In the late 1870s, an inventive young man named Silver Smith arrived in the area, drawn by the natural wonders of the Silver River. He experimented with various glass-bottom designs for his boats, and in 1877, he launched his first commercial glass-bottom boat tour. The popularity of these tours quickly grew, and Silver Springs became a popular destination for tourists from around the world.

In the 1900s, Silver Springs continued to thrive as a tourist destination. The Silver River Museum and Environmental Education Center was established in the park, and annual events such as the Ocala Country Fair were held, drawing visitors from across the state.

Today, Silver Springs State Park remains a popular destination for visitors seeking to experience the natural beauty of Florida's Silver River. The park offers a variety of activities, including glass-bottom boat tours, canoe and kayak rentals, hiking and biking trails, and a campground with 59 sites.

The park is also home to a reconstructed "cracker village," including houses, a church, school, a smithy and a cane syrup boiler. Visitors can learn about the history of the area and experience what life was like for the early settlers.

In conclusion, Silver Springs State Park is a beautiful and historic destination for visitors seeking to experience the natural beauty of Florida's Silver River. With its glass-bottom boat tours, hiking and biking trails, campground, and reconstructed "cracker village," the park offers something for everyone to enjoy and learn about the history of the area.
Silver Springs State Park is east of Ocala, just south of State Road 40. From SR 40, turn south on State Road 35 (Baseline Rd). Drive 1.1 miles to the entrance on the left.