

Hernando County

Driving Distance: 23 Miles

From rolling hills and horse farms, antebellum homes and grand oaks to Chinsegut Hill, wooded lakes, and nature trails in sandhill country



A (11.5M) Scenic Drive to Brooksville, May-Stringer Museum, County Court House, Historic District

At Pasco/Hernando County line, continue north on CR 581, which joins CR 572, turn east (R) on CR 572 then continues as CR 581 turn north (L) on CR 581 into Historic Brooksville.

- Rolling hill country, canopy roads, horse farms.

Continue past first intersection (Cortez) to second intersection SR 50 (Jefferson St.). One block past intersection of Broad & Jefferson, turn right on Museum Ct. May-Stringer Museum is on the corner of Museum Ct. and May Ave.

- Four-story antebellum home built in 1856, opened by Historical Society as a museum in 1981.

For a wonderful loop drive through historic Brooksville on tree-lined, brick streets, see lovely historic homes, murals and dine at old restaurants, continue on E. Jefferson St. (W) to the Hernando County Court House.

Turn south (L) on Lemon Street to Broad St., turn north (L) to Main St., turn south (R) to Liberty St., turn east (L) to S. Brooksville Ave. turn south (R) and travel through the Historic District with canopy-lined brick street to Russell Street. Turn west (R) on Russell Street, visit the Russell Street Train Depot, an original train station from 1885. The station currently houses a genealogy resource center, the history of the railroad, the history of various houses in Brooksville and old county records. After touring the train station enjoy a picnic lunch next door at the Russell Street Park. Turn north (R) on Main Street; continue through the Downtown Area with antique shoppes and historic murals; which becomes Howell Ave., to Alta Vista Ave. Turn east (R) on Alta Vista to Bell Ave.,

south (R) on Bell to Olive St., west (R) on Olive to Howell, south (L) on Howell one block to Irene St., east (L) on Irene to Bell. Continue South (R) on Bell to N. Broad St., then turn east (L) on N. Broad, which becomes US 41.

- Homes dating from 1880 to 1920, including the Jennings Estate, home of William Sherman Jennings, elected as Governor of Florida in 1900.
- Old moss-covered oaks, brick streets, historic murals.
- Weeks Hardware built in 1913 of bricks from the Brooksville Brick Factory. The oldest existing retail store in Hernando County.
- County Courthouse with restored 1913 courtroom.

B (8M) Chinsegut Hill, Lake Lindsey, Chinsegut Nature Center

Continue north on US 41 from Brooksville to CR 481, turn west (L) to entrance of Chinsegut Hill, now a University of South Florida Conference & Retreat Center. Follow signs to the historic home.

- Property belonged to Col. Raymond Robins, a native of Brooksville who became wealthy mining gold in Alaska. In 1924, he took up residence on Chinsegut Hill with his wife Margaret. Tours of the restored manor house built circa 1842 are available. Chinsegut is an Inuit



Indian word for "the spirit of lost things." Magnificent views, second highest point in Florida, walking trails, tour of home.

Return to CR 481 and turn west (L) to Lake Lindsey Public Boat Ramp, with benches and view of the lake. Return to CR 481 to CR 476, turn east (R) to the Chinsegut Nature Center, a 408-acre National Wildlife Refuge. Education facility with interpretive displays, picnic area, nature trails, wildlife viewing.

C (3.5M) Lake Townsen Regional Park, Withlacoochee State Trail, McKethan Lake and the Withlacoochee State Forest

Head east on CR 476, across US 41 to Lake Townsen Regional Park, Withlacoochee State Trailhead & Withlacoochee River on the north (L) side of the highway.

- Fishing dock
- Picnic and play area
- Canoe rental
- Bike and horse trail
- Restaurants

Return to CR 476, head west on CR 476, turn north (R) on US 41, through the Withlacoochee State Forest. McKethan Lake is just past the State Forest Headquarters, on the west (L) side of the highway.

- State Forest Welcome Center.
- Picnic tables, grills, fishing, birdwatching on 2-mile loop drive with nature trails, wildlife viewing.
- Hardwood hammock and longleaf pine/turkey oak communities. Many unique and endangered species characteristic of the sandhill community occur in this area.

Continue north on US 41 to the Citrus County line.