

Venice in Bloom



An Island Day of Flowers, Art, & More!

WRITTEN BY MONICA M. MEDINA
VENICE GULF COAST LIVING MAGAZINE

Bursting with vibrant flowers, captivating murals, tasteful cuisine, and charming boutiques, Venice Island is the place to be. Strolling along the sidewalks, pedestrians are greeted by sights such as blossoming bougainvillea, swaying palm trees, and stunning architecture accompanied by exquisite artistic designs. Recently, 52 whimsical and artistically adventurous seahorse and mermaid sculptures were added to the mix, providing guests with an extra dose of charm, color, and fun to appreciate throughout the downtown area. Here on the avenues, get whisked away by the many ways to spend a beautiful day in paradise.

Ten years ago, these stunning streets looked vastly different than they do today. The addition of many renovations, landscaping, and artistic elements coupled by the hard work of dedicated volunteers at Venice Area Beautification, Inc. (VABI) has created a breathtaking oasis in the city where visitors and residents venture to bask in the sights and sounds of the island.

Walk along this beautiful pathway from Venice to Miami Avenue, and see the mural "Healing in the Enchanted Garden"





By bike, car, or foot, discover impressive murals on several buildings all around town. Sponsored by VABI, every painting brings life to an empty space and shares the city's history with thousands of viewers each year. Such pieces include the "Circus Mural" by Frances Smith located near the south bridge and "Venice Remembered," completed by artist Coleen Henry, is found on the Venice Gondolier building. Captivating onlookers with its meticulous floral scenery, "Healing in the Enchanted Garden" by Joseph Barron is a must-see 3D piece, located at Founders' Way along West Venice Avenue. Be sure to take a look at the most recent addition along the Venice Post Office, where the beauty of trees, shrubs, vines, and beautiful birds have been captured in time.

Adding to the beautification of downtown for over 11 years, Robert A. "Bob" Vedder and his Bloom team of volunteers warrant a round of applause. Bob began his efforts in 2010 as a one-man show, overseeing five baskets. Throughout the years, he and his team were able to expand their plans to include more plantings, aided by project managers for the city who installed irrigation systems and wanted to see more lush greenery incorporated into the downtown area. Currently maintaining 91 baskets, 60 oversized planters, and several gardens located at various medians and corner sites, these dedicated workers truly bring the beauty of nature to Venice.

Partnered with American Farms in Naples, Bob and the Bloom team receive new assortments every three to four months arranged with eye-catching arrangements relevant to the seasons. Hardier plants like petunias, begonias, geraniums, and various perennials can be seen during the winter months, while sensitive plants such as pentas, vincas, lantana, Blue salvia, purslane, and more arrive in the summer.

Along Venice Avenue, these baskets and rows of royal palms pave the way for a unique adventure filled with shopping,



FantaSea Venice sculptures featured in this issue are "B.B. King of the Sea" by Raven Skye McDough (page 4); "Artistrria" by Karen Ann Hitt (current page); "Sebastian the Seahorse" by Fran Scully (opp. page, left); and "Shelly" by Catherine Beausoleil (opp. page, right).

Sandy's

DESIGNER CLOTHING

LUUKAA



Unique designer clothes that fit your style...and you.

Sizes range from XS to XXXL • Specializing in USA-made clothing

941.484.9911 128 West Venice Avenue
www.sandysdesignerclothing.com



*Bringing the Heart to Real Estate
& Creating Community Connections*

Inspiring Joy & Ease in the Real Estate Process

Discover how Deb can help you Buy or Sell your home & live the lifestyle of your dreams. Call to schedule your **FREE Consultation & FREE Staging Consultation today!**

exp REALTY Deb Scott, BA, CPC, REALTOR®
978.807.6873 • DebScott.com

EXP REALTY is a unique company offering special benefits to buyers & sellers.



Kinetico
home water systems

KINETICO WATER SYSTEMS OF SWFL
YOUR AUTHORIZED INDEPENDENT KINETICO DEALER
WWW.KINETICOSWFL.COM
941-918-2850

20% OFF

ALL KINETICO WATER TREATMENT SYSTEMS
OFFER CANNOT BE COMBINED WITH OTHER OFFERS
OR DISCOUNTS. MUST PRESENT AD AT TIME OF
PURCHASE FOR SPECIAL PRICING.

BOGO

BUY A NON-ELECTRIC KINETICO WHOLE
HOUSE FILTRATION UNIT & GET THE
DRINKING WATER SYSTEM OF YOUR
CHOICE FREE!

MUST PRESENT AD AT TIME OF PURCHASE FOR
SPECIAL PRICING.



**KINETICO K5
DRINKING
WATER
STATION**



**NEW
TECHNOLOGY
NON-ELECTRIC
COMBINATION
SYSTEM**

VENICE IN BLOOM

dining, or whatever your heart desires. As visitors stroll along the sidewalks, their senses take delight in the creative displays embellished in Florida flair showcased in storefront windows and the welcoming atmosphere of restaurants that encourage them to stop in and enjoy a memorable meal. Tropical tunes humming from inside the shops and boutiques entice guests to explore a sea of jewelry, clothing, shoes, and accessories. Men, women, and children of all ages can uncover exceptional keepsakes to cherish for years to come.

After an eventful day, take respite under a large banyan tree accompanied by a pleasant breeze and the sound of water flowing from one of the many nearby fountains. During the weekend, the Concerts in the Park are being held on various Fridays from 7 to 9 p.m. in Centennial Park. Under the stars, families, friends, and loved ones dance along to jazz, country, and acoustic covers. Then, between 8 a.m. to noon on Saturday mornings, mingle with the neighbors to gather fresh produce for the week and support local businesses and artisans during the Venice Farmers' Market.

Gazing peacefully through the town, it's only a matter of time before your eyes meet with those of a vividly painted seahorse or mermaid sculpture. Presented by Venice Art Center and partners of FantaSea Venice, this dynamic public arts project places 22 mermaids and 30 seahorses all around town for patrons to enjoy while capturing unforgettable photos. Each fiberglass statue is uniquely brought to life by an impeccable artist from the region and sponsored by a number of local businesses. From now until April 2023, when the statues will be held for a live auction, come take a swim through the city and find yourself immersed in an ocean of fantasy.

Step onto the streets of downtown Venice any day of the week, and you'll quickly find plenty of ways to relish in the art, history, shopping, and blooming botanicals around this awe-inspiring island.

*Photos on pages 28 and 29 by Chris Francin.
Photos on pages 30 and 31 by Kelli Tindall.*

Roofing + Solar by Curry

Why Worry - Call Curry!

941-921-9111

WhyWorryCallCurry.com



**18 Months
Promotional
Financing
Available!**

Why Worry ✓
QUICK FIX!
- Repair tiles
- Replace tiles
\$299.00
Call for details!



Since 1986 | 25 Year Workmanship Warranty

241 Interstate Court Sarasota, FL 34240 | Florida State License CCC1325654