

### **Tour of the Crystal River Archaeological State Park**

A guided tour of the Crystal River Archaeological State Park takes approximately 2 hours to complete. It consists of a combination of museum activities and a 1 ½ mile paved walking trail. Most of the trail is shaded and the park is handicapped accessible.

The tour will begin in the park's museum/visitor center. When you enter the museum you immediately get an idea of what the site represents. A wall exhibit shows various types of pottery that have been excavation from various Pre-Columbian Periods (prior to 1400 A.D.). This site has been preserved by the State of Florida as a prime example of what life was like on Florida's west coast before the arrival of the Europeans. The native peoples that lived here used the site as their cultural center, similar to our modern day county seat or capital city. The rest of the museum is dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of native people's jewelry, projectile points, burial goods. There are also exhibits that interpret how the early city came to be. There is an 8 minute video that provides visitors with a short but comprehensive interpretation of the site as it exists today.

The second part of the tour involves the trail. The trail leaves the museum and leads visitors past the ancient midden (trash) area the native people created, on to the Main Temple Mound. The Main or 1<sup>st</sup> Temple Mound was constructed to serve as an elevated worship area. There is a 51 step stairway that leads to the scenic top of this mound overlooking the Crystal River. The trail then continues on to the living and Plaza areas and Burial Mound areas. As this is a loop trail we will end the tour back at the museum. There are approximately nine interpretive stops along this trail to enable the guide and visitors to discuss the different areas.

The park offers restroom facilities and a nice little gift shop. Dogs are allowed, on leash, outside the museum only. The park offers two different open picnic areas. One is conveniently located near the parking lot. The other is located a short walk from the parking lot down by the river's edge.

Cost is \$40 pp For a Public Tour and \$60 pp for a Private Tour Reservations Required Groups Rates available. 6% Sales Tax applies.



**Call 352-795-5650 for Reservations**