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

## **St. Augustine Celebrates 460 Years with Founder's Day Festivities**

*Florida's Historic Coast is home to the Nation's Oldest City, where history comes to life Sept. 6*

St. Augustine, Fla. (July 28, 2025) – On Saturday, Sept. 6, St. Augustine celebrates the 460<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the day Don Pedro Menendez de Aviles and his crew set foot on the shores of La Florida, establishing the Nation's oldest continuously occupied city.

King Phillip II of Spain tasked Don Pedro Menéndez de Avilés with settling a colony in Florida to counter the French presence at Fort Caroline, just north, in present-day Jacksonville. Menendez set sail on his flagship, the *San Pelayo*, along with 10 other ships and over 1,000 sailors, soldiers, and settlers, sighting land on August 28, 1565, the feast day of St. Augustine. After sailing north for a brief skirmish with the French, the expedition landed on Sept. 8, 1565, naming the site after the Catholic saint. Father Francisco López de Mendoza Grajales held what would become the first Mass of Thanksgiving in the North American continent.

On Sept. 6, 2025, 460 years later, historical reenactors will bring the events of the past to life. Dressed in traditional 16<sup>th</sup> century Spanish garb, Menendez and his crew will step out of Spanish chalupa boats onto the grounds of the [Mission Nombre de Dios](#). After holding a Celebration of Mass at the Rustic Alter, the group will proceed to [Ponce de Leon's Fountain of Youth Archaeological Park](#), the historical site of the first Spanish settlement. There, visitors can witness cannon and musket salutes, explore the encampment, and see a reenactment of the first Thanksgiving meal.

Schedule of events for Saturday, September 6, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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 the Fountain of Youth; regular admission and St. Johns County residents' admission applicable.

1– 5 p.m. | Encampment and weapons demonstrations at the Fountain of Youth; regular admission and St. Johns County residents' admission applicable.

Visitors can explore more of St. Augustine's rich history by visiting culturally significant attractions like [The Governor's House Cultural Center and Museum](#), [Colonial Quarter](#), [Castillo de San Marcos National Monument](#), [Fort Matanzas National Monument](#), and [Fort Mose Historic State Park](#). For history with an artistic touch, the St. Augustine Art Association and St. Johns Cultural Council's [Founder's Day Plein Air](#)

[Paint Out](#) invite participants to capture the beauty of Historic Downtown St. Augustine in paint. To see all the sites with historical narration, guests can tour the Nation's oldest city aboard the [Old Town Trolleys of St. Augustine](#) or the [Red Train Tours](#).

Explore all of Florida's Historic Coast's [Must-Do Experiences](#) and create a fun itinerary packed with celebratory fun using the handy [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](http://www.FloridasHistoricCoast.com). Check us out on social media Instagram @FloridasHistoricCoast; @ViajaStAugustine, [Facebook.com/OfficialStAugustine](https://www.facebook.com/OfficialStAugustine), and [Facebook.com/ViajaStAugustine](https://www.facebook.com/ViajaStAugustine) and Twitter @FIHistoricCoast

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