

## Our Nation's Oldest City: St. Augustine, Florida

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St. Augustine is a city located on the northeast coast of Florida. It is the oldest continuously occupied European settlement in the United States. The city was founded in 1565 by Spanish explorer Pedro Menéndez de Avilés. Earlier settlements in the area failed. This was due mostly to famine and hurricanes. The first white child ever to be born in the continental United States was born here in 1566.

St. Augustine was attacked and burned by British explorer Sir Francis Drake twenty years later. The Spanish residents of St. Augustine built the Castillo de San Marcos. It was a masonry-walled military fort. The walls were made of stone, similar to limestone, that was made of ancient shells bonded together. The fort was designed to protect the city from invaders. It was completed in 1695 after 23 years of construction.

The British attacked the fort in 1702. They attacked again in 1704, but the Spanish survived. The British finally gained control of St. Augustine in 1763. Florida was returned to Spain in 1783 in the Treaty of Paris. That was the end of the Revolutionary War. Spain gave Florida to America in 1821. In return, America gave up claim to other lands in the West.

In the early 19th century, the U.S. became involved in three conflicts with the Seminole tribes. These Seminole Wars, also called The Florida Wars, helped establish St. Augustine as a growing city. The Castillo de San Marcos Fort remained in service until 1862. At that time, the Confederate Army took over. They used it as a military prison. They didn't hold the Castillo for long- January 1861 to March 1862. Then Union troops held it until the end of the Civil War.

In 1883, wealthy oilman Henry Flagler visited St. Augustine. He was so taken with the city that he began to invest in it. He built several of the city's most impressive buildings, including a museum and a college. The town soon became a winter resort for the wealthy. By 1938, St. Augustine was one of the first cities in the nation to open a theme park. Marineland is located just south of St. Augustine and is billed as "the world's first oceanarium."

With more than 400 years of history, this city is still a popular tourist attraction. The Castillo de San Marcos is now a National Monument and is part of the National Park Service.



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### Questions

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- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. In which state is St. Augustine located?
- A. Alabama
  - B. Florida
  - C. Louisiana
  - D. Georgia

Name \_\_\_\_\_



Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. The first white child was born in St. Augustine on what date?

- A. 1620
- B. 1523
- C. 1601
- D. 1566

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. Who built the Castillo de San Marcos?

- A. the Spanish
- B. the French
- C. the British
- D. the Native Americans

4. The walls of Castillo de San Marcos made of what material?

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5. The Florida Wars were also known as what?

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6. What theme park is located near St. Augustine?

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