

History & Nature

Don Vicente Martinez Ybor, an influential cigar manufacturer, fled Cuba's 10-year war of independence and came to Florida. In 1885, tempted by the warm climate, Henry B. Plant's new railroad and a nearby shipping port, Ybor obtained 40 acres from the Tampa Board of Trade and began construction of his 'company town.'

The Ybor cigar factory was the largest in the world, employing more than 4,000 workers. Cubans, Spaniards, Italians, Germans and Jews called Ybor City home - establishing their own newspapers, restaurants, shops, social clubs, mutual aid societies and hospitals. These immigrant medical services are among the earliest known examples of cooperative social medicine in the United States.

In the late 1800s, Ybor City became a support center for the Cuban Revolution. When war broke out between the United States and Spain in 1898, the Army stationed thousands of men in Ybor City, including Teddy Roosevelt and his 'Rough Riders.' On August 12, 1898, Cuba won its independence.

From the opening of the first factory in 1886 until the 1930s, Ybor City was a flourishing Latin community. People paid premium prices for hand-rolled cigars. Workers were paid well and lived well. There was an exciting 'boom town' atmosphere. Ybor City was the 'Cigar Capital of the World.'

The cigar industry declined with the Depression, the advent of cigarettes and the introduction of cigar-making machines. Factories closed and families moved away. It was the end of an era. From the 1960s through the 1970s, urban renewal programs tore away much of Ybor City's historic fabric. Former residents and community leaders called for the creation of a museum. On September 12, 1980, the Ybor City Museum opened its doors.

Florida State Parks

Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Recreation and Parks

Ybor City Museum State Park

1818 E. 9th Avenue
Tampa, FL 33605
Phone: (813) 247-6323

FloridaStateParks.org

Park Guidelines

- The Ybor City Museum State Park is open from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. everyday except Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years days.
- An entrance fee is required.
- All plants and animals are protected in the state parks.
- Do not remove, deface, mutilate or molest any natural or cultural resources.
- Pets are not permitted in the museum or the La Casita. Where they are permitted, they must be on a six-foot handheld leash and be well behaved.
- Become a volunteer. Inquire at the museum.
- For information about joining Ybor City Museum Society, call (813) 247-1434 or visit ybormuseum.org.
- Florida's state parks are committed to providing equal access to all facilities and programs. Should you need assistance to enable your participation, please contact the museum.

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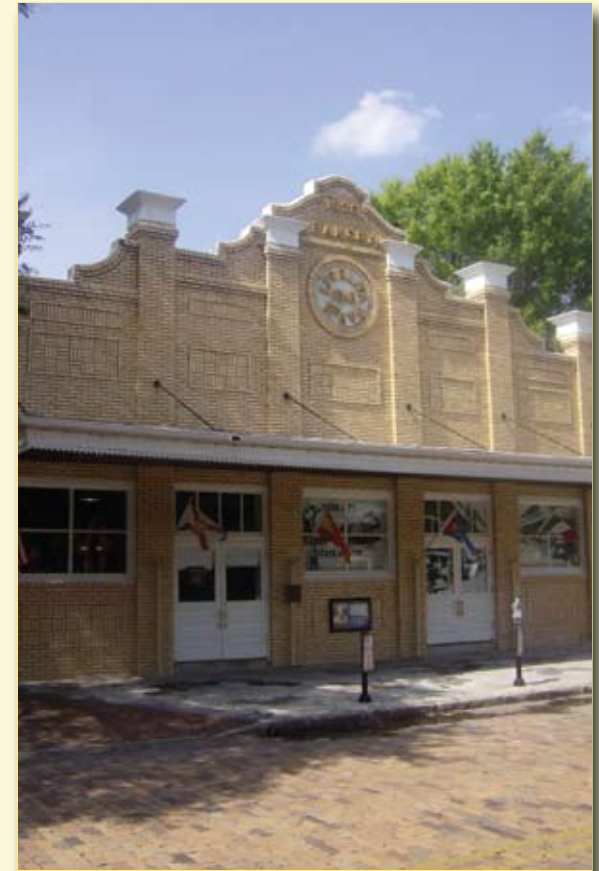
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Southwest
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Ybor City Museum State Park

An American Immigrant City



...the Real FloridaSM

National Gold Medal Winner
Florida State Parks - "America's First Two-Time Winner"



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