

Places on the Water

FLORENCE FUN

By Ann Rezabek



Pickwick Belle in the Shoals Photo courtesy Alison Stanfield, Florence Tourism

Will you be cruisin' the Tennessee River this summer, or maybe searching for a getaway that's not too far away? Given the sights along the scenic Tennessee River, boaters in this area are downright lucky. We have access to wonderful destinations almost in our backyards. And, here's a good one for you. Whether you have a day or a few, head to Mile Marker 256 on the Tennessee River on Lake Pickwick to enjoy the sights and sounds of Florence, Alabama.

Cruise In

Cruise into Florence Harbor & Marina, a full-service marina with 110 wet slips for boats ranging from 20 to 60 feet. While many boaters have made the marina their permanent home, there's still room on the floating docks for transients. The marina offers gas and diesel fuel, pump-out station, convenience store, pontoon boat rentals and a floating, two-story bar and

restaurant. Amenities for transient visitors include power and water hookups, restrooms and shower, a laundry room (complete with a book/magazine exchange), courtesy van and free wireless internet access. When they say "full-service" they mean it! florenceharbor.com

Soon, the marina will be bigger and better than ever. Through a grant from the Alabama Department of Environmental Management, improvements will be made to the east side of the marina. An additional 10 to 12 transient slips are planned.

Park It

Since 8,000 B.C. people have been enjoying the natural beauty and resources of this area. Today, McFarland Park sits between the Tennessee River and downtown Florence. You can make yourself at home here with campsites right along the river offering all amenities, primitive camping, a beach area,

lighted walking trails, picnic tables and shelters, playgrounds, a driving range, baseball and soccer fields, fishing piers and more. The park hosts special events and fishing tournaments throughout the year.

Parks abound in Florence, offering everything from fountains you look at to fountains you play in, from beautiful landscaping to a Veteran's Memorial, and from skateboarding equipment to mountain bike trails. To get information about the city's parks, visit florenceal.org/City_Departments/Parks_Recreation.

Roll On

Just this May, the Pickwick Belle, a beautiful and authentic paddle-wheel riverboat, began rolling out of the Port of Florence for some of her cruises. Florence was added as Pickwick Belle's second port, with the original port remaining in Pickwick Dam, TN.