



THE BABCOCK RANCH GUIDE

Southwest Florida Community Guide • 2026



RIVER DISTRICT LIVING

Fort Myers

The City of Palms. A historic riverfront downtown, beach access on both sides of the Caloosahatchee, and every kind of neighborhood, from 1920s bungalows to gated golf communities.

AT A GLANCE

Welcome to Fort Myers

95K

POPULATION

\$385K

MEDIAN HOME

50+

MILES OF COAST

40+

GOLF COMMUNITIES

Fort Myers isn't one thing, it's twenty. Downtown is a walkable historic core wrapped around the Caloosahatchee River. South Fort Myers has master-planned gated communities and country clubs. Iona and McGregor put you between the beach and downtown. Gateway keeps the schools crowd happy. Whatever price point and lifestyle you're after, Fort Myers almost certainly has a version of it, which is exactly why choosing here without a guide gets expensive.

WHY PEOPLE LOVE IT

- RSW International Airport with 80+ nonstop destinations
- Twins (Hammond Stadium) and Red Sox (JetBlue Park) spring training
- 20 minutes to Fort Myers Beach and Sanibel Island causeway
- Downtown River District: restaurants, galleries, monthly ArtWalk & Music Walk
- Edison & Ford Winter Estates on the McGregor corridor
- Lee Health, the largest health system in SWFL, headquartered here

COST OF LIVING SNAPSHOT

Median home price	\$385K	Gateway family homes: \$500-700K
Waterfront median	\$925K	McGregor Gulf-access: \$1.5M+
Property tax rate	~1.15%	Millage varies by district
Wind + flood insurance	\$3-7K	Coastal streets materially higher
HOA (gated communities)	\$200-1,200/mo	Country clubs add equity fees
Utilities (single-family)	\$230/mo	LCEC or FPL depending on zone

Neighborhoods to know

McGregor Boulevard

Historic royal palm-lined corridor, 1920s estates, mid-century ranches, and walk-to-water pockets. Prestige address.

Downtown River District

Loft condos and historic homes steps from the riverfront, restaurants, and monthly ArtWalk. Most walkable option in Lee County.

Gateway

Master-planned with top-rated schools, JetBlue Park, and quick I-75 access. The school-first family answer.

Iona / McGregor

The bridge between town and beach, Gulf-access canals, gated communities, and Sanibel proximity.

Whiskey Creek

Established mid-century with mature oaks, a semi-private golf course, and character homes for character prices.

Verandah

Gated riverfront golf community east of I-75, Old Florida landscape, two golf courses, and family amenities.

Gulf Harbour Yacht & Country Club

Full-amenity gated community with private marina, tennis, and one of the best social calendars in Fort Myers.

Fiddlesticks Country Club

Bundled golf community for buyers who want two championship courses and no separate club fees.

The Forum / Colonial

Newer construction, retail-adjacent, and one of the strongest value plays in Lee County.

Schools worth a look

Six Mile Charter Academy

K-8 · One of Lee County's top-performing K-8 charters. Waitlist most years, I keep parents informed on lottery timing.

Patriot Elementary

K-5 · Gateway zone, consistent A rating, and strong reputation for reading intervention.

Gateway Elementary / Gateway Charter

K-8 · Charter option with STEM programming and dual sports/arts pathways.

Cypress Lake Middle & High (Fine Arts)

6-12 · Magnet school for dance, music, theater, and visual arts, audition-based, statewide reputation.

Fort Myers High School

9-12 · Historic 1911 campus in downtown, IB program, and top-tier academics. One of the most sought-after zones in the county.

Canterbury School

PK-12 · Private, non-denominational college prep. Small class sizes, strong college placement, and a robust arts and athletics program.

Bishop Verot Catholic High

9-12 · Diocese of Venice private high school. Strong academics, competitive athletics, and college-prep track record.



YOUR LOCAL GUIDE

Ready to see Fort Myers?

Tour neighborhoods, compare builders, and get honest, resident-level advice before you buy. No pressure, no scripts.



Michael Cirone

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