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**TRAVEL WITH VAL**

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## Red Sox Nation Has A Florida Home In Fort Myers

By: Valarie D'Elia



*Red Sox Nation is not just in Boston, but also in Fort Myers, Fla., where some baseball fans are hitting their spring training vacations out of the park. NY1's Valarie D'Elia filed the following report.*

Many old timers come to southwest Florida to retire, and in Fort Myers there's a park that honors retirement of another sort. Just like Fenway Park in Boston, Fort Myers' Jet Blue Park, a.k.a. "Fenway South," is full of Red Sox history. A plaza in the park entrance is full of 5.5-foot-tall versions of the team's retired numbers.

Besides the signature hot dogs, game attendees can try the local fish, with a Boston accent.

Other nods to the original Fenway are a replica of the "Green Monster" wall in left field and a manual scoreboard retrieved from storage, which has a ladder "magically" appear between innings.

At capacity, the \$80 million stadium can seat 11,000 fans who come from all over.

"My grandpa has a condo on the other side of the state, so I kind of made a vacation out of it," said one Red Sox fan.

"We have family that lives in Boston and the Red Sox nation goes everywhere," said another.

Even when the BoSox aren't playing the Bronx Bombers, a Yankee fan with an opinion manages to

turn up.

"There's a lot of things to do here in Fort Myers than sit at the beach and burn yourself," said the Yankees fan.

I personally love those gorgeous beaches and the stadium is supposedly built from blocks embedded with sea shells from nearby Sanibel Island.

Besides the beach, visit the Edison and Ford winter estates and take part in other family-friendly activities.

See a game on Monday and learn why Florida spring training is called the "Grapefruit League."

Nothing is sweeter than a victory, but visitors can also pay a visit to Norman Love confections near the stadium, for artistic chocolates and gelato.

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