

How the Circus Came to Town



The Circus Past

Sarasota became the celebrated "**Circus Capital of the World**" when John Ringling moved his Ringling Bros. Circus winter headquarters to the area in the 1920s. The famous Ca' d'Zan mansion, the renowned art museum and grounds are a part of the Ringling campus that also includes the Ringling Circus Museum. In the 1950s, Cecil B. DeMille filmed "The Greatest Show on Earth" in Sarasota.

On St. Armands Circle lies the Circus Ring of Fame, where more than 100 legends of the circus are honored with dedicated plaques.



The Circus Present

Wallenda has performed high-profile stunts like walking the high-wire above Times Square and across Niagara Falls.

Circus Sarasota executes almost a month's worth of performances under a European-style big top.

Big Cat Habitat and Gulf Coast Sanctuary, founded by Kay Rosaire, a member of Sarasota's famous circus families, serves as a rescue center for exotic and domestic animals, such as lions, ligers, monkeys, and bears. Visitors can enjoy a petting zoo and wildlife shows.

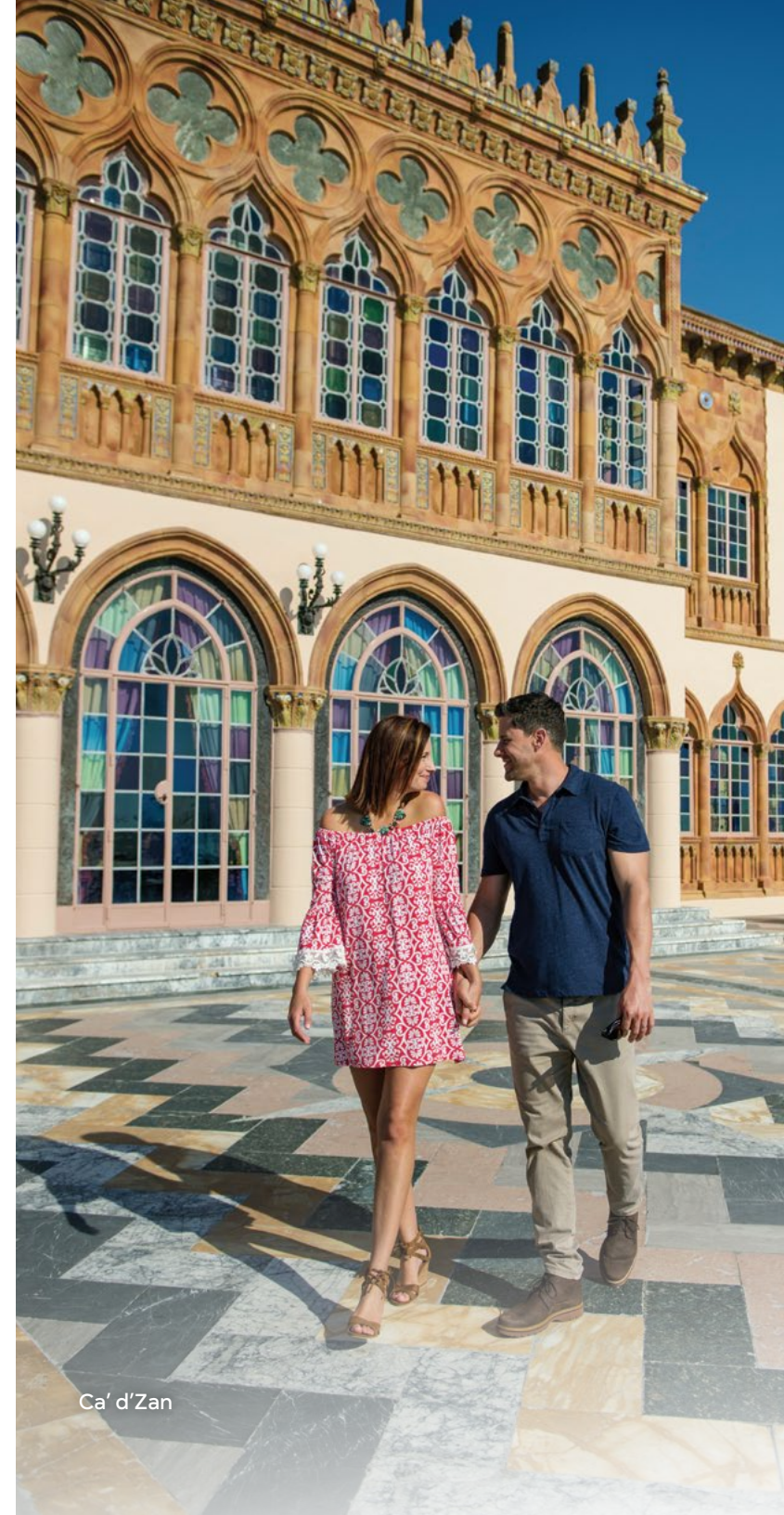


The Circus Future

Aspiring aerialists and other future circus hopefuls can learn skills at Sailor Circus Academy. Students from 4th through 12th grades are eligible to participate, and the academy puts on its own show every spring.

Created by world-renowned circus performers Pedro Reis and Dolly Jacobs, the Circus Arts Conservatory has weekly drop-in classes and summer camps for children ages 5 and up. Adults can take classes, too.

Tito Gaona's Flying Trapeze Academy & Flying Fantasy Circus in Venice lets kids of all ages see what it's like to become a trapeze artist.



Ca' d'Zan