Key West, Florida

Flat, American, and walkable. The easiest port day on most itineraries, as long as you are not expecting Caribbean sand.

Facts checked against official sources on 24 September 2026

Getting ashore	Ships dock. Three facilities: Mallory Square, the privately owned Pier B, and the Navy's Outer Mole Pier, listed as currently closed.
Currency and language	US dollars, English, US phone service and US medical care
Free transport	The Duval Loop bus is free for tourists and residents alike

At the Key West, Florida cruise port: what’s there

Port facts checked on 30 October 2026. Shops, prices and opening hours change, so check on the day.

Key West has no fenced-in cruise village: you step off the ship and you're in Old Town, with Mallory Square, Front Street and Duval Street all close by. When we called here we rented a GEM car and drove ourselves around, but a stay-close day works just as well on foot. These days nearly every big ship ties up at the privately run Pier B, beside the Opal Key Resort (the old Margaritaville resort), and the city's own two piers no longer take large cruise ships.

Port map: this port doesn’t publish a map of its own that we could find, so we drew the simple walk below from the port’s and cruise lines’ own descriptions.

Book it from your phone

Tours in Key West: the bookings Granny uses, one scan away.

Point your phone camera at a code. Your phone opens the booking page. No camera app? Type the web address printed under the code.

Key West shore excursions

Cruise-only tours with a return-to-ship guarantee. Non-refundable from 14 days before the tour.

SHORE EXCURSIONS GROUP

aicruisegranny.com/go/key-west-tours

More Key West tours

Thousands of reviewed tours. Most cancel free up to 24 hours ahead; look for the Worry-Free tag.

VIATOR

aicruisegranny.com/go/key-west-viator

Travel insurance

Compare cruise travel insurance plans side by side before final payment.

SQUAREMOUTH

aicruisegranny.com/go/insurance

Check the official source

Rules, prices and hours change. Scan to open the official page and confirm before you go. These are not paid links.

Bus fares
City of Key West

Fort Zachary Taylor fees
Florida State Parks

Accessible travel
Visit Florida Keys

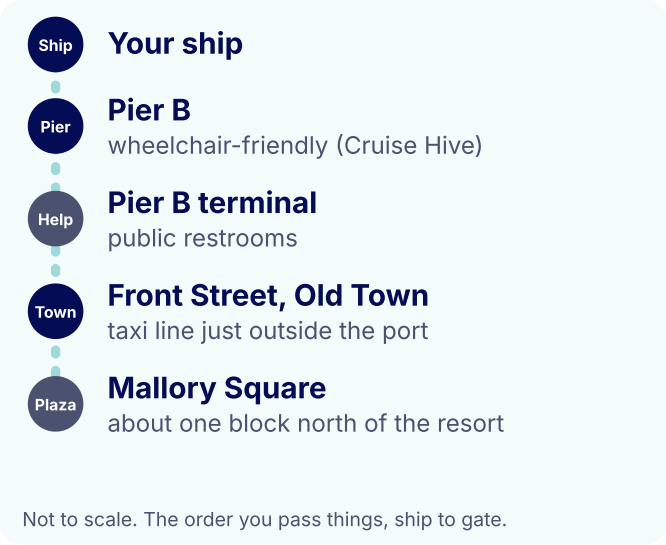
Full guide online: photos, live prices and the latest updates at **aicruisegranny.com/port-key-west**

Booking codes are affiliate or travel-agent links: AI Cruise Granny may earn a commission at no extra cost to you. Prices, rules and availability are set by each company; check them before you book.

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From the ship: Pier B

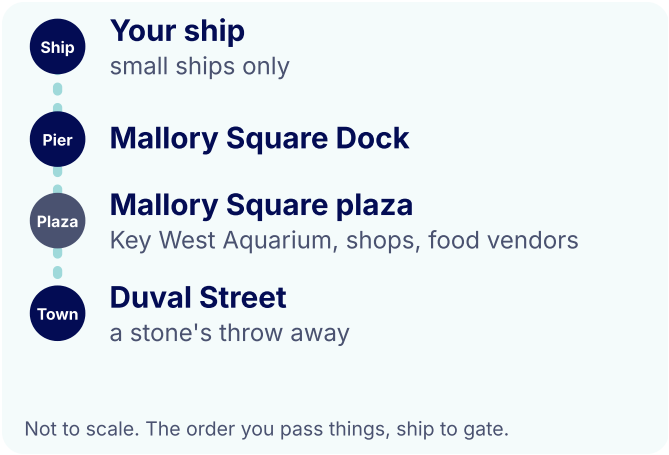
Privately operated by Pier B Development Corporation under a lease from the State of Florida, in front of the Opal Key Resort & Marina (formerly Margaritaville Resort), 245 Front Street. Since 2022 it has been the pier used by large cruise ships; its city contract allowed seven ships a week (Keys Weekly, 2022). Cruise Hive lists check-in counters, luggage services and public restrooms in the terminal.



Our own simple drawing, not the port's map.

From the ship: Mallory Square Dock

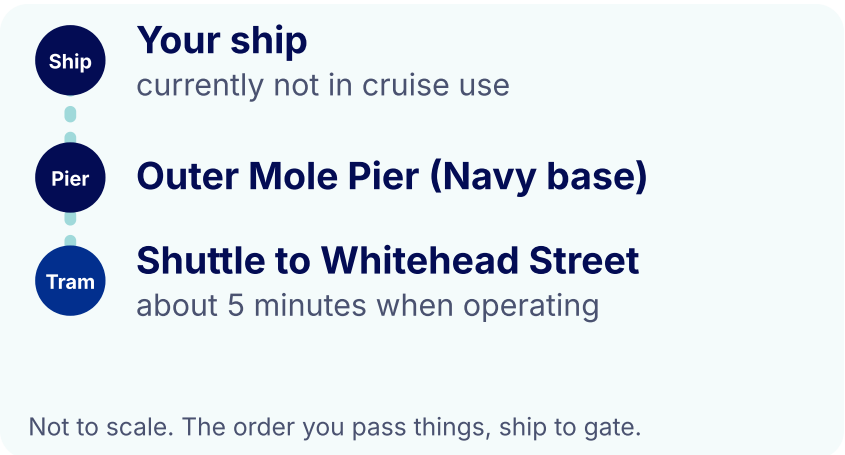
Owned and run by the City of Key West, right at Mallory Square in Old Town. Since 2022 the city has barred large cruise ships here; Wikipedia says that as of 2024 it is mainly used by the small-ship American Cruise Lines.



Our own simple drawing, not the port's map.

From the ship: Navy Outer Mole Pier

Federally owned, operated by the city under a lease from the US Navy. Listed as closed to cruise ships since the city's 2022 decision. When it was used, ships ran a short shuttle into town to Whitehead Street.



Our own simple drawing, not the port's map.

Free things to do inside the port

Mallory Square Free — Waterfront plaza with bars, restaurants, souvenir and craft shops, galleries and street performers. Celebrity suggests mid-afternoon to watch performers gathering before sunset.
Old Town waterfront, about one block from the Pier B resort

Duval Loop bus Free — Free city bus looping Old Town on accessible buses.
Stops around Old Town
Access: Key West Transit buses are accessible

Front Street and Duval Street browsing Free — Boutiques, galleries and bars; Duval is about two blocks east of the Pier B resort.
Straight off the pier

Phone signal Free — Key West is in the US, so your home US cell plan works normally (Cruise Hive notes reasonable reception).
Everywhere

Pools and beaches

No beach at the piers — There's no swimming beach at any cruise pier. The nearest are Fort Zachary Taylor (paid state park) and the county's Higgs Beach, both a ride away.
See our main Key West guide
Access: Higgs Beach lists beach wheelchairs and accessible restrooms (Florida FWC)

Food and drink

Mallory Square food vendors and restaurants — Snack vendors and waterfront restaurants and bars.
Mallory Square

Opal Key Resort bar — On-site bar at the resort beside Pier B.
245 Front Street

Shopping

Mallory Square shops — Souvenir and craft shops; Celebrity points to sandals, surf gear and Key-lime treats.
Mallory Square

Duval Street — Most of the island's shops, independent boutiques and galleries.
Old Town, a few blocks from the piers

Worth paying for (and what it costs)

Key West Aquarium — Aquarium with guided tours and live feedings (rays and sharks, sea turtles, touch tank) included with admission. Open daily 9am–6pm, last entry 5:30pm. Prices are on its tickets page.
1 Whitehead Street, Mallory Square
Access: Publishes an ADA policy; ask in advance for accommodations

Conch Tour Train

About $42.85–$45.10 per adult (reseller listing, Oct 2026)
— Narrated 60-minute sit-down loop of the island.
Old Town
Access: Monroe County lists it as offering accessible options

Old Town Trolley

From US$50.30 per person, one day (checked Sept 2026)
— Hop-on, hop-off trolley, 13 stops, first tour 9am, last departure from Mallory Square 4:30pm.
Departure point at Mallory Square
Access: Monroe County lists it as offering accessible options

Restrooms, Wi-Fi, money and help

Pier B terminal restrooms Free — Public restrooms, check-in counters and luggage services, per Cruise Hive.
Pier B terminal

Wi-Fi — No free Wi-Fi at the cruise terminals (Cruise Hive); Old Town businesses offer public Wi-Fi.
Old Town cafés

Money — US dollars, US cards, US banks; no currency exchange needed.

Getting out of the port

Taxi line — A well-marked taxi line just outside the port. Uber and Lyft also operate (Celebrity).
Just outside the port

Pedicabs — Pedal-cab rides around Old Town.
Old Town

Golf cart, Jeep, scooter and bike rentals — Celebrity says rentals are available near each dock. Exact shops and prices aren't published by the port.
Near the docks, outside the port

City buses

US$2 per ride; Duval Loop free
— Key West Transit runs five routes 5:40am–10pm. The Duval Loop is free; other routes US$2 (US$1 reduced), day pass US$4.
Old Town stops
Access: Fleet of 20 accessible buses

A whole day without leaving the port

If I were spending the day close to the ship here, I'd walk off Pier B into Old Town, take the free Duval Loop or simply stroll to Mallory Square, and spend a cool hour in the Key West Aquarium catching a shark or turtle feeding. Lunch on the waterfront, a browse along Front and Duval streets, then a sit-down tour on the Conch Train or Trolley so my feet get a

rest while I still see the island. Big ships usually leave before the famous Mallory Square sunset, so check your all-aboard time rather than planning around it.

At the port with a cane, walker or wheelchair

- Ships dock; tenders are rare. Cruise Hive calls all three piers wheelchair-friendly, and Old Town is flat.
- Key West Transit runs 20 accessible buses, including the free Duval Loop. Monroe County says the Conch Train and Old Town Trolley offer accessible options.
- Pier B's terminal has public restrooms; no source confirms an accessible restroom by name, wheelchair rental or a published pier length.
- Mobility-scooter and wheelchair rental shops exist in town but none is published by the port; book ahead through a provider your cruise line approves, and check with your own line.

More on cruising with mobility & health needs. Rules differ by cruise line, so check with yours.

Questions about the port

▼ Where do cruise ships dock in Key West?

Almost all large ships now dock at Pier B, beside the Opal Key Resort on Front Street. Since 2022 the city has kept large ships away from its own Mallory Square and Outer Mole piers.

▼ Can you walk from the Key West cruise port to Duval Street?

Yes. Duval Street is about two blocks from the Pier B resort, and Mallory Square is about a block away, all on flat streets.

▼ Is there free Wi-Fi at the Key West cruise port?

Not at the terminals, but your US phone plan works normally and many Old Town businesses offer free Wi-Fi.

Where the port facts come from: Wikipedia: Port of Key West (30 October 2026); Keys Weekly: Mallory Square makeover? (2022) (30 October 2026); Keys Weekly: Cruise ship debate archive (30 October 2026); Key West Aquarium: Open daily (30 October 2026); Celebrity Cruises: Key West cruise port guide (30 October 2026); Cruise Hive: Key West cruise port, piers, things nearby and getting around (30 October 2026); Fun in Key West: Where do cruise ships dock in Key West? (June 2025) (30 October 2026); Living the Dream RTW: Opal Key Resort & Marina review (updated June 2026) (30 October 2026); City of Key West: Bus fares (24 September 2026); Conch Tour Train: Tickets (24 September 2026); Old Town Trolley Tours: Key West (24 September 2026)

Getting around without walking far

Key West Transit runs five routes from 5:40am to 10pm, seven days a week except Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day, on a fleet of 20 accessible buses. The **Duval Loop is free**. Other city routes are $2, or $1 reduced, with a one-day pass at $4.

The sit-down sightseeing options publish their prices: the Conch Tour Train from $40.80 for a 60-minute loop, and the Old Town Trolley from $50.30 for a one-day hop-on hop-off ticket with 13 stops, first tour 9am and last departure from Mallory Square at 4:30pm. Monroe County's tourism office publishes that Key West Transit, the Conch Tour Train and the Old Town Trolley all provide accessible options.

The beaches, and the honest verdict

Key West is a town day. The beaches are pleasant rather than spectacular, and people who arrive expecting the Caribbean are routinely disappointed.

Fort Zachary Taylor	$6 per vehicle up to eight people, $4.50 single occupant, $2.50 for pedestrians and cyclists, plus a county surcharge. Open 8am to sundown daily; the fort itself closes at 5pm.
Higgs Beach	County beach, open 7:30am to sunset, with restrooms, playground, volleyball, tennis and pickleball. Florida's wildlife commission lists it as offering **beach wheelchairs and accessible restrooms**.
Smathers Beach	City beach with restrooms and showers. Parking is $5 an hour.

Not published anywhere official that we could read: any limit on cruise ship size or number of ships per day, walking distances from the piers into Old Town or to the beaches, and whether Higgs and Smathers charge admission. The City of Key West's port pages blocked automated reading, so check the city site directly if the ship-size question matters to you.

Where these facts come from

- Florida Ports Council, Port of Key West (https://flaports.org/ports/port-of-key-west/)
- City of Key West, bus fares (https://www.cityofkeywest-fl.gov/350/Bus-Fares)
- City of Key West, public transportation (https://cityofkeywest-fl.gov/358/Public-Transportation)
- Florida State Parks, Fort Zachary Taylor hours and fees (https://www.floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/fort-zachary-taylor-historic-state-park/hours-fees)
- Monroe County, Higgs Beach (https://www.monroecounty-fl.gov/1363/Higgs-Beach-Reynolds-Street-Pier)
- Florida Fish and Wildlife, wheelchair-friendly beaches (https://myfwc.com/license/accessibility/wheelchair-friendly-beaches/)
- Visit Florida Keys, accessible travel (https://visitfloridakeys.com/plan-your-trip/travel-tips/accessible-travel)
- Conch Tour Train, tickets (https://www.conchtourtrain.com/tickets/)
- Old Town Trolley, Key West (https://www.trolleytours.com/key-west)

Ports change their rules and their prices. Check the official pages above before you sail.

Mobility & access *at this port*

From **Sails Anyway**, the accessible-cruising section of this site. Nothing here is medical advice — it is what the port and the cruise lines publish, so you know what to ask.

The short answer

Ashore	Docked
Free beach	20–25 min walk, and mediocre
Hardest part	Sun, crowds and a short port call

The single best low-exertion option in any port we cover

The **Conch Train** or **Old Town Trolley**. Seated, narrated, hop off where you like and back on when you're ready. It turns a whole town into something you can see

without spending your legs — and unlike most tours, you're not committed to a route once you start.

Why this port is *easier than most*

- **It's flat.** No hills anywhere on the island, which is not true of St. Thomas or Curaçao.
- **It's American.** Kerb cuts, ADA norms, accessible restrooms, US dollars, no language barrier — and US medical care if something goes wrong.
- **Everything in Old Town is close.** Duval Street, the Hemingway House and the Southernmost Point are all reachable from the pier.
- **The trolley covers the rest**, so distance stops being the deciding factor.

The expectation to correct

The beaches here are mediocre. Higgs and Smathers are free but a 20 to 25 minute walk, and people who arrive expecting Caribbean sand are consistently disappointed. **Key West is a town day.** Plan it that way and it's one of the best days on the itinerary.

What the day *asks of you*

- **Very little, if you use the trolley.** Walking is optional here in a way it isn't in most ports.
- **Sun.** There's little shade on Duval, and the heat does the work the hills would elsewhere.
- **Crowds** when several ships are in, on sidewalks that aren't especially wide.
- **Watching the clock.** Port calls here are often short — check your all-aboard before you settle in anywhere.

Worth doing, *sitting down*

- **The Hemingway House** — flat grounds, plenty of seating, and the cats.
- **Mallory Square** waterfront bars, for watching the harbour without walking it.
- **Sunset**, if your ship stays late. Few ports offer it and this one does it properly.

> *"Key West is a town day. Plan it that way and it's one of the best days on the itinerary."*

Check with your cruise line

- **Ask whether you're docking at Mallory Square or Pier B** — it changes how far you are from Duval Street.
- **Ask whether the trolley you book is wheelchair accessible**, since not every vehicle in the fleet is.
- **Ask your all-aboard time** and treat it seriously; calls here are often shorter than elsewhere.
- **Ask about pier assistance** if the walk from the ship to the gate is a concern.

Accessibility details last checked 22 September 2026. How we check this →

More on cruising with mobility & health needs →

About the "I" on this page. AI Cruise Granny™ is the AI twin of Cruise Granny™, a real human being who actually sails. Every experience written here in the first person is hers. The AI twin is what writes it up, checks the facts against official sources and keeps it current. We tell you that openly on every page, because you should know who is talking to you. More about how this works.
