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## Orlando Is Not A One-Mouse Town

So you're headed back to Orlando. Maybe the kids insisted. Maybe it's a business conference. Maybe you need to get your money's worth out of that timeshare investment. Or maybe the airfare deals to sunny Florida were just too good to pass up. But is there anything new left to do in Orlando on a second, third, or fourth trip?

Absolutely, says Kelly Monaghan, author of **The Other Orlando: What To Do When You've Done Disney and Universal** ('2007, \$15.95; www.TheOtherOrlando.com), who in the book identifies more than 200 attractions and things to do outside Disney World and Universal Orlando. And the list keeps growing and changing, Monaghan says. Monaghan began tracking the other Orlando in 1994 and has his own list of favorites, must-dos, and hidden gems.

Discovery Cove has to be the most exhilarating experience in Orlando, Monaghan says. Here you can swim with dolphins, snorkel with colorful tropical fish, and handfeed stingrays and exotic birds. It's the most expensive theme park in Orlando, over \$200 per person if you swim with the dolphins, but for most people it's the experience of a lifetime.

Monaghan adds that the cost of a day at Discovery Cove includes seven days of admission to nearby SeaWorld Adventure Park, home to Shamu, the world's most famous killer whale. Every day killer whales, dolphins, sea lions and even walrus perform in enormous water-filled stadiums for thousands of people.

I can't imagine a trip to Orlando without revisiting Shamu, says Monaghan. Once you see a trainer soar into the air off Shamu's snout, you will know in that instant that you made the wrong career choice.

For those who tire of the mega-parks, and the mega-prices they charge, Monaghan can suggest a wealth of less expensive alternatives. Gatorland is the original Orlando theme park, says Monaghan, and it is still one of the most interesting. Guests can watch gators and crocs leap high out of the water to snare a meal or marvel at the courage of wranglers who wrestle 6-foot gators into submission. In the spring, Gatorland's alligator breeding marsh is alive with nesting herons and egrets that use the alligators below as a sort of security system for their chick-filled nests. Gatorland is especially popular with foreign tourists, Monaghan notes.

Monaghan takes special delight in shattering preconceptions about Orlando. A lot of people think that Orlando is a cultural wasteland, he says. But it has an arts scene that would be the envy of many cities. Art is everywhere. Even

—more—

### More 'Hidden' Gems of the *Other Orlando*

- **Winter Park Scenic Boat Tour.** A leisurely voyage past homes of the rich and not-so-famous.
- **The Holy Land Experience.** A tour of Jerusalem without the danger.
- **Historic Bok Sanctuary.** A fairy tale tower in a magical woods.
- **Baseball Spring Training.** Tomorrow's stars at yesterday's prices.
- **Stallion 51.** Pilot an authentic World War II *Owucpi" i jvgt()*
- **Reptile World Serpentarium.** See cobras and rattlers milked for their venom.

