

# ***FLORIDA***

## ***“with a difference”***

*A Tour for the Connoisseur*



*Captiva Island*

*An exclusive fly-drive tour - for individual travelers, featuring the back roads of the **Sunshine State**; unique accommodations and exceptional experiences, including **Everglades National Park** and the unique **Florida Keys**, with the main focus on famous **Key West***

**NORTH AMERICAN TOUR ORGANIZATION**  
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# Florida – “with a difference”

## A TOUR FOR THE CONNOISEUR

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*An exclusive “Fly-Drive” tour, routed via the back roads of the Sunshine State, - featuring unique accommodations and exceptional experiences, - including Everglades National Park and the unique Florida Keys, with the main focus on famous Key West*

To the discriminating traveler, we offer exciting and relaxing tours through some of the most picturesque parts of America. You drive yourself and select from an extensive “menu” of scenic pleasures and entertainment that which most coincides with individual tastes and interests.

For the traveler who abhors mass tourism, who dislikes traffic on the busy interstate highways, who wishes to savor the local restaurant scene, taking advantage of local know-how, this tour is for you! In most instances, you will spend the night in picturesque, artfully constructed and aesthetically valued Inns; you will dine in selected restaurants, known to the local connoisseurs and experience the scenery and America’s multi-faceted lifestyles.

Experience: The spirit of adventure in the Everglades National Park; the “laissez faire” attitudes of the “Conchs in Key West” and the relaxing atmosphere at the resort in Islamorada.

In addition, you will not only experience the country, but also meet the people. It is the very nature of Country Inns, that guests mingle and enjoy socializing in a friendly, cosmopolitan environment.



*Typical Florida sunset*

### **CONDENSED TOUR ITINERARY**

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*A 7-day tour itinerary, routed through the Sunshine State, from Miami and back to Miami, featuring some of the most spectacular attractions and most popular destinations to be discovered in the American South - Optional tour extension in Miami Beach.*

- DAY 01:** Pick up Rental Car. Proceed from Miami across Florida to the *Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary* and on to the Bay of Mexico. Arrive in the afternoon in the islands of *Sanibel* and *Captiva* for check-in at: *'TWEEN WATERS INN \*\*\*\**
- DAY 02:** Explore Sanibel and Captiva Islands. *'TWEEN WATERS INN \*\*\*\**
- DAY 03:** Proceed to *Big Cypress Reserve*. Take an exciting *Airboat Ride* and enter *Everglades Nat'l Park*. Continue through the *Florida Keys* for an evening arrival in *Key West*: *MARQUESA HOTEL \*\*\*\**  
or: *THE KEY LIME INN \*\*\**
- DAY 04:** Sightseeing and leisure time in Key West *MARQUESA HOTEL \*\*\*\**  
or: *THE KEY LIME INN \*\*\**
- DAY 05:** Sightseeing and leisure time in Key West *MARQUESA HOTEL \*\*\*\**  
or: *THE KEY LIME INN \*\*\**
- DAY 06:** Shopping in Key West. Proceed to *Islamorada*. *CHEECA LODGE \*\*\*\**  
or: *PELICAN COVE \*\*\*\**
- DAY 07:** Proceed from Islamorada to Miami or to Miami Int'l Airport. Return Rental Car. **END OF TOUR**
- or: Extend your stay in the Miami Beach



## **TOUR HIGHLIGHTS**

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A TOUR FOR THE CONNOISEUR

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- ❖ Tour the unique wilderness of the **Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary**.
- ❖ Learn the “Sanibel Stoop”, as you walk along the beaches of **Shell Seekers’ Paradise**.
- ❖ Take to the thrill of an **Airboat Ride** into the Everglades wilderness.
- ❖ Explore **Shark Valley** and its abundant wildlife in an open-air tram.
- ❖ Make the most of your **Everglades National Park “Safari.”**
- ❖ Conform to the relaxed lifestyle of the freewheeling “Conchs” in **Key West**.
- ❖ Get inspired on visit to **Ernest Hemingway’s Home**.
- ❖ Sample the exotic local cuisine and mingle with the evening crowd in **Mallory Square**, watching the breathtaking sunset.
- ❖ Relax, enjoy, unwind; savor the facilities at the ultra-deluxe **Cheeca Lodge** in **Islamorada**.
- ❖ Enjoy and appreciate the very best of **Florida** – in accommodation, food and drink.



**DAY 01:            MIAMI – CORKSCREW SWAMP SANCTUARY -**  
**CAPTIVA ISLAND - 174M / 278KM / 4 HOURS**

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When you leave the Miami area this morning, follow Route 75 North for about 78 miles / 125 km. You travel through the geographical center of Florida: flat, green, and fertile. You drive along Interstate 75, also named Everglades Parkway, through "Alligator Alley" and on until you reach the junction of Rt. 29. Unless you are interested in the intricacies of agriculture (groves of citrus, lime and avocado; fields of sugar beets and caladium flowers; herds of dairy cattle...) you'll find no reason to stop.



Proceed on Route 29 through the Seminole Indian Reservation directly to **Immokalee**, where you join Route 846 to **Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary**. If nature is of interest to you, you'll find this visit well worth your while. After this unique experience, return to Immokalee and proceed via Route 82 westbound to Fort Myers. Once you reach the Caloosahatchee River, continue west along palm-lined McGregor Boulevard (you'll pass inventor Thomas Edison's house, which is open for tourists) 15 miles / 24 km to Punta Rassa. Cross the causeway to **Sanibel Island**, the first in a chain of barrier islands extending northward along the Gulf Coast. Your destination and refuge for the next two nights, **Captiva Island**, is Sanibel's quiet sister to the north.

Overnight at luxurious **'Tween Waters Inn**, with a natural botanical paradise on the one side and miles of sparkling white sand beaches on the other. You will come to love this peaceful island, as the Lindberghs did, when they made their Florida escape in earlier days (Anne Morrow Lindbergh wrote much of "Gift from the Sea" on this island).

#### ***CORKSCREW SWAMP SANCTUARY***

This immense wilderness of pine flatwoods, wet prairie, swampland, and typical hardwood hammocks - a habitat for wildlife and native plants - may be enjoyed on foot by means of an incredibly beautiful 2.8 km long boardwalk overhung by Spanish moss. The sanctuary is the home of the nation's largest surviving stand of virgin bald cypress trees, many of which are about 700 years old.

Among the many sight to be savored at close range are lettuce lakes, cypress knees, floating tussocks, water hemlock, ropes of strangler fig, ferns and lilies, brilliant hibiscus, royal palms, and various epiphytes. Cardinals, red-shouldered hawks, and rare birds known as limpkins are found here, as is the country's largest colony of wood storks. There are also the familiar alligators, Florida water snakes, mosquito fish, and turtles.

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## A TOUR FOR THE CONNOISEUR

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### Day 02:                    CAPTIVA & SANIBEL ISLANDS

You might be completely content to enjoy your resort in peace and quiet and do absolutely nothing. On the other hand, you might also be curious what other visitors to the twin islands are up to: there are beaches for strolling, shells to be discovered, sunsets to be watched, wildlife sanctuaries to be explored ... plenty to do, if that's what you like.

A **Shell Seeker's Paradise**. Experts consider Sanibel and the nearby islands one of the three best shelling areas in the world (the others are Jeffrey's Bay in South Africa and Sulu Islands in the Southwest Pacific). The popularity of shelling has given rise to a posture known as the “Sanibel Stoop”: you can't walk on a Sanibel beach without seeing someone in this classic bent-from-the-waist stance, bending over to pick up one of Neptune's treasures.

Knowledgeable conchologists will tell you the best time to hunt is at low tide; the best place on Sanibel is on Captiva is are limited to two day. Wear a pair of you walk through plastic bag for that you are really pastime you could expert, Captain the 'Tween Waters Johnson Shoals off where one can find shells.



Bowman's Beach; the best Captive Beach, and that you live (inhabited) shells per sneakers to avoid cuts, as the shell beds, and carry a perfect gift from the sea. If serious about this new join locally famous shell Mike Fuery (works out of Marina), for a trip to the coast of Cayo Costa, up to 60 different kinds of

**J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge.** This 5,000- acre sanctuary is a nature lover's Mecca. You can drive, bicycle, or canoe through the maze of estuarine wetlands to see roseate spoonbills, alligators, herons, armadillos, sea-grape trees, gumbo-limbos and buttonwood. Trails off the main road take you to quiet brackish pools populated with alligators snapping at egrets. A boardwalk leads through the mangroves to tidal flats where you'll see more birds, fish, and raccoons, even otters.

**A**nd a word about food: On Sanibel and Captiva you have over three dozen restaurants to choose from. Ready for something good and tasty? Try the **Thistle Lodge** Restaurant at Casa Ybel Resort; they specialize in fresh seafood, steak and pasta. Or stay at home at your resort and live it up at the legendary **King's Crown**. Enjoy Oysters Rockefeller, Shrimp de Jonghe, Fettuccine Alfredo, Veal Marsala, Pepper Steak, Chateau-briand - or some of the dishes named for these very special islands.

### DAY 03:                    CAPTIVA ISLAND – EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK -

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### KEY WEST - 297M / 475KM / 6 HOURS

You should depart early this morning; it promises to be a busy day. From Captiva you proceed via Sanibel and the causeway back to the mainland. The quickest way is to proceed by Interstate 75 South, bypassing Naples, and continue to join the Tamiami Trail (Route 41) East. Shortly after crossing into the **Big Cypress National Preserve**, arrive in the minute community of Ochopee. Here you may stop to mail a card home from the smallest and most photographed post office in North America, or experience a new exciting activity, an **Airboat Ride** (not available in the Everglades National Park for environmental reasons). **Wooten’s** (1/800-282-2781) offers these trips all day long – from the highway into the deeper regions of the preserve (\$25.44 for the 30-minute airboat ride).



About midday you’ll arrive at the designed-for-tourists **Miccosukee Indian Village**. You can take a guided or self-guided tour, including a museum, native houses, craft areas....Another good reason for stopping is the Miccosukee Restaurant, the only decent eating facility along the Tamiami Trail. Here you can have the regular fare, or you might wish to try some of the Native American dishes: catfish, fried frog legs, Indian tacos, and pumpkin bread.



As your next stop, you should consider **Shark Valley**, one of the best wildlife viewing areas of Everglades National Park. Private vehicles are not allowed on the 15m/24km road. A two-hour guided tour by open-air tram is regularly operated. You should call for a reservation (305/221-8455) for the 13:00 departure. If you don’t want the guided tour, may we suggest renting a bicycle!

Continue on Route 41 East and Route 997 South beyond Homestead until you reach Route 1. Proceed along the Florida Keys, a chain of coral islands that trail westward from Key Largo to Key West. The keys are connected by 42 bridges, from which the ocean appears in distinct gem-clear emerald, sapphire and turquoise shades. You’ll pass a number of resorts and marinas and will arrive late in the afternoon in famous **Key West**, where you check in at the elegant **Marquesa Hotel**.

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## A TOUR FOR THE CONNOISEUR

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### DAY 04:

### KEY WEST

Key West is unlike any other town in the United States. A haven for generations of pirates, soldiers, shipwreck scavengers, artists and tourists, Key West has evolved a style, an architecture, and even a cuisine all its own. It is a small town, made for walking; the entire island is only about 4m/6.4km long and 2m/3.2km wide. Locals, known as “Conchs” (after the ornate shellfish that is both a highly prized delicacy and a symbol of the island’s independent spirit) will remind you that their island is closer to Havana, Cuba, than it is to Miami, and that Key West, indeed, is not mainstream America.



Most colorful is the far western end of the island, an **Old Town** filled with gingerbread houses, Spanish moss, swaying palms, and an ambience that is artsy, elegant, tropical and seedy all at once. Ernest Hemingway wrote and drank here; so did Tennessee Williams. Harry Truman established a “Little White House” here during his Presidency and Pulitzer Prize winner Elizabeth Bishop wrote poetry here in 1938-42.

The inspiration these artists found in Key West is available to anyone who goes down to the pier at sunset. Watching the sun fall into the ocean is a popular ritual that intrigues islanders and tourists alike. Looking out over the water, you will know there is land out there somewhere. But it won’t matter. When you are in Key West, you have gone as far as you can go.

There is plenty to do in Key West, so use your time wisely. First you should visit the premier Key West attraction; the **Ernest Hemingway Home and Museum**. Hemingway lived in Key West from 1929 to 1940. At first he lived at 1100 South Street, where he finished “A Farewell to Arms”, but in 1931 he and his wife, Pauline, bought the mansion at 907 Whitehead which still bears his name. At the time, it was the grandest home in town. It is a worthwhile visit; you will see the chair where Hemingway sat and the typewriter he used while writing “To Have or Have Not”, “Death in the Afternoon”, “The Green Hills of Africa”, “The Snows of Kilimanjaro”, and “The Fifth Column.” Tours are given daily, reflecting on Hemingway’s works, his rigorous lifestyle and colorful personality.



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### About Key West ...

The name "Key West" was taken from the Spanish Cayo Hueso or "Island of Bones." The area achieved this name from Spanish explorers, most notably Ponce de Leon, who set foot on an island strewn with the human bones of Calusa Indians and unlucky sailors. More currently, Key West has also been given the names "The Conch Republic" and "Margaritaville," from the song by Jimmy Buffett.

### Key West Culture

There are no dress codes in Key West, even for the most expensive restaurants. On this Florida island, differences in people and cultures are celebrated with the only rule being that of tolerance. A sense of celebration daily permeates the air. The setting sun of each day is applauded with festival zeal in Key West's Mallory Square. At this daily celebration, visitors to Key West can sip their cool drink of choice while hearing the sounds of local musicians and viewing the spectacular sunset over the waters of the Gulf of Mexico.



### Key West's Social Agenda

Key West also boasts a lengthy list of festivals on its social calendar. Some of the most famous of these festivals include various fishing tournaments, literary seminars, art festivals, premiere plays, and yacht races. However, the most famous of Key West's celebrations is the Fantasy Festival. Akin to Mardi Gras in its party-like atmosphere, the only word to describe the air of festivity is "Anything Goes." The October Fantasy Fest lasts for ten days that hits its denouement with a costumed parade through Old Town Key West. This particular festival alone draws over 50,000 visitors. Key West is one of the most unique areas in the United States. While so many larger and well-known cities thrive on pressure and corporate conformity, Key West celebrates its artists, businesses, and visitors in a seemingly "laid-back" atmosphere. Because of this accepting, diverse culture and gorgeous natural beauty, it is clear why so many have chosen Key West as their home.



Various tours highlight a visit to Key West. The Conch Tour Train is by far the island's most popular. For more than 25 years, this tour has highlighted some sixty unusual and historic Key West sites. Lasting over 1 ½ hours, this is also a good way for visitors to become familiar with the island's layout. There is also a tour that specifically showcases the final resting places of some of Key West's most famous and/or unusual citizens, known as the Cemetery Tour. The Old Town Trolley Tours are also worth while. On these authentically-styled trolleys, well-informed guides take you back in time to a young Key West.

**DAY 05:**

**KEY WEST**

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A full day at leisure in Key West. You can visit the Tennessee Williams House, the Audobon House and Gardens, the Wrecker’s Museum, and the very interesting Mel Fisher’s Maritime Heritage Society Museum with its booty from wrecked Spanish galleons. Walk the Pelican Path, ride the Conch Train, explore the colorful shops, bars and outdoor cafes, sample the exotic local cuisine and mingle with the evening crowds who gather in Mallory Square to watch free entertainment and the breathtaking sunset.



#### **KEY WEST NIGHTLIFE**

*If you wondered where the nighttime action was as you traveled down the Keys, you will discover it’s almost all here in Key West. Entertainment begins long before sunset and goes on far into the early morning hours. Some nightclubs seem to spill right out through their open windows and doors and unto the street.*

*Stick your head into **Sloppy Joe’s** (201 Duval Street), as it is connected with Papa Hemingway legends in various ways. Papa and Sloppy Joe were drinking buddies. Just follow your ears; you’ll hear the live rock, rhythm-and-blues and other varied entertainment until 2a.m. **Captain Tony’s Saloon**, “where everybody is a star,” is a Key West institution. The real star here is Captain Tony, a wiry white-haired codger; a well known local character. Noisy and fun, with all sorts of live performers. **Two Friends Patio Restaurant** (512 Front Street) features live Dixieland jazz, calypso and blues nightly, in its big, popular open-air lounge. You’ll find a bar, rock-and-roll and Jimmy Buffet music at **Margaritaville Café** (500 Duval Street). On the sunset deck of second-story **Havana Docks Bar** (1 Duval Street) you can get an eyeful of Gulf and an earful of the Top-40 band entertaining the crowd. Dancing and revelry goes on late into the night. **The Top** (430 Duval Street) has the best view of any night spot in Key West, from the top of the 1925 La Concha Hotel. There’s dancing and live music Sundays through Tuesdays.*

#### **DAY 06:**

#### **KEY WEST – ISLAMORADA**

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Shopping in Key West is legendary. Should you decide to spend the morning in Old Town, you’ll find that this is the place to spend your money. The streets in the waterfront area are a mass of shops and boutiques offering everything from imported flamingos to artful fabrics. Here are some Key West shopping ideas for you:

Proceed to **Sponge Market**, where sponger C.B. McHugh demonstrates the harvesting and treating of sponges; the store has bins of these “real” sponges for sale. The **Key West Art Center**, located in a former waterfront grocery, is a coop for local artists. Works for sale include paintings, drawings, sculpture and other art. Brightly colored silk screened fabrics and designer clothing is for sale at **Key West Hand Print Fabrics**. **Cavanaugh’s** has gifts from around the world, including Oaxacan pottery, Latin American treasures and African tribal artifacts. Authentic deep sea treasures can be found at **Mel Fisher’s Treasure Exhibit and Sales** and the **Cat House** is a full service gift shop for cats and cat lovers.

Depart for **Islamorada**, located 82 miles (131km) from Key West, half-way from Miami, and check in at your wonderful deluxe island resort: **The Cheeca Lodge \*\*\*\***.



You have been very active for more than a week, moving from place to place, sampling all the many wonderful attractions en route. You will probably wish to relax and enjoy the resort. Just in case you still haven’t had enough, here are some area attractions:

### **DAY 06: (continued)** **ISLAMORADA**

#### **Attractions and activities:**

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- ❖ **Theater of the Sea.** Located on Windley Key, just north of Islamorada, this popular attraction includes a two-hour tour and “bottomless” boat ride that features a wide variety of marine life, plus a performing dolphin show. Visitors can even swim with the dolphins here, but reservations (305/664-2431) are required for that popular feature.
- ❖ **Lignum Vitae and Indian Keys.** “Off-the-beaten-track” boat rides to these Keys offer an unusual contrast to the more traveled Keys. Lignum Vitae, on Islamorada’s bay side, is home to many rare, over 10,000-year-old trees, and plant life. Indian Key, on the Atlantic side, is a state historic site that was Dade County’s first county seat and has now reverted to its original natural landscape. Walking tours are available.
- ❖ **Boutiques, Art Galleries, Specialty Shops.** There are a number of delightful shops and galleries to explore right in Islamorada: here you can purchase anything from locally produced perfume and lotions, to original “Keys” paintings.

Aside from all that, you can play tennis or golf, enjoy the water-sports, the pools, the beach, and the spa. Or, you can take off deep-sea fishing (Islamorada is known as the “sports fishing capital of the world”), sailing, snorkeling, diving.... Should you wish to treat yourself to the very best, this last evening in Florida, have dinner at Cheeca Lodge’s **Atlantic’s Edge Restaurant**. Former President Bush had dinner here one night in 1989, shortly before his inauguration. He had a stone-crab pie with scallions and tomatoes as an appetizer, followed by Florida lobster with balsamic vinaigrette and grilled baby vegetables. You will also find a fine wine list here.

### **DAY 07: ISLAMORADA – MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT – DEPARTURE**

You still have the entire morning to enjoy Islamorada. After lunch, you’ll take off for Miami Int’l Airport. The driving time is 1½ to 2 hours; a distance of 75 miles (120 km) over an excellent highway. Take enough time, since you’ll have to turn in your rental car and depart in a relaxed mood.

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A TOUR FOR THE CONNOISEUR

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**Or, - extend your stay:**

- **at Islamorada**
- **on Miami Beach**
- **take a Caribbean cruise**



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**PRICES & CONDITIONS**

**ACCOMMODATIONS:**

**PRICE - PER ROOM (2 PERSONS), INCLUSIVE OF TAX AND GRATUITIES:**

<b>SUPERIOR: \$1,375</b>	<b>DELUXE: \$2,172</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAPTIVA ISLAND: 'TWEEN WATERS INN <i>www.tween-waters.com</i></li> <li>• KEY WEST: KEY LIME INN <i>www.historickeywestinns.com</i></li> <li>• ISLAMORADA: PELICAN COVE RESORT <i>www.pcove.com</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAPTIVA ISLAND: 'TWEEN WATERS INN <i>www.tween-waters.com</i></li> <li>• KEY WEST: THE MARQUESA HOTEL <i>www.marquesa.com</i></li> <li>• ISLAMORADA: CHEECA LODGE <i>www.cheeca.com</i></li> </ul>

**INCLUDED IN PRICE:**

- ✓ 6 nights at the Hotels or Inns listed in the itinerary - including tax - for 2 persons who share a double room.
- ✓ Breakfast at "Tween Waters Inn" and at "Key Lime Inn" is included.

**RESERVATIONS / PAYMENT:** Some hotels will demand payment at the time of booking. NATO LTD will issue an invoice with the respective banking/payment details. Final payment is due in our office 30 days prior to the arrival of the clients in the United States.

**CAR RENTAL:**

VEHICLE SELECTION / CLASS	PRICE	PREMIUM PACKAGE*
CHRYSLER SEBRING / <i>Intermediate</i>	\$231.72	\$346.08
DODGE CARAVAN / <i>Full-Size</i>	\$349.98	\$475.10
CHRYSLER SEBRING CABRIO / <i>Convertible</i>	\$362.11	\$498.19
CADILLAC DTS / <i>Luxury</i>	\$364.33	\$485.46

\* Price includes additional drivers over 25 years of age, 1 tank of gas and a DPS navigation system

- RENTAL PERIOD: 7 Days / From 09:00 on 1st day to afternoon on day 7.
- DRIVER'S AGE: Minimum age is 25 years.
- ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:
  - We offer vehicles from Alamo, National, Dollar and Thrifty car rentals.
  - The vehicles are maximum six months old and have not been driven in excess of 10,000 km.
  - The rental includes unlimited mileage.
  - The rental includes: CDW (Collision Damage Waiver) and Theft Protection with no deductible, as well as LDW (Liability Damage Waiver and SLI (Supplementary Liability Insurance) and UMP (Uninsured Motorist Protection).
  - The rental includes: Premium local fees, Sales and State Taxes, CFC (Customer Facility Charges), and HFS (Homeland Security Fees).