

Daytona

Culture on the Beach

By Mira Temkin

Daytona Beach is known for a lot of things; miles of sandy beaches, faster-than-the-speed-of-light auto racing and college kids on Spring break. But what you might not know is that Daytona Beach is also the official American home of the London Symphony Orchestra. Since 1966, the LSO has been taking up residence in Daytona Beach as part of the Daytona International Festival, every other year. Now having expanded into a 3-week festival, the LSO has forged a harmonious relationship with the community that keeps on growing.

The yearly Daytona International Festival also offers some of the biggest names in entertainment performing dance, jazz, bluegrass, salsa, folk and world music. The festival offers free concerts on the beach, student education, family series, workshops and more, creating a real synergy in the community.

For me, it was a chance to experience the London Symphony without crossing the big pond. I had the privilege of hearing three different concerts, showcasing the many talents of this world-class orchestra; "Music from the British Isles," a classical symphony and the LSO Pops, a multimedia performance highlighted by the scores of "Superman," "E.T." and "Star Wars."

Museums, Lighthouse and Rockefeller

In between concerts, I took advantage of Daytona's many cultural (yes, cultural) offerings. The Museum of Arts and Sciences features a wonderful exhibit of classic cars, authentic apothecary that rivals the Smithsonian and an interactive children's museum. Their Coca Cola memorabilia is second only to the "World of Coca Cola" in Atlanta. I also visited the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse, a National Historic Landmark and the second tallest in the U.S. No, I didn't brave the 203 steps to the top, but instead took in the museum, highlighting lighthouse life. A stop at The Casements in Ormand Beach, the former winter home of John D. Rockefeller, showcases the history of a bygone



London Symphony Orchestra



Classic car at MOAS



Daytona Beach Bandshell, built in 1937

era. It's now a community center, just as "Neighbor John" would have wanted.

Dining Daytona

From upscale dining to local favorites, you'll find a restaurant for every taste. Located in the Hilton Hotel, **Hyde Park Steak House** is a classic steakhouse overlooking the white sand beach. Lobster Bisque, Wedge Salad, Garlic Steak and Warm Molten Lava Cake are some of their specialties. Check out their \$4.00 martinis and small plate appetizers during Happy Hour, too.

For breakfast, head to the **Daytona Diner** and get a taste of motorcycle mania as well as down-home cooking. **The Dancing Avocado Kitchen** is a true Daytona original, with great healthy entrees for breakfast or lunch. You'll love the eclectic décor, while enjoying vegetarian omelets, burritos, salads, even an avocado Reuben. Don't forget to stop at **Angell & Phelps Chocolate Factory** downtown,

making quality candies since 1925. The scent will lead you there. Take a tour, enjoy free samples, then have lunch next door. **The Cellar**, former winter home of President Harding, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, serves outstanding Northern Italian cuisine in a warm, intimate environment.

It's a Family Affair

Daytona is an affordable, family-friendly destination. Spend your days on the beach, bring the kids to the interactive Marine Science Center or drive your car along the 23-mile stretch of the "world's most famous."

Speed may be king here, but you'll have a chance to take it at a somewhat slower pace!

For more information about Daytona Beach, visit www.daytonabeach.com or about the 2010 Daytona International Festival, see www.dbif.com.