
Winter Haven
- 27 Downtown Lakeland Farmers Curb Market**  
117 N Kentucky Ave  
Lakeland, FL 33801
- 29 International Market World**  
1052 US Highway 92 W.  
Auburndale
- 30 Lake Wales Farmers Market**  
Stuart Ave. & Park Ave.  
Lake Wales
- 31 Central Florida Welcome Center Farmers Market**  
101 Adventure Ct,  
Davenport, FL 33837