



FASCINATING FLORIDA

Villa Vizcaya—Splendor among the Mangroves

Story and Photography
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Villa Vizcaya will amaze anyone with its spectacular Renaissance architecture, numerous works of art dating from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, as well as magnificent Italian-style gardens.

Villa Vizcaya began its history in 1912 when its construction started at the request of James Deering, a well-known and spectacularly wealthy industrialist at that time, and in 1916 it was finally completed. The location of the palace on the shore of Biscayne Bay was very well thought through: a magnificent view opens from its territory, and the estate itself is hidden behind picturesque coconut groves. Initially, the estate and gardens sat upon 180 acres, and the house

is nearly 30,000 square feet.

The Mediterranean Renaissance-style building, with thirty-four luxury rooms, is surrounded by fifty acres of European-style gardens, adorned with elegant gazebos and sculptures standing side-by-side along paved pathways. A variety of pools and canals run all the way to the coastline contributing to the air of peace and tranquility.

James Deering filled his mansion with furniture and luxury items purchased during his working trips to Europe: furniture items of the nineteenth century, paintings and tapestries by famous masters, and pieces of decorative and applied art of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

In addition to works of antiquity,

you can also see ground-breaking technological conveniences—an automatic electric telephone, a central vacuum system, and an elevator.

In 1952 Villa Vizcaya was bought by Miami Dade County and underwent major restorations. The museum and gardens become the favorite place for meeting important people and conducting high-profile events.

For fifty years, all the guests who have ever visited the mansion and the gardens have had an unforgettable feeling of encountering real beauty and history. My friends and I like to visit this place, and every when we leisurely walk along the paths of the park past thickets of orchids and exotic plants, we are filled with gratitude and admiration.