# EPANAMA CITY BEACH Spring/summer 2019 MAGAZINE

# **Perfect Timing**

Beautiful weather and big events await as the warmer months begin

**UNwineD** Get in line for the area's top festival

**IN THE BAG** Cornhole is a way of life at the beach

**SELFIE TRAIL** The area's top spots to snap shots PLUS Need a little adrenaline? Try out PCB's top 10 spots and attractions for thrill seekers.



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SPRING SUMMER 2019





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# PANAMA CITY BEACH

## WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE ACTIVITY IN THE SUMMER IN PCB?

#### VISIT PANAMA CITY BEACH

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"Kayaking in Camp Helen State Park" — **Barrie Ainslie** 



"Shooting pool at Funland" *— Traci Smith* 



"Walks on the Sandy Beach" — Charlene Honnen



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## **BEACHSIDE CONCERTS, FIREWORKS, FESTIVALS AND MORE** — they're all waiting for you

at the Real.FUN.Beach. this spring and summer. This year is packed with fun entertainment, new attractions and endless sunshine for our loyal visitors to enjoy.

As you flip through the pages of this guide, you will notice the structure of this magazine has changed for the better. Inspired by our Make It Yours philosophy, we want YOU as the visitor to use this magazine as a guide to customize your next visit to the beach. We have articles for each PCB fan in your life — ranging from the sports lover (updates on Panama City Beach Sports Complex, pg. 32) to the one who loves all things outdoors (Ecotourism, pg. 45), from the event junkie (pg. 73) to the "selfie queen" of the bunch (pg. 18), we hope you are inspired to book your best visit yet!

If the local experience is what you are after, check out the Experiences section (pg. 88) to hear from PCB's favorite residents, business owners and staples in our community. Read more about Nelda Fields, Panama City Beach loyalist and lifetime local, along with others, as they share their favorite spots for visitors to experience. Speaking of locals, visit the shopping page for some native gear, including locally produced snapbacks and comfy tees to take home after your visit and remind you of sunny days in the sand. (pg. 80)



Spring and summertime call for some of the destination's beloved events, including our Third Annual UNwineD festival, featuring some of Northwest Florida's finest culinary creations, along with the best wine, craft beer and spirits in the South. In partnership with *Southern Living*, we are able to bring an elegant garden party straight to the beach, complete with unique musical talent our visitors cannot find anywhere else. Following the Grand Tasting, enjoy a live concert event featuring three-time Grammy winner **Brandi Carlile**, with opening entertainment by national recording artist **JOHNNYSWIM** (pg. 82). For a list of all summertime events, including Real.FUN.Fourth. and Pepsi Gulf Coast Jam, check out the events calendar on page 74.

There is no better place than Panama City Beach for your next adventure, and we can't wait to welcome you. The sunshine and great times with your loved ones await along our 27 miles of sugar white sand and turquoise green waters. We hope to see you soon!

DAN ROWE President and CEO Visit Panama City Beach



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## FISHING, DIVING AND THE COASTAL LIFESTYLE

Chasin' The Sun explores the diverse fisheries found in the turquoise waters off the coast of Panama City Beach. Hosts and professional fishing guides, Capt. Justin Leake and Capt. Travis Holeman, provide an in-depth look at the irrestistible coastal lifestyle, highlighting the region's rich culture and revealing why Panama City Beach is a fishing and diving hot spot and family vacation destination.





## » LIVE WEBCAM

When you can't be in Panama City Beach, you can still keep an eye on the world's most beautiful beaches thanks to a new high definition webcam mounted on the M.B. Miller Pier. Just go to **VisitPanamaCityBeach.com** to access the webcam, and even take control of the camera for up to 40 seconds at a time!

You can choose from 10 preset views to check on the waves and the water, or take a look down our white sandy beaches in either direction.

As an extra treat, you'll be able to save and share images from the webcam, or see a time-lapse replay of the previous day's sunset. Check it out! It's the next best thing ... to actually getting the sand between your toes.





Even if you can't be here in person, you can catch a glimpse of Panama City Beach from anywhere in the world! Check out the white sand, emerald green water or last night's sunset!

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO FIND OUT ABOUT CURRENT BEACH CONDITIONS! VISITPANAMACITYBEACH.COM

» SOCIAL CABANA

Check out what's happening in Panama City Beach through our range of social media: Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, Google Plus, YouTube and our Blog.





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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

X

\*\*NOT DRAWN TO SCALE

Major Road

**14 PANAMA CITY BEACH** SPRING/SUMMER 2019



## **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





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

**PANAMA CITY BEACH** is the perfect vacation destination for families, and the beach itself 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. Start a game of beach volleyball, or gather everyone for a bike ride along the beach. Off the shore, a bevy of water parks, fun parks, museums and tours will fascinate and delight all ages. And when it's time to sit down to a family meal, you won't have trouble finding a spot that's kid- and wallet-friendly. At the beach, your family will never run out of ways to make it yours.

FAMIL) BEACH

all in the second second

# TRAILS TO YOU

If you're looking for the perfect social media pic, grab your walking shoes because PCB has a bevy of sites to offer

**BY LIESEL SCHMIDT** 





hey say that a picture is worth a thousand words, but when it comes to social media, a picture can be worth a thousand likes — maybe more. Enter the "selfie," that ageold millennial practice of holding up a camera with outstretched arm to snap a picture of yourself against whatever backdrop you might choose. It's a photo that, before the advent of digital and camera phones, was generally a trial-by-error exercise that often yielded some ... *interesting* results. But as technology evolved and allowed us the chance to instantly view our self-taken pictures to see whether we'd actually captured anything worthwhile or should instantly delete, the practice of hitting the shoot button has become a trend that shows no signs of slowing down as people seek out ever more inventive ways — and ever more interesting places — to strike a pose and smile for the selfie.

As with all pics, these fun photos are all about capturing the moment

and preserving those memories in time. From the silly to the serious to the downright wacky, we've seen them all since selfies aren't something we keep to ourselves. They are shared with the rest of the world in the blink of an eye, flitting their way through the social media networks like butterflies in frenzied migration.

Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat...you name it, they're there. And never has there been a more effective way of achieving notoriety as a tourist attraction or a must-see/



must-do/must-go place than that very simple snap-and-share of a great selfie that explodes across social media. From restaurants with share-worthy food to landmarks that beg for attention, people flock to these places to get in on the action, to take a selfie that will show some ingenuity or creativity and capture people's eye. And as anyone can see from scanning the ever-changing social media feeds, Panama City Beach is getting plenty of selfie love as people go mad with posts hashtagging their time in Panama City Beach.

And it's with good reason; there are numerous places throughout this coastal city that already make it a destination worthy of note beautiful beaches, great fishing, fantastic resorts and excellent dining and shopping. You name it, it's here. And while many might walk by certain things throughout the city without ever giving thought to snapping a pic,

there are some truly fun places to stop and flash a smile. So set your phone to camera mode and get ready to take your perfect shot.

Coming into a new city is always a memorable moment, and it's one worth capturing on film ... so to speak. So stop the car and pop out for a selfie with the "WELCOME TO PANAMA CITY BEACH" SIGN on the highway or at the Welcome Center as your backdrop. Sit on it, stand next to it or stay true to the spirit of the selfie and snap a pic of yourself showing off your excitement at the adventure that awaits you as you enter. Then plan to snap a similar — though noticeably regretful - shot when it's time to head home as you bid the city farewell.

Not that now is the time to be thinking about leaving - though that après-vacation glow you'll no doubt have will certainly be something to look forward to. No, now is the time to be thinking about everything you have on your itinerary for your fabulous stay in this fantastic city full of undeniable appeal and vibrant color. It's the color that grabs attention,

color that says, "It's selfie time." And with their bright facades painted in a rainbow-like parade of colors, the so-called "rainbow buildings" next to Pier Park definitely fit the bill, so much so that they've earned a place as a top spot for selfie snapping. So, too, has the *Pier Park arch*, the gateway that announces to all that you have officially arrived at PCB's premier destination for dining, shopping and entertainment. With its vintage style script, this massive metal archway welcomes one and all to come, see, taste and play --and when you're looking for a great selfie moment, this is definitely one worth noticing.

#### **LANDMARKS**

such as the Pier Park arch and the city's welcome sign make for great mementos to take home from your Panama City Beach visit.

















#### WHETHER you are

striking a pose or gathering the family for a group shot, selfies help capture a piece of that beach magic. It's not everyday that you can say you encountered a **MERMAID** or a **PIRATE** — unless, that is, you sail on over to Sisters of the Sea & The Dive Bar, where you'll have the perfect shot at taking a selfie with one of these lovely sea sirens or salty scalawags. For an even bigger pirate-themed adventure, take a day trip out on one of PCB's **SEA DRAGON PIRATE CRUISE** and

say "Arrrrr," then snap away and get ready to tell a tale to tag onto your post. And speaking of telling tales, there's no better bait for a selfie like your triumphant moment with a fish — the fish you caught that's "this big!" Here's your proof to show off to the world as you stand with catch in hand and make twin fish-faces for the camera. PCB's **THREE FISHING PIERS** offer the perfect fishing spot for casting a line without ever leaving the shore, and you'll have a fabulous backdrop for your like-worthy pic. A little more off the beaten path, take a trek down to **CAMP HELEN STATE PARK** to see the remains of its old pier. With this old structure as a backdrop for your selfie, you'll get a shot that whispers tales of fishermen long gone.

Nothing says beach vacation like a beach ball, and the **GIANT BEACH BALL** located just outside the front entrance of The Grand Theater is one fun place to gather a few of your closest BFFs for a sunny selfie before checking out the latest flick on the big screen. Speaking of big, the **GIANT PROPELLER** in front of Captain Anderson's Marina is a major "wow" waiting just for you. A true piece of salvaged maritime wreckage, the propeller is an authentic part of the British oil tanker Empire Mica that was sunk by a German U-Boat in 1942. It now holds a place of pride at the marina, so lean on in, smile, and say, "Shipwreck!"

If you're in the mood for high-flying fun, check out the **SKYWHEEL** and take a sky-high selfie at 180 feet with a shot of your bird's eye view in the background. Back down on the ground, tee up and get goofy with your pose at one of **GOOFY GOLF'S** wacky course attractions like the sphinx or maybe a dinosaur. Even if you don't make a hole in one, at least you'll score a selfie worth sharing.

Share even more fun and get in on the action at one of PCB's many concerts and events at **AARON BESSANT PARK** and **FRANK BROWN PARK.** As go-to spots for great local bands and music festivals such as the Pepsi Gulf Coast Jam or the SandJam Fest — not to mention other expos and events — these are two places where your next sensational selfie is close to center stage.

From fishing and exploring to stuffing your face with unbelievable eats, Panama City Beach has the perfect excuse to get down with your funky self and snap a selfie. So strike a pose and hashtag #RealFunBeach — you have arrived at PCB, and this is one city you'll never get tired of sharing.



# STARTING A NEW TRADITION

20 Reasons why Panama City Beach will rock your family's world

411111

**BY LINDSAY FERRIER** 

Story and photos originally published by visiting blogger and influence

have totally awesome memories of Panama City Beach from when I was a kid. Back in the '80s and '90s, it was a teen paradise filled with kitschy souvenir shops, colorful amusement park attractions and sunburned packs of adolescents.

On our PCB vacations, my girlfriends and I would put on our matching "Spring Break" airbrush T-shirts and stroll down the sugar white sands in search of cute boys, our spiral perms dutifully scrunched and our lips seductively coated in Dr. Pepper-flavored Bonne Bell Lip Smacker.

On the last evening of that particular vacation, I gathered my courage and called out to him after he'd walked by. "Hey! Bikini Man!" I shouted, lifting my camera.

For years, this photo has pretty

much defined Panama City Beach in my mind. Little did I know that while I was busy growing up, getting married and having kids of my own, PCB morphed into something completely different. The roadside motels were replaced by shining highrise condominiums. An international airport opened in 2010, drawing hordes of vacationers from around the world. I brought my family to

#### MILES OF

unspoiled beaches make Panama City Beach an easy place to spend a day with the kids.



Panama City Beach last fall, and the place completely stole my heart. We loved it so much, we came back again this year.

I love Panama City Beach now for its soft, white sands and crystal clear emerald waters. I also love it because there's something here for anyone and any budget. Choose from this list of our favorite things to do at Panama City Beach, and you're pretty much guaranteed the beach trip of a lifetime.



#### **»STAY**

Finding a place to stay is fairly stress free in Panama City Beach. There are tons of beachfront condos, and the competition to rent them out ensures the vast majority are clean, comfortable, well-appointed and, most of all, affordable. Expect to pay about \$200 a night for a condo that sleeps 4–6 people in the summer and around \$120 a night in the offseason.

We stayed in the ginormous and kid-friendly Splash Resort last year, which boasts three pools, a lazy river and an impressive water play area. This year, we stayed at Palazzo Condominiums by Wyndham Vacation Rentals and loved our spacious beachfront condo. For those of you who prefer the hotel life, the Holiday Inn Resort gets a big thumbs-up from families. It has a water playground, a lagoon pool, beachfront rooms and daily activities for kids.

#### **»EAT**

Good news: You do not have to break the bank to have a fabulous meal in Panama City Beach.

Finns Island Style Grub just happens to have some of the best tacos in the entire world, if you ask me, as well as seriously delicious cold-brew coffee. Order the ahi tuna and carne asada tacos when you go, and tell them I sent you. They'll have no idea who I am, but tell them anyway. I dare you.

Donut lovers brave the hour-long wait most mornings for the handmade goodies at Thomas Donut & Snack Shop, but I recommend you skip the lines and go there for an early lunch. The kolaches — sausages wrapped in hot, yeasty rolls — are fantastic, and you can have those donuts for dessert.

We all love Eat My Pasty, a family pub with a delicious British-themed menu. Try the Thai Green Chicken pasty for a savory treat, and be sure to split one of Aunt Helen's Waffle Berry Pasties for dessert. The burgers and fries are also top-notch.

For straight-up seafood, take a tip from the locals and head to Hunt's Oyster Bar & Seafood Restaurant. And go early if you don't want to wait hours for a table. Here, you'll find delicious and fresh oysters, shrimp, crab legs and fish in a convivial, no-frills environment.

With all the money I've just saved you, you'll be able to splurge on a big night out at Firefly, a gorgeous restaurant that's not only my favorite in Panama City Beach, it's one of my favorites in the whole United States. I'm pretty sure I could eat nothing but Firefly's she-crab soup for the rest of my life and die happy, and the pepper-crusted stuffed filet mignon is magnificent. Reservations are a must here, even in the offseason.

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## **»PLAY**

ATTRACTIONS ranging from water parks to state parks will keep your family's itinerary full.

Whether you have preschoolers, teens or something in between, your entire family will have fun on an Airboat Adventures tour. You'll speed through

the creeks and marshes of West Bay in an airboat searching for alligators, bald eagles, dolphins and more plus a few controlled spinouts on the

open water. Kids even get to take turns riding up top with the captain. This tour combines adventure and excitement with actual learning about the ecosystem and the animals it supports, so it's a huge win in my book.

For the best shells and snorkeling in the area, head to Shell Island in nearby St. Andrews State Park. You'll find the best shells at the beach known as "Kiddie Pool." Dig down a few inches into the sand banks on the edge of the water, and you'll turn up gorgeous shells in seconds. On the jetty side of the island, the water is shallow, clear and perfect for snorkeling.

Shell Island isn't all St. Andrews State Park has to offer. It also has great hiking trails and a fun nature center to explore.

A sunset dolphin tour is a must at Panama City Beach, and there are options for every budget. Vacationers rave about the affordable dolphin cruises aboard the Sea Screamer, or you might opt for the pirate ship known as the Sea Dragon, which features sword fights, a pirate dance party, face painting and more.

We splurged on a private sunset dolphin cruise, and it was worth every penny. Our guide took us right up to the dolphins as they swam around our boat. We also made a stop at Shell Island for snorkeling, shelling and interacting with a raccoon family that lived among some nearby rocks. It was unforgettable.

Rainy day? No worries. There are plenty of indoor activities at Panama City Beach. Wonderworks is an awesome way to spend a few hours on a hot or rainy day. Think of it as an educational amusement park, with dozens of rides and hands-on, interactive exhibits your whole family can enjoy together. We loved visiting this place and easily could have spent an entire day here. Across the street, you'll find Ripley's Believe It or Not! - always a good option with kids. This location includes an Odditorium, mirror maze, 7D movie theater and LaseRace attractions.

Gulf World is another fun way to spend a day at Panama City Beach, with a range of exhibits featuring animals such as dolphins, penguins, seals, alligators and flamingos, live shows every half-hour and lots of interactive programs allowing you to swim with dolphins and stingrays, be a trainer for a day and more.

There's much more, of course. Stuffing your face on fried shrimp baskets at giant seafood houses and fishing off the pier. Riding bicycles and renting wave runners. Chasing sand crabs on the beach at night and plummeting down a water slide at Shipwreck Island. But this list should give you a great head start on planning what could easily be the best beach vacation your family ever takes.



# IT'S ALL IN THE BAG

Already a local institution, PCB set to host major cornhole tournaments this winter

STORY BY THOMAS J. MONIGAN // PHOTOS BY MICHAEL BOOINI

rank Geers chuckles when someone asks him if he is the inventor of cornhole.

"This was a backyard game that we decided to turn into a sport," Geers said recently, "and over the last 13 years, that's what American Cornhole has been doing."

Cornhole has been a popular game in these parts in recent years, and you can see it played at local establishments throughout the area this spring and summer. As the temperatures warm and the beaches fill, you'll never venture far without running into a game or two.

So what makes it popular? It's a family affair.

"The first thing is that it's a very simple game that anyone can participate in, and you can play indoors or outdoors," Geers said. "A grandfather can play with his grandson or granddaughter. It's a lifetime sport. And it's very, very social."

As part of its 15th season, the American Cornhole Organization is bringing the ACO Panama City





Sta a



Beach Major tournament to the Laketown Wharf Center from Nov. 8-9. The organization runs state, regionals and world championships in singles, doubles, seniors, juniors and women's levels.

"Once I did the research and learned just how large the ACO is, we're ecstatic to be chosen from everybody that Mr. Geers looked at," said Pat Holcombe.

Holcombe, who grew up in Panama City, is marketing director for Emerald View Resorts, which manages and maintains the Laketown Wharf Event Center.

That facility contains 28,000 square feet, and Laketown Wharf itself has 50,000 square feet of boardwalk around its lake that will be hosting mini-parties to welcome the players, according to Holcombe.

"We think it's going to be a great thing for Panama City Beach, just because the people he brings in are from our type market in those areas," Holcombe said. "It's a perfect marriage."

Geers was brought to Pan-

ama City Beach for a site visit early in 2018 by the Sports Marketing department and immediately fell in love with the area. His tournament was scheduled for last November, but Hurricane Michael last October made that impossible.

"We're extremely excited to be rescheduling and coming back," Geers said. "It's not often that we have such a unique, fun vacation destination. Our event will bring in players from

all over the country. There will be probably 13 to 15 states represented and the location is awesome. I think our players will have a really, really special time, and for locals, there is no cost to come out and check out some of the top competition."





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**THE AMERICAN** Cornhole Association will be holding a major tournament in Panama City Beach in mid-November.



You can find cornhole games around town on and off the beach, and it's a perfect family sport. If you're seeking something a little more competitive, Sundays in June will also see the debut of a six-week competition known as the Panama City Summer Cornhole Series, and it will involve local establishments.

In 2018, events included Fishale Taphouse & Grill, Buster's Beer & Bait, Beef O'Brady's, The Brass Tap, The Lakehouse at Carillon Beach and Ms. Newby's.

"Most of those venues are back in for 2019," organizer Chris Pfahl said in January. "I am looking to add Salty Hobo or Shrimp Boat in St. Andrews as well, but that has not been confirmed yet."

The top eight teams from each local tournament will gain the right

to compete in the city finals; which will be held a week before Labor Day. The winning team will get free entry, hotel stay and \$300 to represent Bay County in one of two state tournaments, according to Pfahl.

"We look forward to seeing the bags in the air and getting back to competition," Pfahl said. "There is a great community of cornhole players in Bay County, and all of us are itching to get back to playing." •

Whether you are tuning up for the American Cornhole Major or just want to take a weekend trip to participate in one of the fall tournaments, Panama City Beach has many opportunities to plan a visit to enjoy this "backyard" or "tailgate" game. Visit AmericanCornhole.com for more information.



## ACO PANAMA CITY BEACH MAJOR

 What: The American Cornhole Association presents a Master Series tournament in Panama City Beach.

 Where: Laketown Wharf Resort
 When: Nov. 8–9
 More info: AmericanCornhole.com

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## VisitPanamaCityBeach.com



## ALL SYSTEMS 'GO' FOR NEW SPORTS COMPLEX

BY THOMAS J. MONIGAN

ork on developing the new Panama City Beach Sports Complex did not suffer any significant setbacks from Hurricane Michael, and the facility is still on track to open in the summer of 2019, according to those involved.

On land donated by The St. Joe Company

at the east end of Breakfast Point, phase one calls for 13 rectangular, multi-purpose fields, with artificial turf on nine and natural grass on the remaining four. Estimated cost is around \$37 million.

"The complex is still slated to open this summer of 2019 with events booked," said Jason Clement, CEO of Sports Facilities Management.

Located in Clearwater, Florida, Sports Facilities Management has been chosen to take charge of operating the new facilities. Elizabeth Moore with Anchor CEI represents the general contractor.

"The project is still the world-class facility it was designed to be, as well as an economic and morale boost for the community," said Moore.

Clement and the Visit PCB team hired J.D. Wood as the complex's general manager, and Wood arrives in Florida with a wealth of experience. He previously served as tourism manager of the City of College Station's Parks and Recreation department in Texas, sports sales and service manager for the Dallas Sports Commission and assistant lecturer for the Sports Management Department at Texas A&M University.

Visit Panama City Beach and SFM continue to book

future events for various sporting events, with plans to open the complex in July 2019 and host the first new event a month later — the Soccer Youth All-American Series from Aug. 1–4.

"Panama City Beach's new Sports Complex will become the ultimate destination for soccer in the Southeast," Wood says.

Wood has been likewise impressed with the local support and overall sense of community.

"Panama City Beach and Bay County, I believe, have set an even higher standard on how a community can come together to help everyone in their time of need,"Wood said. "The sense of unity that they have shown just reinforced to my family and me that we made the best decision when we became a part of this amazing group of people."

And just like Clement and Moore, Wood sees a bright future ahead.

"The Panama City Beach Sports Complex is going to be one of the top sports facilities in the United States," Wood said without hesitation. "The excitement in the sports industry is continuing to grow and grow for the complex as we get closer to opening. The TDC and the CVB have put together a great plan and facility that myself and all of Sports Facilities Management are excited to be a part of."





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\*See website for details.



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# GOLF COURSES

2787

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.

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Pro Shop 📜 Restaurant on Premises 🏹 Driving Range 🎢 PGA Pro Available 🎯

#### **BAY POINT GOLF CLUB**

**OFFERING TWO SPECTACULAR** 18-hole courses, 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 each golf course layout unique, challenging and unforgettable.

Recently renovated with new TifEagle greens and now reopened after the effects of Hurricane Michael, the Nicklaus Course is the only Nicklaus Design in the Panhandle and is set against the backdrop of St. Andrew's Bay and a marshland wildlife sanctuary. The conversion of all 18 greens will create more consistent putting surfaces with faster green speeds yearround. 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 the storm hit in October, 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."

Bay Point's Meadows Course, which is closed but plans to reopen later in 2019, is a classic old Florida layout. The Willard Byrd design weaves through the Sheraton Bay Point Resort with numerous strategically placed bunkers and water features. The signature fifth hole offers a spectacular tee shot to an island fairway in the middle of the Grand Lagoon with a second shot to a peninsula green overlooking St. Andrews Bay.

When you get hungry, swing by Bar 72 for pub-style and seafood fare.

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

Holes: 18 on each course Yardage: Nicklaus, 7,152; Meadows (Closed until late 2019) Par: Both 72

Greens Fees: \$75-\$32 🐺 🍽 🤺 🥮



12

#### HOLIDAY GOLF CLUB

**RENOVATED IN 2014, Holiday Golf features** redesigned tee boxes and 18 remodeled greens that feature TifEagle turf, and the 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

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

#### 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 🐺 🍽 🥘





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## THRILL Seekers' Delights

Are you game enough to complete our Top 10 list?

#### **BY HANNAH BURKE**

or 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 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.

#### 9 JETSKIING 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.

**ON THE WATER** or on dry land, Panama City Beach has your prescription for excitement.

Same up

.







#### 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 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? Strap on your lifejacket and hold on tight for a wet and wild glide ride!

#### 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.

#### 5 SPACE FURY 360

**WonderWorks** There's a new ride at WonderWorks that's taking Panama City Beach by cosmic storm. Board your fully controlled orbiter and make it spin, twist, roll and move as you bump along with other participants. The fun doesn't stop there. In this one-of-a-kind attraction, riders are equipped with their very own laser gun. As they navigate through this galactic game, riders take aim at targets on other players' vehicles.



#### **SKYWHEEL,** one of the newest additions to

additions to PCB, will give you a panoramic view of the area from 200 feet.

#### 4 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. While Hidden Lagoon is family friendly, it is important to note that drivers are required to be at least 56 inches tall to operate a go-kart unassisted. Children under this height must ride with an adult to ensure a swift — and safe — adventure.

#### **3 ZIP LINE**

**Beachfront Adventures** Enjoy an adrenaline rush with a view at Beachfront Adventures, where guests

can choose between two zip line courses. Climbing up the 60-foot tall towers, you'll take in the emerald green expanse of the Gulf of Mexico before propelling yourself from a platform. Soar through the summer sky, gaining a breathtaking view of the rope courses, mini-golf course and dune buggies the park also has to offer.

#### **2 SLINGSHOT PCB**

**Indy Speedway** The name says it all. Buckle up with a friend and prepare to be launched 300 feet straight up into the clouds at a heart-pumping 100 miles per hour. This, by no means, is for the faint of heart. The Slingshot beckons the bravest among us. Those who have the courage — or who yield to highly persuasive friends — will experience a brief, gorgeous view of Panama City Beach at the top of their trajectory (that is, if they manage to keep their eyes open), before falling back toward earth. Children must be 44 inches tall to participate. And the No. 1 gonzo, hold-on-to-your-heart amusement on Panama City Beach is ...

#### **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. Smaller family members need be only 42 inches tall to experience an unforgettable thrill!

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## GO GREEN By the emerald waters

63

**LOOKING FOR AN ECOLOGICALLY RESPONSIBLE,** fun-filled adventure? Panama City Beach has a surprising number of ways to experience nature above and below the water. With 27 miles of beach, two state parks and miles of on- and off-road bike trails in protected conservation areas, you can plan unique, wonder-filled moments — like an encounter with a dolphin, a sunset kayaking trip, camping near the beach, an airboat tour or a hike through a cypress swamp. And don't forget our wide array of organic, vegetarian and vegan fare at local eateries. When you go on vacation here, you'll find it easy to leave the smallest carbon footprint possible while still taking in the natural beauty of each unique environment.

PERFECT WEATHER and the arrival of seasonal species make spring the perfect time to cast away for fish, such as the jack crevalle.



Panama City Beach Spring/ Summer Fishing Report

BY CAPT. NATHAN CHENNAUX



pring is here and there's no better time to get out on the water and take advantage of some fantastic fishing opportunities. As the water temperature warms and the days grow longer, many species of fish arrive from the south and make our area home for the summer.

The arrival of Spanish mackerel marks the beginning of what has become known as the "Spring Run." Once the word gets out that the Spanish mackerel are here, you can find anglers just about everywhere at the piers, jetties, marinas or anywhere they can cast into deep water. Effective baits include spoons, jigs, bubble rigs, and Christmas tree rigs. Remember: Spanish mackerel have very sharp teeth, so a heavy monofilament leader or light piece of wire will dramatically improve your catch ratio.



Another local favorite — pompano — arrives in spring and can be seen cruising along the beaches in big schools. The piers offer great vantage points from which to cast to them, but the vast majority of pompano anglers prefer surfcasting from the beach. Seasoned anglers set up several rods to maximize their odds of catching them as they swim past. Live or dead shrimp and sand fleas are by far the best baits to use, but small jigs work incredibly well when pompano are feeding.

As soon as small crabs, shrimp, and sand eels start flushing out of the bays on big outgoing tides, bull redfish will move into the St. Andrews Pass and around local bridges to gorge on the steady supply of food. Many of these baits will ride the tide out on the surface and that will entice the redfish to move up top as well. A timely, well-placed cast of an appropriately-sized topwater lure is a good way to see a big redfish come alive. On light tackle, this is one of the best fights in the bay and a lot of fun to watch.

Meanwhile, cobia will begin cruising behind manta rays or hanging around floating debris and buoys. This is another very visual type of fishing that generally involves either standing on the pier and waiting for them to swim by or getting out on a tower boat and searching for them. I rarely run the beach **SPANISH MACKEREL,** pompano and cobia are just a few of the species re-entering local waters.

looking for cobia, but I do keep an eye out for them when returning to the dock from other kinds of fishing and try to pick one off.

My beach runs come to an end once I start seeing schools of tarpon. "Silver kings" typically show up in mid- to late spring and migrate down the beaches into mid-summer. Later in the summer, when the big bait schools stack up in the bay, you will see quite a few tarpon around the bridges and other structures. Jigs and big swimbaits work well in most instances, but if they are being picky, you can flat line a crab or live bait to increase your odds of getting hooked up.

On the flats, the fishing is really good for speckled trout and redfish. When the weather is hot, it's important to get out early in the day since speckled trout will be moving out to deeper grass and potholes where the water



temperatures are cooler and the pinfish are always plentiful. As is usually the case, the bigger trout tend to hang out closer to shore in shallower water than most of the schooling fish. Look for nervous bait schools or mullet getting crashed along the shoreline — pretty good indicators that there are feeding fish in the area.

Good luck!



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## CHASIN' THE SUN

### Our fishing show highlights the endless variety of the Gulf and Panama City Beach

#### BY STEVE BORNHOFT

aptains Justin Leake and Travis Holeman will leave the technical stuff to others.

As co-hosts of the *Chasin' the Sun* fishing program, now in its second season on the Discovery Channel and fourth overall, they are called upon to deliver episodes that are consistent with Visit Panama City Beach's standard tagline: Real. Fun. Beach.

So it is that you may find them taking shore leave at a miniature golf course, aboard a sightseeing helicopter or belted into go-carts. But you won't see them demonstrating how to tie the best knot for attaching braided line to a fluorocarbon leader.

Apart from the scenery, attractions and the angling adventures that the show highlights, *Chasin' the Sun* is "character driven," said J. Michael Brown, the program's executive producer and Vice President of Tourism Development for Visit Panama City Beach.

Brown likened Leake and Holeman to the odd couple created by playwright Neil Simon. Leake favors the immaculate Felix Unger, while it's easy to picture the heavily bearded Holeman smoking a breakfast cigar a la Oscar Madison.





#### $\sim\sim\sim$

SEASON 4 OF Chasin' the Sun is on Discovery Channel this year, or you can catch episodes online at the show's YouTube channel.

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**DYAMAHA** 

"The chemistry works," Brown said, noting that the program has racked up more than 10,000 followers on Facebook. "In one episode, Travis ignores fish blood on a boat seat and keeps fishing, and it's Justin who is left to stop and clean it up. People like the interaction, and it keeps them coming back."

Holeman, a one-time tournament fisherman, is a Florida Keys light-tackle guide, and the first *Chasin' the Sun* episode of the 2019 season originated there, giving viewers an opportunity to learn something about his stomping grounds. While down south, Holman and Leake targeted a bruising flats inhabitant, the permit, a species not found in North Florida. But Discovery Season 2 is otherwise devoted to showcasing the fishing and more that Panama City Beach has to offer.

The 2019 season's second episode may have been the best *Chasin' the Sun* installment ever, Brown said.

With the white sands and condominiums of Panama City Beach serving as a backdrop, Leake and a lifelong friend located and drifted toward massive migrating schools of tarpon, then tempted them with large, soft-plastic Z-Man lures. Fooled fish, some of them in the neighborhood of 200 pounds, threw hooks as often as they came to the boat, but just seeing a "silver king" explode from the water is a thrill in itself — even when seen on a small screen.

Holeman added observations about tarpon, noting especially their unpredictability and their refusal to bend to the will of anglers.

To catch them, Holeman said in his typically non-technical fashion, "You have to change what you're doing to whatever it is that they want to do."

Neither Holeman nor Leake is of a mind to carefully document fishing trips, thinking that they might replicate successes the next time the high tide is at 10:40 a.m. and the west is blowing 10 knots out of the southeast.

"Every day is different," Leake said. "We decide what type of fishing we're going to do, and we read the weather, read the water and get after 'em. And, it's amazing, but every year, we find new species to talk about."

New to the lineup this year is the jack crevalle, a tackle-busting member of a family of fishes that also includes pompanos and mackerels. Leake and Holeman gave them a "EVERY DAY IS DIFFERENT. WE DECIDE WHAT TYPE OF FISHING WE'RE GOING TO DO, AND WE READ THE WEATHER, READ THE WATER AND GET AFTER 'EM. AND, IT'S AMAZING, BUT EVERY YEAR, WE FIND NEW SPECIES TO TALK ABOUT."



sporting chance, fishing them with fly tackle and topwater lures.

In the course of the season, *Chasin' the Sun's* hosts move from the flats to piers to offshore reefs. And they welcome aboard celebrity guests, including John Schneider of "Dukes of Hazard" fame and country music artist Lee Brice.

Episodes debut on the Discovery Channel on Saturdays at 7 a.m. Central, and, once aired, may be viewed at any time at the show's website or on its YouTube channel.

The Discovery Channel reaches 99 million households in the U.S. and Canada. This year, *Chasin' the Sun* is enjoying even wider distribution via the DiscoveryGo app, Amazon Prime and syndication. It is now one of the shows, Brown reports, in an "Outdoor America" lineup syndicated to Gray Communications and Raycom Media properties.

"That adds 58 million U.S. households via 99 local television affiliates and seven regional sports networks," Brown noted. "And, it adds 75 million unique users of 135 TV station websites."

Advertising businesses have taken notice. The show, at this writing, has 20 sponsors — local, regional and national — who help spread Visit Panama City Beach's message via their own social platforms.

Sponsors at present are: B&W Trailer Hitches, BŌTE, Dulce Vida Tequila, Engel Coolers, FireDisc Cookers, Florida Fishing Products, Humminbird, Kicker Marine Audio, Latitude Tournament Boats, Minn Kota, Mojo Sportswear Company, Native Eyewear, Pirates Cove Marina, Power-Pole Shallow Water Anchors, Rapala Coastal, Royal American Beach Getaways, SeaDek Marine Products, Sport Trail Trailers, TravisHoleman.com and Z-Man Fishing Products.

"The show has gained a lot of traction," Brown said. "It's become a vitally important component in our tourism promotion efforts."

Viewers post comments on social media — "*Chasin' the Sun* is my favorite show;""Justin and Travis are hilarious"— that let Brown know the show is tracking well.

And the most welcome comment of all: "I'm booking a trip to PCB."

"I hear from guides all the time who tell me about customers who say that *Chasin' the Sun* was the reason they decided to come to our beach," Leake said.



## PUBLIC PARKS

**PANAMA CITY BEACH** has some of the best parks and recreation areas for tourists and locals alike. Whether you love the beach, boating, camping, fishing or any outdoor adventure in between, Panama City Beach has something for everyone.

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ACTIVITIES

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#### 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.

The original 185 acres that is now Camp Helen State Park was used as a family summer retreat before being purchased by the Alabama company, Avondale Textile Mills, which renamed the park Camp Helen and used it as a resort destination for vacationing employees. The historic lodge and associated buildings still stand today and have undergone recent renovations.

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. At times, this freshwater lake will breech the spit of land that separates it from the Gulf of Mexico, and the resulting channel causes fresh and salt water to mix, resulting in what's known as "brackish" water. The park is home to five distinct natural communities — mesic flatwoods, scrub oak, basin swamp, depression marsh and marine unconsolidated substrate. Each of these ecosystems can be viewed in only a short walk through the park. 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 when entering the water. History tours are given the first Saturday of every month at 10 a.m., and it's free with paid park admission. **23937 Panama City Beach Parkway, (850) 233-5059** 





#### 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. Beach goers will love over 1.5 miles of beaches that rest on the Gulf and Grand Lagoon.

If you want to go off road, 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 St. Andrews can offer including: swimming, surfing, snorkeling, scuba diving, kayaking and canoeing. An array of brightly colored marine life can be found not far beneath the surface. Those in search of calmer waters enjoy the "kiddie pool," a large area along the pass that's protected by the jetties. No lifeguard is on duty, so exercise caution when entering the water. St. Andrews State Park is great

for campers, who can choose from

176 camp sites with electricity, water, picnic tables and grills (these can accommodate tents, or RVs up to 40 feet in length). There is also a "primitive" camping area for scouts, faith-based groups and other organized nonprofit groups. 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* 

#### ACTIVITIES Beaches

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 Scuba Diving Shower Station Snorkeling Surfing Swimming Weddings Wildlife Viewing 🔈 8 a.m. until sundown (§) Free

#### PCB CONSERVATION PARK

Panama City Beach — along with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission — developed an innovative system to restore thousands of acres of protected wetlands, leading to the creation of the 2,900-acre Panama City Beach Conservation Park.

The Panama City Beach Conservation Park protects and balances our natural environment while providing amazing outdoor recreational opportunities to visitors. The 2,900-acre 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.

Encompassing over 2900 acres, the Conservation Park has 24 miles of trails and over a mile of boardwalks. The trails range anywhere from 0.6 miles up to 11 miles, with 12 different trails

ACTIVITIES Bicycling Birding Geo-Seeking Hiking/Nature Trail Pet friendly Picnicking Wildlife Viewing Dawn until dusk to choose from. 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 & fauna, and a pavilion are located near the main parking lot, and an outdoor classroom provides a venue for group educational and enrichment opportunities. Additionally, eight boardwalks totaling over a mile in length are scattered throughout the park, allowing excellent viewing of natural wetland areas.

Trails are open daily from sunrise to

sunset. 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 and recreational programs for park guests are offered seasonally. **100 Conservation Drive**, **(850) 233-5045** 

# Summer



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## **PLAY IN THE SUN;** DANCE BENEATH THE STARS

**WHEN YOUR BEACH DREAMS** include some 1-on-1 time, Panama City Beach is ready to help you set the mood. Romance, relaxation and fun are waiting just around the corner with a choice selection of luxury spas, amazing resorts, award-winning restaurants and enough live music for you to dance the night away. There's never a wrong time to schedule a couple's bike ride along the coast, a sunset cruise or a couple's massage at some of the best resorts available. From luxurious rooms to fine dining, Panama City Beach has what you need to dive into romance.

# LAPS OF LUXURY

Opulence, decadence and relaxation



anama City Beach is the perfect place to relax, attracting millions of visitors each year. Along this famously beautiful stretch of white sand beach, visitors can find a wide selection of accommodations that strive to provide the definitive vacation experience. While many specialize in family fun, some take a decidedly more luxurious approach. For the vacation when you just want to be pampered, here are a few of Panama City Beach's top spas to consider.

For a truly relaxed and luxurious vacation, a quick stop — or even a full day — in one of the area's premier spas is a must. Let your worries and tensions melt away while enjoying a massage, facial, manicure or pedicure. Spas offer the ultimate opportunity to pamper yourself, and the perfect treat to top off your vacation.



#### SERENITY SPA AT BAY POINT RESORT

A featured jewel of the new Sheraton Bay Point Resort is the full-service Serenity Spa, a luxurious sanctuary where you can relax and enjoy peaceful pampering and treatment. A local favorite, this spa offers seven different types of massage therapy and four unique body treatments to leave you feeling rejuvenated. A popular request is the Signature Serenity Customized Facial, a treatment tailored to your skin's unique needs, then paired with a neck and facial massage.

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. Pedicure and manicure treatments are a quick fun



treat, while those wanting a full makeover can select salon treatments. Guests can spend time in the spa area before and after treatments in the comfortable and private relaxation areas, take advantage of the sauna and steam rooms, or head out to enjoy the adjacent 10,000-square-foot zero-entry tropical resort pool. The spa, which had been closed, plans to reopen later in 2019.



#### SALON BALIAGE & SPA IN CARILLON BEACH RESORT

Salon Baliage and Spa mirrors the exclusive beach community vibe of Carillon Beach in the design of their private spa. Choose from packages like the "Island Package" — a Grapefruit Facial combined with the Coconut Lime Sugar Scrub and Coconut Lime Massage — or the "Queen for a Day" — a Swedish massage, European Facial, pedicure, manicure and hair treatment with styling. Body treatments like the "Sea Salt Glow" will leave you 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, and professional hair and makeup artists provide wedding and special occasion services.

#### EDEN SALON & SPA

Family owned and operated, Eden lives up to its name with a variety of ways to pamper and beautify during your visit. Full body massages and facials are just part of the allure as Eden also has a full and experienced staff on hand to offer hair coloring and styling — perfect for that upcoming beach wedding — pedicures and nail services, hair removal, body waxing, threading and skincare.







If that wasn't enough, Eden, found off Front Beach Road, is content to help you nurture your body and soul with other options, including permanent makeup and microblading services to help you get your look just right.

#### **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, a bevy of facials and hair removal options for those that need a bit more pampering.

For guests in search of something a little more cutting edge, Hand & Stone also offers LED Skin Phototherapy, a noninvasive facial procedure to help aging skin and reduce wrinkles and acne.

#### **MASSAGE ENVY**

A nationwide franchise offering massages, skin care and facials, Massage Envy offers many ways to help you reach a rest 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. They also have cranial sacral therapy (for headaches and upper body pain), prenatal massages and geriatric massages. Massages can also include a CyMe boost or lotion to pair with the massage, with different options available for hydration, detox, firming, etc.

Skin therapies also include microderm infusion and chemical peels to help restore that glow in the Florida sun.

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

**KNOWN AS THE SEAFOOD CAPITOL OF THE SOUTH,** Panama City Beach offers memorable dining with the easygoing vibe you seek from a coastal town. You can look forward to welcoming service, unparalleled views and world-class restaurants. Area restaurants and seafood markets offer the freshest and most delicious seaside fare you can imagine. Panama City Beach sits at the nexus of the Gulf Coast and American South, making it an ideal location for barbecue, Cajun cuisine and traditional American food. The variety doesn't end there as the area features a broad spectrum of cuisine, from Italian to sushi, Caribbean jerk to Thai noodles. And don't forget to wash that down with our assortment of craft breweries and brewpubs. Whatever you're hungering for, Panama City Beach will have it.

=OOD/E

For the palate, an expansive palette of flavors THRILIN' Palette of flavors By Liesel SCHMIDT

PANAMA CITY BEACH SPRING/SUMMER 2019



FOODIE

IT'S NOT ALL about doughnuts as Thomas Donut & Snack Shop also serves up cool treats for those warm summer days.

offee ... bacon ... cinnamon swirl and maple syrup ... they're standard favorites on the menu at breakfast; but in recent years, they've been showing up in ice creams all over the country, claiming their place in the mix along with everything else imaginable, from sea salt and candy bar bits to sweet corn, roasted beets, tea and even curry. Plainly put, we've come a long way from plain-Jane chocolate and vanilla. Even the days of 31 flavors can seem like they were part of the ice age.

Once so seemingly simple, ice cream has become a canvas of creativity, and whether you stand by your standards or are down with dipping into the most confounding concoctions to come out of the churn, one thing's for sure: Young or old, traditionalist or rebel, we all still scream for ice cream. Here's a look at some Panama City Beach favorites:

#### **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 #2 Ice Cream Shop in America by TripAdvisor. Pink Pelican's menu of sweet treats is so wacky, it might make your head spin. Topping the list is the Pink Pelican Special, a mix of peanut butter cups, Oreo cookie pieces, brownie pieces and Heath Bar bits swirled together with a silky ribbon of butterscotch. Other licks to love are Cookie Monster, Chocolate Hurricane, Tennessee Whiskey, Mexican Hot Chocolate and Almond Joy. Owners Stuart and Deana Spencer tempt customers with a range of indulgences that



include sundaes, shakes, ice cream floats and buzz-worthy coffee drinks. 543 Richard Jackson Blvd., (850) 249-5576, Facebook. com/PinkPelicanIceCream

#### **THOMAS DONUT & SNACK SHOP**

Rounding up the first of their loyal following when they opened as a donut and 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, which offers a daily rotating list of 36 flavors of ice creams, frozen yogurt, sorbets and sherbets, boggles the mind (and freezes the brain). Best-sellers include "C" is for Cookie, Butterscotch Bomb, Garbage Can, Key Lime Pie, Dulce de Leche, and Special Praline. Loading on the love with sundaes and other delights like floats, milkshakes and New Orleans-style Sno-Balls, Thomas doubles down the fun with The Original Freezer Donut Ice Cream Sandwich, which sandwiches ice cream between two halves of a freshly baked Thomas Donut. Life is sweet, and Thomas Donut & Snack Shop gives you plenty of excuses to eat dessert first. 19208 Front Beach Road, (850) 234-8039, ThomasDonutAndSnackShop.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. Classic pops like Cookies & Cream, Raspberry Lemonade, Strawberry and Mango are available, but don't worry — Chuy's doesn't get stuck in convention. Their fruitbased pops are made using fresh juices and about a dozen flavors of hand-dipped ice creams. Chuy's ups the cool factor even further with milkshakes, aguas frescas and fresh-baked treats. One visit to Chuy's, and you'll never want to blow this popsicle stand. 292 B Powell Adams Road, (850) 249-5102, Facebook.com/ChuysPops



PANAMA CITY BEACH serves up a bevy of cold treats, from Kilwin's handcrafted sweets to Funland's sit-downand-indulge banana splits.



#### DAVID'S NEW ORLEANS STYLE CAFÉ & SNO-BALLS

A one-stop shop for New Orleans' most iconic bites, David's New Orleans Style Café & Sno-Balls offers everything from massive muffalettas and po'boys to jazzy jambalaya. And if all that spice leaves your tongue feeling fiery, David's has a truly sweet way to cool it right down. 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, and their famous Sno-Balls have really put this place on parade. 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, and with more than 60 flavored syrups and 12 ice cream flavors available at David's, the combinations are endless. Winning the Sno-Ball fight are favorites like Key Lime Pie (topped with graham cracker crumbs) and Red Velvet Cake. 13913 Panama City Beach Parkway, (850) 236-1998, DavidsSnoBalls.com

#### FUNLAND ARCADE AND SNACK BAR

With its multitude of high-energy arcade games in constant play, Funland Arcade and Snack Bar has been a gamer's dreamcome-true for more than 65 years; but whether your name is topping the leader board or you've been mourning your digital demise, the game's not over until you've scooped up a treat from the Dairy Bar, where they're serving up everything from ice cream cones and classic sundaes to root beer floats and milkshakes. Make tracks for a cone piled high with Moosetracks, or lick your way to the next level of happiness with Butter Pecan, Birthday Cake, Strawberry Cheesecake or Cookies and Cream. Win or lose, Funland's 14 flavors of cool, creamy deliciousness will make you feel like a champ. *14510 Front Beach Road, (850) 234-3693, funland-arcade.weebly.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. But surely heaven would seem incomplete without ice cream; so they've scooped up flavors like Old Fashioned Vanilla, Salted Caramel, Toasted Coconut, Georgia Peach, New Orleans Praline Pecan, Superman and Cookies & Cream. Since opening the Pier Park location in 2008, franchise owners Marc and Yvonne Berkowitz have offered dozens of ice cream flavors, perfect for topping off their madefrom-scratch waffle cones. And if the smell of warming waffle batter wafting through the air doesn't tantalize your taste buds, the scent of fresh fudge or caramel corn being cooked in their open kitchen will surely do the trick - and they'll gladly serve you samples of whatever your heart desires. 821 Pier Park Drive #100, (850) 230-4177, Kilwins.com



#### NITROFREEZE ICE CREAM COMPANY

Chilling is a way of life for Nitrofreeze Ice Cream Company owner Kevin Stringer, an island boy at heart whose love of the madcap is clearly apparent in everything he serves his guests. Clearly apparent, that is, once the smoke has dissipated. But the smoke is part of the show, spilling in thick billows from the rapidly forming ice cream concoctions that Kevin whips up with the help of his trusty tank of liquid nitrogen. It's frozen fun in a flash, taking a base made of coconut milk, local honey and cinnamon and combining it with any of the 50-plus ingredients on their menu, which includes everything from fresh fruit and nuts to Nutella and candy bar bits. Mixed to order before your very eyes with a blast of liquid nitrogen, it's an interactive experience indeed. And while Nitrofreeze might specialize in ice cream, their menu also features fresh and healthy smoothies, gourmet shakes and frozen sweet tea. 202 Blue Fish Drive, (850) 381-8903

#### SOUTHERN CRAFT CREAMERY

Having actually attended ice cream school to learn their art, Southern Craft Creamery owners Dale and Cindy Eade took their family's passion for ice cream and turned it into a family business, using their dairy in Marianna, Florida, to supply the milk for their creamy creations. Since opening in 2013, Southern Craft has become known for the purity and richness of their handcrafted ice creams and sorbets. Southern

Craft partners with local farmers and producers to source the highest quality ingredients, achieving a premium product that packs a punch in every pint. More than 50 flavors are created by hand without the use of artificial ingredients and syrups - a practice that sets them apart and truly licks the competition. Sweetening up their list of 14 signature flavors and many other seasonally available concoctions, Southern Craft also melds the sweet with the salty in flavors like Salted Dark Chocolate, Salty Caramel and Roasted Banana with Salted Peanuts. 19440 Front Beach Road, (850) 573-1458, SouthernCraftCreamery.com

#### BRUSTER'S REAL ICE CREAM

Bruster's Real Ice Cream churns out all of their creamy dreaminess on location each and every day. Favorite flavors include Cookie Dough, Mint Chocolate Chip, Butter Pecan, Birthday Cake and Chocolate Raspberry Truffle; but with 55 ice creams available, this drive-thru and walk-up shop has the perfect scoop for your craving. Shakes, smoothies, floats, freezes and ice cream sodas add to the fun, while Bruster's freshly baked turnovers and brownies are perfect for going a la mode. For special occasions, slice up one of their custom ice cream cakes or a cookie-crumb-crusted pie. 7101 Coastal Palms Blvd., (850) 249-2544, Brusters.com.







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# PASS THE PEAS

#### Paula Deen's Family Kitchen dishes it out at Pier Park

#### **BY PRATT FARMER**



emember Sunday lunch at grandma's house? Everyone would gather around the table, someone would say a blessing and grandpa would get a helping of collard greens from a big bowl, then send it on down. "Pass the chicken," someone would say. And so it began.

What was once a Sunday tradition of the whole family being together eating around a big table has all but faded away thanks to the mobility of American households. But that won't be the case in Panama City Beach this spring. With the slated opening of the newest Paula Deen's Family Kitchen in the Pier Park shopping center, guests will be treated to a delectable menu of home cooking. Family-style dining is different from traditional restaurant dining in that platters of food are placed at the table for all to share. Each table will choose two or three entrees and four sides. Guests then help themselves and pass the food around the table, just like at granny's. And just like at her house, you can enjoy as much as you like. If seafood has become your main staple while visiting Panama City Beach, you now have another option.

In 1989, Paula Deen took her love for cooking Southern recipes and began preparing meals in her home, enlisting her two sons, Jamie and Bobby, to deliver orders in the local area. As her food gained popularity it was time to think on a larger scale. Deen opened her first restaurant in Savannah, Georgia, in 1996. Then, after publishing two

**PAULA DEEN'S** Family Kitchen, one of the newest additions to Pier Park, serves up fresh Southern cooking every day.

IT'S HARD TO picture a table of Southern dishes and not have a basket of hot Southern fried chicken.

> cookbooks, her reputation for great food expanded beyond the local market with the restaurant, gaining national recognition for its down-home cooking, genteel service and Southern ambience. Today in Savannah, The Lady and Sons restaurant is an icon on West Congress Street. It's not uncommon to see people lined up down the block waiting for a table. With that notoriety came her television appearances and then her own show, where Deen shared her recipes with millions of TV viewers across the world. Her Southern charm was only exceeded by the sumptuous dishes she served.

> Relying on the time-honored Deen family recipes, such as fried chicken, collard greens and mashed potatoes, Paula Deen's Family Kitchen was born with an extensive menu of foods prepared with Southern inspiration. Guests will enjoy entrees, delicious side dishes and mouth-watering desserts in a family-style setting. Serving breakfast, lunch and dinner, there will be ample opportunity to eat as much as you like and to come back as often as you can.

> "No one cooks better than your mama," says Ms. Deen. "But our restaurants are always striving to be second to no one but her."

> With recipes for frying chicken that date back to the 4th century, it's clear that Southerners didn't invent fried chicken, but they have made it even better tasting.

In the 1800's, Southerners took chicken to an entirely new level, adding various spices and cooking various pieces of the chicken in what was then commonly known as lard. Homemade lard is trans-fat free. Dipping chicken parts in specially prepared batter and frying until golden brown is just the beginning. This delicacy not only tastes good, but it's also nostalgic.

"NO ONE COOKS BETTER THAN YOUR MAMA. BUT OUR RESTAURANTS ARE ALWAYS STRIVING TO BE SECOND TO NO ONE BUT HER." - PAULA DEEN In addition to the restaurant, guests will enjoy browsing the aisles of the adjacent retail store where Ms. Deen has curated some of the best cookbooks and kitchenware. The store houses many products from the Paula Deen line, including linens, spices, sauces, mixes and more, as well as some of her personal favorites.

Operating with the belief that good food is nothing without good people, everything you experience at Paula Deen's Family Kitchen begins with their staff, who embody Southern hospitality through and through. As the name suggests, the staff views themselves as family. From the chefs who prepare Ms. Deen's recipes

to the wait staff and folks in the retail store, everyone in the building knows what it means to make guests feel at home.

When you walk into the restaurant, you will be greeted with a hearty "Hey, y'all!" and leave filled up and feeling as though you were just sitting around your grandma's dinner table.

"As soon as our guests walk in the door," Deen says, "we want to make them feel like we are wrapping our arms around them and saying, 'Hey, y'all, come on in. Make yourself at home." *For more information and to stay up to date on the opening, visit their website at pauladeensfamilykitchen.com or call (844) 853-7335.*


# **DISCOVER THE SIGHTS** AND THE SOUNDS OF PCB

**SURROUNDED BY THE MOST BEAUTIFUL BEACHES** in the world, you'd think our events calendar would be all about surf and sand. But from live music at our open-air amphitheater to seafood festivals and holiday celebrations, our schedule has something for everyone. We have an 800-pound Beach Ball Drop on New Year's Eve, gather some of the world's best libations for our UNwineD festival and deliver a swashbuckling good time at the Pirates of the High Seas Fest. If live music is more your tempo, SandJam and Pepsi Gulf Coast Jam bring some of the top names in rock and country. Panama City Beach events are about fun for everyone. We could go on, but you'd probably rather look around on your own.

# GET ACTIVE

#### >> WINTER CALENDAR BLOOMS WITH FESTIVALS, RALLIES AND MORE MARCH-DEC. 2019



#### SANDJAM FEST April 26–28

The second annual adult-alternative rock music festival will set their stages on the beautiful sugar white sands of Panama City Beach, providing the most beautiful backdrop for this spring's biggest festival at M.B. Miller County Pier. This year's headliners include Kings of Leon, Third Eye Blind and Young The Giant. *SandjamFest.com* 

#### PANAMA CITY BEACH MARDI GRAS & MUSIC FESTIVAL

March 1–2 The most family-friendly Mardi Gras celebration on the Gulf Coast, this two-day festival takes place in Pier Park and is one of the most fun Mardi Gras events anywhere. Enjoy a weekend filled with parades, float tours, street fair, kids zone and live music (and lots and lots of beads). VisitPanamaCityBeach.com

#### **EMERALD COAST CRUIZIN' CAR SHOW**

March 6–9 Aaron Bessant Park becomes a giant outdoor showroom for thousands of hot rods, classic cars and speedsters for this three-day event. While your family weaves through dozens of rows of iconic vehicles, keep your ears alert for cash and swag giveaways. Collectors and enthusiasts drive home a vintage vehicle if they prevail in the frantic bidding at a live auction. *EmeraldCoastCruizin.com* 

#### **EMERALD COAST BOAT AND LIFESTYLE SHOW**

March 15–17 This land based show at Aaron Bessant Park will feature boat displays from all major manufacturers and the top dealers representing the latest in boats, high tech engines, electronics and marine accessories. But this is more than a boat show as this event also features everything needed for the outdoor beach adventurer – from stand-up paddleboards and fishing kayaks, to outdoor kitchens, diving, active wear and beach cruising bicycles. In short, all the great things residents and visiting tourists enjoy on and around the water along the beaches are available at this event. *EmeraldCoastBoatShow.com* 

#### UNWINED

March 22–23 Guests can raise a glass while mixing and mingling with elite chefs, mixologists and top tastemakers at this hip signature spring event at Aaron Bessant Park. UNwineD features superb craft beer, spirits and wine from around the world, along with culinary creations by Northwest Florida's leading chefs. The weekend begins with the Kickoff Party on Friday night presented by Southern Living, followed by Saturday's Grand Afternoon Tasting and Cocktail Competition featuring threetime Grammy winner Brandi Carlile. *VisitPanamaCityBeach.com* 

#### PANAMA CITY BEACH BEER FESTIVAL

**April 13** Fishale Taphouse and Grill is pleased to host its annual PCB Beer

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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.

#### OUR EXCELLENT AND AFFORDABLE RATES CAN BE VIEWED ON OUR WEBSITE OR BY CALLING OUR FRONT DESK

Festival. Ticket price includes a collector's glass and unlimited 2-ounce samples of over 250 craft beers from around the world. VIP admission starts early and includes samples of featured rare beers, light hors d'oeuvres and private access. All proceeds are donated to the local nonprofit Toys For Kids Foundation. **PCBBeerFestival.com** 

#### SEABREEZE JAZZ FESTIVAL

April 24–28 After 20 years of serenading Panama City Beach with big bands and smooth jams, the Seabreeze Jazz Festival has been officially declared as one of the top 10 jazz festivals in the country. Aaron Bessant Park is the stage for 29 of the hottest names in jazz, including Brian Culbertson, Ken Ford, Eric Darius, Nick Colionne and more. Once festivities end for the night, after parties continue in select Pier Park restaurants. SeabreezeJazzFestival.com

#### PC PARROT HEAD CLUB 2019 RENDEZVOUS! "LICENSE TO CHILL" April 25–28 The

Panama City Parrot Head Club hosts members from all over the country at Sharky's Beach Club for four days of music, fun and raising money for local nonprofit Girls, Inc., which seeks to inspire young women in our community. Event-long passes are available for \$80, and single-day ticket prices are \$20 for Friday and Sunday, and \$30 on Saturday. PanamaCityPHC.org

SANDJAM FEST April 26-28 (see page 74)

SCHOONER'S CAJUN FESTIVAL April 26–28 C'mon ova y'all! The 13th annual Cajun Festival at Schooner's Beach Club will feature daytime bands on the beach, plenty of Cajun cooking and lots of fun for the whole family. **Schooners.com** 

#### **GROOVIN' ON THE GREEN**

May-Sept. Enjoy an evening of music at Carillon Beach's Village Green for this summer concert series. Admission is free, and quests are welcome to bring chairs, blankets and coolers with your beverage of choice while listening to a myriad of musical stylings - including bluegrass, top 40, beach, reggae, country, blues and jazz. Facebook.com/ GroovinOnTheGreen

#### IRONMAN 70.3 GULF COAST

May 11 What began as

a challenge between groups of Navy Seals has become one of the most recognized endurance events in the world. Hosted by Boardwalk Beach Resort, the Ironman 70.3, also known as the Half Ironman, consists of a 1.2-mile swim, a 56-mile bike ride and a 13.1-mile run, with the Florida edition of the challenge serving as one of the most popular races on the circuit. Ironman.com

#### NATIONAL TOURISM DAY

May 7 Visit Panama City Beach hosts its annual Tourism Appreciation event at M.B. Miller County Pier, spotlighting the industry and those who help make the city a year-round destination. This free event is open to locals,



No Independence Day is complete without sparkling, vibrant fireworks displays. Start the day off right by shopping and eating with family and friends at Panama City Beach's Pier Park. Then, when the sun begins to set, head down to the water's edge and claim a front row seat for a spectacular fireworks show.





FREEDOM ROCKS (FIREWORKS) July 3

Grand Lagoon

SUMMER CONCERT SERIES July 4 Aaron Bessant Park

REAL.FUN.FOURTH. CONCERT WITH FIREWORKS July 4 City and County Pier

LIGHT UP THE GULF (FIREWORKS) July 5 Boardwalk Beach Hotel

#### THUNDER BEACH SPRING MOTORCYCLE RALLY May 1-5

The area's leading motorcycle rally is back again for its spring ride through PCB. Pier Park, Frank Brown Park, Harley-Davidson PCB and more are the sites of dozens of displays featuring biking merchandise, sharp apparel and pit-stop snacks for your pack of riders. Check the rally schedule for bike shows, demos, pageants, concerts and contests throughout the city. Plus, your contributions to various events benefit a handful of charities that assist those in need. *ThunderBeachProductions.com* 



# START A FUN FAMILY TRADITION THANKSGIVING WEEKEND 2019 PARK AMPHITHEATER

For more information and to view the event schedule go to: VisitPanamaCityBeach.com/holidays HOLIDAY CONCERTS TREE LIGHTING CHRISTMAS CAROLERS CAMPFIRES & S'MORES SANTA & MRS. CLAUS FIREWORKS



<sup>®</sup> Panama City Beach





### JAM May 14-19

Jeep enthusiasts from throughout the United States travel to Frank Brown Park for this five-day event dedicated to all things Jeep. Industry-leading companies will be present with information, seminars and merchandise. This familyfriendly event includes obstacle courses, bonfires, Jeep parade, bounce houses, live music and more. JeepBeachJam.com

visitors and everyone who works so hard to promote this great destination. The celebration will include food trucks, live music, fireworks and more. VisitPanamaCityBeach.com

#### **MOVIES AND MORE**

June–July Camp Helen State Park offers a summer full of movies, food and fun with a series of family-oriented movies, environmental interpretive programs and old-fashioned campfire cookouts. FriendsOfCampHelen.org

#### **SUMMER CONCERT SERIES**

RUBICON

Thursdays, June-Aug. Hot summer nights are made for music, and the Summer Concert Series has become a beloved summertime tradition in PCB. Enjoy a free concert at the park every Thursday at Aaron Bessant Park Amphitheater - bring your lawn chair and blankets and enjoy the sounds of summer music. Coolers, food and pets are welcome. The new lineup can be found at VisitPanamaCityBeach.com

#### **PEPSI GULF COAST JAM**

Aug. 30-Sept. 1 Pepsi Gulf Coast Jam, a three-day celebration of sun, fun and country music, will host its fifth annual festival on the Gulf Coast shores of Panama City Beach. Pepsi Gulf Coast Jam will provide the best of today's country music for an audience of more than 15,000 people on the coast during Labor Day Weekend. GulfCoastJam.com

#### 9/11 STAIR CLIMB

Sept. 7 The Panama City Beach 9-11

Memorial Stair Climb Fundraiser started back in 2011 as a special way to remember the 10th Anniversary of the tragic events that happened on Sept. 11, 2001. Held at Edgewater Beach and Golf Resort, all money raised goes towards the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation and local First Responder projects. *Firehero.org/Events/9-11-Stair-Climbs* 

#### OKTOBERFEST

**Oct. 4–6** Music lovers and fans of German food and craft beer will don their lederhosen and dirndls and gather at Aaron Bessant Park for the Panama City Beach Oktoberfest. Local brewers will pour their core beers and other seasonal offerings while local food vendors will highlight German fare. *PCBOktoberfest.com* 

#### SCHOONER'S LOBSTER FESTIVAL

**Oct. 14–20** The biggest seven-day lobster festival in Florida takes place

at Schooners. Lobster tournament divers hunt for local lobsters and vie for prizes, while spectators devour delicious lobster dishes and participate in a sandsculpting contest. *Schooners.com/Events/ LobsterFestival.htm* 

#### **BLOODY MARY AND MUSIC FESTIVAL**

**Oct. 19** Enjoy all-you-can-drink bloody mary samples from over two dozen vendors before casting your vote for the best bloody mary. The winner (the "Big Tomato") will be awarded a trophy and bragging rights. A full bar and local eats will also be available. The spectacular Grand Lagoon provides the backdrop for this event, hosted by Schooners Last Local Beach Club. *GrandLagoon.org* 

#### THUNDER BEACH AUTUMN MOTORCYCLE RALLY

**Oct. 23–27** Motorcyclists will be roaring into town to celebrate the annual autumn





Columbus Day weekend brings waves of fun-filled adventure to Panama City Beach each year with this annual event at Pier Park. The whole family can play together, and weekend activities include a scavenger hunt, pirate invasions, water battle, kids parade and main parade, live music, fireworks and much more. *VisitPanamaCityBeach.com*  rally. Bikers from around the nation head south to enjoy contests, rocking entertainment and bike shows. Known as "The Most Biker Friendly FREE Rally in the United States," Thunder Beach Motorcycle Rally is held twice yearly in Panama City Beach. Bikers from around the country enjoy scenic rides along the Emerald Coast, live entertainment and local cuisine. *ThunderBeachProductions.com* 

#### EMERALD COAST CRUIZIN' FALL

**Nov.** 7–9 Boardwalk Beach Resort Twice a year, Panama City Beach pays homage to the classics ... cars that is. Activities at Aaron Bessant Park include cruise-ins, concerts, parties, vendors, food, parades and celebrity appearances. 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* 

#### **BEACH HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS**

**Thanksgiving Weekend** 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. Highlights include the lighting of a 100-foot Christmas tree, magical Santa's Village and holiday music concerts (past acts include Wynonna Judd, John Berry and Panama City POPS Orchestra) at Aaron Bessant Park. *VisitPanamaCityBeach.com* 

#### PANAMA CITY BEACH MARATHON

**Dec. 7** Runners can choose from a marathon, half-marathon, 5K or kid's fun run in this popular annual event — regardless of the division, all win with a view of the Gulf of Mexico to guide them along. *PCBMarathon.com* 

#### **NEW YEAR'S EVE BEACH BALL DROP**

**Dec. 31** Celebrate New Year's Eve on the beach. A family-friendly countdown at 8 p.m. culminates with fireworks and 10,000 beach balls being dropped over the crowd at Pier Park. As the seconds tick down to midnight, thousands of revelers watch the Celebration Tower as a glowing beach ball descends to signify the start of a New Year and kicks off a second round of fireworks. Live music sets a festive tone all night long. *VisitPanamaCityBeach.com* 

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Whether it's eyewear or headwear, a little protection from the sun is always a must when you're roaming around the beach. So grab a bag and set a course to shop for some of the coolest options outside the shade.

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#### THE 850 BRAND

Speaking of locals, there is no better way to support the "850" than to get one of these colorful snapbacks. Created by Panama City Beach local, the 850 Brand has become one of the staples for both visitors and locals alike. Inspired by the beach lifestyle, these bright hats are perfect for strolling down the sandy beach or shopping in Pier Park. **Sold in various locations and online at The850Brand.com** 

#### SHIPWRECK LTD

Shipwreck LTD has been known since the '70s as one of the top spots to find the best beach bum gear. They provide a wide variety of accessories perfect for any visitor on the go! This fringe leather satchel is roomy enough to fit the essentials for your next trip to the beach. And what is not love about a trendy pair of sunglasses — both perfect for a sandy selfie! Top it all off with the 16-ounce Biscayne Bay Corkcicle cup to keep you hydrated all day long. **10570 Front Beach Road**, **(850) 233-6750** 

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# **A WEEKEND TO UNWINED!**

Panama City Beach to usher in spring with its premier festival

BY KARI C. BARLOW



**UNWINED** always features top musical guests, such as last year's performance from St. Paul and The Broken Bones. THIS YEAR'S FESTIVAL will include an art component in addition to the popular libations tastings and

food demonstrations.



S oft breezes, live tunes and an amazing assortment of fine wines, craft beer and spirits spread across Aaron Bessant Park.

That's right — it's time for the 2019 UNwineD Festival.

The area's premier spring event will return to the shores of Panama City Beach on March 22-23 bigger and better than ever before.

"Each year it evolves," said Patrick Stewart, sports and special events operations manager at Visit Panama City Beach. "There will be new products, and we are adding quite a bit of space and added new amenities for visitors to enjoy, so I think people will be a little more comfortable and not feel so shoulder-to-shoulder."

This year's festival comes only five months after Panama City area was hit by Hurricane Michael, and a portion of the festival proceeds will benefit World Central Kitchen and United Way of Northwest Florida — two organizations that have served the area tirelessly in the wake of the storm.

Organizers are also expanding the festival's scope by adding fine art — a request from festival goers — to the UNwineD mix. This year's event will include an art show juried by Beach Arts Group of Panama City Beach.

"When you've got wine and you've got gourmet food — you need art!" said Helen Ballance, executive director of Beach Arts Group. "It just rounds out the picture. It's been the part that's missing." At its heart, UNwineD is a classic, Southern garden party — think gals in sundresses and floppy hats and guys in their best khakis and button downs — that's about celebrating good food, good drink and good music.

"This is one of the events in Panama City Beach that you can relax and enjoy," Stewart said.

This year's festival gets started Friday evening with its annual Southern Living Kick-Off Party, an exclusive, curated experience open to 300 ticket holders. The gathering, held under UNwineD's signature white tent, will feature presentations by a distinguished chef as well as a talented mixologist — with plenty of sips and snacks for all in attendance!

"Partnering with the magazine has really elevated the event," Stewart said.

Celebrity Chef Kevin Gillespie is this year's culinary headliner. Gillespie owns two restaurants — Gunshow in Atlanta and Revival in Decatur - and released the cookbook, "Fire in My Belly" in 2013 and "Pure Pork Awesomeness" in 2015. In 2014, Gunshow earned the seventh spot on GQ Magazine's list of "12 Most Outstanding Restaurants," and in 2015, Gillespie was named a finalist for the James Beard Award for Best Chef in the Southeast.

Also adding some spice to Friday night will be mixologist Mercedes O'Brien, the curator of all things cocktail at Gunshow, Gillespie's Atlanta restaurant.



Guests will have a chance to sip and discuss the evolution of O'Brien's signature creations.

Although the true stars of UNwineD are the adult beverages and gourmet snacks, event organizers have worked hard to provide an equally compelling musical component at its increasingly popular Picnic in the Park & Concert. In past years, crowds have been treated to the folk-rock fusion of The Avett Brothers, the soulful stylings of St. Paul and the Broken Bones and rising Nashville star Cale Tyson.

This year's headliner — six-time Grammy-nominated performer Brandi Carlile — is not likely to disappoint. Carlile will play from 5-to-7 p.m. at the Aaron Bessant Park Amphitheater, with opening entertainment from American Folk duo Johnnyswim.

Named Rolling Stone's 2005 Artist to Watch, Carlile is known for her chart-topping hits, including "The Story," "Party of One" and various albums, such as "The Firewatcher's Daughter" and "Give Up the Ghost." With six nominations including Album of the Year, Record of the Year and Song of the Year ("The Joke") — Carlile is the most nominated female artist at the 2019 Grammys.

Johnnyswim duo Amanda Sudano and Abner Ramirez started their journey in Nashville in 2005, and their musical stylings include American folk, soul, blues and pop.

The festival continues on Saturday with its main event, the Grand Afternoon Tasting from 1-to-4 p.m., featuring craft

THIS YEAR'S CULINARY headliner will be celebrity Chef Kevin Gillespie, owner of two Georgia restaurants – Gunshow in Atlanta and Revival in Decatur.



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beers, wines and spirts from across North America, Europe and South America.

"A lot of these are regional brewers and wine vendors," Stewart said. "We're trying to show people what the Panama City Beach area has to offer."

More than 40 different brands and distributors are expected to showcase their wares at the tasting, and the vibe will be one of discovery.

"Some of the vendors who are mixing at their booths will have signature cocktails and recipe cards available," Stewart added. "Distributors are there to show off their products."

UNwineD guests won't go hungry, either. A variety of local restaurants — including Dovalina's Catering, Firefly, Runaway Island, Beau's and Temperley's British Eatery — will set up at the festival and serve up samples of their signature dishes.

"There is no shortage of food for people to eat during the tasting," Stewart said, adding that the culinary selections will range from local seafood specialties to Southern classics.

The tasting will also include four separate culinary demonstrations — one by Gillespie and three by well-known chefs from local restaurants.

"People attend this event for the experience," Stewart said. "It's a really upscale experience, and it gives people the ability to mingle with that chef they love." The festival's new art show will serve as the perfect backdrop, featuring roughly 25 local and regional artists who specialize in a variety of mediums.

"We have everything from photography to pottery," Ballance said. "We even have a group of writers. ... It should be about celebrating all of the arts!"

The addition of fine art is especially exciting given the hardships left by Hurricane Michael this past October, she said.

"People want beauty," Ballance said. "They want something other than what they are dealing with."

Booths and tables will be set up in a way that encourages interactions between the artists and festival guests.

"Art is a relationship between the artist and the collector," she said. "Tm just excited for the opportunity because one of the things we are working toward is promoting Panama City Beach as an arts destination."

What truly makes UNwineD unique, Balance said, is that it's a festival for all the senses.

Stewart agreed, noting that the event is only growing in popularity, continuing to pull more than half of its attendees from out of the area.

"I get emails from throughout the year from people who want to know about the festival," he said. "It's just an exciting opportunity to see the best that Panama City Beach has to offer — all in one location." • "IT'S JUST AN EXCITING OPPORTUNITY TO SEE THE BEST THAT PANAMA CITY BEACH HAS TO OFFER — ALL IN ONE LOCATION." – PATRICK STEWART, SPORTS AND SPECIAL EVENTS OPERATIONS MANAGER AT VISIT PANAMA CITY BEACH.



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# THE VOICE OF EXPERIENCE

Panama City Beach local Nelda Fields uses her experience to help guide visitors to the area

**BY PRATT FARMER** 

ne thing is certain - when you visit Panama City Beach, you will be struck by the friendly, down-home atmosphere you find here. And no one knows that better than a PCB local. Nelda Fields is guite the fixture around town. She and her late husband, Popeye, moved here as newlyweds over 50 years ago. Nelda went to work for what was then West Panama City Beach. Several years ago, she retired for six months before coming back. Today, Mrs. Fields also works for the City of Panama City Beach and the Tourist Development Council (TDC) where you might meet her in their office or at the airport where she dishes out advice, helping visitors have a vacation to remember.

We sat down with Nelda to get her perspective on Panama City Beach and asked her about some of her favorite things to do:

### **Q** What's the first attraction you visited in PCB?

A When my husband and I came to PCB on our honeymoon in 1961, we played Goofy Golf on Highway 98. I remember it like it was yesterday. I had never seen anything like that! And you know what, Goofy Golf is still here and still run by the family that built it back in 1959. As a matter of fact, I take my grandchildren there every chance I get.

### Q What's an event around town that's always on your calendar.

A The Snowbird Senior Prom. We have lots of people from the colder climates who come to PCB during the winter months. So, we host a party every year near the end of the season. It's like a high school prom. In the past, the attendees even pick a King and Queen. Just like in high school. I always make certain that I am working for the TDC when that event occurs because it is so much fun. The food, music and dancing are always great. I enjoy seeing people having fun!



PANAMA CITY BEACH resident Nelda Fields has over 50 years of local knowledge to pass on to visitors.

## **Q** What are a couple of your favorite local shops in town, and what all do they offer?

A Cariloha at Pier Park is a unique shop, and the staff there is very friendly. If you come to the beach, you will definitely want something to take home with you. One of my favorite beach stores is Salty Dog on Front Beach Road. It has everything, from swimsuits to sunglasses to surfboards. If you decide to head across the bridge, Little Village on 12th Street is unique. They usually have music, and there's lots of art to look at and buy.

#### **Q** Outside of venturing to the pier, what are some activities or places in PCB you like to visit on the weekend?

A It's fun to take a boat from Captain Anderson's Marina and go out to Shell Island. You can often see dolphins because they like to show off and greet you to the area. I also like to visit St. Andrews State Park. It's on the eastern edge of the beach and is so pristine. It's just a good place to get away and really enjoy what we have here. The Grande Theater at Pier Park is a beautiful place to see all the latest movies. It's the nicest theater I have ever been in, and with so many screens, there is usually something for everyone in the family.

#### Q If visitors are interested in roaming the beaches or just taking a stroll down PCB's main drag, where are the best places to park?

A At certain times of the year, parking can be challenging. MB Miller Pier is a great place to park and walk the pier or the beach. Usually if I want a quiet stroll on the beach, I will drive to the western end and usually don't have a problem finding a parking place.

Q Everyone knows Gulf seafood abounds in PCB, but where are some of the more offbeat places to dine at in the area? Any favorites or hard-tofind/out-of-the-way spots?



PIER PARK and Russell-Fields Pier each offer their own different type of scenic walk in Panama City Beach.









### **LOCAL'S PERSPECTIVE** WHAT MAKES PANAMA CITY BEACH SO SPECIAL TO A LOCAL?

#### **NELDA FIELDS**

#### City of Panama City Beach

"Living and working in Panama City Beach, there is always plenty to do. I have so many favorites, it's hard to pick one. I always take my family to the pier because it is such a beautiful walk, and once you are out over the Gulf, the breeze is just wonderful. It's also fun to watch people fishing from the pier, especially kids who might be doing that for the first time. My late husband worked at the pier, and it was named after him (Russell-Fields Pier). So that has to always be on my list of places to take people. Pier Park is a must as well. It has so much to do there. We might spend an entire afternoon and evening there - shopping, eating at one of the restaurants and then people watch until the sun goes down."

#### MAYOR MIKE THOMAS Panama City

Beach "There are so many things that make the beach a special place,



but what I like best is the diversity. Just like the *Chasin' The Sun* fishing show demonstrates, we live in a beautiful environment that is a sportsman's paradise. You can be a tourist even if you are a local and enjoy the beach, the woods or the water, all within 15 minutes of each other. This is a great family place to live or visit, with fresh water fishing, salt water fishing and hunting. In Panama City Beach, there is something for every outdoor enthusiast."

#### BRIAN ROBINSON

Diver's Den "What I love about Panama City Beach are the countless shipwrecks and dive sites to explore. Along



with the amazing diving we also have a multitude of fish life to see and bring home for dinner. It truly is paradise above and below the water here, and I get the privilege of managing Diver's Den on Thomas Drive, where we teach people how to dive every week. I have also grown up in Panama City and couldn't imagine a more beautiful place to live, work and raise my daughters in."

#### TERRAH WAYNICK

The Shadow Box "As a small business owner, it's so special to have that feeling of friendship and community amongst locals, visitors and



other business owners. The camaraderie is priceless. This is hands-down the most treasured thing about living and working in Panama City Beach. Let's face it, you can't beat a morning walk on the white sandy beaches and closing out the day with breathtaking sunsets, where no two ever are alike."



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Sign up to receive alerts for flag changes by texting FLAG to 313131.

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The "Leave No Trace" ordinance states that all personal items will be removed and disposed of if left on the beach between the hours of 7 p.m. and 7 a.m. These items include, but are not limited to, tents, chairs, toys, umbrellas and coolers. On public beaches or with the upland landowner's permission, beachgoers may store personal belongings overnight at the toe of the dune. The toe of the dune is the area of the beach immediately seaward of the dune and beach vegetation. To be specific, it is the area of the beach that is furthest from the water that is not in a sand dune or beach access point.

Those who store their personal items overnight do so at their own risk. The county, the city, the Tourist Development Council and the beach maintenance contractor do not assume any liability for any items left on the beach.



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