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**ST. AUGUSTINE
PONTE VEDRA**
FLORIDA'S HISTORIC COAST®

St. Augustine Recognizes 459th Anniversary with Founder's Day

The Nation's Oldest City celebrates founding of San Agustín settlement on September 7 with a day of festivities

St. Augustine, Fla. (July 17, 2024) – Spain's long and rich [history](#) on Florida's Historic Coast began with a momentous step from ship to shore on September 8, 1565. On September 7, 2024, the Nation's Oldest City celebrates its 459th anniversary with [Founder's Day](#).

Forty-two years before Jamestown and fifty-five years before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock, the Spanish landed on the shores of what would become St. Augustine under the leadership of Don Pedro de Menéndez de Avilés. King Philip II had sent Menéndez on a mission to rout the French from the area, keeping Spanish trade and exploration routes to Central and South America clear from interference. The Spanish brigade spotted land on the feast day of San Agustín and landed with over 600 voyagers. Father Francisco Lopez de Mendoza immediately held the first Catholic mass in what would eventually become the United States, giving thanks for the successful voyage, and celebrated with the New World's first Thanksgiving meal.



settlement.

With the help of dedicated historical reenactors dressed in full, traditional Spanish garb, visitors can experience that extraordinary day. The reenactment of the landing, complete with chalupa boats, will occur as Menendez and his crew step foot on the grounds of the Mission Nombre de Dios. After the Mass held at the Rustic Altar, the celebration continues with a grand procession, cannon and musket salutes, and a Thanksgiving meal on the grounds of the Fountain of Youth Archaeological Park, the site of the first Spanish

The schedule of events for Saturday, September 7:

10 a.m. | Menendez and crew land at Mission Nombre de Dios grounds, FREE

11 a.m. | Catholic Mass at Rustic Altar on Mission grounds, FREE (bring a folding chair)

12 p.m. | Procession from Mission to Fountain of Youth, FREE

1 p.m. | Reenactment of first Thanksgiving meal at Fountain of Youth, (regular admission applies).

1– 5 p.m. | Encampment and weapons demonstrations at Fountain of Youth Archeological Park (regular admission applies).

Florida's Historic Coast is easily accessible, just off I-95 and less than an hour from two international airports and Amtrak railroad stations. For lodging deals, attractions, and upcoming events, use Florida Historic Coast's convenient [trip planner](#).

Located midway between Daytona Beach and Jacksonville, Florida's Historic Coast includes historic St. Augustine, the outstanding golf and seaside elegance of Ponte Vedra, the rural beauty of Hastings, Elkton, St. Johns, and 42 miles of pristine Atlantic beaches. Visitor Information Centers are located at 10 Castillo Drive, St. Augustine; 200 Solana Rd. Suite

B, Ponte Vedra Beach: and at the St. Johns County Beach Pier Park, 350 A1A Beach Blvd., St. Augustine Beach. For advance travel information, call 1.800.653.2489 or go to the Visitors and Convention Bureau website at www.FloridasHistoricCoast.com. Check us out on social media Instagram @FloridasHistoricCoast; @ViajaStAugustine, Facebook.com/OfficialStAugustine, and Facebook.com/ViajaStAugustine and Twitter @FIHistoricCoast

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