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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Summer-Wonderland in Sarasota this Winter**

Sarasota, Fla. (Oct. X, 2009) – Sarasota & Her Islands offers a summer-wonderland this winter with delightful temperatures, swaying palm trees and sand and surf to melt away the stress of the holiday season.

While the destination may be a wonderful get-away from the traditional winter, it is not without the traditional winter holiday festivities.

Holiday parades will march down the streets almost anywhere across the country, but Sarasota offers both walking *and* floating parades to welcome the Christmas season. By land, parades include Venice Main Street ([www.venicemainstreet.com](http://www.venicemainstreet.com)), Nov. 28 and Holiday Parade Downtown Sarasota, Dec. 5. By sea, parades include Venice Christmas Boat Parade ([www.venicechristmasboatparade.com](http://www.venicechristmasboatparade.com)), Dec. 5 and the 23rd Annual Sarasota Christmas Boat Parade (<http://sarasotachristmasboatparade.com>), Dec. 12.

Area attractions show off their holiday best with events such as The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art's Holiday Splendor ([www.ringling.org](http://www.ringling.org)), Dec. 3 benefiting U.S. Marine Corps Toys for Tots; Mote Aquarium's Santa Jaws ([www.mote.org](http://www.mote.org)), Nov 28, Dec. 5, 12 and 19; Historic Spanish Point's Heritage Holidays ([www.historicspanishpoint.com](http://www.historicspanishpoint.com)), Nov. 22 - Jan. 2; Sarasota Jungle Garden's Holiday Lights and Jungle Nights ([www.sarasotajunglegardens.com](http://www.sarasotajunglegardens.com)), select nights Nov 27 - Dec. 27; and Selby Botanical Garden's Lights in Bloom ([www.selby.org](http://www.selby.org)), Dec. 18 - 23 and Dec. 26 - 27.

Seasonal concerts, dancing and caroling fill the air with the Holiday Swing Big Band Courtyard Concert at the Ringling Museum ([www.ringling.org](http://www.ringling.org)), Dec. 10; Candy Canes + Carols: Christmas with Florida Voices at the Historic Asolo Theater ([www.ringling.org](http://www.ringling.org)), Dec. 3; and Moscow Ballet: Great Russian Nutcracker 2009 at the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall ([www.vanwezel.org](http://www.vanwezel.org)), Dec. 29.

Truly unique holiday events include the Atomic Holiday Bazaar IV ([www.atomicholidaybazaar.com](http://www.atomicholidaybazaar.com)), Dec. 12 - 13. This event features “crafters that infuse their creations with splashes of punk, dabs of rock, and jabs of general tuffness.”

The 33rd Annual Sandy Claws Beach Run ([www.parksonline.scgov.net](http://www.parksonline.scgov.net)), Dec.12 includes a one-mile fun run and 5k run on Siesta Key Beach, which was selected by Dr. Beach at the number 2 beach in the country in 2009.

Visitors to Sarasota will find something for everyone on their holiday shopping lists at any of Sarasota’s retail shops on St. Armands Circle ([www.starmandscircleassoc.com](http://www.starmandscircleassoc.com)), historic Venice Main Street ([www.venicemainstreet.com](http://www.venicemainstreet.com)) and downtown Sarasota. Original Ringling Museum Christmas Tree ornaments and cards are sold in the Museum Store ([www.ringling.org](http://www.ringling.org)).

Additional information and a complete list of holiday events happening in Sarasota & Her Islands is available at [www.sarasotafl.org](http://www.sarasotafl.org)

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**Sarasota and her string of eight islands are located along Southwest Florida’s Gulf Coast between Tampa and Ft. Myers. Sarasota and Her Islands is comprised of Sarasota, Longboat Key, Lido Key, St. Armands Key, Manasota Key, Siesta Key, Casey Key, Englewood, Nokomis, North Port, Osprey and Venice. In addition to sandy beaches, Sarasota and Her Islands also offer numerous cultural and ecological attractions. For more information on discovering Sarasota & Her Islands, call the Sarasota Convention & Visitors Bureau at (800) 522-9799 or visit [www.sarasotafl.org](http://www.sarasotafl.org).**