

# Florida Biplanes & Helicopters Ride Information

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*Thank you for choosing to take a tour with Florida Biplanes & Helicopters. We want to make sure you have the best experience possible. Below are directions and answers to the most common questions about your tour. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions you don't see answered here.*

## **Directions to our Space Coast/Cocoa Beach location (Merritt Island Airport):**

The Merritt Island Airport is located just 5-miles West of Cocoa Beach and a 15-minute drive from Port Canaveral. Driving time from the Orlando/I-Drive/Attractions is just under an hour and from Melbourne is 20-30 minutes. Our office and hangar is on the Northwest side of the airport. NOTE: You must arrive via S. Plumosa Street, as the main airport entrance from Rt. 3 (Courtenay Parkway) does not connect to the North side of the airport.

### **For GPS directions, our address is: 475 Manor Drive, Merritt Island, FL 32952**

#### **From Cocoa Beach, Canaveral, Cocoa, or Rockledge:**

- Take SR. 520 (Merritt Island Causeway) to Merritt Island (5 miles West of Cocoa Beach, 2 miles East of Cocoa).
- Turn South on S. Plumosa Street (traffic light) and go approximately 0.8 miles.
- S. Plumosa dead-ends at the airport fence at Manor Drive. You will see our hangar immediately to the left. To get there, make a left on Manor Drive and go 50 yards to the parking lot on the right. Enter thru the small pedestrian gate in Southeast corner and walk back to the right to our hangar.

#### **From Orlando and points North:**

- Take SR. 528 (The Beach Line Expressway/Bennett Causeway) to Merritt Island.
- Exit on Rt. 3 (N Courtenay Parkway) and go South approximately 3.3 miles.
- Turn Left on SR520 (just after Home Depot) and then turn Right (2<sup>nd</sup> traffic light) on S. Plumosa Street and go approximately 0.8 miles.
- S. Plumosa dead-ends at the airport fence at Manor Drive. You will see our hangar immediately to the left. To get there, make a left on Manor Drive and go 50 yards to the parking lot on the right. Enter thru the small pedestrian gate and walk back to the right to our hangar.

#### **From Melbourne and points South:**

- Take I-95 North and take exit #201- SR. 520 (King Street) East towards Cocoa/Rockledge.
- Stay on SR520 until passing over the large bridge into Merritt Island.
- Turn Right on S. Plumosa Street and go approximately 0.8 miles.
- S. Plumosa dead-ends at the airport fence at Manor Drive. You will see our hangar immediately to the left. To get there, make a left on Manor Drive and go 50 yards to the parking lot on the right. Enter thru the small pedestrian gate and walk back to the right to our hangar.

#### **From Melbourne Beach and points South (alternate route):**

- Take Pineda Causeway to Rt. 3 North (Tropical Trail) in Merritt Island
- After approx.. 10 miles you will see airport entrance on the right (do not take it)
- Proceed 0.6 miles to first traffic light after airport entrance and Turn Right onto Cone Rd.
- Go to first stop sign (0.4 miles) and Turn Right on Plumosa St. and proceed one block to end.
- S. Plumosa dead-ends at the airport fence at Manor Drive. You will see our hangar immediately to the left. To get there, make a left on Manor Drive and go 50 yards to the parking lot on the right. Enter thru the small pedestrian gate and walk back to the right to our hangar.

#### **Contact Number**

**Florida Biplanes Main Line: 321-392-4125**

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## Directions to our St. Petersburg location (Albert Whitted Airport):

The Albert Whitted Airport is located in Downtown St. Petersburg next to the Dali Museum and just a few blocks from Tropicana Field. We operate out of the Main (Sheltair) Terminal, lower level. Our counter is to the left as you enter co-located with the Sheltair counter.

### **TO THE MAIN TERMINAL:**

These directions will take you to the Main Terminal (Sheltair Terminal)

### **For GPS directions, the Main Terminal address is: 540 1st Street SE, St. Petersburg, FL 33701**

- Take I275 towards downtown St. Petersburg. Take Exit 22 onto I175 East.
- Stay in the left lane of I175 until you see signs indicating the "Freeway Ends in 1000 feet". At this point move to the right lane.
- As the freeway ends continue straight ahead and go to the 4th traffic light and turn right on 1st Street.
- The main entrance to the airport will be immediately on your left. There is ample parking in the terminal parking lot. Once inside the terminal, look to your left for our counter.

### **Contact Numbers**

**Florida Biplanes Main Line: 321-392-4125**

**Sheltair/Albert Whitted Airport Main Terminal: 727-893-7657**

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### **How do I make a reservation for a flight / tour?**

Please schedule your tour as far in advance as possible either thru our website, or by calling 321-392-4125 or 888-FOR-RIDE to allow for the best selection of times. We require a credit card to hold a reservation (unless redeeming a Gift Certificate). The credit card is only used to hold the reservation. Payment is collected after your tour is over.

### **How far in advance should I book my tour?**

Please schedule your tour on our website or by calling 321-392-4125 or 888-FOR-RIDE as far in advance as possible to allow for the best selection of times. We do not schedule tours via email correspondence. We fly 7 days a week, year round. Weekend reservations are often tightly booked, so you should try to schedule as early as possible. While we do take "walk-ups" when availability permits, we do ask that you make an appointment.

### **What time should I plan to arrive at the airport for my tour(s)?**

Please plan to arrive at least 15-minutes prior to your tour reservation. (25-30 minutes prior for sunset flights and biplane tours with Aerobatics Upgrades) This will allow time for a preflight safety briefing and for you to get settled into the aircraft. You should allow an additional 15-minutes after your tour for deplaning and checkout.

### **How do I pay for my tour?**

You pay after your tour(s) are complete. (It's always easier to pay for something when you have a big smile on your face!) We accept cash or credit cards. (Visa, Mastercard or Discover; sorry, we do not accept American Express)

### **I gave you a credit card when I booked my reservation. Can you use the same card information at checkout?**

When we take your card number to hold a reservation, we don't put a charge on your card and it's information is encrypted (for security purposes). Therefore, you will need to present your credit card at the time of checkout.

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## **How many people can go up at one time in the Biplane?**

Our Biplanes seat two passengers at a time (side-by-side seating). The cockpit is spacious and can comfortably fit two adults. There is a maximum combined weight limit of 500 lbs. Children cannot be placed on your lap during a flight. The biplane is unique in that the pilot sits in the rear cockpit and the passengers sit in the front.

## **How many people can go up at one time in the Helicopter?**

Our helicopter seats three passengers at a time (one in the front, beside the pilot, and two in the rear). Seating is spacious and each seat has a large window for sightseeing. There is an individual weight limit of 300 lbs per passenger and a combined (up to three) passenger weight limit of 600 lbs. Children/infants under the age of two can sit on an adult's lap.

## **What is the minimum and maximum age for the Biplane?**

While there is no legal minimum age, we recommend no younger than 3 years of age for children accompanied by an adult. A child of normal stature for this age will fit safely in the seat belts and be tall enough to take in the view. The child must be able to wear a headset or earplugs due to engine noise. There is no maximum age, as long as you can get into and out of the cockpit (it requires a little bit of flexibility).

## **What is the minimum and maximum age for the Helicopter?**

Children/infants under the age of 2 can ride on the lap of an adult. Ages 2 and older must occupy their own seat. Getting in and out is very easy and comfortable for adults of any age.

## **What should I wear on my Biplane flight?**

The aircraft offers good protection from the elements, so dress as if you were going for a ride in a convertible or on a motorcycle. When the temperature is below 70 degrees, a jacket (leather is best) is recommended. You should also bring sunglasses. We wear flying helmets with headsets attached. The headsets are used for communication with the pilot (and each other). We will supply the flying helmet.

## **What should I wear on my Helicopter flight?**

The Helicopter is air-conditioned and offers a comfortable climate year-round.

## **Can the passengers talk to the pilot during the flight?**

Yes, both the Biplanes and Helicopters have an intercom system that allows two-way communication between the pilot and the passengers. We supply the headsets.

## **Are there any weight limits for the Biplane tours?**

The maximum weight limit is 500 lbs combined total weight of up to two passengers. We may ask you for your weight before the flight, so please be honest, as this is an important consideration with regard to safety. It's important to remember that two passengers will be seated side-by-side, so approaching the 500 lbs combined limit sometimes results in a "we can't fit" issue rather than a "we're too heavy" issue.

## **Are there any weight limits for the Helicopter tours?**

The maximum weight limit is 600 lbs combined total weight of up to three passengers. There is a maximum limit of 300 lbs per seat.

## **Where will we go on my tour?**

Both coasts of Central Florida offer many exciting sights to see. Please see our online tour descriptions on our website for more details about each tour.

## **Can we do any aerobatics on my flight?**

Yes, you can add an Aerobatics Upgrade to any Biplane tour with a flight duration of 15-minutes or longer. Aerobatics consist of a series of loops, barrel-rolls, and wingovers at the end of your scenic tour. All flights with aerobatics require all passengers to wear a parachute (which we gladly provide).

## **Are aerobatics right for me?**

Our Waco UPF-7s are fully aerobatic WWII-era basic pilot trainers. These magnificent aircraft perform their maneuvers smoother than a roller coaster. Your pilot will gracefully maneuver the aircraft through a relaxed series of rolls, loops, and wing overs.

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## **Can I bring a camera or camcorder?**

Yes! A camera with a wide-angle lens is perfect. It should have a strap if possible. A camcorder is good as long as it is one of the smaller, handheld types.

## **Do you offer a video for sale?**

Yes, we have an HD Megapixel wide-angle video camera mounted on the aircraft that records a fantastic high-quality movie of your flight. Our video package consists of having your flight video professionally edited and posted online, as well as having a hard-copy DVD mailed to your home. The video package is a great value and a fun way to relive your flight experience! The video package is optional and is available at a very reasonable price. Every flight is recorded so you can view your video after the flight before making a decision to purchase it.

## **What happens if the weather is bad on the day of my flight?**

There are a number of reasons we may cancel your flight due to weather (wind, low clouds, rain, etc.). Simply put, we will not take you up on a day where you will not be thrilled with your flight. Your pilot has the authority to cancel, change, or shorten a flight due to weather or other variables. If we cancel your flight due to inclement weather (at the sole discretion of Florida Biplanes Inc.) we will gladly reschedule your flight for the next best time and date. NOTE: Tours that are cancelled or rescheduled by us due to weather do not incur any cancellation charges.

## **Can I change my tour when I get to the airport?**

If you would like to change your flight to a longer tour, we ask that you give us as much notice as possible. Our tours are often booked back-to-back and it may be difficult for us to accommodate last-minute changes. We will do our best to accommodate you if at all possible. You can upgrade any Biplane tour that is 15-minutes or longer to include aerobatics prior to departure. Our Aerobatics Upgrades add loops, rolls, and wingovers to your standard scenic tour.

## **How do I reschedule or cancel my tour?**

Please call us right away if you need to reschedule or cancel your tour reservation. As a small business, it's important that we be able to rebook that time for another customer. We require at least 24-hours notice for this.

## **What is your cancellation policy?**

There is no charge for reservations canceled at least 24 hours in advance. However, once booked, any reservation canceled with less than 24 hours of the scheduled ride will be charged a \$50 cancellation fee per flight. Reservations canceled on the same day of the scheduled flight may be charged the full amount of the tour(s) - this includes no-shows and Gift Certificate redemptions. NOTE: Tours that are cancelled or rescheduled by us due to weather do not incur any cancellation charges.

## **How safe is this?**

It is very safe! The most hazardous part of this adventure is the drive to the airport. Our aircraft are cared for on a daily basis and receive a full inspection by our full-time maintenance staff every 100 hours of flying. All our pilots are FAA certified commercial pilots, with most holding Airline Transport Pilot ratings. All our pilots and mechanics participate in a rigorous FAA/DOT drug test program.

## **What are your hours of operation at the airport?**

We typically fly from 9am to sunset, however we don't always staff our airport office during non-flying periods. Please call us at 321-392-4125 before coming out to the airport so we may provide you with the best possible service.

## **Should I tip the pilot?**

While not required (or expected), most of our pilots are very appreciative of a tip, if you feel they earned it.

## **Do I have to sign a waiver to fly?**

Yes, all passengers must sign a waiver of liability. For passengers under 18 years of age, an adult or legal guardian must sign for them. You can review the waiver on our website.

## **Contact Number**

**Florida Biplanes Main Line: 321-392-4125**