

# REAL.FUN.BEACH.

VACATION GUIDE 2022

## INSIDE

We profile leading  
restaurants,  
amusements and  
attractions

## BACK *to the* BEACH

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people love to gather



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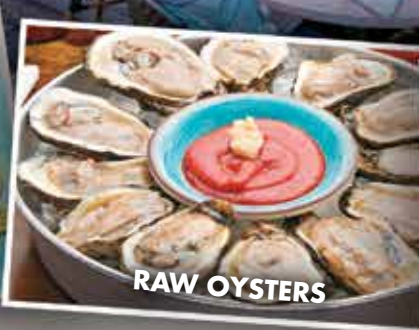
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# CONTENTS | 2022

## FEATURES

14

### FREE AND EASY

Some of the best experiences that PCB has to offer all who visit are free — and priceless.

28

### INSIDER INFO

A passing shower in the forecast? The fun need not stop. PCB's attractions include many that are out of the elements.

70

### GREAT FOOD, GREAT VIEWS

The experience of looking beyond a deck to the Gulf horizon adds extra spice to the finest food that PCB restaurants prepare.

52

### PROPOSALS IN PARADISE

Make one of the most momentous moments in your life especially memorable. We recommend romantic settings perfect for popping the question.

90

### COMING TOGETHER

People gather in PCB to mark milestones, strengthen ties, create memories and plan their futures. And here, one memorable get-together leads to another.





44



18

INSTAGRAM @HALFADOZENJACKSONS

# CONTENTS | 2022

## 13 FAMILY BEACH

### 18 ISLAND HOPPING

Shell Island, you are sure to enjoy both its lagoon side and its surf side.

### 23 FUN FOR ALL

At PCB, fun is accessible for people of all ability and mobility levels.

## 27 ADRENALINE

### 32 THRILL SEEKERS

For some, free time is best spent living on the edge. We've got adventures and challenges that will get even the hardcore adrenaline junkie's heart racing.

## 37 ECOTOURISM

### 38 FISHING REPORT

Inshore, offshore and in creeks, bayous and bays, something is always biting. Anglers' targets run from blue runners to bluefish to blue marlin.

### 42 PUBLIC PARKS

Experience the real Florida at our parks offering beaches, jetties, piney woods and a lake that is home.

### 44 GREAT OUTDOORS

Hiking, bicycling, diving and surfing are just some of the ways to get your endorphins flowing in, on and around our waters.

## 51 ROMANCE

### 56 ROMANTIC RENDEZVOUS

Make special connections in intimate settings that you will long remember.

## 63 ENTERTAINMENT

### 64 DÉCOR BY THE SHORE

PCB is home to dozens of shops and boutiques that are equipped to outfit your beach condo or your Florida room back home.

## 65 IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Visitors from around the country share memories and sing the praises of their favorite vacation place.

## 66 CALENDAR

Panama City Beach's events calendar, just like many of our fine restaurants, hotels and condos, stays booked!

## 69 FOODIE

### 74 SWEETS AND FROZEN TREATS

You're on vacation — relax! Permit yourself a cheat day and savor a sweet treat, be it a delicate delicacy or a thunderous shake.

## 79 SPORTS

### 80 SPORTS PARKS

PCB state-of-the-park sports venues host local recreational leagues, high school competitions and regional tournaments.

### 84 STAYING FIT

No matter your fitness regimen, you can trade flip-flops for sneakers and keep it going while you're here.

### 86 HIT THE LINKS

PCB has golf options suited to the duffer thrilled to break 100 and the serious player with a single-digit handicap.

## 89 GATHERINGS

### 96 CELEBRATE GOOD TIMES

PCB party planning experts will infuse your next celebration or special occasion with plenty of pizzazz.

## EVERY ISSUE

## 10 AREA MAP





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**BlueDolphinTour.com**

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**ExecutivePontoonRentals.com**

For same day reservations call (850) 234-SAIL (7245)



**Treasure Island Marina, 3601 Thomas Drive, Panama City Beach**





No matter what kind of Panama City Beach vacation you're dreaming about, we've got you covered. Panama City Beach, named the top three beach in the United States by Tripadvisor, has 27 miles of white-sand beaches to choose from, and you'll find a different experience at each stop along the way. The adventure begins at the **Real. FUN. Beach.** with shimmering waters offering as much fun above the waves as below.

Panama City Beach is the perfect place for all kinds of celebrations, with endless choices of award-winning restaurants, signature events and stunning accommodations — making this destination ideal for reconnecting with family and friends. Our paradise is brimming with a beach-town ambiance, featuring one-of-a-kind attractions like diving, nature trails, water sports and amusement parks. Panama City Beach gives you plenty to do for your next family vacation or romantic weekend getaway.

Whether you are in the mood for fun and adventure or relaxing days on the beach, you can do it all in Panama City Beach. Nature lovers can explore one of our many eco-friendly parks, or you can ignite your taste buds by trying some of the freshest seafood in the Gulf. If you are craving a thrill-seeking adventure, cast your line during a deep-sea fishing trip and reel in that prized trophy.

Ready to get away for the ideal beach vacation? This issue offers visitors an inside look at the best ways to explore the **Real. FUN. Beach.** Whether you are looking for adrenaline-fueled adventures, a romantic getaway, quality family time or a chance to experience the great outdoors, Panama City Beach offers a variety of experiences that cater to every type of traveler.

A visit to Panama City Beach will remind you that it is not always about how you celebrate but where. So, what are you waiting for? Pack up your bathing suit and flip-flops, and start the celebration today!

**DAN ROWE**  
President and CEO  
*Visit Panama City Beach*



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# PANAMA CITY BEACH

## Talk Like a Local

- "Back Beach Road"..... Panama City Beach Parkway
- "Middle Beach Road"..... Hutchison Boulevard
- "City Pier"..... Russell-Fields Pier
- "County Pier"..... M.B. Miller Pier

\*\*NOT DRAWN TO SCALE





## Distance Chart

Atlanta, GA	297 mi	470 km
Birmingham, AL	280 mi	440 km
Dallas, TX	751 mi	1,310 km
Houston, TX	639 mi	1,034 km
Montgomery, AL	186 mi	206 km
Nashville, TN	476 mi	744 km
New Orleans, LA	305 mi	513 km
Orlando, FL	340 mi	617 km
St. Louis, MO	745 mi	1,243 km
Tallahassee, FL	98 mi	171 km
Tampa, FL	339 mi	546 km







### OUR FAMILY IS YOUR FAMILY

Location, cleanliness and value are standard at the Flamingo Motel. We do not charge for extra people, parking, local calls or cleaning. Value is our mission and we publish our rates in advance.

Located directly on the beach within walking distance of Pier Park and across the street from Gulf World, you would be hard pressed to find a better location on Panama City Beach.

## CHOOSE FROM THREE UNIQUE EXPERIENCES WHEN YOU VISIT THE FLAMINGO

### The Tropical Garden

The Tropical Garden features both Beach views and Garden views overlooking the pool, lush garden, and banana trees. Offering six unique floor plans.

### The Cabana Level

You won't get any closer to the beach than the Cabana level. Offering two floor plans, privacy is the feel of the Cabana.

### The Tower

The newest addition to the Flamingo, the seven-story tower offers beachfront views with private balcony overlooking the pool and Gulf.





## FAMILY BEACH



### **FAMILY TIME IS MORE FUN UNDER THE SUN**

Panama City Beach is the perfect vacation destination for families. The beach is the best place to relax, unwind and play. With 27 miles of pristine, white-sand beaches, feel free to kick back under an umbrella with a good book while your family frolics in the waves.



“

Our favorite place is PCB and the Holiday Inn Resort Panama City Beach! My parents have been taking me to PCB since I was about a year old, and we vacationed almost every year there. I also got engaged and married on this beach. I now have a little family of my own and vacation multiple times a year with the little ones you see in this photo. I love this place — no matter how much it changes from the little town we once knew.

**BRITTINI HINTZ**  
*Florence, Alabama*



# A PRICELESS EXPERIENCE


*(OR CLOSE TO IT)*

Here are  
**23 FUN  
AND BUDGET-  
FRIENDLY**  
things to do

BY ZANDRA WOLFGRAM







The best things in life are free, a song once said, and a great time in Panama City Beach doesn't always include a price tag. Between the city's wonderful beaches, parks, piers and playgrounds, you can find a multitude of activities that will make some lasting — and priceless — memories.

#### **BEAUTIFUL BEACHES**

With 27 miles of white sand and turquoise water, the World's Most Beautiful Beaches are accessible at no charge. With nearly 100 access points, you won't have a difficult time finding a spot to dig your toes into the famous sugar-white sand. To view a full list of beach access points, go to [VisitPanamaCityBeach.com](http://VisitPanamaCityBeach.com).

#### **NATURAL DIVERSIONS**

Get a breath of fresh air and head outside for a natural adventure. Pack a picnic lunch, and visit Camp Helen State Park with its 185-acres of ecological wonder that is bordered on three sides by water, the Gulf to the south and Lake Powell to the north and east. The most visited park by locals and tourists alike is St. Andrews State Park. Here you can cast a line and catch some fish, take a dive and scuba along the jetties or simply enjoy what has been named the Best Beach in America — all for less than \$10 per vehicle. Spanning nearly 3,000 acres, the

Panama City Beach Conservation Park features 12 different trails of varying difficulty and eight boardwalks totaling more than a mile in length. Bring binoculars — you'll likely spot plenty of birds and wildlife in the wetlands area of this picturesque park.

#### **PARK & PLAY**

Frank Brown Park is an impressive state-of-the-art sports complex, complete with an aquatic center, children's playground and 200-plus acres of recreational facilities. Admission to the park is free, so you can park and play without spending a penny. Entrance fees to the park's aquatic center vary based on age and residency but start at just \$3 per person. Score!

#### **CATCH A CONCERT**

If you are visiting during the summer season, be sure to check out the Summer Concert Series. From June through August at Aaron Bessant Park, enjoy a free concert in the park every Thursday night. Don't forget to bring your

## #ASHTAG PCB

*Some of our favorite spots to snap that pic*

### (PIER) PARK IT

As Panama City Beach's premier shopping, dining and entertainment destination, Pier Park has an endless supply of Insta-worthy moments in store.

### SPIN THAT WHEEL

Towering nearly 200 feet, SkyWheel offers breathtaking views of the surrounding beaches and the city — all from a climate-controlled gondola.

### COLOR YOUR FEED

No trip to Panama City Beach would be complete without a walk past the famous "rainbow buildings," their bright facades painted in a kaleidoscopic parade of colors.

### WHATEVER FLOATS YOUR BOAT

Boating is the perfect opportunity to add to your Instagram feed, whether you're fishing or just relaxing on the open water.

### PICS AND TREATS

Mountainous sundaes, towering tiers of pancakes. Panama City Beach has food destinations that'll make your followers wish you were sharing more than a pic.

### GET BEACHED!

Miles and miles of pristine white sand and waters whose glittering jewel tones have made it famous around the world — what's not to love?

### INSTA-SUNSETS

With its endless stretches of beautiful beaches, sunsets in Panama City Beach are well worth capturing forever.

### COCO LOCOS

Want a drink that'll drive your social feed loco? Head over to Coco Locos, where they whip up imaginative drinks served in coconut shells and hollowed-out pineapples.

### PIER(S) PRESSURE

With three great fishing piers (Russell-Fields City Pier, M.B. Miller County Pier, Tiller Pier) in town, you'll have plenty of opportunities to cast a line and snap a pic.

— Liesel Schmidt



lawn chairs and blankets. Coolers, food and — yes — pets are welcome.

### SHOPPING IS IN THE BAG

Technically, window-shopping and art gallery browsing are free. So go treasure hunting for souvenirs, and get all the ideas you want for stocking stuffers. Visit large shopping centers such as Pier Park and Pier Park North, which are filled with both name-brand and specialty boutiques, or take on the Décor By The Shore shopping trail, which showcases dozens of one-of-a-kind mom-and-pop shops peppering the coast. No matter what, you'll bag a great time — and surely clock some serious miles on that Fitbit, too.

### HOW ACCOMMODATING

Most accommodations offer complimentary amenities as exclusive

privileges for booking direct, so be sure to ask about all the goodies that come with your stay. From free DVD rentals to free beach chair setups, there are a host of freebies, so take full advantage of them. Many resorts and hotels have fun daily activities for kids, so be sure to ask. And some even have attractions on-site, Sandpiper Beacon for example has a lazy river, waterslides and miniature golf — all free to registered guests.

### AND, BECAUSE IDEAS ARE FREE, HERE ARE A FEW MORE ...

- » Snorkel until you spy something you recognize from "Finding Nemo."
- » Fly a kite, toss a ball or fling a Frisbee and act like a kid again.
- » Jog miles of sugar-white sands for a refreshing workout.



- » Toast the sunset.
- » Explore Shell Island for treasure.
- » Browse beach book and souvenir shops for unique finds.
- » Put your shades on, and people watch at Pier Park.
- » Listen to live music at an outdoor concert.
- » Build a sandcastle.
- » Picnic in a local park or playground.
- » Pose for a family portrait, and capture the moment forever.
- » Get your groove on, and dance in the sand.
- » Spike your life with some beach volleyball.
- » Be the first to spy dolphins ... and stingrays ... and sea turtles.
- » Catch a wave, and bodysurf to shore.
- » Daydream your day away — you're on vacation after all.

*For more attractions and activities to enjoy in Panama City Beach, go to [VisitPanamaCityBeach.com](http://VisitPanamaCityBeach.com), and be sure to go to [VisitPanamaCityBeach.com/things-to-do/special-offers](http://VisitPanamaCityBeach.com/things-to-do/special-offers) to view discounts and special savings on things to do and places to stay in the area. ●*

INSTAGRAM @RHYZZO



## Bring the Pets; Leave the Worries

Keep your pet healthy while on vacation with the help of these tips from Dr. Matt LeBleu, a veterinarian at Animal Care Center Panama City Beach.

### THINGS TO BRING ON VACATION

- » Flea prevention/parasite control, due to exposure to common pet areas in condos, etc.
- » Medical records/vaccine history in case veterinary care is required.
- » Extra medication for your pet if he or she is on regular medication.

### TIPS

- 1 Watch your pet carefully while on the beach. Dr. LeBleu sees a high number of sand impaction cases that are

caused by pets ingesting sand. He adds that sand toxicity is also possible when a pet is playing on the beach, as are health problems caused by drinking ocean water.


- 2 To avoid heatstroke, provide your pet with plenty of shade and fresh drinking water, whether you're on the beach or at the park.

- 3 Be aware that your pet may experience increased anxiety while on vacation, especially if he or she has noise phobia. For example, fireworks on the Fourth of July can be very

stressful for a pet. Consider medications to help your pet stay calm and comfortable. In addition, traveling can cause a pet to experience stress-induced diarrhea.

- 4 Dr. LeBleu cautions against traveling with animals that have major health concerns. Doing so can sometimes exacerbate conditions and force emergency visits. Dr. LeBleu says, "We've seen many vacations ruined due to pet parents being faced with a euthanasia decision while away from home with their pet."

# ISLAND INCLINATIONS



A visit to Shell Island is an adventure within itself

*BY HANNAH BURKE*







Getting away from it all is an underrated and coveted experience in our constantly online and connected world. The thought of just throwing back and relaxing without a care in the world with civilization left far behind is comforting.

If that sounds appealing, book the next boat (or sail there yourself) for Shell Island, a 7-mile, pristine peninsula just off the coast of St. Andrews State Park in Panama City Beach. The crystal-clear waves and sugar-white sand will have you wanting to cast off and be a castaway — if just for a day. Here's how to get there:

### Shell Island Shuttle

Eager for an express route? The Shell Island Shuttle is your ticket, transporting passengers to and from the retreat every half hour from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. You'll be dropped off near the rocky jetties, a premier snorkeling spot that fosters a medley of marine life. Open all week, the Shell Island Shuttle departs directly from Adventures of Sea with no reservations necessary. Pack a picnic and stay for an hour or two, or indulge in an all-day R&R session until the final shuttle retrieves you. [ShellIslandShuttle.com](https://www.ShellIslandShuttle.com)

### Pontoon Rentals

Ask any local about the ultimate leisure boat, and they'll steer you in the direction of the beloved pontoon. While dozens of pontoon rental vendors are stationed along the beach, Shell Island Boat Rentals & Tours is located at Treasure Island Marina, a 10-minute cruise from your island destination. While the operation offers unique guided tours, pontoon rentals allow you to explore at your own pace. Choose among four rental packages that can accommodate



## 5 THINGS TO BRING WITH YOU IF YOU'RE ON A DESERTED ISLAND

### CAMERA

Shell Island is a barrier island, meaning it hosts a variety of ecosystems within its salt marshes, pine-scrub forests, dunes and barrier flats. You'll want to have your camera ready for any deer, ghost crabs, nesting birds or sea turtles you might encounter.

### SNORKEL GEAR

Starfish, sponges, seahorses and tropical fish thrive just offshore.

### FISHING ROD

Redfish, mackerel and sea trout — oh, my. Just keep in mind that you'll need a Florida fishing license to cast at Shell Island.

### COOLER

Shell Island is an unspoiled oasis, meaning there are no public facilities or concessions available. Be sure to pack plenty of water and snacks — and ensure your space is clean before you leave.

### BEACH BAG

A tote to contain your towels, sunscreen and shells. It wouldn't be Shell Island if it wasn't furnished with hundreds of sand dollars, conchs and pen shells to collect.

up to 10 guests, and be sure to take your time getting there ... you're more than likely to spot a pod or two of bottlenose dolphins! [ShellIslandTours.com](http://ShellIslandTours.com)

### Jet Ski Rentals

If none of the previous options are quite your speed, you're sure to get your kicks on a sleek n' speedy Jet Ski. At Lagoon Pontoons, select from two-hour, half-day or full-day rentals, climb aboard a VX110 Yamaha WaveRunner and slice through the sea to your heart's content. Though your target is about a five-minute ride away, it's well worth it to take the scenic course through St. Andrews Bay to whet your appetite for adventure. No matter which route you take to Shell Island, you're in for a full day of discovery and fun. When you need to catch your breath, simply ride along the shore of Shell Island and let your thrilling excursion continue through the dunes. [LagoonPontoon.com](http://LagoonPontoon.com)

### Dolphin Cruise

Boasting one of the world's most abundant populations of bottlenose dolphins, St. Andrews Bay and Shell Island are the ultimate sites to seek out these magnificent mammals. Island Time

Sailing's Shell Island Dolphin & Snorkel Cruise isn't your typical sightseeing tour, offering guests an exhilarating adventure both on and off the boat. In the span of this 3½-hour cruise, experienced guides will scout out prominent dolphin purlieus, educate passengers on the history of St. Andrews Bay and anchor down for a swim and snorkel session. While stationed, families can easily wade or paddleboard to Shell Island to scoop up some scallops or conchs as a souvenir. [IslandTimeSailing.com](http://IslandTimeSailing.com)

### Private Charters & Tours

If you want the privacy of your own boat but the expertise of a local tour guide, look no further than booking a charter with Blue Dolphin Tours. Whether you're looking for a romantic day in the sun with your significant other or want to bring the whole family along, your captain will supply the ultimate expedition. As opposed to larger commercial tour boats, this quiet modest craft is less likely to intimidate the dolphins you'll spot and swim with along the way. Once you reach your destination, snorkel, beachcomb and soak in some rays to make the most of your day. [BlueDolphinTour.com](http://BlueDolphinTour.com) ●







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“

Labor Day week 2021 was our first time in PCB, and being able to get our daughter in the water was the best part.

**SUE GREER ACEY,**  
North Bend, Ohio

# Fun

## FOR ALL

Wheelchair users can find safe, accessible fun in Panama City Beach

**BY KARI C. BARLOW**

Wheelchair users who enjoy a beach vacation will not be disappointed in Panama City Beach. With 27 miles of sugar-white beaches — and 100 access points — there’s fun for all ages and abilities.

Travel blogger Cory Lee, a wheelchair user since the age of 4, has praised the area’s lodging, dining and recreational offerings on his website [CurbFreeWithCoryLee.com](http://CurbFreeWithCoryLee.com).

“Whether you’re looking to enjoy the outdoors, spend days at the beach or explore a pirate cruise, mind-bending museum or outdoor maze, there are a plethora of wheelchair accessible options,” Lee said. “Panama City Beach is a great destination for wheelchair accessible excursions, giving you the freedom to enjoy your trip no matter your interest.”

Check out more of Lee’s comments in this travel guide, compiled with wheelchair users in mind:

## LODGING

### DAYS INN

Days Inn staff is specifically trained in service to guests with disabilities. The hotel provides access to all hotel amenities as well as assistive listening devices for meetings or conferences, TTY devices for guest use and TVs with closed captioning.

### HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS

Holiday Inn Express Panama City Beach Beachfront has a completely accessible front entrance, elevators and public restrooms. There are wheelchair accessible paths to the registration area, guest rooms, meeting rooms and the pool. Wheelchair accessible rooms are available upon request with roll-in showers and a private balcony overlooking the Gulf.

### HOLIDAY INN RESORT

The perfect resort for anyone in Panama City Beach, especially families. The Holiday Inn Resort provides accessibility in the hotel's common areas such as the public entrance, elevators, public restrooms and the spectacular pool and pool deck. Guest rooms include mobility-accessible tubs and roll-in showers.

### HAMPTON INN & SUITES BEACHFRONT

Hampton Inn & Suites is ADA compliant providing guests with access to all hotel amenities. This beachfront hotel is just a short flip-flop shuffle to the beach. Adjacent to Gulf World Marine Park, Hampton Inn is in walking distance of local bites and less than a mile from Pier Park shopping. Kick your day off with free hot breakfast, and enjoy WiFi. Enjoy poolside views of the Gulf and a fitness center.

### RESORT COLLECTION

Resort Collection has over 900 full-service Gulf-front and Gulf-view vacation rentals and golf villas. Every resort is different and offers a unique

personality of its own with accessibility for every guest. With so many units to offer whether you're visiting for a romantic getaway or a family reunion, Resort Collection can provide the perfect accommodations for any occasion.

### SANDPIPER BEACON BEACH RESORT

While Sandpiper Beacon Beach Resort was built before the Americans with Disabilities Act was signed into law, the property has since made modifications to accommodate everyone's needs. Wheelchair accessible rooms are available, and service dogs are welcome. "The wheelchair accessible rooms at Sandpiper Beacon are on the ground floor, have wider doors, accessible outlets and accessible space within the room," Lee said. "Bathrooms have grab bars in the shower and handheld shower heads, as well as raised toilet seats, but the shower and bathtub themselves are not roll-in." The path to the pool, which has a self-operating lift outdoors and a hoist indoors, is wheelchair accessible.

## RECREATION

### RUSSELL-FIELDS CITY PIER

This pier is wheelchair accessible with a sloped entrance and concrete that provides a smooth surface. It's \$3 to walk or roll and \$7 to fish, and thanks to the pier's partnership with Beach Powered Mobility — a company that rents motorized wheelchairs designed to handle the sand — wheelchair users can explore the shoreline with friends and family.

### ST. ANDREWS STATE PARK

With a mile and a half of beach, 60 campsites and hiking trails, this park has something for everyone. The park itself is wheelchair accessible with access to the visitor's center, elevated boardwalks to the beach and the jetty overlook, fishing piers and scenic overlooks. Beach wheelchairs are



While there were too many photographic memories to post, one of favorites would have to be when my non-verbal autistic son saw the ocean for the very first time. He even gave me a kiss on the cheek! #MyPCB

SADIE PERRY

available at the ranger station, and service animals are welcome.

### WONDERWORKS

At this science-focused indoor amusement park, there are wheelchair accessible elevators on each level. Wheelchairs are not available to rent at the property. Visitors who need special assistance are encouraged to call 72 hours before their planned visit so that assistance and accommodations can be made.

### SEA DRAGON PIRATE CRUISE

On this two-hour cruise, be prepared for pirate-themed fun and dolphin sightings. The ship's entrance is a ramp the width of a standard wheelchair, and staff members are available to assist you with boarding. It is advised that wheelchair users arrive early to explore the dock, measure the ramp and ask any questions beforehand. The restrooms are not easily accessible to wheelchair users, as there are steps and hatches between the main deck and the facilities. The main deck is wheelchair accessible, and you can stay on the deck through the duration of the cruise.



“ Panama City Beach is a great destination for wheelchair accessible excursions, giving you the freedom to enjoy your trip no matter your interest. — CORY LEE ”

## SHOPPING & DINING

### PINEAPPLE WILLY'S

After lounging on the beach all day, relax at this waterfront gem — which is ADA compliant and wheelchair accessible — and known for live music and delicious seafood. “There is a long staircase leading to the beach from the sand side, but the street side has an added ramp and a paved parking lot,” Lee said. “The outdoor seating is picnic table style with space at the end of the table for a wheelchair. The inside has ramps, space to accommodate

wheelchairs and smaller tables can be placed together to accommodate large groups.”

### PIER PARK

This premier shopping destination, located across the street from the pier, has everything from coffee and sandwiches to burgers and sushi. Popular choices include Margaritaville for amazing seafood and cocktails and Dave & Buster's for high-energy arcade lovers. The sidewalks are wide enough to accommodate the usual traffic, and the stores and restaurants adhere to ADA requirements. ●



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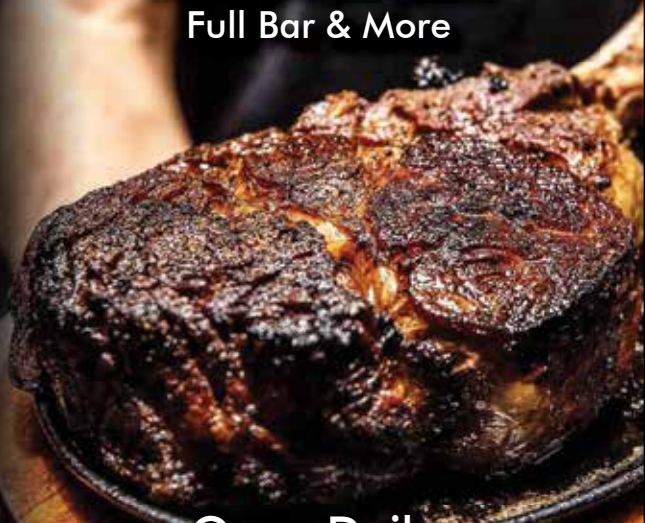


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“

It was our very first time to Florida, and we chose PCB. We fell in love instantly, and our hearts cannot wait to come back — everything was so much fun. We visited the Russell-Fields Pier, rode the helicopter (Emerald Executive Helicopters), took a private ride to Shell Island, ate so much delicious food, we rode the SkyWheel — and most importantly — swam in the beautiful water.

**JASON AND  
AMANDA POLK,**  
*Springdale, Arkansas*



Dave & Buster's

# INSIDER INFO

Staying out of the sun or getting out of the rain, PCB offers its fair share of indoor entertainment

**BY ROB RUSHIN**

Panama City Beach's days can be picture perfect year-round, but sometimes the weather may not cooperate or you may fancy a day in the A/C. If you're seeking to spend an afternoon in the great indoors, Panama City Beach boasts an array of exhibits, attractions and experiences perfect for a day out of the sun or rain.





DAVE & BUSTER'S



WonderWorks

### WonderWorks

Imagine a top-secret laboratory in the Bermuda Triangle where an experiment gone wrong lands it intact — but upside down — in Panama City Beach. Impossible? Not at WonderWorks, where you enter through the roof and move through the inversion tunnel to begin your adventure. WonderWorks is a four-story fun house filled with over 100 highly interactive virtual, physical and mental challenges for the whole family.

### Dave & Buster's

Ding, ding, ding! When your day calls for some winning, Dave & Buster's offers fun for everyone. Eat the latest chef-crafted food, sip on a fresh strawberry watermelon margarita,

score big on hundreds of arcade games or watch your favorite sports team live. All this and more are the kind of wins you'll find at Dave & Buster's.

### Emerald Coast Mirror & Laser Craze

This unique amusement palace offers four challenging, family-friendly games. The Mirror Maze is 2,300 square feet of mirrors, complete with a light and sound extravaganza that will blow your mind. Can you make it through the entire maze without touching a single mirror? This fun house on steroids is great for the whole family. Did you ever fancy yourself an international jewel thief or Double-0 spy? Test your skills in the Laser Challenge, where every move you





Rock'it Lanes

make means points or penalties. Dodge a constantly shifting array of laser beams to see who racks up the highest score. Looking for cutthroat competition? Check out the Pirate's Quest Laser Tag arena, and compete with other players across 1,800 square feet of laser tag battlefield.

### Rock'it Lanes

If you cannot find something to tickle your fun bone at Rock'it Lanes, you might need a medic. With 24 bowling lanes, 10 pool tables, an 8,000-square-foot skating rink and a 16,000-square-foot mega arcade, there is literally something for everyone at this indoor recreation mecca. Or if you want to chill while the kids go wild, you can head over to the sports bar and indulge in some food and beverages while enjoying wall-to-wall high-def TVs.

### Just Jump Trampoline Park

Bounce into safe family fun at the Just Jump Trampoline Park, which features 30,000 square feet of open jump area. Featuring a tumble track, two Soc-Air courts, dodgeball, basketball, a double trapeze and a gladiator pit, Just Jump is the place to go to take your vacation higher. A dedicated kiddie area for jumpers age 6 and under features a play

structure, separate trampolines, foam pit, climbing wall and a basketball goal.

### Ripley's Believe It or Not Odditorium

Ripley's Odditorium brings a taste of the weird and strange to Panama City Beach. Unusual exhibits, art and artifacts from around the world challenge your imagination and expand your horizons. For a one-of-a-kind immersive experience, Ripley's 7D Moving Theater combines a 3D movie with moving seats, interactive gaming and special effects that rock your senses as you experience every bump, drop and turn with a motion simulator. It's great fun for ages 8 to 80. This place is for real — believe it or not.

### Gulf World Marine Park

For interactive education and family fun featuring dolphins, sea lions and tropical birds, pay a visit to Gulf World Marine Park. Interact with stingrays and sea lions, or take a swim with the dolphins. Daily educational shows and fascinating indoor and outdoor exhibits showcase the excitement of penguins, flamingos, sharks, sea turtles and much more.

### Man in the Sea Museum

Life might not be all games, but we can still have fun. The Man in the Sea



The Grand Theatre

Museum explores the history of undersea diving. Learn about the evolution of dive equipment, from antique equipment to the latest hi-tech gear, and explore treasures recovered from sunken ships dating back to the 1500s. The Man in the Sea Museum is also home to SEALAB-I, the United States Navy's first underwater habitat, and features a submarine you can explore with the family. Open Tuesday–Saturday.

### The Grand Theatre

The Grand Theatre at Pier Park is the only IMAX movie theater in the area. With an all-digital projection and sound system, stadium seating and high-back rocking chairs, The Grand screens first-run blockbusters and IMAX specialty films. Stop by the specialty café and pay a visit to the arcade for fun and games before or after the movie.

### Kartona The Electric Speedway

Panama City Beach is home to the region's only indoor go-kart facility. Featuring eco-friendly, all-electric karts, Kartona also provides helmet-mounted GoPro cameras to record your race, a spectator area for your fans, a concession bar for snacks and drinks and private party rooms for your special event. Rent the track, race your friends and record it all with their Go-Pro race cams to take the experience home with you. Kartona offers kart rentals for visitors and casual racers and league competitions for more committed need-for-speed demons. ●





## 18 DIFFERENT ATTRACTIONS INCLUDING:

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PIRATE SHIP



# THRILL-A-MINUTE

PCB has several attractions that can take your breath away

**BY HANNAH BURKE**

For those looking for something a little more exciting than a lazy day at the beach, Panama City Beach has attractions to get your adrenaline pumping. Lovers of speed, spins, drops and dives will get their kicks from rides built for children of all ages to enjoy. With both the daredevil and the slightly less adventuresome rider in mind, we offer you our Top 10 list of amusements.



#### 10 PIRATE SHIP

Join the pirates aboard the **Sea Dragon**, and depart Panama City Beach's Grand Lagoon for two hours of action-packed time travel. Come as you are; eye patches are optional! In addition to great sightseeing — there are lots of dolphins about — be prepared to sing along with a fantastic soundtrack that syncs with activities on the main deck. Kids enjoy nonstop activity that includes swordplay, firing a cannon and finding a sunken treasure. Everyone shares in the loot! There's also a water gun fight, face painting, a pirate dance party and (temporary) pirate tattoos. Food, refreshments and souvenirs are all available aboard ship.

#### 9 JET SKIING AND WAVERUNNERS

**Adventures at Sea** If your need for a little excitement leads you to the Gulf, Adventures at Sea has several options to get your pulse racing. Explore the shore with their 30-minute and hourlong Jet Ski rentals as you cut loose and get to know PCB from a different angle. Or, if you're looking for something a bit more structured, they also offer Waverunner tours that will explore Shell Island, St. Andrews State Park and the myriad marine life living just offshore.

#### 8 WONDER COASTER

**WonderWorks** Afraid of heights? Not to worry, WonderWorks hosts the Wonder Coaster, an indoor, virtual coaster that provides all the excitement of the real

## Banana Boat Rides



thing. Guests are strapped into a capsule in front of a screen and then pick a cyber ride to fit their thrill level. Though you remain on the ground, the capsule is anything but stationary. As you watch the track ahead of you plummet and loop on the screen, you'll dip and spin, too, as the container follows every twist and turn.

### 7 BANANA BOAT RIDES

**Various locations** As an exhilarating way to beat the heat, banana boat rides offer a unique experience on the water. These banana-shaped rafts seat multiple people and are pulled through the waves by a Jet Ski. Children especially love this bouncy ride, provided by various services along the beach. What better way to experience Panama City Beach's crystal clear water than to get out in it yourself?

### 6 TREETOP DROP

**Shipwreck Island Waterpark** Craving more wet fun? Shipwreck Island Waterpark is home to slides, rapids, a lazy river and even a wave pool, but the Treetop Drop alone is enough to make the entire visit worthwhile. These two slides are the tallest in the park, standing 65 feet high. One is enclosed from top to bottom and coils in circles in a speedy descent. The second slide is partially enclosed then opens up for a plummeting, jaw-dropping finish. Either way you choose, you're guaranteed to be climbing to the top of the tower again for more.



Shipwreck Island Waterpark





### 5 RACETRACK

**Hidden Lagoon** If your idea of a thrill involves good old-fashioned go-karting, you should know that Hidden Lagoon Racetrack offers the longest track available in the area — not to mention the fastest. Zip around a nearly mile-long course, featuring plenty of curves and high-speed straightaways. Children under 56 inches must ride with an adult to ensure a swift — and safe — adventure.

### 4 SEA SCREAMER

Excursions aboard the large-capacity, brilliant yellow Sea Screamer are both educational and exhilarating. The captain and crew describe points of interest as the vessels cruise along Panama City Beach. They are well versed in local history and the habits of marine wildlife and regale passengers with nautical tales as appropriately tropical tunes are played. The dolphins that cavort and splash in the Sea Screamer's wake are the stars of both daytime and sunset cruises. Smaller creatures are revealed when a deckhand hoists a crab trap during the trips. During the heat of summer, stream-machine water launchers cool off the kids.

### 3 SKYWHEEL

**Pier Park Experience Panama City Beach** at 200 feet with the area's biggest and newest attraction. Finished in 2018, SkyWheel offers a 360-degree panoramic view of the area — all from the safety and comfort of glass-enclosed, fully accessible gondolas that comfortably seat up to six people. Each gondola is also climate controlled, so you'll always be comfortable no matter the weather outside.

### 2 HELICOPTER TOURS

As impressive as the meeting of Gulf waters and the quartz sand of Panama City Beach is when seen from the shore or a condo balcony, it's ever more impressive when viewed while flying with Panhandle Helicopter. The company provides tours that range from five to 22 miles (five to 15 minutes) in length. It has two Robinson helicopters, one capable of carrying three passengers and the other, four. A five-minute intro tour runs from the City Pier to the County Pier and back. A 22-mile trip visits St. Andrews State Park and the jetties that form the entrance to St. Andrew Bay. A premium is placed on safety; aircraft are maintained according to the highest FAA standards.

### 1 SKY COASTER

**Race City Amusement Park** It's a bird. It's a plane. No, it's you! Race City offers the thrill ride of your life — it's the rise and fall of a rollercoaster experience sans cart and track. Up to three people share a hang gliding harness and are hauled up 130 feet in the air. When people on the ground below you start to look like ants, your tether is released and you'll drop into a giant swinging arc. Get as close to flying as you'll ever get as you cut through the air! ●





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### **GO GREEN BY THE EMERALD WATERS**

Looking for an ecologically responsible, fun-filled adventure? With 27 miles of beach, two state parks and miles of on- and off-road bike trails in protected conservation areas, PCB has everything from dolphin encounters and sunset kayaking to an airboat tour or a hike through a cypress swamp.



“

I love making new friends each time I visit.

**ANNA WHITE**  
Dallas, Georgia



# REEL FUN BEACH

Get the lowdown on what to fish for on the open waters

**BY CAPT. NATHAN CHENNAUX**





## WINTER

While most of the country is hunkered down enduring the harsh winter cold, Panama City Beach mornings frequently begin with mild temperatures of about 40 degrees, and the mercury rises to 70 or so by afternoon. A few clouds, bright sunshine and abundant clear water are commonplace this time of year, and an easy northeast wind often glides us quietly across the shallows.

As my charter client and I make our way along the shoreline with our eyes scanning the water's surface for signs of fish, we spot activity in the mouth of a small marsh finger — tails emerging ever so slightly from the water before disappearing again, leaving hardly a ripple. This time, it's a small school of redfish rooting around in the mud for crabs, shrimp and minnows. When I spot a shrimp leaping from the water, frantically trying to escape the scene, I instruct my angler to cast an artificial shrimp just past the school and let it come to rest on the bottom. With little hesitation, a beautiful upper-slot redfish inhales the bait and a stiff hook-set is the beginning of a battle sure to be remembered. Once the fish is successfully landed, we take a photo, thank the fish for the sweet memory and release it to fight another day.

After several warm days to start the month, I awoke this morning to a cold front and piercing northwest wind blowing about 20 miles per hour. It seems as if Mother Nature uses early March to taunt us with some spring-like weather for a couple weeks before we have a late cold snap that slows everything back down to a halt.

Speckled trout season, which has been closed for harvest the entire month of February, is back open, and the bayous and creeks around the bay should be stacked with fish. When it's cold like this and fish are lethargic, suspending twitch baits become magical for enticing good bites. Jigs and plugs will catch a lot of small fish but there is something special about



the way a suspending plug sits right in front of big fish and provokes them into wolfing it down.

I always encourage anglers to do everyone a favor by respecting nature's resource. By that, I mean it's OK to keep a few fish, but releasing the bigger ones with good genes will keep them swimming, spawning and making future anglers very happy.

## SPRING

At home this morning, the smell of orange blossom fills the air as I enjoy a cup of coffee and gaze upon another incredible sunrise with its vibrant display of pink, orange, purple and red. The anticipation of warmer days and migrating fish fills me with an excitement than can hardly be contained.

While idling out of the bayou on my way to the St. Andrews Pass, I stop by a local marina to pick up a couple dozen live shrimp and a few small spoons. From mid-March into April is an ideal period to fish around the inlets and along the beaches. You can also head over to the jetties and use electronics to find areas holding many different species of fish.

This is a great time to target sheepshead, a fish that's especially frustrating because it has mastered the art of bait thievery. A light action spinning rod rigged with 8- to 10-pound braided line and 15-pound

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**HEFTY CATCH** Two members of the drum family — redfish and black drum — are popular catches made from nearshore and backcountry bays in and around Panama City Beach.

---

leader (plus a ton of patience) are all that's required to take advantage of this unique fishery.

As soon as my offering reaches the bottom, I feel the telltale nibbling of a sheepshead. Experience has taught me that when targeting this species, it's important to let the fish chew until it swallows the bait and swims off, so I wait until I feel the rod get heavy and load up. A light tug is all it takes to securely set the hook. If you try to get quick on the hookset, then you will repeatedly come up empty — something I've learned the hard way.

You may notice that certain areas will also have other fish mixed in with the sheepshead. For example, if the sheepshead are stacked at the tip of the jetties near the beach, you'll more than likely encounter bites from redfish, black drum and especially pompano.

While checking out the jetties with my electronics, I'm also scanning the water for Spanish mackerel and other fish feeding on the surface. If a school

of them pops up or I'm marking fish out in open water, then I try casting a small, heavy spoon and working it erratically through the school. Open water fish such as mackerel tend to react well to speed, shine and vibration — making them the perfect species for teaching new anglers how to use lures effectively. Mackerel have extremely sharp teeth, so a short leader of light wire is a good way to prevent cut-offs.

## SUMMER

Oh, sweet summertime ... the occasion to have some fun in the sun! It's the season to experience first-light topwater bites and being back at the dock by lunchtime to enjoy a cold beverage while a chef prepares the day's catch. It's the season of midday siestas on the beach to escape the oppressive heat, followed up with an explosive evening of redfish action around the bridges and inlets. It's the season of beating the sun out to the bait buoys before heading to the reefs for red snapper, grouper and amberjack. And it's the season for running weedlines in search of mahi mahi, kingfish or the occasional wahoo or sailfish. The list goes on and on with seemingly endless opportunities to catch fish inshore and out in the Gulf of Mexico.

Getting an early start is very important when fishing the shallows since the water is prone to heating up much faster than deeper areas. Look for trout and redfish to be hanging out on grassy flats with moving current, varying depths and lots of sandy potholes. If you locate a structure in shallow water, then you might also find that it's holding mangrove snapper, sheepshead, black drum and flounder.

Hoping to fight something big and acrobatic? If so, try to align your schedule with the annual tarpon migration. A keen eye early in the morning will help you spot schools of "silver kings" rolling on the surface just off the sandy beach, giving you critical information as to the direction they are moving and their level of relaxation. Tarpon can be

frustrating to no end, but the pursuit and occasional battle make for thrilling moments no angler will ever forget.

## FALL

The onset of fall's cooler temperatures is a welcome departure from the intense summer heat. Autumn often brings on some of the most insane bites and congregations of fish you will see all year. Massive schools of Spanish mackerel are hanging out around the inlets and can be seen leaping out of the water as they feed on small baitfish near the surface. Redfish have started grouping up into large schools and working their way along the flats in search of the next pod of bait. Speckled trout are also out in the shallows but will soon move toward the marshy backwaters and deep bayous where they will stay throughout the cool months. Flounder are being caught more frequently, and it won't be long until they start stacking up in the pass in preparation for their journey toward the Gulf.

Fall also means huge bait pods will appear throughout the bays. A wide variety of species — including redfish, jack crevalle, sharks and tarpon — lurk beneath these bait balls, waiting for the opportune moment to attack. It's common to observe the big fish allowing smaller species — such as bluefish, mackerel, bonito and ladyfish — to create havoc and injure the baitfish so they can reap the rewards of an easy meal. The key to catching the larger fish is to not set the hook when you feel the quick bumps of the small ones; they'll spit out your bait, and it will fall below the bait school where the trophies are hanging out. Believe me, you will feel the difference when a 25-pounder strikes.

Panama City Beach is home to a world-class fishery, and there's really no bad time to cast a line. Before hitting the water, be sure to check the most up-to-date Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) regulations on seasons and bag limits.

Luckily for us, there's always a bite waiting to be found! ●

## HIT THE WATERS FOR SEASON 7

**"CHASIN' THE SUN,"** Visit Panama City Beach's award-winning fishing and coastal lifestyle television series, returns for its seventh season on Discovery Channel. Weekly episodes showcase Panama City Beach's world-class fishery and highlight some of its most popular attractions and events.

Capt. Justin Leake, a lifelong resident and full-time charter fishing guide, hosts the show and invites guest anglers on board to experience spectacular trophy catches while offering expert advice on how to target the wide variety of species inhabiting local waters.

"Whether it's redfish, snapper, grouper, tarpon or kingfish, our fishery is incredibly diverse, and with year-round action, there

is always something in our waters to challenge every angler," says Capt. Leake.

"Chasin' The Sun" has received numerous honors since its 2016 debut, including U.S. Travel Association Destiny Awards for "Best Video, Film or Podcast Series" and "People's Choice," as well as Visit Florida's Flagler Award for niche marketing.

The series airs January through June during Discovery Channel's Saturday morning outdoor programming schedule. Produced in partnership with Pinfish Media, episodes of "Chasin The Sun" are available for online viewing at ChasinTheSunTV.com and on more than 30 of the most popular digital networks



and on-demand platforms, including Amazon Prime, Discovery GO, Roku, Vudu, STIRR and Samsung TV Plus.





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# PUBLIC PARKS


**WHEN THE GREAT OUTDOORS BECKON,** Panama City Beach features some of the state's best parks and ecological areas. Whether your outdoor activities include boating, camping, fishing, hiking, swimming or any outdoor adventure in between, Panama City Beach has something for everyone.

## ↓PCB CONSERVATION PARK

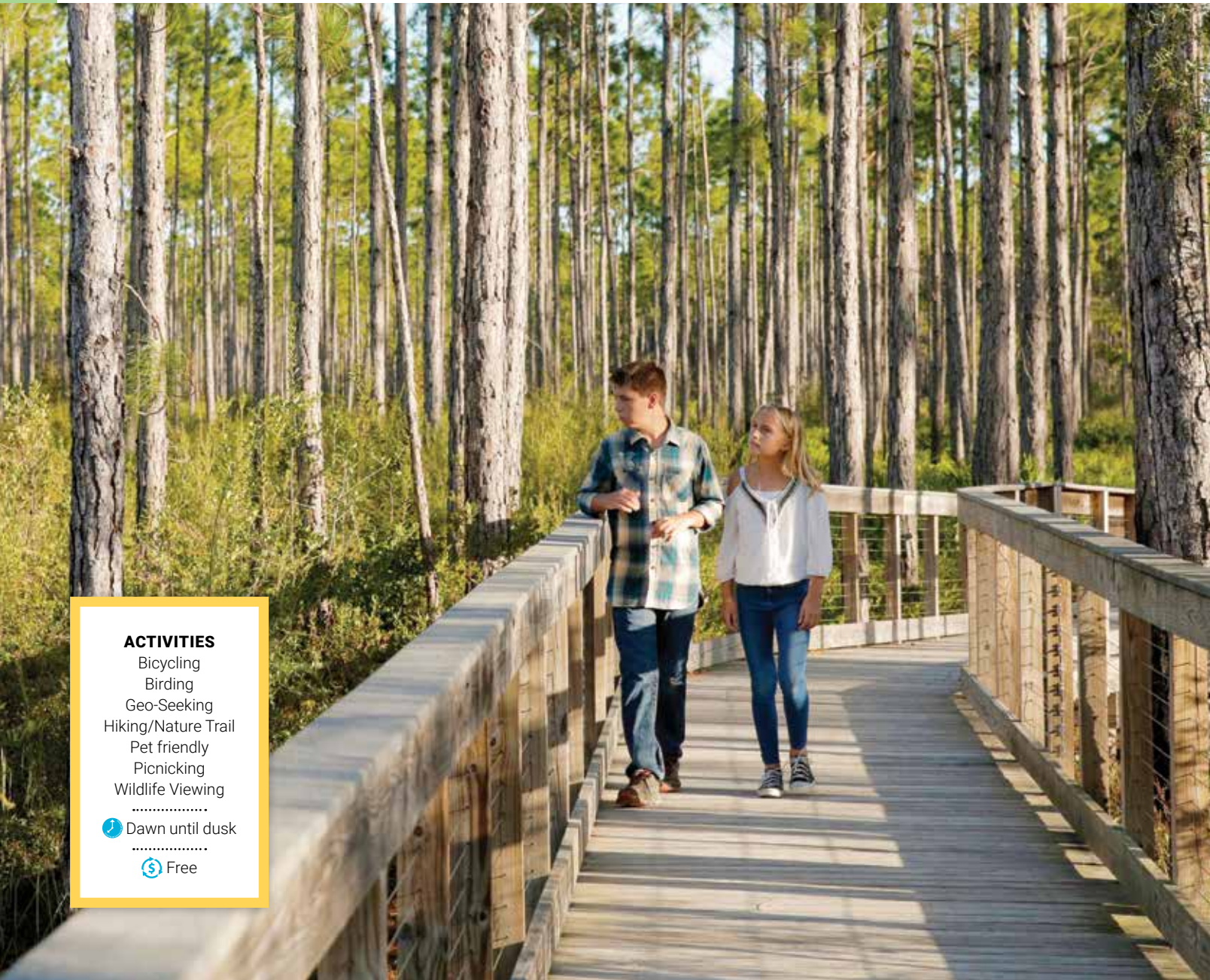
The 2,900-acre Panama City Beach Conservation Park is a safeguard for wetlands, wildlife and pine forest, while also acting as a natural filter that balances treated water before it makes its way to the St. Andrews Bay. Conservation Park has 24 miles of trails and over a mile of boardwalks. A 4,400-square-foot building is at the southeast corner of the park to function as a shelter for park users, garbage disposal, public restroom facilities, parking, picnic tables and a drinking water station. Public restrooms, picnic areas, a guide to local flora and fauna and a pavilion are located near the main parking lot, and an outdoor classroom provides a venue for group educational and enrichment opportunities. Dogs are permitted on leashes, but no more than two dogs per person. No motorized vehicles of any kind or horses are allowed on the trails. No overnight stays, campfires, smoking or open flames allowed. Guided Audubon bird walks, volunteer programs and recreational programs are offered seasonally. **100 Conservation Drive, (850) 233-5045**

### ACTIVITIES

- Bicycling
- Birding
- Geo-Seeking
- Hiking/Nature Trail
- Pet friendly
- Picnicking
- Wildlife Viewing

 Dawn until dusk

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Hours ⌚  
Fees 💰



#### ACTIVITIES

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Bicycling  
Boat Ramp  
Boat Tours  
Boating  
Campfire Circles  
Camping  
Primitive/Group Camping  
Canoeing and Kayaking  
Concessions & Food  
Fishing  
Geo-seeking  
Hiking/Nature Trail  
Interpretive Exhibit  
Pet-friendly  
Picnic Pavilion  
Picnicking  
Playground  
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Shower Station  
Snorkeling  
Surfing  
Swimming  
Weddings  
Wildlife Viewing

⌚ 8 a.m. until sundown

💰 \$8 multi-occupant (2–8) vehicle; \$4 single-occupant vehicle; \$2 pedestrians and bicyclists

INSTAGRAM @PARADISEADVENTURESFCB



## ST. ANDREWS STATE PARK

St. Andrews State Park is consistently one of the most popular and most visited state parks in Florida. Situated on a peninsula at the far eastern edge of Panama City Beach, St. Andrews State Park is bordered by the Gulf of Mexico to the south, the St. Andrews Pass to the east and the Grand Lagoon to the north. Beachgoers will love over 1.5 miles of beaches that rest on the Gulf and Grand Lagoon. There are two trails that will help you explore the nature and wildlife of Panama City Beach — including migratory birds, deer and alligators. Anglers will also be thrilled with two piers and numerous jetties to cast off from, plus a boat ramp on the lagoon. If you're looking to get on the water, there's plenty that St. Andrews can offer including: swimming, surfing, snorkeling, scuba diving, kayaking and canoeing. This site is equipped with water, a portable toilet, fire ring and picnic tables. **4607 State Park Lane, (850) 708-6100. Call ahead for booking.**

## CAMP HELEN STATE PARK

This often overlooked ecological gem sits on the far western border of Panama City Beach. Offering pristine beaches, excellent trails that wind through dunes and scrub oak forests and a rare dune lake, Camp Helen State Park is truly a unique park. Camp Helen State Park is bordered by water on three sides, and the unique combination makes it the ecological wonder that it is. Lake Powell forms the eastern border, and is one of the largest rare coastal dune lakes found only in a few places in the world. The park is home to five distinct natural communities — mesic flatwoods, scrub oak, basin swamp, depression marsh and marine unconsolidated substrate. There is no camping at Camp Helen, but fishing, boating and fires are allowed in designated areas. No lifeguard is on duty, so exercise caution. **23937 Panama City Beach Parkway, (850) 233-5059**

#### ACTIVITIES

Beach  
Birding  
Canoeing and Kayaking  
Fishing  
Hiking/Nature Trail  
Historic Site  
Interpretive Exhibit  
Meetings & Retreats  
Picnicking  
Swimming  
Visitor Center  
Weddings

⌚ 8 a.m. until sunset, 365 days a year

💰 \$4 per vehicle; \$2 pedestrians and bicyclists






# NURTURING *Nature*



Get off the beach and explore some of PCB's wild areas and wildlife

**BY KARI C. BARLOW AND ZANDRA WOLFGRAM**



~~~~~  
**WHETHER YOU'RE**  
hiking, biking or  
boating, Panama City  
Beach has a bevy of  
ecological marvels  
waiting to be seen.  
~~~~~



Outdoor activities in Panama City Beach usually revolve around two things: sand and surf. It's natural that The World's Most Beautiful Beaches beckon locals and travelers alike, but PCB also features a treasure trove of activities, sights and places to explore that don't include a beach towel.





## DEEP DIVE

Here are five of the top wrecks and reefs to seek out in PCB:

### EL DORADO

This former luxury cruise liner, damaged during Hurricane Michael in October 2018, is the newest wreck to join the area's list of artificial reefs.

### BLACK BART

Located six miles off shore, this old oil field supply ship serves as a memorial to Capt. Charles Bartholomew, the U.S. Navy's Supervisor of Salvage in Panama City.

### USS STRENGTH

This former U.S. Navy minesweeper is one of the most inviting wrecks along the Gulf Coast. Sunk in 1987, the 184-foot ship is located about six miles off the coast.

### EMPIRE MICA

Built in 1941, this 465-foot ocean tanker was torpedoed by a German U boat, and one of its propellers now sits at Captain Anderson's restaurant.

### LIBERTY SHIP

This 441-foot World War II Liberty Ship is located in about 100 feet of water about 10 miles off shore.

INSTAGRAM @WATERTRIBEDIVECHARTERS



### DIVING AND SNORKELING

For scuba divers in search of unique underwater adventures, Panama City Beach is the place to be. Underneath its turquoise waters lies a treasure trove of natural and man-made sites spread across the northern Gulf of Mexico.

"The diving here is phenomenal," said Todd Yarbrough, course director at Red Alert Diving, a full-service dive center and aquatic training facility. "The variation of depth, the visibility and the conditions and the animal life are just unparalleled." Within just a few miles of Panama City Beach, divers will find more

than 50 artificial reefs, sunken ships and barges, as well as hundreds of natural limestone reefs.

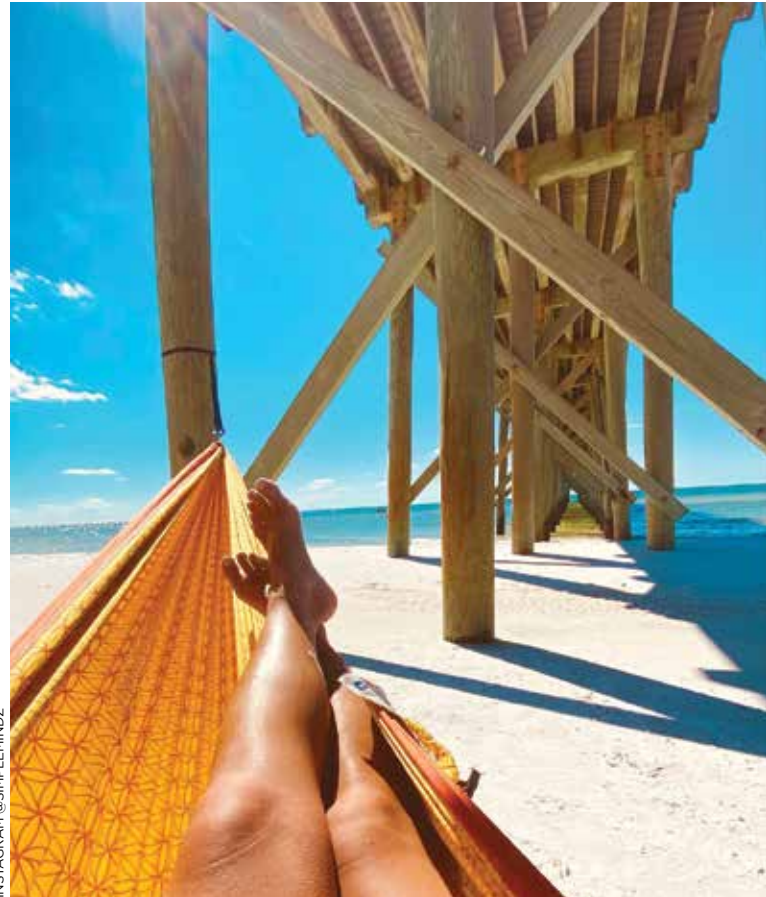
"The artificial reef system we have here is pretty great," said Yarbrough, who started diving when he was 12. "We have everything from 400-foot long ships to 40-foot Army tankers for people to dive on. Our shipwrecks are all within recreational limits, and they're as clean and as safe as anything can be in our sport."

Perhaps the greatest draw — and one that appeals to all ages — is the marine life accessible around these dive sites. "We have such a vast array of fish from





~~~~~  
**WHEN IT COMES TO**  
 shopping for souvenirs or  
 soaking up the Northwest  
 Florida sun, Panama City  
 Beach has plenty of options.  
 ~~~~~



INSTAGRAM @SIMPLEMINDZ

amberjack to goliath grouper, and goliath grouper get up to 700 to 800 pounds,” said Brian Robinson, general manager at Diver’s Den, which offers certification and dive charters. “They’re just a really cool thing for people to see.”

For adventure enthusiasts who do not have their diving certification, snorkeling off the coast of St. Andrews State Park or the secluded Shell Island is the perfect way to explore the area’s turquoise waters. The Gulf’s excellent water clarity, which is even better during the fall months, allows for plentiful encounters with undersea life.

Need a place to start — or dive in? The PCB area has several local businesses that will help you train, gain certification and even buy gear, like Panama City Dive Center, Panama City Diving, the

Dive Locker and Down Time Dive Charters. These dive shops even offer diving charters if you’re looking to get on the water straightaway.

### **CAMPING**

Camping in Panama City Beach is an experience like no other. Not only can you sleep out under the stars, hike beautiful trails and roast marshmallows over a campfire — you can do it all within walking distance of the sparkling Gulf of Mexico!

Whether you prefer to pitch a tent, crank up the RV or glamp it up in style with all the comforts of home, Panama City Beach has the perfect spot for you.

For that old-fashioned camping experience, Panama City Beach is home to St. Andrews State Park, where visitors

can explore more than 1,200 acres of unique coastal terrain.

One of the most popular state parks in Florida, St. Andrews is perfect for tent campers and folks with RVs. With 176 campsites — for tents and RVs up to 45 feet — in the pinewoods near Grand Lagoon, the park has the largest selection of camping accommodations in the area. The park offers more than a 1½ miles of sugar-white beachfront, and for those who like to hike or simply stroll through nature, there are two main inland trails. Heron Pond Trail takes visitors through a flatwood pine forest and past a historic turpentine still, while Gator Lake Trail offers a scenic view of Gator Lake. Other activities include watching wading birds at Button Bush Marsh, shore and pier fishing in the



## YOUR CAMPING HOW-TO

When you're going camping, it never hurts to make a list. Here are some of our best suggestions:

Sunscreen

Beach toys

Fishing supplies

Life jackets

Paddleboards  
and surfboards

Kayaks

Bug repellent  
(Lots of it.  
Seriously, our  
mosquitoes are  
big and hungry.)

Citronella candles

Bicycles and  
helmets

Golf carts  
(Some properties  
restrict golf carts  
to certain areas.)

Gulf of Mexico and taking the boat shuttle to Shell Island, a pristine barrier island across the channel from the park.

For more on PCB's public parks, see page 42.

### BIKING & HIKING

Walking is wonderful, but bicycling might get you through paradise quicker. With beautiful hiking and bike-friendly trails — plus plenty of bike rental shops — Panama City Beach is a trailblazer's dream come true.

Bike Paths & Trails Conservation Park spans 2,912 acres and offers more than 24 miles of trails and boardwalks. The 12 designated trails range from less than a mile to 11 miles long. An additional mile of boardwalks through the park's wetlands allows bird watchers unparalleled opportunities to view migrating and local birds.

For the explorer who wants a smoother, less challenging path to follow than those found in Conservation Park, Gayle's Trails are a great option. These paved pathways were named after former Mayor Gayle F. Oberst, who played a major role in securing the grants that allowed for the trails' development.

The Gayle's Trails trail heads are found in Aaron Bessant Park and Frank Brown Park. Gayle's Trails offer cyclists the choice of three routes with a round trip of up to 19.5 miles. Visitors can choose to walk or bike the trails found within the parks' boundaries, or they can follow them from park to park. They can also explore the many paths that lead away from the parks, such as the trail that runs from Frank Brown Park to the Panama City Beach Conservation Park (2.8 miles), or the







stretch that parallels Highway 79 north to the Intracoastal Waterway.

### **PADDLEBOARDING**

Beach lovers can surf the waves via paddleboard on Panama City Beach's protected and open waters like the Grand Lagoon, St. Andrews Bay and various cold springs, rivers and lakes in the region. While paddleboarding, guests can spy rays, fish, sea turtles, dolphin and other wildlife beneath the water's surface. Equipment is easily rented from The Boardroom or PCB SUP, and for the especially brave and well balanced, paddleboard yoga is also available at Yoga Elements. ●

## **WHAT BIKE FITS YOUR RIDE?**

How do you know what kind of bike you are best suited for? Here are a few things to keep in mind.

### **Single-speed vs. Multi-speed**

Traditionally, beach cruisers are designed as single-speed bikes — that is, they don't have any gearing to change the resistance in the pedal stroke. That said, there are 3-speed and 7-speed versions. Having multiple gears is great for hilly terrain.

### **Pedal Brakes vs. Handlebar Brakes**

Most beach cruisers brake simply by pedaling backwards, a century-old technology known as coaster brakes. Handlebar brakes also are easy to use, but they don't have as clean a look and might require a bit more maintenance.

### **Fit and Comfort**

When it comes to style, low-rider cruisers have a high "cool factor" and are a great choice for short rides around the beach. Longer rides are better when you're seated in the upright position of a classic beach cruiser frame, which allows you to relax your arms and provides for a more efficient pedal stroke so that you are not wasting energy.

*Bike The Beach PCB, 17292 Front Beach, Road #106, (850) 557-7787*

# Family Friendly Destination

*The*  
**Palmetto**  
INN & SUITES



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**Gulf-front pool, hot tub and sundeck | Gulf-front kids playground**

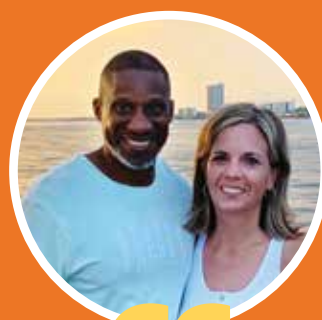
**17255 Front Beach Road | (850) 234-2121 | [PalmettoMotel.com](http://PalmettoMotel.com)**





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DANCE BENEATH  
THE STARS**

Romance, relaxation and fun are waiting for you all around Panama City Beach. We have luxury spas, world-class golf, amazing resorts, award-winning restaurants and enough live music for you to dance the night away.



“

Celebrated 16 years at our favorite spot. We have been going back every year for six years in a row.

**BRANDI MARLEY**

# PARADISE *Proposal*

Here are our 10 favorites spots to pop the question or renew your vows

**BY HANNAH BURKE**

The timeless sands and sunsets of Panama City Beach beckon couples and romantics to make the promises and vows of a lifetime. The area hosts thousands of weddings, proposals, receptions and honeymoons each year — thanks in no small part to the area's beaches, parks and attractions. Whether you're getting down on one knee or renewing your vows, here are 10 venues we think can help sweeten the mood.

## **BEACH PROPOSAL**

Panama City Beach has been voted one of the most beautiful beaches in the world for many years, so it is no surprise that a beach proposal is one of the most popular spots to get down on one knee. From sunrise to sunset, there is never the wrong time to pop the question on the destination's 27 miles of magical, white-sand beach.

## **ST. ANDREWS STATE PARK/ CAMP HELEN STATE PARK**

If Panama City Beach's main strip of shore is a bit too public for your liking, the private beach access and pristine woodlands of St. Andrews and Camp Helen State Parks are ideal for the eco-crazy couple. The winding trails of each park offer premier hiking, birding and picnicking beneath a cool canopy of pines and palms, allowing couples to get lost in their own private slice of nature. If your S.O. can't get enough of the water, canoeing through Camp Helen's Lake Powell or cruising to Shell Island produces an ideal moment to bring out the ring.



INSTAGRAM @BOBBYKNIGHT25

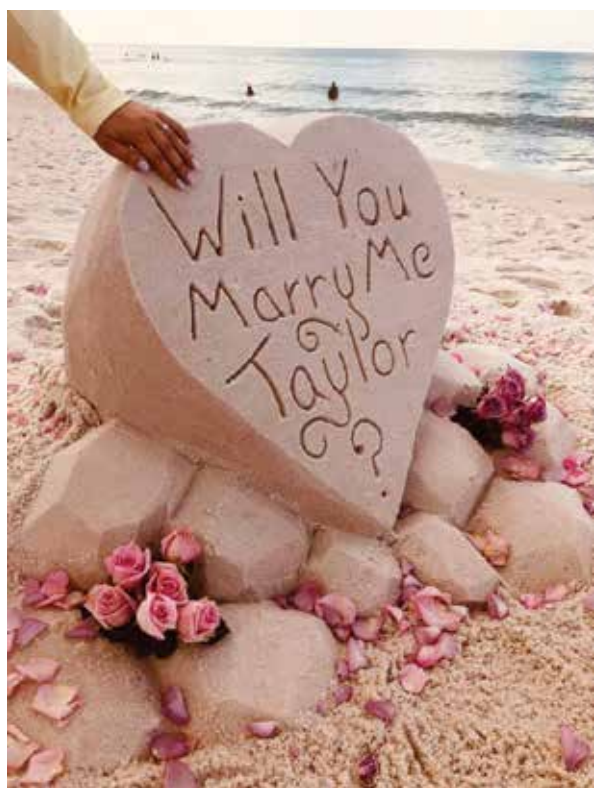
## **SKYWHEEL AT PIER PARK**

A 200-foot ascent into the clear blue sky has hearts fluttering as you and your loved one are treated to a bird's eye view of the ocean and cityscape. Not your typical Ferris wheel, this air-conditioned, glass-encased gondola creates an intimate, serene ambience à la London Eye. While your breath is already taken away by the gorgeous vista at the apex of the observation wheel, it's the perfect time to ask your soulmate to share many more of these moments with you for the rest of your lives. They'll be on cloud nine.









### PRIVATE BONFIRE ON THE BEACH

Endless Rentals offers custom built fire pits for a beachside bonfire that is sure to send sparks flying for the perfect engagement. Couples can enjoy a picnic and s'mores, or let Endless Rentals arrange a cozy hammock, perfect for watching the sunset and taking in that newly engaged bliss on the destination's famous beaches.

### GRAND LAGOON CRUISE

If your style is more traditional than trendy, you can't go wrong with a classic sunset setting. But add in a dreamy sail across the sea, champagne in hand, while dolphins leap across the horizon — now you've created something out of a fairy tale. Island Time Sailing's catamaran allows plenty of room for your closest friends and family members to come along and witness your big moment. It's only appropriate your happily ever after includes gliding off into the sunset with your beloved.

### PRIVATE PONTOON BOAT CHARTER

A private pontoon boat excursion with Paradise Adventures offers an entertaining and memorable experience where couples can sit back, relax and enjoy the romantic ride. Providing an easy, stress-free proposal experience with a complimentary photographer on board, these pontoon boats are also fitted with an anchor, allowing couples to explore the shallow bays or get out for a swim.

### CONSERVATION PARK

Make it a scavenger hunt, set up a romantic rest spot or spontaneously lower to one knee during your hike through the 2,900 acres that Conservation Park has

to offer for the ultimate, alfresco engagement. Active couples can bike along the boardwalks or rough it on a run through the wetlands to get their hearts pumping before dropping the big question.

### HELICOPTER ABOVE PANAMA CITY BEACH

Panhandle Helicopter Tours go the extra mile to help sweep your gal or guy off her feet, showcasing the full breadth of PCB's beauty from the clouds. Private tours allow you and your main squeeze an exclusive, scenic expedition on a route of your choice. As you gaze upon the emerald-green waves, coastal communities and state parks from above, they'll never forget the sound of your voice coming through their headset, asking those four magical words.

### DIVING TRIP

If you've ever been diving, you know there's nothing quite like swimming alongside colorful fish, playful dolphins and stunning sea turtles in their natural habitat. While immersed in a completely different world, it seems only appropriate you ask the question that completely changes yours once you surface. With a backdrop of sunken ships and artificial reefs, your experienced diving guides will gladly capture the moment with underwater photography so friends back on land can witness the magic.

### SHELL ISLAND

Shell Island, an undeveloped beach that is located just across the pass from St. Andrews State Park, is a favorite among couples for picnics, walks and brilliant sunsets. This secluded and sandy oasis offers all the fun and relaxation of the city's public beaches but without the crowds — so couples can enjoy their proposal in a more private setting. This barrier island is surrounded by the world's highest concentration of bottlenose dolphins and is truly an oasis with natural beauty as far as the eye can see. The island is accessible by boat rental or an hourly shuttle service. ●





~~~~~  
**WHETHER IT'S**  
on the sands or  
on the waters,  
Panama City  
Beach has a  
variety of venues  
where you can  
say, "I do."  
~~~~~







~~~~~  
**THERE ARE A**  
variety of ways  
and an assortment  
of venues to make  
any night a special  
one in PCB.  
~~~~~





# ROMANTIC RENDEZVOUS

Here are some ways to make your getaways  
and date nights unforgettable

**BY ZANDRA WOLFGAM AND HANNAH BURKE**

~~~~~

**T**he beach always holds a certain bit of romance to it, making it one of the best places for couples to spend time together. Like the sand and the shore of the Gulf of Mexico, the memories here seem to stretch on forever, so here are a few of the amazing spots that we've discovered to rekindle your imagination.

Start the day off right with a great sunrise and breakfast with your significant other. **FINNS BARISTA BAR** has fresh-brewed local coffee from Amavida Coffee Roasters, plus a selection of healthy bowls and smoothies, or try out the fantastic breakfast and brunch options at **ANDY'S FLOUR POWER**, like their selection of skillet and omelets.

If you want to chill and relax, consider a couple's massage or body treatment at

Serenity Spa, the featured jewel of the Sheraton Resort. The couples massage treatments provide a perfect opportunity to recharge before a night on the town or unwind on your way to a lazy day on the beach. Romance doesn't just have to be put on hold until the sunsets. Day dates are a great way to spend quality time (especially if the kiddos are enjoying a day camp getaway themselves).

There are plenty of options of how to spend the day working off that Gulf seafood. Shopping while on vacation is pretty much a win-win. **PIER PARK** and **PIER PARK NORTH** have all your favorite name brand stores — not to mention dining and entertainment, perfect for a great date — but, if you want to get lost in lesser-known, locally owned boutiques and mom-and-pop specialty shops that don't always have the budget to advertise, we have done the legwork



~~~~~  
**OUTDOOR**  
 spots to dine  
 and spend time  
 together make  
 a beach visit  
 one of a kind.  
 ~~~~~

for you. We bundled together our favorites and call it **DÉCOR BY THE SHORE**. It's a selection of stores and shops, such as **BEACH HOUSE MARKET**, **AVENUE SEA** and **THE SHADOW BOX**, which specialize in coastal-themed antiques, furniture, gifts and accessories. Couples looking to holiday shop while on vacation can make their list, check it twice and head to the area for all their holiday shopping needs this season.

For a nice dinner, head to **CAPT. ANDERSON'S** for fresh Gulf fare like scallops, shrimp, grouper and flounder. Or hit up **HUNT & GATHER RAW BAR & PUB** for fresh oysters, snapper and bison ribeye.

Amp up your adventure quotient by adding a splash. A snorkeling or catamaran excursion at **ST. ANDREWS STATE PARK** is a great way to take in the natural beauty and experience an exciting adventure together. Venture to Shell Island, a 7-mile long undeveloped barrier island running east to west between the Gulf of Mexico and the St. Andrew Bay, and make an entire day of it. Take a beach tour boat over, or rent a private pontoon to escape to this special island retreat. Get lost searching for the perfect seashell or swimming with the dolphins, and let the world fade away. Your morning adventures will surely work up an appetite.

What says, "I love you" more than a picnic for two? Grab a picnic lunch to go from Liza's Kitchen, head to **CAMP HELEN STATE PARK** and find some shade under one of the majestic live oaks or tall cypress pines and spend the afternoon hiking a nature trail, birding or simply stretch out on a blanket and watch the clouds roll by.

Whether you are strolling the beach or just parked on your balcony with a glass of wine, don't miss the setting of the sun. That is a no-brainer. Once the sun goes down, there are still plenty of options for you and your sweetheart. Extend your time on the beach with a romantic beach bonfire experience with a hammock



and s'mores. There are local outfits, such as **ENDLESS BEACH RENTALS**, that will take care of all the logistics.

Head to **PINEAPPLE WILLY'S** on Thomas Drive, **RUNAWAY ISLAND** or **SHARKY'S BEACHFRONT RESTAURANT** on Front Beach Road for cocktails and dinner. Then stay to hear live music. Whatever stokes the fire in your heart, you are sure to find it and more in Panama City Beach.



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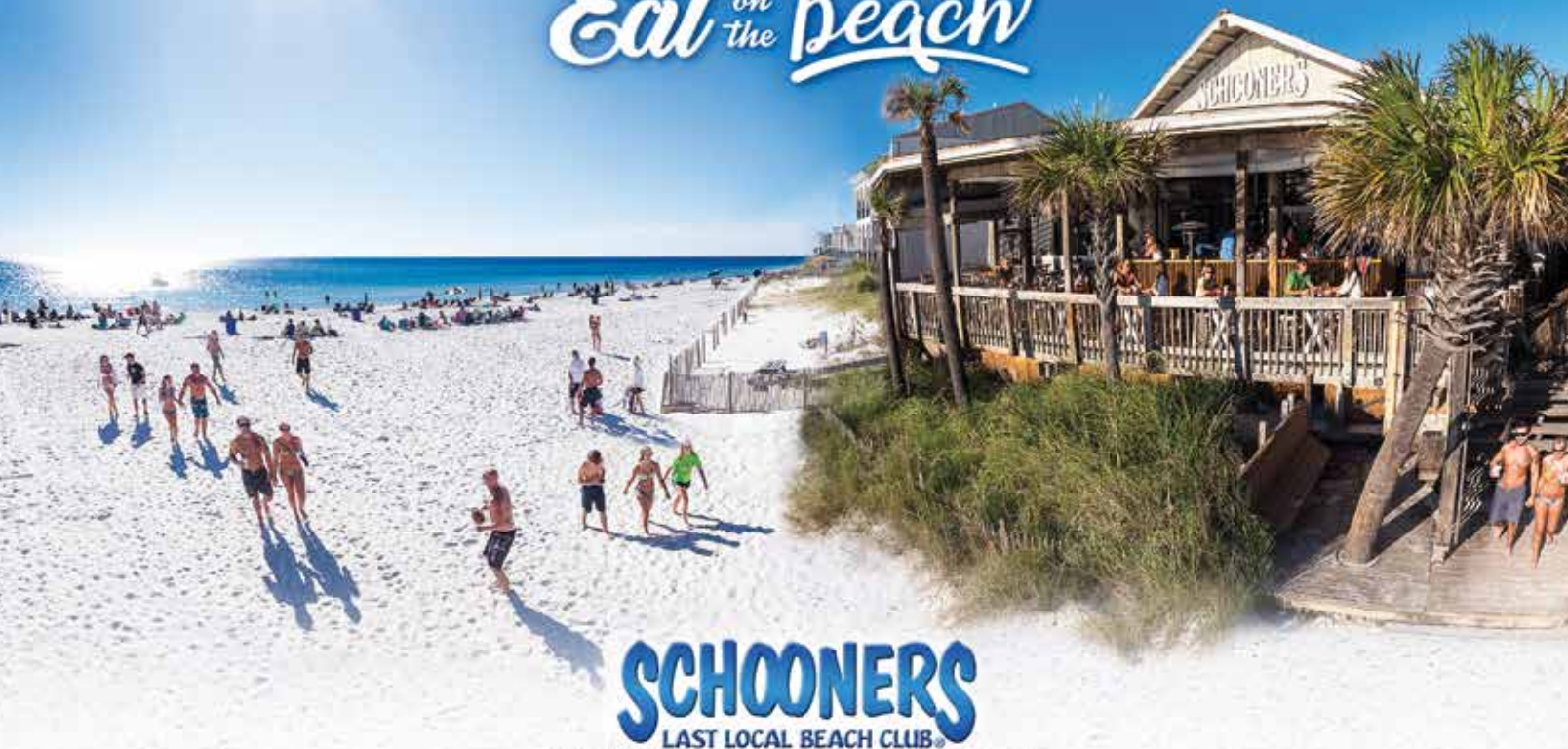
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# ROMANTIC VENUES

HERE ARE A COUPLE OF OPTIONS THAT WILL SPICE UP YOUR VISIT

## Firefly

Located about a block off the beach in the Shoppes at Edgewater, this wonderful locally owned and operated Mediterranean restaurant has a cozy vibe perfect for a dinner date night out. Named “Most Romantic Restaurant” by Open Table, Firefly is open daily for dinner at 5 p.m. Walk-ins are welcome, but reservations are recommended. Ask about the weekly specials and wine-pairing menu. [535 Richard Jackson Blvd., \(850\) 249-3359, FireflyPCB.com](#)

## Salon Baliage & Spa In Carillon Beach Resort

Salon Baliage & Spa mirrors the exclusive beach community vibe of Carillon Beach in the design of their private spa. Body treatments like the “Sea Salt Glow” will leave you feeling rejuvenated after a day at the beach, or just add an extra treat to your vacation experience. The salon, owned by Joni Day, frequently provides specials for its resort guests. [100 Carillon Market St., #202, \(850\) 235-1985, SalonBaliage.com](#)

## Saltwater Grill

The fresh Gulf seafood, Maine lobster and hand-cut steaks are a big draw, but it’s the 7-foot-high, 25,000-gallon tropical saltwater aquarium that sets the mood. Both the main dining room and the Mermaid Room lounge offer dazzling views of this tropical reef and its parade of exotic sea creatures — perfect for an unforgettable meal. [11040 Hutchison Blvd., \(850\) 230-2739, SaltwaterGrillPCB.com](#)


## Hand & Stone

A good massage could be the perfect chaser after a long day of shopping some of PCB’s finest locales. Located in Pier Park North near the heart of the shopping district, Hand & Stone offers a selection of relaxation services, including Swedish, prenatal, deep tissue and sports massages in addition to their namesake hot stone massage, which can be great for chronic pain and arthritis sufferers. They also offer couples massages. [15600 Panama City Beach Parkway, Suite 800, \(850\) 764-0617, HandAndStonePanamaCity.com](#)

## Bella Roma

Nothing says intimate like a quiet Italian dinner. Featuring authentic Northern Italian, Bella Roma offers an array of traditional pasta dishes, antipastos and some of the area’s best gourmet pizzas. It’s a truly memorable dining experience, where cuisine and atmosphere are paired as thoughtfully as food and wine. [11535 Hutchinson Blvd., \(850\) 249-1340, BellaRomaPCB.com](#)

## Massage Envy

A nationwide franchise offering massages, skin care and facials, Massage Envy offers many ways to help you reach a rested and relaxed state. Located in Pier Park, Massage Envy offers more personalized massage and therapy treatments to better match a varied clientele. Swedish, sports and deep tissue massages, along with trigger point therapy, are some of the options available to relieve tension. [15801 LC Hilton Jr. Drive, Suite 120, \(850\) 563-0070, MassageEnvy.com](#) 



# Shimmering Seas

Jewelry & Gifts

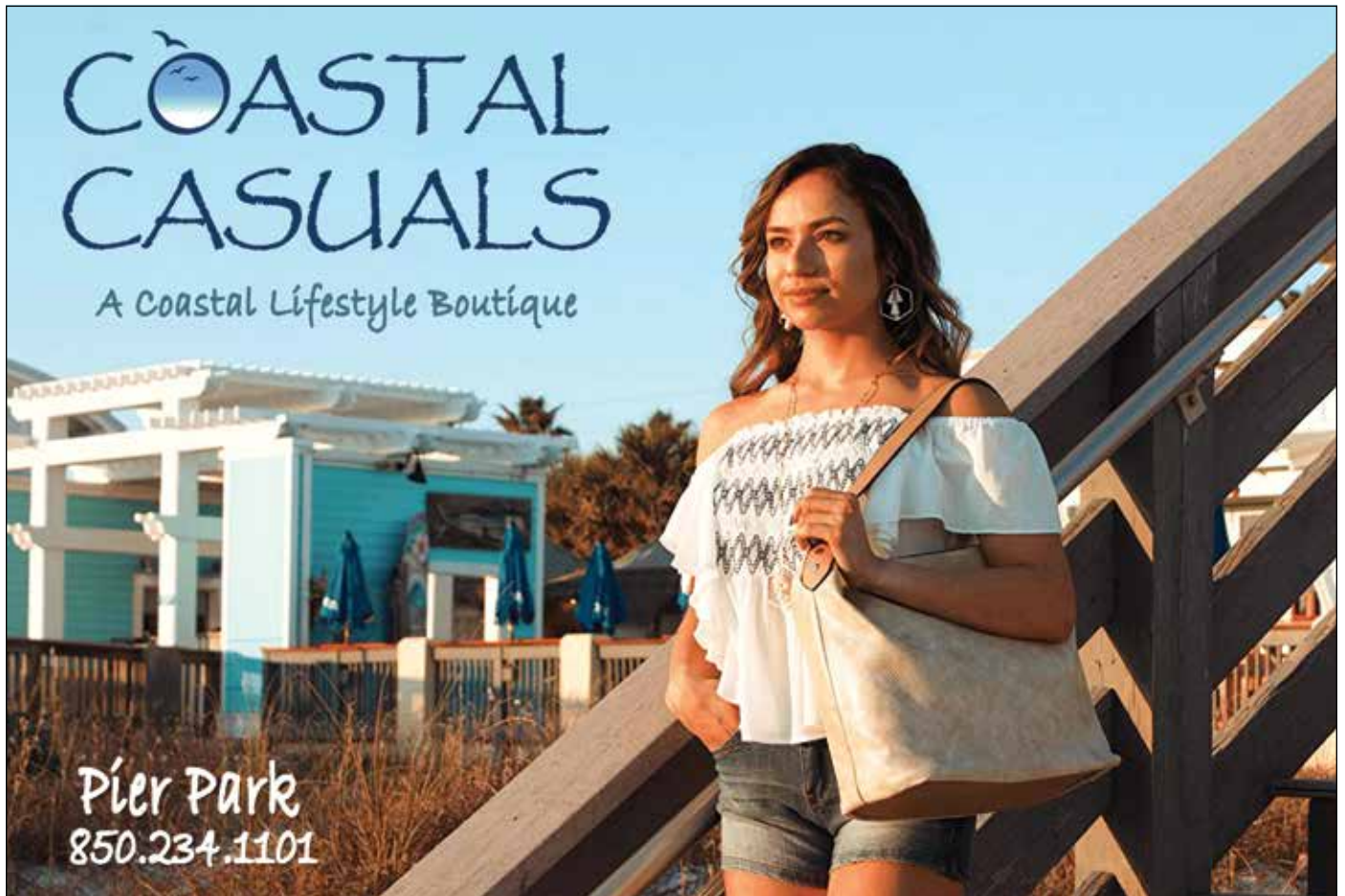


*"Jewelry Creations Inspired by the Sea"*

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## ENTERTAINMENT



### DISCOVER THE SIGHTS AND THE SOUNDS OF PCB

From live music at our open-air amphitheater to seafood festivals and holiday celebrations, PCB's schedule has something for everyone. There's an 800-pound Beach Ball Drop on New Year's Eve, our libations celebration UNwineD, or a swashbuckling good time at the Pirates of the High Seas Fest. And don't miss SandJam and Pepsi Gulf Coast Jam, featuring some of the top names in rock and country.



“

I visited Panama City Beach this summer with four of my best friends. We made so many memories from snorkeling to spotting dolphins! We will come back again.

**JOELEN FAMOSO**



## GOOD TIMES, GREAT FINDS

Hit the trail and discover some of PCB's top shops and boutiques **BY HANNAH BURKE**

Embarking on the Décor' By The Shore shopping trail allows you to bottle up the scenic splendor of Panama City Beach and take it home with you. Pick up your passport from Visit Panama City Beach, or print one from [VisitPanamaCityBeach.com](http://VisitPanamaCityBeach.com) and then collect stamps in it from seven of the most distinguished coastal consignment and antique furniture shops in the area. Once your card is filled and your wallet is empty, your trek will be rewarded. Simply turn the evidence of your excursion back in to the visitors' center for your very own Panama City Beach swag bag.

"People who take on this trail will love the local twist on Panama City Beach," says Lacey Rudd, Public Relations Manager for Visit Panama City Beach. "Each one of these stores has its own personality and holds a piece of our community. Although they all have the same theme, you're sure to find something different from each store!"

Take your time as you stroll down Panama City Beach's Coastal Design Emporium Trail, a choice selection of stores and shops specializing in coastal-themed antiques, furniture, gifts and accessories. These vendors are known for Northwest Florida's unique sense of style and design. ●

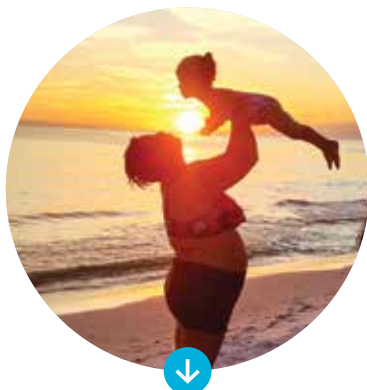
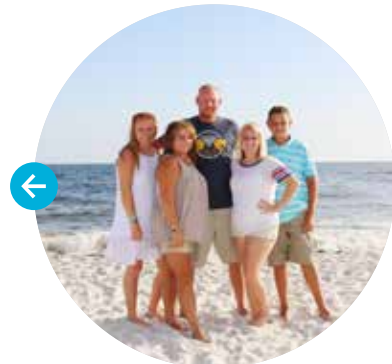


# PCB — IN YOUR WORDS

*Whether you're visiting PCB for the first time or the 50th, a trip to the beach always creates some of the best and most cherished memories. Friends, family or couples — no matter who you're here with, you'll never forget a moment. On this page, some recent visitors will share their thoughts on what made PCB special to them.*

The Gilmore family has been coming to #MyPCB for 22 years. My children have grown up here, and we spend a week in the summer and a week in the fall here. Our family loves to go sunset sailing and snorkeling with **Island Time Sailing**, and we spend all day at **Shell Island** and **St. Andrews State Park** swimming and snorkeling at the jetties. We head down to **Camp St. Helen**, where the **Ocean Meets Lake Powell**, and take pictures by the "old beach roller coaster." There are so many memories here at #MyPCB.

**NATALIE GILMORE**



My son and his fiancé were married in a beautiful ceremony at **St. Andrews Park** in October of 2021, so this trip was super special to me. I had my two sons, a daughter and all four grandchildren there together, and this was the first time little Kyran had seen the beach. My heart was so full. I feel that this picture is not only beautiful, but it also shows love — the kind of love I have for my family as well as **Panama City Beach**.

**CANDICE SIMPSON MARTIN**  
Lexington, Tennessee

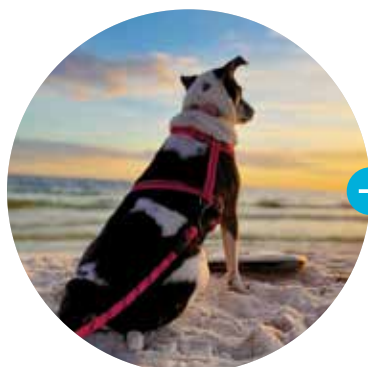
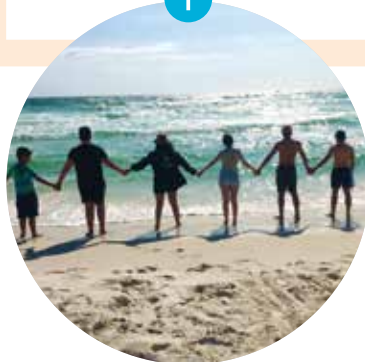
April of this year was our first time to **PCB**. We stayed in a beautiful beach house in the **Holiday Beach** area. We had such an amazing wonderful time that the kiddos wanted to move here. The beaches are absolutely breathtaking, and there's so many fun things to do in town. We will be back every year now.

**LISA SOLIZ**  
Watauga, Texas



My husband and I found **PCB** to be our home-away-from-home. We spend winters walking the beach and **exploring all PCB** has to offer. We are so blessed to be married for 46 years, and now that we are both retired, we have been additionally blessed to enjoy the **beauty of PCB**. Last year, we were very blessed when we adopted our 4-year-old granddaughter. We now see our PCB through her eyes. The magic never ends at PCB; see y'all in November!

**DIANA BARNES GOAD**



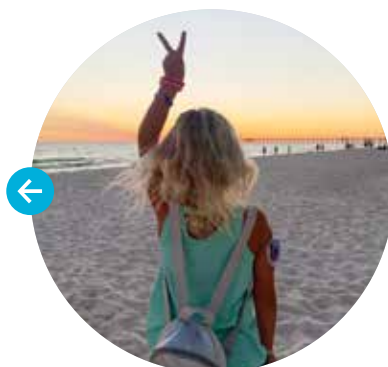
This was our first time to PCB, and we picked PCB specially because it's dog friendly. This was also our first vacation with our dog — as we lost our other one a few months ago (she was 18) and had been planning to take both. The **sunsets** were amazing and perfect every night at PCB. We loved **Pier Park** and the **SkyWheel**. #MyPCB

**CRYSTAL CAREL**

We visit **PCB** as a family a few times a year. It's perfect for our family and has everything we need.

This was our last **PCB sunset** until next spring. We don't say goodbye; we say peace out 'til next time!

**TAMMY WILLIAMS RHODES**





MAKE IT **EVENTFUL.**  
MAKE IT **YOURS.**



## PIRATES OF THE HIGH SEAS FESTIVAL

Oct. 3–9

Columbus Day weekend brings waves of fun-filled adventure to Panama City Beach each year with this annual event at Pier Park.

[VisitPanamaCityBeach.com](http://VisitPanamaCityBeach.com)

### PCB FOOD TRUCK & CRAFT BEER FESTIVAL

**Feb. 5–6** This festival will be a weekend of craft beer, great food, lawn games, music and fun for the whole family.

[VisitPanamaCityBeach.com](http://VisitPanamaCityBeach.com)

### PCB MARDI GRAS AND MUSIC FESTIVAL, FEATURING THE KREWE OF DOMINIQUE YOUNG PARADE

**Feb. 11–12** In conjunction with the Krewe of Dominique Young's great Mardi Gras at the Beach parade, this festival is always held the weekend before Fat Tuesday and features entertainment for the whole family.

[VisitPanamaCityBeach.com](http://VisitPanamaCityBeach.com)

### PCB SCOTTISH FESTIVAL

**March 5** Located at Frank Brown Park festival grounds, attendees can expect Scottish athletic competitions, Scottish and Irish musical performances, a British car club show, children's activities, and Scottish and Irish food and drink.

[VisitPanamaCityBeach.com](http://VisitPanamaCityBeach.com)

### EMERALD COAST CRUIZIN' CAR SHOW

**March 9–12/Nov. 9–12** Car enthusiasts of all ages are welcome to check out the thousands of hot rods, customs, muscle cars, trucks and classics on display.

[EmeraldCoastCruizin.com](http://EmeraldCoastCruizin.com)

### UNWINE D

**March 18–19** UNwineD features superb craft beer, spirits and wine from around the world, along with culinary creations by Northwest Florida's leading chefs.

[VisitPanamaCityBeach.com](http://VisitPanamaCityBeach.com)

### CAJUN FESTIVAL

**April 18–24** Cajun music, Cajun food and Cajun fun! C'mon ova' y'all! Join us for a Cajun Beach Party with daytime bands on the beach. It's lots of fun for the whole family. [Schooners.com](http://Schooners.com)

### THUNDER BEACH MOTORCYCLE RALLY

**April 27–May 1/Oct. 19–23** Thunder Beach Motorcycle Rally is held twice



yearly in Panama City Beach. Bikers from around the country enjoy live entertainment, local cuisine and scenic rides along the Emerald Coast. [ThunderBeachProductions.com](http://ThunderBeachProductions.com)

### VISIT PANAMA CITY BEACH IRONMAN 70.3 GULF COAST

**May 7** Athletes looking for a flat and fast early season race that will ease you toward a personal record can look no further than Visit Panama City Beach IRONMAN 70.3 Gulf Coast. [Ironman.com](http://Ironman.com)

### GRAND LAGOON TACOS & TEQUILA FEST

**May 7** Enjoy creative tacos and tequila cocktails made by local bars and restaurants all competing for the Best Taco and/or The Best Tequila Cocktail at Hammerhead Fred's. Enjoy live music and lots of fun. [GrandLagoon.com](http://GrandLagoon.com)

### PRO WATERCROSS

**May 7–8** In watercross, personal watercraft and water surfaces replace the motorcycles and off-road dirt tracks of motocross, and intensity levels are even greater. Competitors racing on unpredictable liquid tracks reach speeds of more than 85 mph, and freestylists turn astounding double-flips. Check out all the action when the Pro Motocross tour stops by Sharky's Beachfront Restaurant. [SharkysBeach.com](http://SharkysBeach.com)

### FLORIDA JEEP JAM

**May 10–14** Jeep enthusiasts from throughout the United States travel to Frank Brown Park for this five-day event dedicated to all things Jeep. [JeepBeachJam.com](http://JeepBeachJam.com)

### SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

**Recurring weekly | Tuesdays (June–August)**  
The Summer Concert Series has become a beloved summertime tradition in PCB. Enjoy a

free concert at the park every Tuesday at Aaron Bessant Park Amphitheater. [VisitPanamaCityBeach.com](http://VisitPanamaCityBeach.com)

### PEPSI GULF COAST JAM

**June 2–5** Pepsi Gulf Coast Jam, a three-day celebration of sun, fun and country music, will host the postponed 2020 festival on the Gulf Coast shores of Panama City Beach. [GulfCoastJam.com](http://GulfCoastJam.com)

### REAL.FUN.FOURTH. EVENTS

**July 2–4** This weeklong celebration boasts activities around Panama City Beach, including three spectacular firework shows. [VisitPanamaCityBeach.com](http://VisitPanamaCityBeach.com)

### PANAMA CITY BEACH FISHING RODEO

**Sept. 23–Oct. 9** Hosted by Capt. Anderson's Marina, the Panama City Beach Fishing Rodeo takes place during one of the best fishing periods of the year. The event features competition in categories including charter boats, recreational boats, party boats, even kayaks and paddleboards. Prizes are awarded in species categories ranging from king mackerel to red grouper, amberjack and many more. [PCBeachFishingRodeo.com](http://PCBeachFishingRodeo.com)

### SANDJAM MUSIC FESTIVAL

**Sept. 30–Oct. 2** This annual adult-alternative rock music festival will set their stages at Frank Brown Park. Come for the music, stay for the beaches and make long-lasting memories at SandJam presented by Pepsi. [SandJamFest.com](http://SandJamFest.com)

### LOBSTER FESTIVAL

**Oct. 10–14** The biggest seven-day lobster festival in Florida takes place at Schooners during the middle of October. [Schooners.com](http://Schooners.com)

### PANAMA CITY BEACH OKTOBERFEST

**Oct. 14–16** Authentic German beer and brats are



## SEABREEZE JAZZ FESTIVAL

**April 20–24**

The Seabreeze Jazz Festival combines top national smooth jazz artists with a full weekend of fun, sun, great beaches and good times — all on the west end of Panama City Beach.

[SeabreezeJazzFestival.com](http://SeabreezeJazzFestival.com)

the stars of the show, while this year's festivities will feature stein hoisting competitions, live music and plenty of activities for the kids. [PCBoktoberfest.com](http://PCBoktoberfest.com)

### BLOODY MARY FESTIVAL & GOLF TOURNAMENT

**Nov. 4–5** Bars and restaurants will compete for the title of "Best Bloody Mary." The winner will be crowned "Big Tomato," and the event will feature live music and award-winning bloody marys. For more information, visit Sheraton Panama City Golf & Spa Resort. [GrandLagoon.com](http://GrandLagoon.com)

### VISIT PANAMA CITY BEACH IRONMAN FLORIDA

**Nov. 5** Panama City Beach has proven to have the best combination of temperature and terrain for this competition, making the Florida edition of the challenge one of the most popular races on the circuit. [Ironman.com](http://Ironman.com)

### BEACH HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

**Nov. 25–26** Kicking off

Thanksgiving weekend, Beach Home for the Holidays includes a fun-filled lineup of activities and events to entice families from far and wide to build new traditions and celebrate the season together in Panama City Beach. [VisitPanamaCityBeach.com](http://VisitPanamaCityBeach.com)

### PCB MARATHON & 5K

**Dec. 3** Run through paradise alongside our award-winning beaches in the marathon, half-marathon, 5K or kid's fun run. The 26.2-mile race has become a staple for the community and helps attract thousands of residents and visitors to Panama City Beach. [PCBMarathon.com](http://PCBMarathon.com)

### NEW YEAR'S EVE BEACH BALL DROP

**Dec. 31** Celebrate New Year's Eve on the beach with not one but two countdowns, at 8 p.m. and midnight. Ring in the new year with fireworks and 10,000 beach balls being dropped over the crowd. [VisitPanamaCityBeach.com](http://VisitPanamaCityBeach.com) ●

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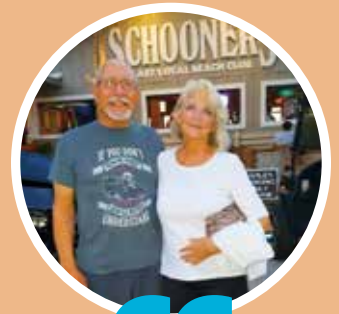


FOODIE



## FROM SURF TO TURF, FIND YOUR TASTE OF THE BEACH

Known as the Seafood Capital of the South, Panama City Beach offers memorable dining with the easy-going vibe you seek from a coastal town. You can look forward to welcoming service, unparalleled views and world-class restaurants. PCB sits at the nexus of the Gulf Coast and American South, making it an ideal location for unforgettable meals.



Panama City Beach is my hometown. I met my husband at The Beach Party in 1965, and Schooners has become our new favorite place as The Last Local Beach Club. My husband was stationed at Tyndall Air Force Base in Panama City, and I was born at Tyndall AFB. PCB — on the Gulf of Mexico, not the ocean — is still my dream home. I've been on many cruises to other beaches, none are as beautiful as Panama City Beach, Florida.

**ANNETTE S. RUPP**



# GREAT FOOD AND GREAT VIEWS

Enjoy the open air and great Gulf fare with these by-the-beach eateries

BY LIESEL SCHMIDT

When you're mere steps away from the freshest, most celebrated seafood in the country, the thought of boxing yourself into a restaurant dining room, walled off from the fresh air, sunshine and sounds of the shoreline can seem almost like sacrilege. But those view-obstructing walls don't have to be an issue if you play your cards right, and Panama City Beach has plenty of fantastic restaurants serving up beautiful vantage points and outdoor dining that you don't want to miss.

"We've got a view that's one in a million," says Melissa Whitted, the operations manager at **Runaway Island**. That observation is well founded as Runaway offers unobstructed views of the sun sinking into a watercolor of sunset hues each afternoon from their deck bar, sunset deck and dining deck, as well as their flag room and ballyhoo bar on their upper level. Perfect for those days when you feel like relaxing in a casual atmosphere. Feel free to dine on seven different types of fish tacos, and sip some killer cocktails or wicked frozen drinks. [14521 Front Beach Road, \(850\) 634-4884, RunawayIslandPCB.com](#)

An old-fashioned beach bar built on the beach back in the '70s, **Schooners** has a locale right along the surf, putting your toes steps away from a good wiggle in the sand and the tide right at eye level as you breathe in the salt air and feast on redfish tacos or their seafood sandwiches (grouper, redfish or lobster). Enjoying this beach bar's "sunset-perfect perspective," guests love to gather for the countdown before the sunset blast of the old Schooners cannon as the sun dips below the surface of the Gulf. [5121 Gulf Drive, \(850\) 235-3555, Schooners.com](#)

Located directly on the beautiful white sand beaches overlooking the Gulf of Mexico, **Harpoon Harry's** amazes guests with their 16-foot windows and sweeping 180-degree views of the Gulf of Mexico. The sunset experience is made even more complete with frozen drinks from the tiki bar or one of the restaurant's famous "monster harpoon" drinks. Harpoon Harry's menu — featuring its famous Seafood Bucket (crab legs, Gulf shrimp, clams and scallops) — will spear your hunger right through. [12627 Front Beach Road, \(850\) 234-6060, HarpoonHarry.com](#)

Starting with appetizers like fried boudin balls and gator bites, the menu at **Dat Cajun Place** is like a second line through the French Quarter, jazzing things up even more with Cajun specialties like po'boys, red beans and rice and their very own variation on the muffaletta. With their award-winning chicken and andouille sausage gumbo, it's Creole cooking at its finest. [2705 Thomas Dr., \(850\) 588-5314, DatCajunPlace.com](#)





~~~~~  
**FESTIVE  
COCKTAILS**  
and a seat  
overlooking the  
Gulf horizon  
make for a  
superior pairing.  
~~~~~



~~~~~  
**SHELL FISH**  
Nothing enhances  
a fish taco quite  
like a view of the  
sparkling Gulf of  
Mexico.  
~~~~~



Head down to the shoreline at **Hook'd Pier Bar & Grill** for some delicious seafood fare. Directly across the street from Pier Park, the eats can't be more fresh. Featuring an array of Gulf classics — grouper sandwiches, homemade gumbo, shrimp tacos and gator tacos (to name a few) — Hook'd will reel you in with ease. [16201-C Front Beach Road, \(850\) 233-8232, HookedPierBar.com](https://www.hookedpierbar.com)

Since 1986, locals and visitors have made **Sharky's Beachfront Restaurant and Tiki Bar** the place to go for fresh seafood, amazing entertainment and spectacular views. Sharky's adds its own unique flair to local seafood, steaks and other popular dishes. [15201 Front Beach Road, \(850\) 235-2420, SharkysBeach.com](https://www.sharkysbeach.com)

Serving a full menu of great seafood, fish tacos and cocktails from daybreak until the stars come out and play, you

might have to leave the sands of the beach to come in and dine at **Barefoot on the Beach Bar & Grill**, but their waterfront views will make you feel like you never left. One of a trio of Barefoot restaurants known throughout the area for their fresh, casual fare and fantastic drinks, this beachside eatery has options aplenty. [11073 Front Beach Road, \(850\) 249-2442, BarefootRestaurants.com.](https://www.barefootrestaurants.com)

For those looking for a food truck proficient in local Gulf fare, **Finns** offers a slew of favorites, but the standout has to be their island-style tacos (fish, ahi tuna or shrimp among others). They also have a selection of epic quesadillas with any protein you can think of, plus burrito bowls, wraps and nachos. [7210 Thomas Drive, \(850\) 249-3466, FinnsGrub.com](https://www.finnsgrub.com)

For an upscale experience, **The Grand Marlin** has the freshest seafood

delicacies that combine the Caribbean and the Gulf Coast. Dine on specials like grouper piccata, yellowfin tuna or crab cakes. The Grand Marlin also delights with an 80-plus bottle wine list, but the real draw might be the restaurant's raw bar, which boasts the finest fresh oysters from Apalachicola, East Bay and beyond. [5323 N. Lagoon Drive, \(850\) 249-1500, TheGrandMarlin.com](https://www.thegrandmarlin.com)

The only fish fresher than those exiting the kitchen at the **Saltwater Grill** are swimming about its mesmerizing 25,000-gallon saltwater aquarium. General manager Dante Hamm knows from good seafood. He grew up in Panama City Beach and is a graduate of the culinary program at Gulf Coast State College. The restaurant's tantalizing menu may overwhelm you, so here's a suggestion: After sipping on a Mermaid Water rum martini, get started with smoked tuna dip, proceed to a



Greek salad and go regal with Grouper Imperial, grilled and topped with lump crab meat. You may need to get dessert to go. [11040 Hutchison Blvd., \(850\) 230-2739, SaltwaterGrillPCB.com](#)

Offering fish tacos made with grilled mahi-mahi in your choice of corn or flour tortillas lightly warmed on the grill, **Diego's Burrito Factory** has a wide variety of toppings to make your taco all the more craveable. Suckers for shrimp will love their shrimp tacos, but if your appetite is shark-sized, order a fully loaded mahi-mahi burrito or their ever-popular spinach tortilla shrimp quesadillas. [15514 Front Beach Road and 6209 Sunset Drive, \(850\) 249-7373 and \(850\) 238-8741, DiegosBurritoFactory.com](#)

Named for its original owner and founder, **Dusty's Oyster Bar** has been a Panama City Beach landmark for more than three decades. They're renowned for their fresh oysters and their grouper sandwich, served fried, grilled or blackened in a po'boy roll. [16450 Front Beach Road, \(850\) 233-0035](#)

Need some down-home Southern fare? **Beau's** features sandwiches like fried chicken, pulled pork and burgers, then pair it with any of their classic sides, like collard greens, mac and cheese, potato salad and more. [\(850\) 775-1828, 2304 Thomas Drive, Beaus.business.site](#)

Family owned and operated, **C Level Bar & Grill** specializes in fresh Gulf seafood, hand-cut steaks, craft burgers and sandwiches. Their fresh seafood includes, fish tacos, crab cakes, Gulf grouper and mahi-mahi, just to name a few. [8014 Front Beach Road, \(850\) 233-3564, CLevelPCB.com](#) ●

INSTAGRAM @SALTWATERGRILLPCB



Saltwater Grill PCB

JAYNA LEACH



Barefoot on the Beach Bar & Grill



# FROZEN SWEETS & SUGARY TREATS

Let your sweet tooth get the better of you  
with these delicious options

BY LIESEL SCHMIDT



## THE YARD MILKSHAKE BAR

The Yard's extensive list of 50 insane and gravity-defying toppings means that their 28 base flavors of premium Hershey's ice creams can be combined into customized shakes so numerous that they would give a statistician pause. Since opening the Panama City Beach location in 2018, owners Logan and Chelsea Green have boasted signatures such as "The Unicorn," with its enchanted purple-and-white sweet cream ice cream swirled with sweet and sour cherry and blue raspberry rainbows. 15801 L.C. Hilton Jr. Drive, #110, (850) 708-3226, [TheYardMilkshakeBar.com](http://TheYardMilkshakeBar.com)

MICHAEL BOONIN



Ice cream, milkshakes and other frozen delights are some of life's simple pleasures, but simple doesn't have to mean boring. Panama City Beach offers the best and uncommon concoctions for tasty desserts. The next time you're in need of a scoop or two (or three), challenge your taste buds with a unique treat.

### **Pink Pelican Ice Cream Bar**

Pink Pelican Ice Cream Bar has the scoop on fantastic flavors, sourcing each of their 40-plus ice creams, sherbets and frozen yogurts from the crème de la crème of the nation's creameries. Perhaps that's what helped earn them the distinction of being named the No. 2 Ice Cream Shop in America by Tripadvisor. [543 Richard Jackson Blvd., \(850\) 249-5576, Facebook.com/PinkPelicanIceCream](#)

### **David's New Orleans Style Café & Sno-Balls**

Since they opened the NOLA-style eatery in 2007, owners David Bulger and David Ellingson have made it their mission to bring the Big Easy to the beach. A cup of finely shaved ice with soft-serve ice cream at its center is drizzled in one of many flavored syrups and is then capped off with a dome of even more shaved ice and syrup. Sno-Balls are customizable and kaleidoscopic, with more than 60 flavored syrups and 12 ice cream flavors. Favorites include Key Lime Pie and Red Velvet Cake. [13913 Panama City Beach Parkway, \(850\) 236-1998, DavidsSnoBalls.com](#)

### **Gypsea Crepes**

A go-to spot for unique sweet and savory crepes, Gypsea Crepes has something for everyone, any time of day. Those seeking a sugar rush shouldn't miss their Sweet Crepe filled with strawberries, bananas, blueberries and raspberries, and topped with choice of chocolate sauce, Nutella or peanut butter. If feeling extra indulgent, diners can top their crepe with a slice of cheesecake. [7012 Thomas Drive, \(850\) 588-7531](#)

### **The Pancakery**

Growing up outside New Orleans, Ricky Lehrmann and Daryl Battaglia, owners of The Pancakery, vacationed on Florida beaches. When they committed to going into business, they wanted to bring friends and families together in a special place. For them, Panama City Beach is such



INSTAGRAM @LIFE\_IN\_THE\_5TH\_LANE

a place. The Florida Panhandle's favorite breakfast spot — it's open for lunch, too — offers gourmet pancakes, crepes, omelettes and lots of sweets! No one says the super sugary Happy Face Pancake has to be reserved just for kids. Be sure to apply extra syrup! [13800 Panama City Beach Parkway, \(850\) 588-5077, ThePancakery.com](#)

### **Candymaker**

Started by local businessman Tom Ehlke, the Candymaker has become a popular stop for Pier Park visitors, and the demand for fresh, homemade taffy and candy has grown. Many visitors call and have the candy shipped to them after they get back home. Whatever craving you may have, Candymaker will fulfill it with one of the area's largest selections of handmade candies. [600 Pier Park Drive, Suite 100, \(850\) 236-6575](#)

### **Pokee & Ice Rolls**

Pokee & Ice Rolls is bringing Panama City Beach a vibrant fusion of Thai and Hawaiian delicacies. Ice rolls, or stir-fried ice cream, is a delicious handmade dessert that originates from Thailand. Check out their amazing process in person. [11260 Panama City Beach Parkway, Suite 104, \(850\) 319-7884, PokeelceRolls.com](#)



### THOMAS DONUT & SNACK SHOP

Opened as a snack shop in 1971, Thomas Donut & Snack Shop put the cherry on top of their already successful family-owned business when they built an ice cream shop in 2015. The menu offers a daily rotating list of 36 flavors of ice creams, frozen yogurt, sorbets and sherbets — plus a selection of delicious homemade doughnuts. **19208 Front Beach Road, (850) 234-8039, [ThomasDonutAndSnackShop.com](http://ThomasDonutAndSnackShop.com)**



The Pancakery

### Gulf Coast Burger Co.

The brainchild of Justin Greene and Dustin Kelly, Gulf Coast Burger's shakes shake up the dessert scene with flavors such as the sugar-packed "Sugar Rush," a vanilla base loaded with Fruity Pebbles and festooned with an enormous lollipop, some Nerds Rope, Airhead Extremes and cotton candy ... then topped with a cherry. Their spiked shakes make this kid-like indulgence anything but child's play. **10031 Hutchison Blvd, (850) 775-1312, [GCBurgerco.com](http://GCBurgerco.com)**

### Kilwin's

Offering handcrafted sweets since 1947, Kilwin's has become a name famous for their heavenly fudges, premium gourmet chocolates, caramels, toffees, brittles, candied apples and caramel corns. Or try their diverse flavors of ice cream. **821 Pier Park Drive, (850) 230-4177, [Kilwins.com](http://Kilwins.com)**

### Chuy's Gourmet Pops & More

With more than 35 flavors on their menu, Chuy's Gourmet Pops & More first opened in late spring of 2016. Since then, owners Jazmina and Silvino Barragan have been using fresh fruits and ice creams to create combinations that are truly unique and worth getting downright sticky for. Their fruit-based pops are made using fresh juices and about a dozen flavors of hand-dipped ice creams. **11204 Hutchison Blvd., (850) 249-5102, [Facebook.com/ChuysPops](https://Facebook.com/ChuysPops)**



### Hershey's Beach Ice Cream Shop

The name brand says it all. Featuring 40 flavors of Hershey's ice cream, this shop has whatever you're looking for — even by the pint. Pick from a variety of cones, milkshakes and sky-high sundaes. **8815 Thomas Drive, (850) 708-1840, [IceCreamShopPanamaCityBeachFL.com](http://IceCreamShopPanamaCityBeachFL.com)**

### Monkey Licks Ice Cream Shop

Swing by to try their tall unique cones and wide assortment of ice cream dishes and sandwiches — like their unique Fruity Pebbles ice cream sandwich. **11840 Front Beach Road, (850) 234-0082, [Facebook.com/monkeylickspcb](https://Facebook.com/monkeylickspcb)**

### Frozen Dune

Cold-fried ice cream is the specialty at Frozen Dune, which offers an array of rolled ice cream options — like a rolled ice cream — sure to tempt your sweet tooth. If ice cream doesn't catch your fancy, they also have a selection of teas and coffees. **17292 Front Beach Road, #103, (850) 249-1888, [Frozen-Dune.business.site](http://Frozen-Dune.business.site)** ●

### Gulf Coast Burger Co.



### COCO LOCOS DRINK PARADISE

Why settle for some run-of-the-mill beverage when you can have the freshest fruit and frozen drinks served inside of a pineapple or coconut? Just find the tiki hut in Pier Park and sample from a menu of drinks and smoothies that combine pineapple, mango, lime, strawberries, raspberries and more.

**16201 Front Beach Road,  
(256) 393-3444,  
[Facebook.com/cocolocospcb](https://Facebook.com/cocolocospcb)**





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## SPORTS



### A GOOD REASON TO BREAK A SWEAT

Whether it's golfing, biking, diving or anything else under the sun, Panama City Beach has a venue or a destination for the athletically inclined. The city also boasts two top-notch sports parks that host an array of sporting events and tournaments.



“

We come to PCB three to four times a year and absolutely love it. The local food, the breathtaking water, the boat rentals to Shell Island, snorkeling, tanning, relaxing — you name it, we've done it. And we wouldn't trade it for the world!  
Love #MyPCB

**EMILY WILEY BRITT**

# HOMEFIELD ADVANTAGES

PCB has a crowded slate when it comes to sports venues

*BY THOMAS J. MONIGAN*







~~~~~  
**THE PANAMA**  
City Beach Sports  
Park debuted in  
2019 and hosts an  
array of youth and  
amateur sports.  
~~~~~

Ever since its opening, the new Panama City Beach Sports Complex has been delivering on its promise to be something special. More than a decade in the making, Panama City Beach's newest attraction celebrated its grand opening in 2019 as local youth teams and sports enthusiasts descended on the new complex to grab a first look.

"This project has been a long time coming," said Visit Panama City Beach's President and CEO Dan Rowe.

After over a year of hosting sports teams and championships, local fans seem to be in agreement.

"The response has been overwhelmingly positive," says Richard Sanders, Vice President of Sports and Special Events for Visit Panama City Beach, "from the field conditions to the state-of-the-art light system and the professionalism and customer service of the park's staff."

And what is proving so attractive?

"Being mostly an artificial turf facility, weather does not play as an important role in events being able to be played," Sanders said. "We have already experienced a couple of situations where one park was deemed unplayable due to weather conditions, and we were able to move games to the new sports complex and the event was able to play to conclusion. This is important when you are hosting hundreds of teams from throughout the United States."

Years in the planning, the Sports Complex itself came together in about 14 months. Hired to bring the plan together was Jamie Cox, the general manager of the complex.

"We're staying busy and having fun," Cox said. "Everything we've been planning for and hoping for, it's just great to see it coming to fulfillment."

"As soon as folks get out of their vehicles, they're greeted with smiles



## SPORTS COMPLEX

### BY THE NUMBERS

The new complex sits on land donated by The St. Joe Company at the east end of scenic Breakfast Point. Nearly \$39 million in preparation and construction has created 13 rectangular fields — and much more:

- ◆ **13 multi-purpose sports fields** for use with every sport, from baseball and softball to lacrosse and soccer
- ◆ **9 AstroTurf fields** with Z-Cap Cooling technology
- ◆ 4 fields with **natural grass**
- ◆ **2 championship fields** with a capacity up to 1,500
- ◆ 13 fields total, all with **qualité LED lights**
- ◆ **Wi-Fi access** throughout complex
- ◆ On-site **concession stands**



PLAY BALL PCB's sports parks attract tournament teams from around the country.

and customer service all the way to their playing fields. The overall cleanliness of the complex, plus the attention to detail on the little things, like water in the dugouts and on the team benches — those kind of 'back to the basics' items are the kinds of things they are enjoying because not a lot of people do that anymore," says Cox.

### FRANK BROWN PARK

Meanwhile, the city's original sports park, Frank Brown Park, is still a big draw for sports tournaments, concerts, pets and more. The facility encompasses over 200 acres and offers something for everyone.

Frank Brown Park regularly hosts regional and national events for youth and adults, including USFA Fastpitch Softball, Grand Slam Baseball and the World Softball League.

"Frank Brown is a diamond sports primary park whereas the new sports park is primarily for soccer, lacrosse and football," Sanders says.

Another big draw for Frank Brown Park is the state-of-the-art Aquatic Center. The facility's 50-meter Olympic pool is terrific for swim meets or pool training, and it also has a springboard and a diving well that served as the event venue for a master's synchronized swimming national championship. Parents and younger visitors will love the separate 5,000-square-foot splash park and kid's pool.

Dog lovers will appreciate a fenced-in, off-the-leash dog play area located on Frank Brown Park grounds, while fishermen can take advantage of a stocked fishing pond on the property. ●

"FRANK BROWN IS A DIAMOND SPORTS PRIMARY PARK WHEREAS THE NEW SPORTS PARK IS PRIMARILY FOR SOCCER, LACROSSE AND FOOTBALL."

— RICHARD SANDERS, Vice President of Sports and Special Events for Visit Panama City Beach

## FRANK BROWN PARK

### BY THE NUMBERS

The playgrounds, picnic areas, freshwater youth fishing lake, greenways and trails are open to the public year-round and are free from sunrise to sunset.

- » 9 full-size baseball/softball diamonds designed for tournament-level play
- » 6 lit soccer fields
- » 1 lit basketball court
- » 4 lit tennis courts
- » 1.25 mile lit jogging track + walking/biking trails
- » 1 children's playground
- » 1 fishing pond
- » 22 acre festival site
- » 50m olympic-size swimming pool
- » 1 splashpad

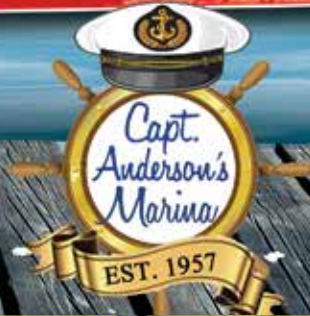


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5550 N. Lagoon Drive, Panama City Beach

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# STAYING FIT ON YOUR TRIP

Keep your vacation healthy with  
these beach activities

**BY ROB RUSHIN**

Trying to maintain a healthy lifestyle can be a challenge for any vacation or beach trip, but Panama City Beach has more than one way to stay active. Whether you like long walks, short runs, bike rides or surfside yoga, here are a few ways to stay physically inspired on your next visit.

## **BICYCLING**

What's the best thing about biking around Panama City Beach? The land is almost perfectly flat, so anybody can enjoy biking here.

Biking around Panama City Beach is a great way to explore and see things that just fly by in a blur when you are in a car. Add a little pedal power to your beach excursion, and burn a few calories while you tick off some of the most popular sites along Panama City Beach.

There are too many rental outlets to count, but a quick visit to [VisitPanamaCityBeach.com](http://VisitPanamaCityBeach.com) will help you find places such as Peddle Paddle Surf Shop and Bike the Beach PCB, where they can take care of finding the best ride for you or your family. They will set you up with helmets, locks, sunscreen and other essentials. You can rent your gear for as long as you want — from a couple hours to several weeks.

## **KAYAKS, CANOES AND BOARDS (PLUS YOGA)**

Done with land excursions and want to get out on the water? Renting a kayak or canoe in PCB is as easy as renting a bike. Spend some time alone with nature, and get a look at the parts of Panama City Beach that most rarely see when you take off on your favorite self-powered water craft.

Stretch your arms as you take a kayak or canoe on the emerald Gulf waters, or sit back for a trip through some of the off-the-beaten-path waterways, lagoons and lakes. There's also stand up paddleboarding (or SUP), which has surged in popularity and is a unique way to explore local waters.

Miss your weekly yoga routine? Panama City Beach also has paddleboard yoga, yoga on the beach and aerial yoga to help you find your center while on a whirlwind vacation.

[VisitPanamaCityBeach.com](http://VisitPanamaCityBeach.com) can point you toward local trainers and vendors that will help set you up, help you select the right equipment and give you tips on how to use the gear properly. With



## GOING TO THE MAT

A couple appears to worship the sun while practicing yoga on the sand.

watercraft, most vendors are happy to deliver and pick them up — and some even offer shuttle services so you can make your paddle journey one-way.

Call ahead or just stop in. Like all the businesses along the coast, the atmosphere is friendly and helpful.

## VOLLEYBALL

If you need something more competitive than beach yoga, beach volleyball has grown in popularity for both participants and spectators. Like most beach destinations, Panama City Beach is loaded with places to show your best Olympic form.

Work off that big lunch with an afternoon at the net with friends or a pick-up game with the family. On the beach, places such as Schooners, Sharky's and Hook'd Pier Bar offer pickup games where you can work up a thirst or just watch the action.

Many of the resorts in the area provide multiple courts for guests to unwind with a little friendly sportsmanship. For extended stay guests, there are several league options to choose from.

## FITNESS CLUBS AND CLASSES

Getting away from the same old routine is part of the charm of a vacation. But

you might want to maintain your regular fitness practice at one of the area's 20-plus fitness centers, including some national chains where your home membership might apply. Ask your gym to see if there is a partner facility here you can use.

You will also find specialized fitness regimens, like martial arts academies offering everything from karate and aikido to Brazilian jiu-jitsu. Class

levels range from beginner to black belt, so check ahead to find the right class for you and your family.

For those leaning toward a more sedate exertion, there are dozens of nearby options for every kind of yoga imaginable. Call ahead to find the place that suits you best.

Now enjoy putting a healthy twist on your vacation.

You'll be glad you did. ●



## EATING RIGHT

In the mood for a healthy meal during your visit? Panama City Beach has a wide range of healthy eats and vegetarian/vegan options.



### FINN'S BARISTA BAR & SNACK SHACK

The place to go for all things vegan. Their wide selection of toasts and acai bowls makes this trendy coffee shop popular with vegans and non-vegans alike. They also serve Noli South Kombucha, which is made locally.  
[7200 Thomas Drive, \(850\) 866-1471](#)

### LOTUS CAFE & JUICE BAR

Lotus Café offers snacks like hummus and even seed cheese, made with sunflower or pumpkin seeds and 100% vegan. Their all-organic menu of vegan food allows you to add tofu, tempeh or a veggie burger to any meal.  
[707 R. Jackson Blvd., \(850\) 234-1651](#)

### LIZA'S KITCHEN

This popular foodie and brunch spot makes everything from scratch, including focaccia bread, soups and salad dressings — even the mayonnaise. Stop in for classic eggs Benedict, eggs New Orleans or our very own eggs Liza.  
[7328 Thomas Drive, \(850\) 233-9000, LoveLizas.com](#)

### THE POUR

Another local coffee shop known for its vegan bites and comfy couches. Their veggie'wich sandwich is stuffed with fresh veggies like cucumber, tomatoes, and avocado and spread with hummus. They also offer avocado toast with crushed red pepper and a lemon wedge.  
[12902 Front Beach Road, \(850\) 234-3084](#)

➡ Finn's Fish Taco

# GOLF COURSES

Whether you're looking for a relaxing day on the course, a getaway with your friends or eager for some family fun, Panama City Beach has three public golf courses eager to cater to your needs.

## HOLIDAY GOLF CLUB

**RENOVATED IN 2014**, Holiday Golf features redesigned tee boxes and 18 remodeled greens that feature TifEagle turf. This new, state-of-the-art turf offers superb speeds and excellent consistency. Holiday looks to impress with its forgiving fairways, modern greens and Southern hospitality.

The 18-hole Championship Course has very generous fairways with water coming into play on almost every hole. The layout is forgiving on the tee and challenging on the greens making it great for every level of golfer.

Holiday also features a par 3 course. Master your short game on this 1,003-yard course, great for junior and beginning golfers. The course is available 7 a.m. – 8 p.m., seven days a week and features a pace of play of only 60 minutes.

Holiday also features a pro shop, practice facilities and Mulligans Bar & Grill, offering breakfast, lunch and a fully stocked bar.

100 Fairway Blvd., (850) 234-1800  
[HolidayGolfClub.com](http://HolidayGolfClub.com)

Holes: 18/9

Yardage: 6,859/1,003

Par: 72/27


Greens Fees: \$75–\$39

Par-3 Course\*


Fees: \$39–\$29


\*Par-3 course is not available for night play



Pro Shop 

Restaurant on Premises 

Driving Range 

PGA Pro Available 





## BAY POINT GOLF CLUB

**OFFERING THE ONLY** Nicklaus Design in the Panhandle, Bay Point Golf Club boasts a sprawling locale carved from Northwest Florida's natural terrain of scrub oaks, pines and saltwater marshes. You'll find this course's layout unique, challenging and unforgettable.

Recently renovated with new TifEagle greens and now reopened after the effects of Hurricane Michael, the Nicklaus Course is set against the backdrop of St. Andrews Bay and a marshland wildlife sanctuary. The conversion of all 18 greens will create more consistent putting surfaces with faster green speeds year-round. In addition, 23 renovated green-side bunkers complement the greens and include sand and drainage.

"I couldn't be prouder of the work our team has put in at Bay Point to get the Nicklaus Course back into playing shape," Bay Point general manager Ryan Mulvey said. "It has been a very difficult time for our community since (Hurricane Michael), but this golf course has been a real rallying point for our team, and the work we've done has helped provide a sense of normalcy for all of us."

When you get hungry, swing by Bar 72 for pub-style and seafood fare. Bar 72 is open for lunch daily, and it serves breakfast and dinner on select days.

4701 Bay Point Road  
(850) 235-6950  
BayPointGolfClub.com

Holes: 18  
Yardage: 7,152  
Par: 72

Greens Fees:  
\$85-\$45



## SIGNAL HILL GOLF COURSE

**THE ELDER STATESMAN** of Panama City Beach golf courses, Signal Hill celebrated its 56th birthday in 2018. Rich in history and natural splendor, this golf course's setting is a well-maintained wonderland of wide-open fairways and dazzling greens.

Signal Hill retains a rich history and has learned a lot in its years along the coast. It has delighted guests with reasonable rates and a kind, attentive staff for decades. The 18-hole course is relatively flat, with some simple confidence-boosting holes and some tantalizing tricky ones. This makes Signal Hill the ideal golf course for families, beginners and pros seeking a relaxed round.

The course also offers a pro shop and a snack bar serving breakfast and lunch. Built by John Sherman, the course is still a local family affair; Signal Hill owner and operator Beth Langford is Sherman's daughter, her son is one of the course managers and her grandson works in the pro shop.

9615 N. Thomas Drive, (850) 234-3218,  
SignalHillGolfCourse.com

Holes: 18; Yardage: 5,617; Par: 71

Greens Fees: \$52-\$34; Nine Hole Rate: \$42-\$27







***ARRH  
MATEY!***



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5325 N. Lagoon Drive, Panama City Beach  
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[piratecruise.net](http://piratecruise.net)





## LET'S ALL GATHER TOGETHER

Long known for its appeal as a wedding and honeymoon destination, Panama City Beach also garners acclaim as a top-notch venue for family reunions, business retreats and group excursions.



My daughter Kaitlyn celebrated in PCB with her boyfriend and parents and a few close friends in August of 2021 (her birthday is Aug. 18). We've visited PCB a few times over the past few years for Jeep events, and we love it. We got to planning, and we knew we just wanted to relax, enjoy the beach and hit the bars at night. We visited Donovan's, Foghorns (which we loved since it was so low-key and had nice pool tables), and Tootsie's Orchid Lounge. We had a blast! We got some beach time in, had some drinks and definitely had lots of laughs and memories to last forever. Can't wait to come back.

**MICHELLE AUBERT  
CHIASSON**

A photograph of two women sitting on wooden beach chairs on a sandy beach at sunset. They are both smiling and holding glasses of wine. A fire is burning in a metal fire pit in front of them. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue with some clouds. The ocean is visible in the background.

# A SPECIAL PLACE TO GATHER

Make Panama City Beach your go-to  
locale for get-togethers

BY KARI C. BARLOW







**F**or generations, Panama City Beach has made all manner of meet-ups memorable.

Settings matter when people come together as families, businesses, classmates or clubs to reflect on the past, plan the future, mark milestones or join in shared interests.

Coming to Panama City Beach as the culmination of the work of planning an event, meeting or reunion is like rewarding yourself with a vacation — one that is world class and postcard perfect. Indeed, Tripadvisor has named PCB one of the top three beaches in the United States.

It's little wonder that one trip to PCB tends to lead to another. Couples who marry on Panama City Beach are likely to return as parents; business travelers frequently come back on their own time.

### PLAN AN EXQUISITE WEDDING

With 27 miles of white, sandy beaches along the sparkling Gulf of Mexico, Panama City Beach is one of the most popular destinations for proposals and weddings in the

Southeast. From jaw-dropping scenery to elegant venues and the professionals with years of experience, it has all the elements necessary to pull together those once-in-a-lifetime moments.

At the popular **Capt. Anderson's Marina & Event Center** — where wedding space is always in high demand — the backdrop of Grand Lagoon is a main attraction.

"From sunrise to sunset, the views are amazing," Marketing Director Chelsea Ray said. "With pelicans and seagulls constantly showing off to the occasional dolphin sighting and 43 boats all docked here unloading their catch of the day, there's never a dull moment!"

The stunning water views also flow seamlessly from ceremony to reception, where the Capt. Anderson's team offers all the latest trends, such as photo booths that post directly to social media and retro Polaroid cameras with fun props.

"Everybody, no matter the age or celebration, loves acting silly in front of the camera with good friends in a beautiful setting," Ray said. "Another extremely popular





trend is charcuterie boards. From simple meats and cheeses placed in an appealing presentation to extremely elegant buffets and towers of beautiful charcuterie. They're often too pretty to even want to touch — but they're very delicious."

For brides looking to hold larger events, the **Sheraton Panama City Beach Golf & Spa Resort** — the only AAA Four-Diamond property in the area — combines luxury, elegance and practicality.

"From start to finish, the Sheraton offers everything a successful event needs to connect, to inspire, to celebrate and to have fun on Florida's Emerald Coast," said Charissa Thacker, Sheraton's marketing manager. "With the added confidence of a Marriott brand, guests can also trust that the highest standards of safety and service are a priority."

The sprawling resort offers more than 60,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor event space, including two ballrooms, waterside dining and a private bay beach, known for hosting stunning wedding ceremonies and casual bonfire receptions with breathtaking sunsets.

"Our main attractions include the luxurious 12,000-square-foot Serenity Spa at Sheraton, the only Nicklaus-design golf course in Northwest Florida, and now the area's only dining cruise aboard our new 78-foot

Champagne Lady," Thacker said. "Our weekly cruises will feature delectable buffet menus, live entertainment and breathtaking views of coastal waters and surrounding areas."

Other large-scale venues include the **Springhill Suites Panama City Beachfront**, which boasts seven event rooms with a total of 10,832 square feet of event space. When not enjoying the beach, wedding guests can relax by the outdoor pool, enjoy a drink on the terrace or take advantage of the always-open fitness center.

For any bride looking to customize her special day, it's all about those small-but-amazing details, like the increasingly popular **Alpha-Lit Marquee Letters**. These giant glowing letters — spelling out first names, last names and sweet messages — are sure to add a little glamour to any wedding reception. After all, what couple wouldn't enjoy seeing their name in lights?

With the motto "You Spell It — We Light It Up!" this Dallas-based company, which has a location on the Emerald Coast, can even help out with proposals, baby announcements, anniversaries and more! For more information, check out [AlphaLitLetters.com](http://AlphaLitLetters.com).

At **Sharky's Beachfront Restaurant**, couples will find a lively one-stop shop for all their wedding needs. Located directly on the Gulf of Mexico, the popular eatery is set up to accommodate

## WEDDING PROS

Whatever the size or style of your wedding celebration, the professional designers and planners in Panama City Beach have you covered.

Here are a few more local businesses to help you bring your special day to life:

**Beach Beginnings Weddings**  
[BeachBeginnings.com](http://BeachBeginnings.com)

**Princess Wedding Co.**  
[PanamaCityBeachWeddingPackages.business.site](http://PanamaCityBeachWeddingPackages.business.site)

**CB Weddings**  
[CBWeddings.com/Welcom.html](http://CBWeddings.com/Welcom.html)

**Panama City Beach Weddings**  
[PanamaCityBeachWeddings.net](http://PanamaCityBeachWeddings.net)

**Beach House Florist**  
[BeachHouseFlorist.com](http://BeachHouseFlorist.com)

**Cakes by Annette**  
[CakesByAnnette3276.wixsite.com/cakesbyannette](http://CakesByAnnette3276.wixsite.com/cakesbyannette)

**Panama City Weddings**  
[PanamaCityWeddings.com](http://PanamaCityWeddings.com)

**Resort Collection**  
[ResortCollection.com](http://ResortCollection.com)

**Coastal Beach Weddings**  
[CoastalBeachWeddings.com](http://CoastalBeachWeddings.com)

**Carillon Beach Weddings & Events**  
[CarillonWeddings.com](http://CarillonWeddings.com)

*For more suggestions on venues and planners, visit [VisitPanamaCityBeach.com/weddings/services-resources](http://VisitPanamaCityBeach.com/weddings/services-resources).*

up to 500 guests, either indoors or out on the sand.

If you're going for a more laid-back-and-minimal-fuss sort of vibe, **Endless Beach Rentals** is a natural choice. Whether you're interested in secluded Shell Island or a peaceful stretch of beach at **St. Andrews State Park**, Jared Williams and his team can provide you with a variety of packages that include chairs, fire pits, s'mores, hammocks, coolers, Bluetooth speakers and even a few cornhole sets. All you and your guests have to do is sit back and enjoy the breeze.

"Folks want easy. They want to click a button and get an email, and then be done with it," said Williams, who services bonfires, proposals, rehearsal dinners and much more. "We offer a few more hours on the world's most beautiful beaches with the people that matter most!"



“It’s difficult to pinpoint how long family reunions have been gathering in PCB, but from the numerous families who have contacted us for assistance over the years, there have been plenty. They love to visit in summer when the kids are out of school, and many of them use it as an annual vacation.”

— **RENEE LALANNE-WUERDEMAN,**

*Vice President of Sales at*

*Visit Panama City Beach*

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### REDISCOVER FAMILY & FRIENDS

In recent years, PCB tourism leaders have intentionally replaced college and university spring break activities with a more family-friendly vibe.

That transition has brought about additional chain hotels, new dining, shopping and attraction options, and the new Panama City Beach Sports Complex.

As a result, the area is seeing a steady flow of family reunions. This segment of group visitors is primarily regional, traveling to PCB from Georgia, Texas, Tennessee, North and South Carolina and Virginia. Their preferred attraction is the beach itself, and their favored accommodation is the condominium.

“It’s difficult to pinpoint how long family reunions have been gathering in PCB, but from the numerous families who have contacted us for assistance over the years, there have been plenty,” said Renee Lalanne-Wuerdeman, vice president of sales at Visit Panama City Beach. “They love to visit in summer when the kids are out of school, and many of them use it as an annual vacation.”

And the fun does not have to stop at the water’s edge. Take your reunion on a dolphin tour, play nine holes at a premier golf club or relax on the deck of a beachside restaurant serving up world-class seafood.





**SHOES OPTIONAL**  
Kick off your flip-flops  
at the sound of the  
processional!

Here are a few more ideas to ramp up your reunion:

- **Shop at Pier Park**

This massive, open-air retail destination has everything from local boutiques to big-name stores.

[Simon.com/Mall/Pier-Park](https://www.simon.com/Mall/Pier-Park)

- **Splash out at Shipwreck Island Water Park**

This 15-acre park has a professionally trained aquatics staff, raging rapids, a lazy river and waterslides for all ages.

[ShipwreckIsland.com](https://www.shipwreckisland.com)

- **Get weird at Ripley's Believe It or Not Odditorium**

Mirror mazes, shrunken heads and a 7D theater!

[Ripleys.com/PanamaCityBeach](https://www.ripleys.com/PanamaCityBeach)

Military reunions are also a long-standing tradition in Panama City Beach. Members of the Army, Air Force, Navy and Marines began meeting here with the advent of World War II veteran events.

"Those visitors love our warm weather, affordable accommodation options and appreciate that a third of Bay County's population comes from our Tyndall Air Force Base and the Navy Support Activity facility," Lalanne-Wuerdeman said. "We offer outstanding incentives to choose Panama City Beach. Besides our standard amenities, we offer a customized brick to be placed at our Veteran's Memorial and a commemorative lapel pin."

## STRATEGIZE IN PARADISE

Panama City Beach is ideal for corporate meetings. In addition to 1,800 rooms

and 160,000 square feet of meeting space across four conference resorts, the area offers 20,000 rooms at hotels, motels and condominiums.

"We're easy to get to," Lalanne-Wuerdeman said. "We're served by Delta, Southwest, American and United airlines, with service to Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport, and three highways from off of Interstate 10 also lead directly into Panama City Beach."

As a full-service CVB, Visit Panama City Beach is also uniquely positioned to provide meeting planners from all market segments with a variety of services including site selection, RFP development, assistance with housing, suggested itineraries and day trips, welcome packets and a staff table at your event to answer questions and provide materials about Panama City Beach.

At the Sheraton Panama City Beach Golf & Spa Resort, in-person corporate meetings are continuing to incorporate virtual segments to their schedules.

"Everyone experienced a crash course in virtual events during the past two years, and we don't see this trend going away completely," said Charissa Thacker, the resort's marketing manager. "To ensure we're ready to meet these new trends, we have partnered with event technology experts, Encore, our on-site audiovisual company, to connect our clients with creative solutions for hybrid, virtual and in-person events."

The best part? When the business is completed, the sparkling Gulf of Mexico is never far away.

"Visitors to Panama City Beach can't wait to get in the water," Thacker said.

"From first-class fishing and diving to snorkeling St. Andrews State Park and playing in the waves, everyone can enjoy the coastal waters in their own way."

And you can't forget the Southern hospitality.

"It's hard to find a community like ours where everybody is a friend — stranger or not," Capt. Anderson's Ray said. "I think that's what makes Panama City Beach such a special place to host an event!"

## PCB CELEBRATIONS 101: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

We asked the experts for tips on booking a group vacay in Panama City Beach, and here's what they said:

**Book early and be flexible.** In the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, many events are being rescheduled — and demand is higher than ever.

**Hire a planner.** These pros will keep you focused and on schedule so that your big day is perfect.

**Ask questions.** The more you know, the more confident and relaxed you'll be on your special day.

**Plan on some traffic.** Panama City Beach has been discovered, and you're likely to see some crowds, especially during peak summer months.

**Stay safe.** Pay close attention to our beach warning flags and local surf conditions. Wear sunscreen — you don't want to ruin your good time with a burn.

**Relax.** Be patient, be kind and this place will reward you with memories to last a lifetime. ●

# CELEBRATE A MILESTONE OR JUST A MONDAY

PCB has a bevy of options to help you commemorate in paradise

BY KARI C. BARLOW

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**W**hether you're marking an official holiday, like Memorial Day or the Fourth of July, or sharing a personal milestone with friends and family, Panama City Beach is the perfect destination. Its turquoise waters, sugar-white beaches, luxurious accommodations and world-class restaurants have you covered for all adventures, no matter the season.

PCB offers every kind of fun imaginable, and celebrating a special occasion is a fabulous reason to visit. From romantic holidays to adventurous family vacations, any trip is a chance to take your celebration to the next level and make lasting memories at our Real.Fun.Beach.

Head out on a fishing charter with dad for Father's Day, paddleboard through crystal-clear waters on the Fourth of July, celebrate a retirement with a beachfront dinner or take the whole family out on an eco-tour — there's no shortage of activities for your celebrations here.

"People come from all over to meet up here and celebrate on our beaches," said **Jared Williams**, who oversees the team at **Endless Beach Rentals**. "We embrace the opportunity to be ambassadors to the sand!"

Williams services a wide range of events including birthdays, retirement parties, anniversaries and casual beach bonfires.

What's the common thread? People who want to hang out and make amazing memories.

"Whether it's close family, college friends or annual meet-ups, people come here to be with people," Williams said. "It's a place to share with those you love!"

A visit to Panama City Beach is the perfect reminder that it's not always about how you celebrate but where.

So what are you waiting for? Pack your bathing suit and flip-flops, and get started with some of these ideas:

## PROPOSAL ON A HELICOPTER

Go big! Go high! Hearts will race as you share your special moment while soaring over the sparkling Gulf of Mexico. With incredible views of PCB's sugar-white sand beaches and thrilling sites below, a daring and romantic helicopter tour with **Panhandle Helicopters** will turn any proposal into the memory of a lifetime.

## ANNIVERSARY PHOTOS AT THE NUMBERED BEACH ENTRANCES

Whether commemorating one year or 35 years, visitors and couples can scout the beach entrances along the **Bay County Public Beach Access** points to find the marker number that suits their occasion. These marker signs, which range from one to 100, come with the stunning backdrop of the Gulf of Mexico and make perfect photos



for all major milestones, including birthdays, wedding anniversaries, years cancer-free and more.

## BEACH BABYMOON AND GENDER REVEAL

What better place for expectant parents to celebrate the joy of their soon-to-arrive baby boy or girl? Couples can relax during this special time with a variety of romantic activities, including a couple's massage at the **Sheraton's Serenity Spa** and dinner at **Firefly**, voted OpenTable's "Most Romantic Restaurant 2017." Panama City Beach also offers moms- and dads-to-be unique opportunities for gender reveals, including **Island Time Sailing Cruises**, with its 365-degree view of the stellar Florida sunset, and the popular **SkyWheel**, which can arrange changing the LED lights on the ride to blue or pink for a grand gender reveal surprise.

## FAMILYMOON AT THE BEACH

For newlyweds who want to include their children on their honeymoon, Panama City Beach has adventurous and memorable options for families of all ages. Experience family bonding and almost guaranteed dolphin sightings on the water with Jet Ski or boat rentals, parasailing, fishing charters, snorkeling adventures and more. Head to the beach at sunset for a luxury picnic custom designed by **Luxe Picnix** for unbeatable new family pictures and never-ending smiles.

## GRADUATION PHOTOS

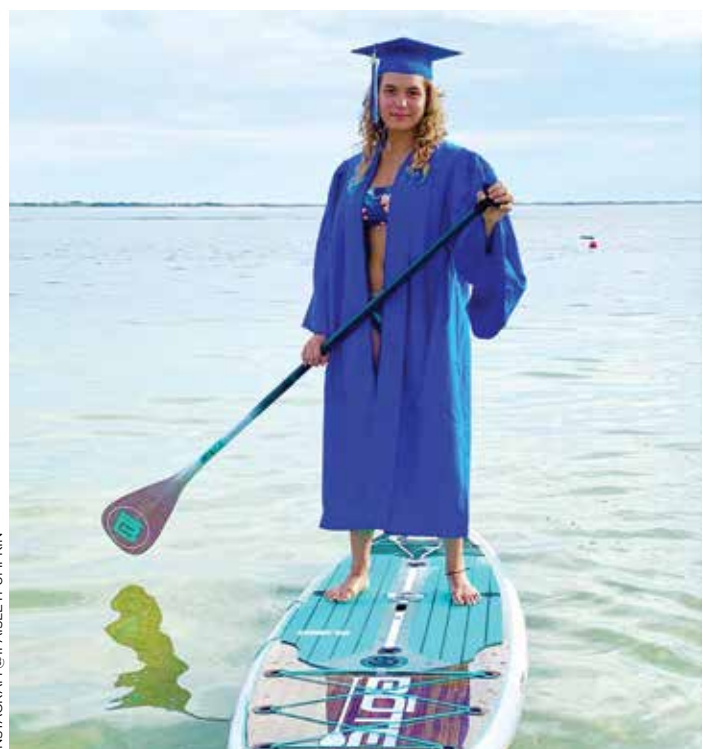
High school and college seniors who want to celebrate their hard work with amazing photos will find a variety of backdrops in Panama City Beach. From a sunset on the dunes to **Shipwreck Island Water Park** to a scenic lakeside trail at **St. Andrews State Park**, these photos can be as silly, serious and everything in between.

## CHEERS WITH A SANDCASTLE PARTY

Perfect for birthday parties, graduations, bachelorette trips, engagements and more, professional sandcastle sculptors in Panama City Beach can custom build a sandcastle announcing any special event. In addition, the company also offers professional sandcastle building lessons that are perfect for a child's birthday party. Arrange for a customized sandcastle, and make this beach get-together an Instagram-worthy occasion. ●



INSTAGRAM @HEYITSLYNIE



INSTAGRAM @IPALSLEYPUMPKIN

# STAY PCB CURRENT

## BEACH RESPONSIBLY

The health and safety of our Panama City Beach community is our top priority.  
Please follow CDC guidelines.



## KEEP PCB BEAUTIFUL

Help preserve the beauty of the Gulf of Mexico and the beaches of Panama City Beach by not littering. Trash receptacles are in place along the entire length of the beach.

## LEAVE ONLY FOOTPRINTS

The Leave Only Footprints Ordinance is in effect for Panama City Beach. All your personal items including, but not limited to: **TENTS**, **CHAIRS**, **COOLERS**, and **UMBRELLAS** will be removed and disposed of if left on the beach between the hours of 7pm and 7am. On public beaches or with the upland landowner's permission, personal property may be stored overnight at the toe of the dune at your own risk.

[VISITPANAMACITYBEACH.COM/STAYPCBCURRENT](https://www.visitpanamacitybeach.com/staypcbcurrent)

Sign up to receive alerts for flag changes by texting **PCBFLAGS** to **888777**



**GREEN –  
LOW HAZARD**  
Calm conditions,  
exercise caution



**YELLOW –  
MEDIUM HAZARD**  
Moderate surf  
and/or currents



**RED – HIGH  
HAZARD**  
High surf and/or  
strong currents



**RED  
OVER RED**  
Water closed  
to public



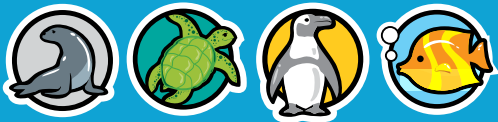
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Dangerous  
marine life





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