# Florida removes gay travel section from official website



The LGBTQ+ travel section has been removed from Florida's official tourism website, VisitFlorida.com, causing anger among members of the community and event organisers. Currently, the specific reasons for the removal have not been provided by Visit Florida.

The decision comes ahead of the 20th anniversary of Come Out With Pride, one of the largest single-day events for the LGBTQ+ community in downtown Orlando, scheduled for October 19 this year at Lake Eola Park. The festival annually attracts thousands of attendees and generates significant economic and cultural impact in Central Florida. "Come Out With Pride is literally the largest single event that happens here in Orlando and in Orange County," said Tatiana Quiroga, Executive Director of the festival.

The now-missing LGBTQ+ travel section previously featured blog posts, videos, and information on the state's gay-friendly beaches, Pride events, and travel tips specific to the LGBTQ+ community. Quiroga, who had recently communicated with Visit Florida about possibly including the festival on their website, was taken aback by the sudden removal. "A couple of weeks ago, they [Visit Florida] said it would be great to put Come Out With Pride on their website. So now, to hear that the entire section has been taken down is really sad and disappointing," Quiroga noted.

Visit Florida, a public-private partnership established in 1996, operates with state funding but is not an official state agency. Over the past few years, LGBTQ+ issues in Florida have become points of contention, with recent legislative efforts aimed at limiting drag shows, the participation of transgender athletes, and discussions of LGBTQ+ topics in classrooms. These events culminated in a legal dispute between Governor Ron DeSantis and Disney, which has since been resolved.

Quiroga perceives the removal of the LGBTQ+ travel section as part of a broader effort to restrict LGBTQ+ history and expression in Florida. "To know that folks can't use Visit Florida as a resource to find information, it's really sad and disappointing," she expressed. Despite the challenges, Quiroga affirmed that the LGBTQ+ community will continue its efforts unabated. "We will always persevere and march on. This is who we are and what we do," she asserted.

Efforts to get a comment from Visit Florida regarding this change have so far been unsuccessful. Interestingly, the website continues to provide travel information targeted towards other minority groups, including Black and Hispanic travellers.

As Come Out With Pride's 20th anniversary approaches, questions remain about the impact this website change might have on the event's visibility and future promotional efforts.