

SPRING TRAINING IN SARASOTA

Spend the season in Sarasota with the Baltimore Orioles at the newly renovated Ed Smith Stadium

The season is upon us: the season to prepare for baseball season. The Baltimore Orioles will head back to sunny Sarasota this March for 2011 spring training. The home games will take place at the newly renovated Ed Smith Stadium.

The Baltimore Orioles moved their spring training operation back to Sarasota last year. The team spent springs in the early '90s in Sarasota, but maintained a spring training facility in Ft. Lauderdale until signing a 30-year agreement that made Sarasota home once again.

The new stadium will have a second-floor shaded concourse with concessions, more beer stands and restrooms. Other additions include a picnic area, extended awnings, new seats, a video board and a deli and retail shop. The stadium's capacity will also increase significantly, from approximately 6,500 to nearly 9,000.

The Games

The spring training season kicks off on Tuesday, **March 1, 2011** at 1:05 p.m. with a game against our other favorite local team, the Tampa Bay Rays. There are a total of 16 home games in which the Orioles will face off against the Twins, Red Sox, Yankees, Phillies, Tigers, Pirates, Astros and Blue Jays.

The complete home schedule is as follows:

Tuesday, March 1 at 1:05 p.m. - Tampa Bay Rays
Thursday, March 3 at 1:05 p.m. - Minnesota Twins
Saturday, March 5 at 1:05 p.m. - Boston Red Sox
Monday, March 7 at 7:05 p.m. - New York Yankees
Wednesday, March 9 at 1:05 p.m. - Minnesota Twins
Friday, March 11 at 1:05 p.m. - Philadelphia Phillies
Sunday, March 13 at 1:05 p.m. - Detroit Tigers
Monday, March 14 at 1:05 p.m. - Pittsburgh Pirates
Tuesday, March 15 at 1:05 p.m. - Houston Astros
Friday, March 18 at 7:05 p.m. - Minnesota Twins
Saturday, March 19 at 1:05 p.m. - Philadelphia Phillies
Tuesday, March 22 at 1:05 p.m. - New York Yankees
Thursday, March 24 at 7:05 p.m. - Pittsburgh Pirates
Sunday, March 27 at 1:05 p.m. - Boston Red Sox
Monday, March 28 at 1:05 p.m. - Detroit Tigers
Tuesday, March 29 at 1:05 p.m. - Toronto Blue Jays

Tickets for all of the games are on sale now. Buy individual tickets online at www.orioles.com. You can even print your tickets at home. Season and group tickets are available, as well. Call **(941) 954-4101**.

Prices range from \$8 for standing room only to \$29 for premium infield box seats at prime games. Tickets are also available at the box office, which is open from 10 a.m.-4 p.m., seven days a week, from February 14 until the end of the home season on March 29. For all price information and details, visit www.orioles.com.

Ed Smith Stadium is located at 2700 12th Street, Sarasota.

Spring Training Events

In addition to the games, take advantage of other fun season events presented by AmericInn, Hampton Inn Sarasota and Hilton Garden Inn at the Sarasota-Bradenton Airport. On Saturday, **February 26, 2011**, there is a private autograph event with the Orioles for season ticket holders. Sunday, **March 13, 2011** is **Youth Baseball Day**. Youth baseball players will have the opportunity to participate in a pre-game parade on the field prior to the Orioles v. Tigers game. **Scouts Night** takes place on **Friday, March 18, 2011**. Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts from Sarasota County will receive Orioles patches and a pre-Twins game ceremony will recognize their organizations. On Saturday, **March 19, 2011**, kids 14 and under can run the bases after the Phillies game at **Kids Run the Bases**. **Seniors Run the Bases** will take place on **Tuesday, March 29, 2011**. Fans over 60 can walk or run the bases after the last home game against the Blue Jays.

Hotel Specials

With all this affordable fun, there are hotel deals to match. Depending on your personal schedule and the games you'd like to see, you can pick an Orioles package for Grand Slam Weekend, Friday-Tuesday, **March 4-8, 2011**, **Friday-Sunday**, March 18-20, 2011 or **Saturday-Monday**, March 26-28, 2011.

Packages include your choice of hotel accommodations, Enterprise 4-door car rental with unlimited mileage, a special meet-and-greet with Orioles players and personnel, game tickets and Orioles sports merchandise. There are package options that include airfare between Baltimore and Florida, for those diehard Orioles fans coming down from Maryland, as well the option to extend your stay.

You can book your entire packaged stay online by visiting www.springtrainingtours.com/orioles/orioles.html. For details and any questions, call (800) 892-7687.

AmericInn Sarasota's spring training special includes rooms starting at \$119/night and a hot breakfast buffet. It's just a few miles away from the stadium. Use promo code PKG14 when booking for additional deals.

The **Hampton Inn** is five miles from the stadium and two-night stays start at \$392. Take a dip in the heated swimming pool or whirlpool to wind down after the game. The **Hilton Garden Inn Sarasota** is six miles from the stadium. The hotel is offering free 24-hour shuttle transportation

and free breakfast during spring training. A two-night stay starts at \$392. **Homewood Suites** is also six miles from the stadium. Two-night stays start at \$392 and the hotel has a pool and fitness room. **Hyatt Place** is eight miles from the stadium. Two-night stays start at \$392 and an outdoor heated pool and fitness center are among the amenities. **Hyatt Regency** is ten miles from the stadium and boasts a great view, poolside bars, a marina, daily breakfasts and Sunday champagne brunches and more. Two night stays start at \$452.

For room rates and reservations, as well as more information, visit www.springtrainingtours.com/orioles/orioles.html or individual websites: www.hamptoninn.com, www.hiltongardensarasota.com, www.homewoodsuites.com, www.hyattplacessarasotabradenton.com, www.sarasota.hyatt.com.

Great Escapes

Unwind after a day at the game with a concert from the **Sarasota Orchestra**. In the spirit of baseball, the orchestra will perform a musical rendition of *Casey at the Bat*.

The concert series, which is called Great Escapes, will feature themed performances showcasing both light, classical music and catchy “Pops-fare.” Selections from *Rocky*, *Chariots of Fire* and *Entrance of the Gladiators* will keep fans in that fighting spirit.

Performances will take place on **March 16, 2011** at 5:30 p.m., **March 17, 2011** at 7:30 p.m., **March 18, 2011** at 5:30 p.m. and **March 19, 2011** at 8:00 p.m. The showings on the 16th and 18th are earlier, lighter concerts. All performances will take place at Holley Hall (Beatrice Friedman Center, 709 N. Tamiami Trl., Sarasota, 941-953-4252).

For more information on hotels and fun activities in Sarasota, visit www.sarasotafl.org.