



## Oleta River State Park Real Florida Guide

Note: Colored numbers correspond with numbers on the map. **Red** = Days 1-3, **Green** = Other Activities



[Oleta River State Park](#) (1) is 1,032-acre park located on Biscayne Bay in northeast Miami-Dade County in the busy Miami metropolitan area. Although it offers a variety of recreational opportunities, the park is best known for miles of off-road bicycling trails, ranging from novice trails to challenging trails for experienced bicyclists. Along the Oleta River, at the north end of the park, a large stand of beautiful mangrove forest

preserves native South Florida plants and wildlife. Visit the website for [Friends of Oleta River State Park](#), a volunteer not for profit support group that hosts frequent events at the park and raises money for park priorities.

Choose from the options below to plan your adventures while making the state park a comfortable home base for a three-day stay or longer. The park offers 14 quaint cabins with covered porches and picnic tables' cabins, available by reservation through [Reserve America](#).

Also available is a primitive group camping area. There are three primitive campsites which can accommodate 30 campers each. Each site is equipped with two tables, a fire circle, restroom and cold water shower. There is no electricity in the primitive camp. There is a community pavilion for the primitive group camps to share. Call the

Oleta River State Park for more information and reservations at 305-919-1844.

## Day 1, Bicycling and Hiking

Currently, Oleta River State Park has more than 10 miles of single-track, twisty mountain bike trails ranging from mild to wild. For the beginner, there are more than 4 miles of novice trails and 3 miles of paved trail. The paved trail offers great conditions for roller blading. Helmets are highly recommended for all cyclists and Florida law requires helmets for cyclists age 16 and under. For hiking, stick to the nature trail at the tip of the peninsula.

Bike, canoe, kayak and paddleboard rentals are available from the park's concessionaire. For more information, see the website for [BG Oleta River Outdoors](#) (BGORO). BGORO also offers guided mountain bike tours for beginners and experienced riders.

## Day 2, Canoeing and Kayaking

Besides renting your own canoe, kayak or paddle board to explore the mangrove shoreline along Biscayne Bay, the BGORO offers several guided tours including full moon canoe and kayak trips of Biscayne Bay, several types of Oleta River trips, and even paddle board yoga classes. State park staff also provide a variety of guided hiking, biking and boat eco-tours; check the park's [Events](#) webpage.





## Day 3, Beaches and Swimming

Visitors can enjoy the sandy beach and swim in the lagoon off Biscayne Bay. After sun and fun, enjoy the historic onsite restaurant [Blue Marlin Fish House](#).

## Other Activities

Explore and enjoy nearby [Greynolds Park \(2\)](#) sunrise to sunset daily. The park is considered a hidden gem of nature in North Miami Beach. Once the site of a rock quarry, it is now a 249-acre park consisting of a variety of habitats, most notably a relatively intact hardwood hammock and mangrove forest. The hammock at Greynolds is one of the last well-protected natural areas of northern Miami-Dade County.

Tequesta Indians used the Oleta River, which runs along the east side of the park, as a source of transportation. In the years following, Seminole Indians used the land alongside the river as a trading post and a source of supplies for early Miami-Dade County settlers. Today the park features a nature center, golf course, campground, playground, biking and hiking trails, and opportunities for canoeing, kayaking and paddle boarding. Guided tours are available.

The nearby [Ancient Spanish Monastery \(3\)](#), open 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday, is a unique oasis in North Miami Beach. Construction of the Monastery of St. Bernard de Clairvaux was completed in the year 1141 AD near Segovia, Spain. Cistercian





monks occupied the Monastery for nearly 700 years. After a social revolution in the 1830's, the Monastery's Cloisters were seized, sold and converted into a granary and stable. In 1925, William Randolph Hearst purchased the Cloisters and the Monastery's outbuildings. The structures were dismantled stone by stone, packed in more than 11,000 wooden crates, numbered for identification and shipped to the United States. Soon after the shipment arrived, Hearst's financial problems forced his collection to be sold at auction. The massive crates remained in a warehouse in Brooklyn, New York for 26 years. After Hearst's death in 1952, two entrepreneurs purchased the crates for use as a tourist attraction. It took 19 months and the equivalent of nearly \$20 million dollars to put the Monastery back together. Today the Monastery is an active Episcopal Church.

While traveling in the area there are a number of [scenic roads of Miami](#). From Oleta River State Park drive south on A1A to Ocean Drive (4) to see the [South Beach "Art Deco" Historic District](#). Then drive over the Rickenbacker Causeway (5), a toll bridge, Miami's highest point for fantastic views of Biscayne Bay and downtown Miami. The causeway leads to [Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park](#) (6). This state park is home of a historic lighthouse built in 1825 and reconstructed in 1846, and is the oldest standing structure in Miami-Dade County. Visitors come to the park to sunbathe, swim and picnic on this sandy Atlantic beachfront. Guided tours of the lighthouse and lighthouse



keeper's cottage are given twice daily, Thursday through Monday. Two restaurants, Lighthouse Café and Boater's Grill, offer authentic Cuban cuisine, or picnickers can reserve a pavilion and fire up their own grill. Bicycles, beach chairs and umbrellas can be rented. Overnight boat camping is allowed in No Name Harbor and a primitive campsite is available for organized youth groups.

