

Atlantic City's Bountiful Treasures

All visitors can go home winners by exploring the area's bountiful treasures.

[Arline Zatz Photos by Joel Zatz](#) — [July 17, 2019](#)



The Ferris wheel is a Steel Pier favorite

In 2018, over 20 million people traveled to Atlantic City. Many hoped to strike it rich by rolling dice, playing cards, the slot machines and other games of chance at the posh gambling casinos. Some win, but most lose. Fortunately, all visitors can go home winners by exploring the area's bountiful treasures.



Pool at Harrah's Atlantic City. Unique decor and architecture may be found in many of the casino hotels.

Outside the casinos, relax on the free, wide and clean sandy beach. Watch seagulls flying overhead; bask in the sun for a free dose of Vitamin D; listen to the sound of the Atlantic Ocean's waves pounding the beach. Dip your feet into the water to keep cool, or go for a refreshing swim and, if you're an angler, bring your fishing equipment and hopefully catch a delectable dinner.

Not a beach lover? Then walk or jog along the over six-mile-long boardwalk that's up to 60 feet wide in spots, and made of thousands of wooden planks laid on concrete-and-steel pilings. The first boardwalk was built in 1870 to keep visitors from dropping sand on hotel carpets. Today's expanded boardwalk is surrounded by restaurants, game rooms, gift shops, and stores selling Atlantic City's famed salt-water taffy, fried sugar-coated funnel cakes, and just about any food you may be craving—including pizza, subs, ice cream and hoagies. Any food you may crave can be found here—and also in the top casino restaurants.



Salt water taffy, originated in Atlantic City, is featured in a number of shops

There are many benches along the boardwalk to rest on, and it's fun watching people walking by or those sitting on the sand beneath colorful umbrellas. One way to avoid exercise, yet explore the boardwalk, is to rent a covered rolling chair powered by a human, who will point out interesting features. (Various fees depend on distance.)



The free, clean, sandy beach at Atlantic City



Bicyclists share the Atlantic City boardwalk with walkers and rolling chairs.

The thousand-foot long Steel Pier, built in 1898, features live music, games, and rides –including a Merry-Go-Round, Roller Coaster, and a giant Ferris wheel for thrills and great views. Food stands abound, and dozens of events are held here year-round.



View of the beach and Atlantic Ocean from the howdah of Lucy the Margate Elephant

The Jim Whelan Boardwalk Hall hosts numerous events including comedy festivals, basketball championships, drone racing, hockey, boxing, soccer, and stars-studded shows. Explore the inside of this huge, lovely building, at no charge. Try the interactive video boards, artifacts of Atlantic City, and watch clips of the city's history at its mini-theater.

Built in 1926, there's a 456 x 310 feet striking Barrel Vault ceiling made of painted aluminum tiles to resemble Roman baths. The largest organ in the world is housed here. Free recitals demonstrating the organ's powerful music are held weekdays, May through September 30 at 12:30 P.M., plus an in-depth tour is available every Wednesday from 10:00 A.M to 12:30 P.M. year-round.

Absecon Lighthouse, at 171 feet high, is New Jersey's tallest lighthouse. Climb the 228 winding steps to the top to view the original Fresnel lens imported from France in 1857 to guide boats. The light still shines brightly every night and can be seen for miles. Below are dozens of boats docked in scenic Absecon Inlet. A variety of events are held here, including the popular evening program, "By the Light of the Moon."



Absecon lighthouse, 171 feet high, is the tallest in New Jersey. The keeper's house is in the foreground

Shoppers love "The Playground," that's situated 800 feet over the Atlantic Ocean. Across from Caesar's Casino and connected by a walkway, it has three levels with upscale shops and restaurants. For fine ocean views, go the top floor where a banquet hall and wedding chapel is located.

Atlantic City Aquarium at Historic Gardner's Basin is fantastic and a fun, educational place with over a hundred varieties of fish and marine animals; a "Please Touch" tank containing Horseshoe Crabs and Sea Urchins. Other exhibits contain live moray eels and seahorses. A Live Dive Feeding Show and an Animal show are on tap, plus much more.



Entrance to Atlantic City Aquarium at Historic Gardner's Basin

Visiting New Jersey's landmark Lucy the Elephant is a unique experience. Only two miles away in Margate, and built in 1881 as a real estate office, this six-story attraction beckons visitors of all ages into her huge body. Learn her history via a short video, and look through one of her big eyes or from the Howdah for a view of the city.



Lucy the Elephant, built in 1881, is 65 feet high and is made of wood.



Kids can't resist hopping on Lucy the Elephant's toes

Do attend the annual Atlantic City Air Show, “Thunder Over the Boardwalk” on August 21, 2019. This year the United Kingdom’s daredevil stunt fliers -the Red Arrows-will appear along with the Air Force Thunderbirds and the Army Golden Knights Parachute Team providing thrills and expert formations. For best viewing, stay on the boardwalk, and have your camera, sunscreen, hat, and water for this memorable, exciting event.



New Jersey Korean War memorial, on the boardwalk, in the midst of luxury hotels and casinos.



Visitors can view the Fresnel lens at Absecon lighthouse



The odd-shaped Ripley's Believe It or Not! building houses the oddities inside

For more information on the casinos and more attractions, call (1-888-228-4748) or visit the Boardwalk Information Center located at Mississippi Avenue and the Boardwalk. Hours are Monday – Thursday from 9:30 AM – 5:30 PM; Friday, Saturday and Holidays from 9:30 AM – 8:00 PM