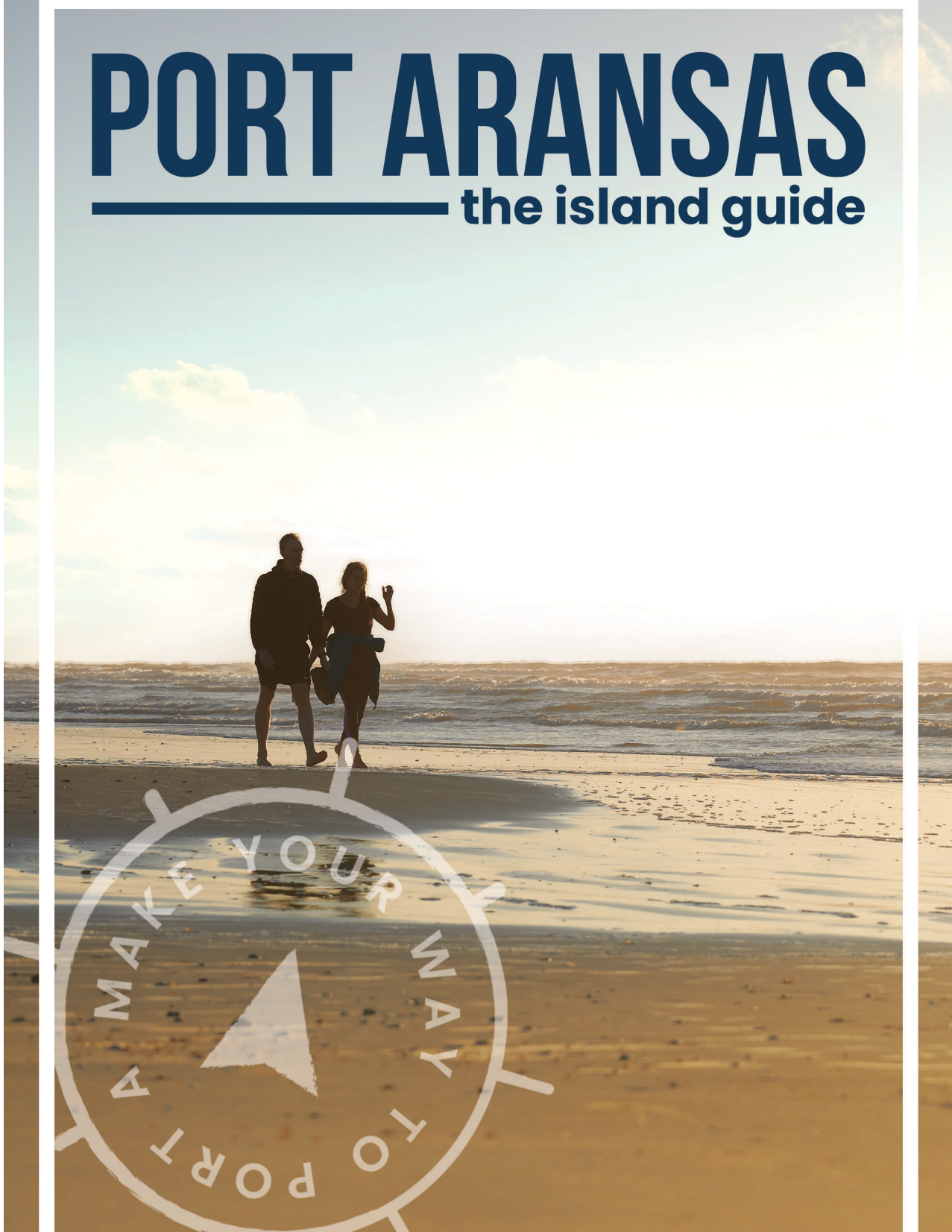


# PORT ARANSAS

---

the island guide



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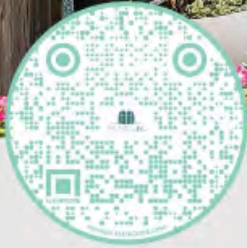


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# CONTENTS

## LOCAL MAP

Find your way around Port A with our map!

PAGE 92



## MAKE YOUR WAY TO PORT A

Find the best route to Port Aransas!

PAGE 91



9

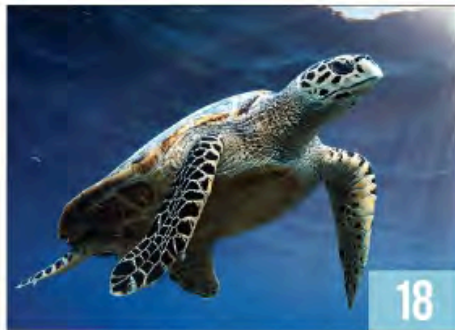
## PORT ARANSAS **A**

### Beach

- 8 WELCOME TO YOUR BEACH
- 10 OH, SHELL YEAH
- 14 GRAB-N-GO BEACH PICNICS
- 18 PORT A'S WILD SIDE
- 22 GETTING AROUND PORT A
- 25 BIKE PORT A
- 26 NOT HERE FOR A LONG TIME, JUST A GOOD TIME

### Things to Do

- 28 WATER ADVENTURES AWAIT
- 32 ARRGH YOU READY FOR ADVENTURE?
- 34 NATURE LOVER & BIRDER PARADISE



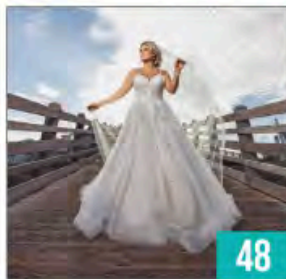
18



26



42



48

- 36 REMOTE LEARNING: ISLAND STYLE
- 38 PRO TIPS TO BUILDING SANDCASTLES
- 40 PLAY IN PORT A
- 42 A TEE-RIFIC TRIP
- 44 DIVE IN TO PORT A HISTORY
- 48 PLAN YOUR BACHELORETTE BEACH PARTY
- 51 CHAPEL ON THE DUNES
- 52 LET YOUR INNER ARTIST EXPERIENCE PORT A
- 56 SMALL TOWN SHOPPING AT ITS BEST



68



# Fishing

- 60** ON THE ROCKS WITH SALT
- 62** GOOD THINGS COME TO THOSE WHO BAIT
- 68** COOK YOUR CATCH



62



77



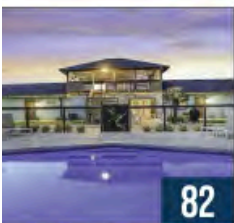
78



72

# Dining & Nightlife

- 72** YOUR TASTEBUDS WILL BE HOOKED
- 77** THE INSIDE SCOOP
- 78** GOOD TIMES & GOOD TUNES GUARANTEED



82

# Stay

- 82** YOUR HOME IN PARADISE
- 89** HITTING THE ROAD ON YOUR TERMS

# PORT ARANSAS

the island life

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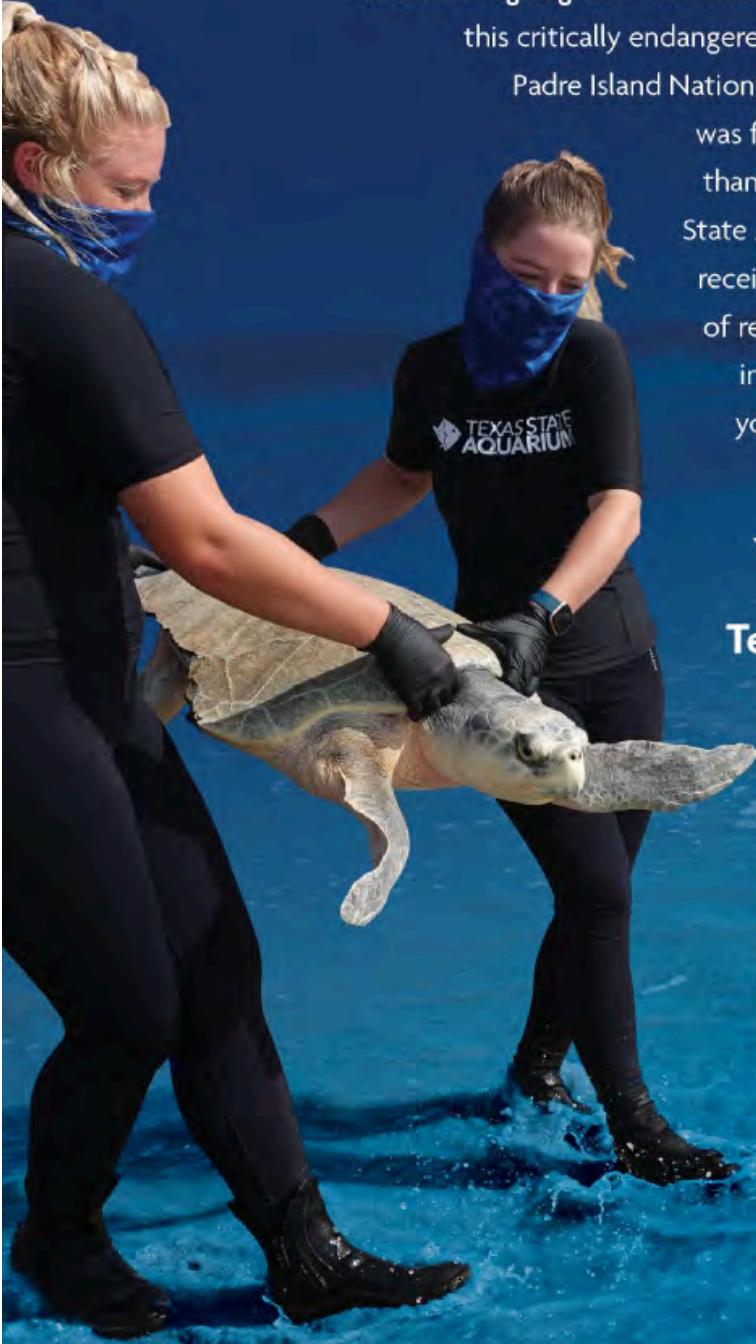
Corpus Christi, Texas — 

# Admission includes Two-toed sloths, Caribbean flamingos, *and* three months in rehab.

There's a lot going on at the Texas State Aquarium, like the rescue of this critically endangered Kemp's ridley sea turtle from the Padre Island National Seashore. This resilient sea turtle was found with a near-fatal wound, and thanks to the quick action of the Texas State Aquarium wildlife rescue team, she received emergency care. After months of rehabilitation, she was released back into the Gulf of Mexico. Funds from your admission make stories like this possible and help save wildlife.

*Your visit makes the difference!*

[TexasStateAquarium.org](https://TexasStateAquarium.org)  
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# *Welcome to your* **Beach**

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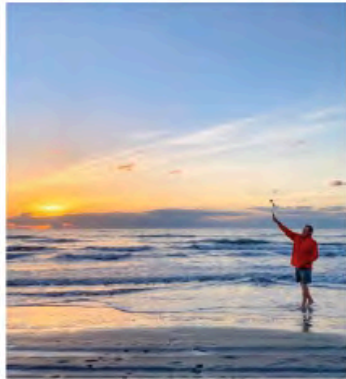


Photo Credit: Caitlin Martone Cox



**PHOTO** The Jetty Boat takes visitors to San Jose Island. Photo Credit: Shannon Lafayette

# OH, SHELL YEAH!

*A look at our annual family  
trip to Port Aransas*

By Kelsey Dixon  
Contributing Writer



Keith Petrus, Beachcombing on San Jose Island

At the recommendation of my co-worker who has been going to Port A for more than 50 years, we tried something new during our annual family trip to Port Aransas and took the kids to San Jose Island. I have been coming to Port A every summer since childhood and I had no idea this little treasure existed.

It's a quick ferry boat ride from Fisherman's Wharf and you have to pack everything you need, and I mean EVERYTHING (don't forget toilet paper and a trash bag) because the island is uninhabited. Our kids are a bit older now, so we didn't need a full five course meal and an arsenal of snacks but I'm glad we packed plenty of water. The hubs, of course, packed his fishing gear because the North Jetties off the tip of St. Jo (that's what the locals call it) is supposed to be some of the best fishing in the "Fishing Capital of Texas" which is saying something since you can practically hook a fish from the entire circumference of Port Aransas.

The Jetty Boat dropped us off at a little dock on the channel side of the island and after a short walk down a sandy trail we were on our own secluded beach with seashells as far as the eye could see. I'm talking full sand dollars, lightning whelks, starfish and about a billion other unique shells for which we had to buy a guide from our favorite shark mouthed souvenir shop to identify. The kids found an entire colony of wild hermit crabs and tried to race them.

As you can imagine it didn't work out and they were returned to their natural habitat unharmed.

A bit further down the beach we found giant driftwood that a previous visitor fashioned into a fort. The kids had a blast playing "Survivor," fully immersed in the peaceful isolation of this island until hunger set in and we realized we forgot to pack lunch. We contemplated going full survivor mode and making sashimi from the fish my husband caught but the little one put a stop to that.

We made our way back down the path to the pick-up location for the Jetty Boat and I waited with my toes in the sand and a full heart, watching the sky fire off a brilliant orange, pink and purple.

When we got back to the mainland the fish cleaner at Fisherman's Wharf cleaned our catch and we walked over to Virginia's on the Bay, where they turned our fish into a gourmet meal. Mama even got a big 'ol frozen drink with a fun umbrella.

As we piled in the golf cart to head back to the condo my daughter asked, "Did that just happen?" and we just grinned at each other. To call it the perfect day would be an understatement. It was an adventure, almost too special to share. But we would have never found this treasure if someone hadn't shared it with me, so I'm passing on this gift to you.





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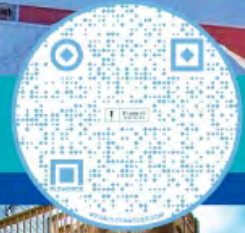
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**BEACH  
PICNICS**

By Melinda Mayden  
*Contributing Writer*

Tanned legs dangle over the sides of a lowered tailgate. A blanket spread on the hot sand is guarded from the waves by a lopsided sandcastle. Hands, sticky with s'mores remnants, warm by a bonfire.



Picnics in Port Aransas, whatever they may look like, are always a good idea. The beaches are wide and driveable, the sand is soft and inviting, and even the “winter” days rarely require more than a pullover. In an island town like this one, every day is a beach day.

Putting together the perfect picnic, though, is often much easier to imagine than it is to create. Port Aransas locals know the struggle, and business owners have risen to the challenge. Enter: the Grab & Go picnic. Locals around the island serve up to-go packages that satisfy every beachgoer and meet the needs of any picnic.

**The Family Friendly Picnic**

Buckling up the kids and grabbing grandma’s sunhat takes time, which is why visitors looking for a family-friendly picnic should swing by Port A Beer Hut. They won’t even need to step foot out of their car (or golf cart) to find something for the whole family. Patrons can drive through for frozen daiquiris

and cold beer, or to pick up a coveted Bodega Box—handcrafted and portable charcuterie boxes that feature tantalizing ingredients like pesto gouda and Genoa salami. The tiki-style structure also boasts Barefoot Beans, where the “brew crew” will whip up a latte or a smoothie for coffee lovers and kiddos alike to fuel up. For something heartier, swing by Miss K’s Catering and Gourmet Food. Miss K’s curbside has a full menu of hot and cold options, like caprese paninis, packed and ready to take out to the beach.

Great food and drinks are essential, but there’s no picnic without a good setup, and for that, Bron’s Beach Carts is the spot. Bron’s has picnics down to an art, from transportation to entertainment. Their golf cart rentals are ready for both the street and the beach, and rental options allow picnickers to relax in luxury with resort-style chairs under a beach umbrella, cabana or palapa. Families looking for entertainment can even rent classic beach games like cornhole for a little friendly competition.

*Continued on Page 16*



Photo Credit: Shannon Lafayette



**▲ BEACH**



Continued from Page 15

**The Party Picnic**

Adults who want to ramp up their picnic can do so with a beach bonfire. These nighttime party picnics feature a roaring fire that keep the company warm inside and out. The best ones also have food and drinks, which is where Island Wine comes in as a one-stop shop. This spot lives up to its name with wines galore, sure, but there's so much more than that, with a full spread of craft beers, adult slushies like the agave wine-based margarita, charcuterie boards and chips and dips.

If it's really time to party with a group, leave the work to the professionals. Slow Ur Roll will dig in, literally, to build a crackling bonfire setup out of sand, in coastal shapes like a starfish or a wave. These masterpieces are ideal for lounging or for roasting the provided s'mores and dancing to Jimmy Buffett. Seafood lovers will be happy about Rollin' Tide Boil Co., who will build a bonfire, throw the shrimp or crab boil that dreams are made of, and let picnickers lean back in their Adirondack chairs—no setup or cleanup required!

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**You Say Turtle,  
We Say Tortuga**

Port Aransas is home to many sea turtle species, including Loggerheads and the endangered Kemp's Ridley turtles. There are several excellent spots to chill out, take in views of the Texas coast and spot sea turtles in their natural environments, most notably are Roberts Point Park and the south jetty.

Sea turtles are a precious resident of the Texas Coast, and preserving their habitats and nesting areas is a top priority. As cordial neighbors, locals and visitors alike pitch in to protect turtles while visiting the beach.

Cleaning up after a day on the beach, filling in divots in the sand and removing all lines and gear after a day of fishing helps protect these magnificent creatures.

For a bucket-list vacation experience, visitors are invited to Padre Island National Seashore to safely observe sea turtle hatchling releases.

# PORT A'S WILD SIDE

*Up-close encounters with sea turtles, dolphins and birds!*

By Luis Arjona  
Contributing Writer

An oasis located on the Gulf Coast of South Texas, Port Aransas is a charming beach town with a spectacular aura. The city is proud of its efforts to form a restorative ecology, forging a relationship between locals, visitors and the environment to offer the perfect destination for responsible ecotours.

Photo Credit: Steve Coons



### Silver Swimmers

Conservation efforts do not stop at the shore but carry out into the Gulf as well. The dolphin population in the area is quite active year-round, providing moments of joy as they gracefully skip around the water. Port Aransas offers popular dolphin cruises, where visitors can enjoy an exciting adventure on the Gulf while learning about efforts to preserve the area's waterways.

Providing one of the most memorable dolphin excursions in Port Aransas, The Scarlet Lady offers a mix of entertainment and education. The Scarlet Lady is a 50-foot catamaran, ensuring a steady voyage during 90-minute daytime and sunset tours. Cruising along the Lydia Ann Channel, visitors see wild dolphins, sea birds and a picturesque view of the Lydia Ann Lighthouse.



### Winging it

Be on the lookout for birds in Port Aransas, where whooping cranes winter and hundreds of native and migratory species mingle throughout the year. The Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail is a state-designated system of trails, bird sanctuaries and nature preserves along the Texas Gulf Coast. Port Aransas has six sites along the trail, making the area a must-see for avid birders and wildlife photographers. When the light hits just right, visitors feel like they have stepped inside an Impressionist painting at these popular birding areas.

**WANT THE BEST BIRDING SPOTS?**

We've got quite a few for you...

**PAGE 34**

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## PORT ARANSAS



### Amos Rehabilitation Keep

A local point of pride, Amos Rehabilitation Keep (ARK), rescues and rehabilitates sea turtles and shore birds in the area while educating the public about the problems local wildlife endure from human encroachment. Operated by the University of Texas Marine Science Institute, ARK is a great resource for responsible wildlife encounters. Learn more at [utmsi.utexas.edu](http://utmsi.utexas.edu).

### Texas State Aquarium

The Texas State Aquarium engages people with animals, inspires appreciation for bays and seas, and supports wildlife conservation.

Each year, thousands of protected, threatened, or endangered species along the Texas coast become ill or injured. Some have been impaired by predators, diseases, or other natural causes. Most are brought with problems caused directly or indirectly by humans. This includes entanglement in fishing line, nets, or lures, and even illegal harassment and shootings. With education and conservation initiatives, such as the Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation practices along with the "Going Green" program, perhaps visitors' experiences will lead to a better understanding of the importance of their own responsibilities in the environment.

THE ISLAND GUIDE

**19**

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Photo Credit: Jackfish Cart Rentals

# Getting Around **PORT A**

*Sandy shoes, messy hair, forgotten towels – it's all good! When you're on island time, the stresses melt away and Port A makes it easy. We're a golf cart town, and if that sounds pretentious, think again. Our beaches are drivable, so you don't have to worry about dragging gear for the whole family around all day. Just throw it on the cart or in your truck and off you go to explore the beach, shopping, dining and adventures that await.*



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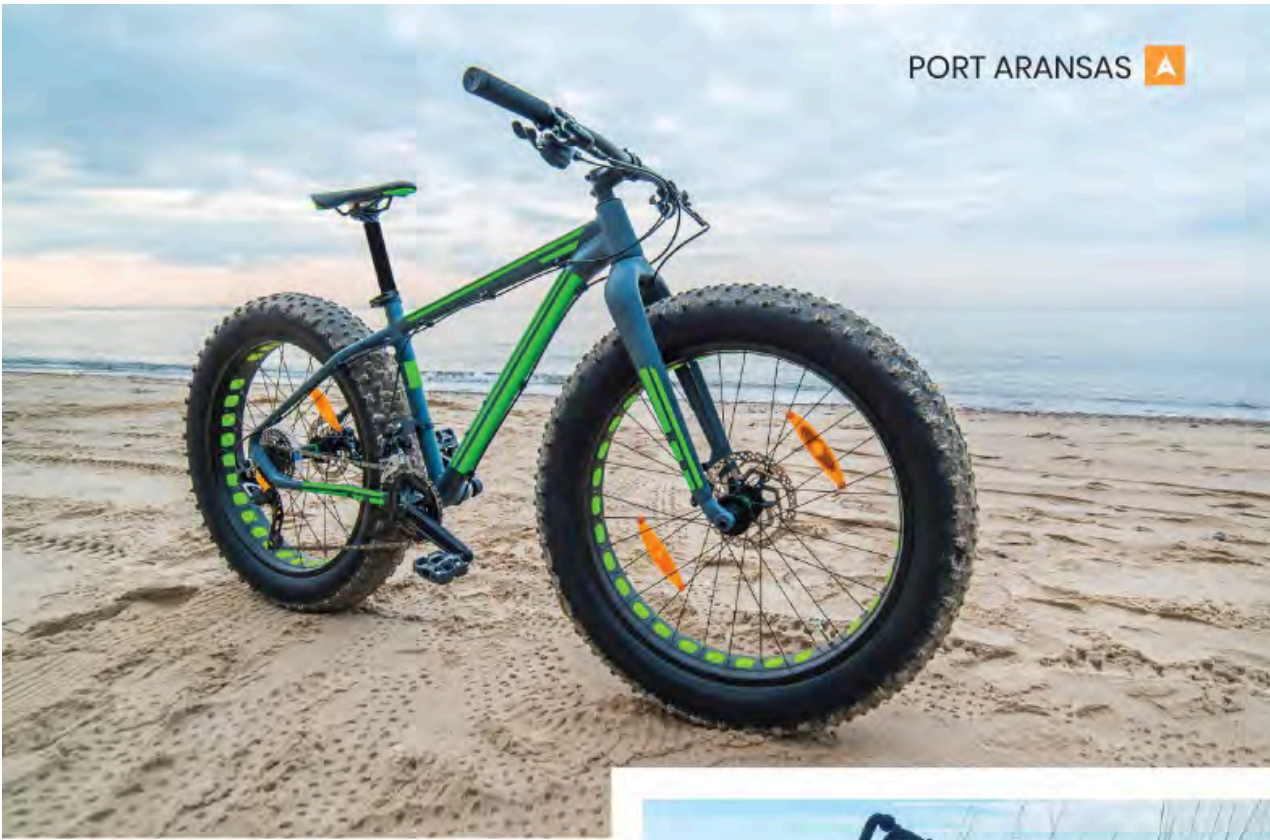
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# BIKE **PORT A**

*A fun way to experience the island from beach to trail*



There is no better way to spend the day than riding a bicycle around Port Aransas. There is so much to see, and bicycles can go places cars and golf carts cannot.

Fat-tire bicycles are as easy to ride on the sandy beaches as they are on the trails and streets in town. Cares go free when the pedaling starts. Ride the beach, dodge the waves, and let the salty air and sunshine lead the way.

Want to get closer to the birds? Roseate Spoonbills and Blue Herons are waders and love hanging out in the wetlands. Ride the trails and get close enough to take some great pictures. Or head down to The Nature Preserve at Charlie's Pasture for a sunset you won't forget, while you watch the ships pass and the dolphins play.

With plenty of sidewalks in town and extra wide sidewalks parallel to State Highway

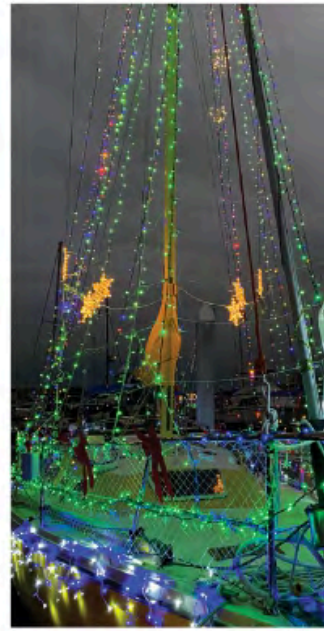
361, riding a bike is an easy and fun way to peek in your favorite boutiques or dine at that restaurant you've been hearing about. Experience all the best of Port A, on a bike!

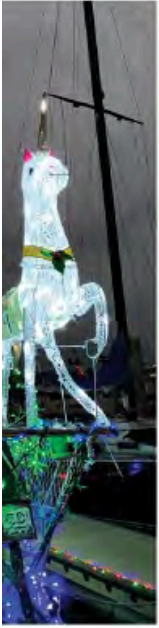
Riding a bike is also a great way to forget about that "all you can eat dinner" from the night before. Exercise the guilt away and build a little muscle every time you pedal. If pedaling sounds fun but you're afraid you'll bite off more than you can chew again, an electric bicycle with pedal-assist is just what you need! Pedal-assist allows you to pedal – or not. Either way, enjoy the fresh salty air as you navigate around Port A and get a little exercise as you go.

Contact Island Motor Bikes at 315 S. Alister St., #109 or call 361-655-5501 for all your bicycle needs. You'll find one-stop-shopping for rentals, sales, service, and supplies.

 BEACH

*Not here for a long time, just a*  
**GOOD TIME**





## Need another reason to plan a trip to Port A?

We invite you to make Port A your favorite place. Vacations here often turn into family traditions that span generations. It is always the season for fun here with our year-round festivals and events for families of all ages, including the annual Beachtoberfest, the Whooping Crane Festival and Texas SandFest. You'll find that your family's Port A story will grow with new friends you'll meet at these community festivities, around beach bonfires, or out on a fishing trip. No matter what event you attend, or the people you meet, you'll capture memories that create traditions, pulling you back year after year to Port A.



## ANNUAL EVENTS

### January

- Garden Club Home Tour
- Restaurant Week

### February

- Adopt a Beach
- Whooping Crane Festival
- Chocolate Crawl Shopping Night

### March

- Spring Break
- Flip Flop Fashion Show

### April

- Spring Fling Shop Around
- Adopt a Beach

### May

- Wooden Boat Festival
- Cinco de Mayo Longboard Pro Surfing Tournament
- ArtFest

### June

- Powderpuff Ladies Fishing Tournament

### July

- Deep Sea RoundUp Fishing Tournament
- Billfish Pachanga

### August

- Texas Women Anglers Tournament

### September

- Texas Super Chef
- Port A Live Music Fest

### October

- Texas SandFest
- Beachtoberfest
- Port A Art About
- Surf Classic "Expression Session"

### November

- Holiday Shop Around

### December

- Christmas in the Park
- Christmas Golf Cart Parade
- Christmas Lighted Boat Parade

# WATER ADVENTURES AWAIT



Photo Credit: Chrissy Hoffmans



Looking for the best aerial view of Port A and the Gulf? Step off the beach and take a high-flying adventure with Chute 'Em Up Parasailing. With the ocean breeze blowing through your hair and your feet dangling above the water, you'll have a bird's eye view of the island and Gulf on a thrilling parasailing flight.

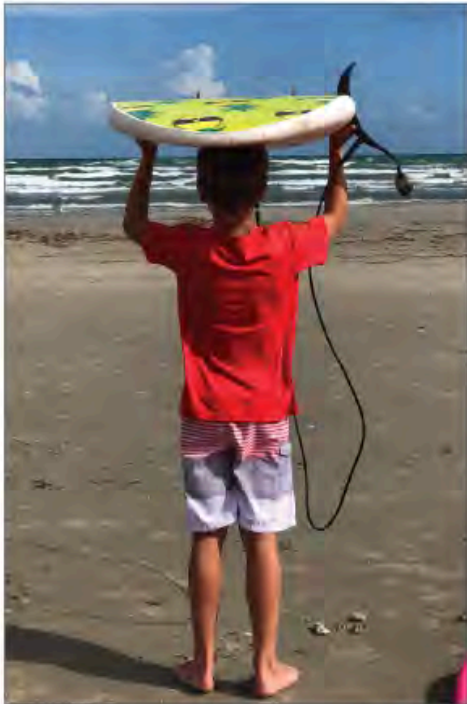
Now that you have your feet wet, it's time to really make a splash. With your hands firmly gripped on the throttle, crash through the waves on a jet skiing ride with Gettin' Salty Watersports. From relaxing private sunset boat cruises to stand up paddle boarding fun, they'll guide you to the best places to go.

Become one with the ocean while you buddy up with the beach bums riding the waves windsurfing or hang ten on a traditional surfboard. Experienced surfers can take the sport to the extreme with

kiteboarding along the coastal line. Bring your own equipment or rent a surfboard or paddleboard on the beach from Texas Surf Camp. New to surfing? No worries. Their professional instructors offer private lessons that will turn you into a pro in no time. If you plan on staying for the week, consider enrolling in a week-long surf camp or wind down with a beach yoga class.

Add to your island adventure paddling along and exploring by kayak or stand up paddle board with rentals available at Island Surf Rentals. Or, let the pros at Coastal Bend Kayak lead the way on a guided kayak tour where you'll mingle with dolphins, marvel at wildlife, and cruise into the setting sun and let the moon be your guide.

Sunbathing and sandcastle building are fun, but make the most of your island getaway planning a water adventure.



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Photo Credit: Merdoq Media

# ARRGH YOU READY FOR AN ADVENTURE?

From relaxing boat cruises to surfing safaris, the best conditions for water adventures are right here in Port A. No trip to Port A would be complete without booking your reservation for one of the best dolphin watching tours in the country or hopping aboard a themed day cruise for a sight-seeing pirate adventure.



Photo Credit: Claudia J Harbison Fitts





*A Nature Lover &*  
**BIRDER'S  
PARADISE**



**Port Aransas Named Certified Bird City Texas Community!**  
Port A is committed to restoring coastal ecosystems and birding amenities. The nature preserve system provides excellent bird habitats for coastal and migratory birds.



Port Aransas features several opportunities for nature lovers and birding enthusiasts to experience; with Nature Preserves, Parks and Shorelines – Port Aransas is the perfect getaway.

**The Nature Preserve at Charlie's Pasture**

The Nature Preserve at Charlie's Pasture is a vast 1280 acre property with uplands, sand flats, marshes, wooded motts and ponds that support a diversity of plants and animals. Hundreds of species of shorebirds, waterfowl and songbirds use the area to forage, nest, rest and refuel while undertaking strenuous migrations. This area has been dedicated as preserved land in an effort to protect these endangered, threatened and vulnerable species and provide visitors a glimpse back in time to the coastal prairie habitat that has all but disappeared from the Texas Coast.

The Preserve's main entrance lies on Port St. adjacent to the Corpus Christi Ship Channel.

A large pavilion overlooks tidal flats and is a gathering place for free activities like

Nature Preserve Yoga (Tuesdays at 11:30 a.m.) and Nature Walks. The area is the trailhead for a mile of paved trail graced with lookouts of prairie and pond habitats and leads to the Port Aransas Community Park. A second ¼ mile unpaved loop trail branches from the parking area on Port St. across from the restrooms and leads up and around Clay's Hill, a wooded area with adjacent cattail pond. Nature walks leave from the Community Park Saturdays at 8 a.m. Those who visit are reminded to stay on the trails, carry out litter and keep from disturbing wildlife.

**Leonabelle Turnbull Birding Center**

The Birding Center can be found on the South end of Ross Ave. down the street from the Community Park. Pollinator gardens, a large mural, bird drips and educational signage flank the entrance to the site. A 700 ft boardwalk with shaded observation tower, provides visitors with expansive views of the freshwater marsh fed by the Nueces County Water District treatment plant and all of the diverse wildlife it attracts. A newly opened trail extends the path of the boardwalk along the shoreline toward the southern portion of the Nature Preserve at Charlie's Pasture. Future boardwalks will connect these sites as the Preserve is working on creating a system of interconnected nature areas. Visitors often see a large American alligator at this location along with ducks, pelicans, wading birds and songbirds. Birding on the Boardwalk is a free guided program on Wednesdays at 9 a.m.

**Wetland Park**

The Wetland Park overlooks tidal marshes along Hwy 361 across from the US Post Office. During wet periods and high tides, the basin is typically crowded with waterfowl, wading birds and shorebirds. A small gazebo and boardwalk provide visitors quick access to the marsh habitat. Visitors are encouraged to document their sightings on the chalkboard at the entrance to all the birding areas, including this one!

**Joan & Scott Holt Paradise Pond**

Paradise Pond is nestled in the 400 block of Cut Off Rd. behind Taqueria San Juan. It is one of only a few wooded natural freshwater ponds on Mustang Island. Short boardwalks and seating areas provide excellent access to a lush vegetation for hundreds of species of migrating songbirds in the spring and fall. This Preserve site is recognized as an important stopover for migrating birds along the Central Texas Coast. The site is currently undergoing habitat restoration after many invasive Brazilian peppertrees were removed and neighboring land was developed. Preserve staff have planted a variety of native trees and are expanding the property that will eventually connect via a walking path to the Community Park.



**A THINGSTODO**



Photo Credit: Knot Too Shabby - Family Beach House Rental



PORT ARANSAS ▲

# Remote HERE

PORT ARANSAS

## Remote Learning - Island Style

As schools around the world respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, learning may look a little different this year. Remote learning allows students to access educational curriculum outside of the traditional classroom. If you can learn anywhere, why not REMOTE HERE? It's time to schedule a Port A schoolcation.

Remote Learning – Island Style gives your kids the opportunity to discover learning in the real world, beyond the four walls of

a classroom. Whether you prefer a cozy beach cottage, conventional hotel room, luxury condominium or the privacy of your own beach house, the island offers coastal digs to fit your needs. Not only do most accommodations offer high speed internet to complete your required coursework, but Port Aransas is full of educational enrichment opportunities to level up your distance learning!

### ELECTIVE ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Take art classes at the Port Aransas Art Center
- Paint at Fire It! Ceramics
- Sandcastle building lessons with the Port Aransas Sandcastle Guy

### SOCIAL STUDIES

- Port Aransas Museum
- Farley Boat Works
- Take a tour
- Learn more about the Lighthouse

### SCIENCE

- Volunteer at the Amos Rehabilitation Keep
- Scavenger hunt at the Nature Preserve
- Ecology tour on San Jose Island
- Dolphin tours
- Discover sea treasure in the floating Marine Biology lab
- Explore the bird trails

### PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- Take a surfing lesson
- Play a quick round of golf
- Check out the skate park

- Go for a swim at the community pool
- Challenge your skills on the 12-hole disc golf course
- Try paddle boarding
- Rent a bike

### TIPS

- Create your own "learning cabana" by renting a beach setup.
- Visit the Ellis Memorial Public Library
- Get to know the Port Aransas Business Center
- Take a study break at Coffee Waves



Sculptor: Todd Pangborn



# PRO TIPS: BUILDING A PROPER SANDCASTLE

*Learn to build insta-worthy sandcastles in Port A!*

By Mark Landrum  
Contributing Writer

**1.** Set up close to the waterline (works best when the tide is going out). Dig a hole to the water table, where the sand is saturated with water. Stack the sand from your hole in a large pile to the dune side of your hole.

## A FEW THINGS YOU'LL NEED TO GET STARTED

- A bucket
- A 5-gal. paint bucket works well
- Shovel
- Plastic knife, fork, and spoon

**2.** Stir the sand and water in the hole till you get large patties of wet sand to scoop with your hands. This process can be duplicated in a bucket too.

**3.** Take a scoop of sand and water, plop it on top of the sand stack and pat gently on top of the stack. The idea is to make a pancake of wet sand. You want the water to wrap around the sand, so bring the water to the top of the pancake then pull your hand away to watch the sand go back down. Repeat the process until you have a tall stack of sand pancakes.

**4.** The goal is to get big scoops of sand and water. The larger in diameter the bottom pancake is, the taller your stack can go. When you build it as tall as you can, you are ready for your carving tools.

**5.** Use the carving tools (knife, fork, and spoon) to make a roof, bricks, windows, stairs, and doors. I use the knife to carve and block out the different features. The spoon and fork may be used for texturing and making windows. Use the tools gently to carve and shave the sand. Never poke, jab, stab, or hack at the sand. Have fun!



Sculptor: Remy Hoggard



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**A THINGS TO DO**





# PLAY IN PORT A

***Port A parks offer something for the young...  
and the young at heart!***

The Community Park is home to the community pool, three baseball fields, a basketball court, 12-hole disc golf course, a skate park, playscape, pickleball court and our most recent addition, a splash pad! The Community Park is also a great place for a stroll and includes a 1.1-mile walking/jogging trail that meanders through the flats and ends at a large pavilion overlooking the Nature Preserve at Charlie's Pasture.

Roberts Point Park welcomes visitors to Port Aransas as they ride the ferryboat from the mainland. The 50-acre park is packed with activities for the whole family, including basketball, sand volleyball, bocce ball, age-appropriate pirate playscapes and pavilions for picnics. The 1-mile bulkhead is often filled with fishermen and also serves as a walking/jogging trail with palapas along the route and an observation tower that overlooks the active ship channel.



Photo Credit: oSnapMedia



# A TEE-RIFIC TRIP

## *Gather the Guys for Golf on the Gulf*

By Grant Jenkins  
*Contributing Writer*

There is a big difference between a guys' trip in your 20s and a guys' trip in your 30s. The stories are the same but our tolerance for cramming into the cheapest rental car and deciding who sleeps on the floor of the motel room by a coin flip is no longer there. Don't get me wrong, those memories make the best stories but I'm at a point in my life where if I'm vacationing with my buddies, more than one bathroom is a requirement.

With a general hesitancy to fly, in addition to work and family obligations, we decided to look closer to home for our annual guys trip this year. In fact, we decided to recreate our first trip together - Port Aransas, Texas during Spring Break in our freshman year of college. I use the term "recreate" loosely, because as mentioned, we are adults now... well mostly.

We rented a beach house called the "Custom Gem" at the Palmilla Beach Resort. We had plenty of room to spread out and since my buddy was technically on a "workcation," he was able to use one of the bedrooms for an office while the rest of us played a round of golf.



**PHOTO** Grab a drink or a bite at REDS



**PHOTO** Slow down and enjoy the view. Don't miss the beauty of the Texas Coast while enjoying the course.

We booked the tee time at 8 a.m. because we wanted to hit the beach after and have time to chill before our dinner reservations. I knew the course was adjacent to the beach, but I had no idea what felt like a gentle sea breeze could make club and line selection so challenging. Overall the course was in great condition. Fairways were solid. Greens were manicured and roll true. We played the nines twice and even took advantage of the par 3 course at the turn. We probably would have needed to play more than once to play it well, but we were having too much fun taking turns on the golf board to care (think giant scooter/surfboard with a bag holder). We definitely got our money's worth and I can't wait to take my dad this fall and play it again.



**PHOTO** Where else can you jump on a Golfboard and cruise through a Links Style course while taking in the scenery of the Gulf of Mexico?

**PHOTO** Everybody's somebody at Palmilla!

# VISITORS FIND PORT A'S HISTORY **WELL WORTH DIVING INTO**

*While vacations in Port Aransas are timeless, the history is as deep as the sea.*

By Bryan Rindfuss  
*Contributing Writer*

Like many other lucky Texans, I have countless childhood memories that are inseparable from Port Aransas and Mustang Island.

On spring and summer weekends, our family would pile into a packed suburban and head for the coast—with a chorus of “Are we there yet?” filling the air until we were finally aboard the ferry and throwing stale bread to circling seagulls. Once settled into the stilted beach house my parents owned until the mid-1980s, my brother and I would make a beeline for the beach, where we’d race out to the sandbar, frolic in the surf, hunt relentlessly for sand dollars and build drip castles under a circus-striped tent.

If we tired of these activities, we’d pester Dad to take us fishing on the jetty or fire up the metal detector so we could comb the beach for buried treasure.

As an adult, I’ve continued to visit Port Aransas regularly. With the family beach house long sold, I stay at the historic Tarpon Inn whenever possible (nothing beats the authenticity of lazing in a rocker on the wraparound porch). Beyond prerequisite beach time, I always try to spot the fantastically colored Roseate Spoonbills and the lounging alligator at Leonabelle Turnbull Birding Center, dine on fresh seafood at Shell’s Pasta and Seafood and snap photos of candy-colored houses, quirky yard art and the Texas-size shark heads that guard the gift shops.

With its relaxed pace, unpretentious attitude and festive spirit, Port Aransas is easy to love. But like any other place on Earth, there’s much more than meets the eye. A quick dig into local history reveals accounts of nomadic Karankawa people living off the land and traveling by canoe, wild mustangs running free, infamous pirate Jean Lafitte burying a treasure chest and marking his booty with a silver dagger, English

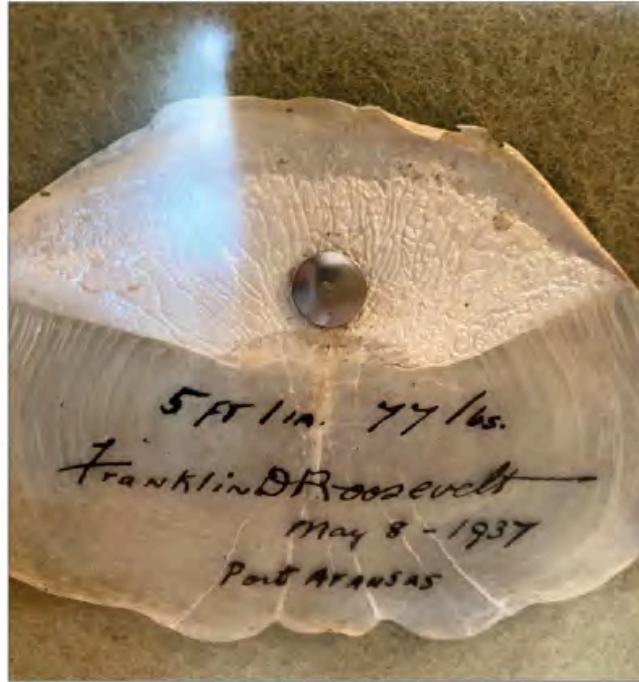
*Continued on Page 47*



“

**I have countless childhood memories that are inseparable from Port Aransas & Mustang Island...**

~ Bryan Rindfuss ”



**PHOTO** Scale from tarpon landed by F.D.R. during fishing trip in Port Aransas in May 1937. Scale is now located on the lobby wall at the Tarpon Inn.

Expanded workshop at Farley Boat Works. Volunteers working on an 18' fly-fishing skiff (foreground) and a 16' sailing dory (middle).

President Roosevelt (seated) landing tarpon hoisted by son Elliot (center) and guide Barney Farley (right) and two of the president's security detail in the bow.



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Volunteer Will Mayfield

*Continued from Page 44*

immigrant Robert Mercer ushering in a ranching period and anglers from all over the world getting reeled in by the thrill of catching a “silver king” in the quaint fishing village once known as the “Tarpon Capital of the World.”

#### **See for Yourself**

Thanks to the Port Aransas Preservation and Historical Association (PAPHA), visitors seeking cultural enlightenment can dive into some of these fascinating chapters at two homegrown institutions: the Port Aransas Museum and Farley Boat Works.

Situated in a restored kit house from the early 1900s, the Port Aransas Museum celebrates local history through rotating exhibits and permanent installations. Since opening in 2008, the volunteer-staffed museum has shed light on everything from the island’s first inhabitants to the “taming” of the Aransas Pass—a complex saga involving “Spanish explorers, early ‘Texians’ and the armies of three warring nations.” Highlights of the permanent collection include a dazzling lighthouse lens designed by French engineer Augustin-Jean Fresnel, a bronze bell from the train that transported the granite used to build the south jetty and film footage dating back to the 1920s. The museum also runs a historical database and a gift shop stocked with vintage photographs.

Billed as a “living exhibit,” Farley Boat Works preserves the legacy of a family business that played a vital role in the tarpon boom that swept Port Aransas from the 1880s to the 1950s. Arriving in 1910, aspiring tarpon guide Barney Farley recognized the developing fishing village needed motorboats and shared the idea with his brother Fred, a master woodworker who established Farley and Son Boat Works in 1915. Built from solid wood planks and powered by old car engines, Farley Boats were designed with low sides and a high bow that helped them fight choppy waves, and open cockpits that allowed anglers to cast in any direction.

Led by guides versed in wrangling massive, thrashing tarpon, these handcrafted boats were at center stage for notable events such as the annual Texas Tarpon Rodeo (initiated in 1932) and an oft-cited fishing trip Barney Farley organized for President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1937. Although later models incorporated windscreens, marine engines and cabins, Farley Boats were always built out of solid wood (initially cypress and later mahogany) even after the popularization of fiberglass. In addition to displaying historic motorboats, Farley Boat Works offers boat-building workshops and is in the process of completing a 60-foot Scow Schooner “like the ones that plied our local waters in the days of sail.”

Slated to open this year, the Maritime Museum will expand the PAPHA’s scope significantly with 6,000 square feet dedicated to showcasing Farley Boats and facilitating restoration projects.





Photo Credit: Moonlight Elegant Photography





# Plan Your BACHELORETTE BEACH PARTY

- ♥ **Book a beach house!**
- ♥ **Reserve your golf cart** and beach setups.
- ♥ **Make reservations at The Balinese Wellness Spa!** From chair massages and mini-facials, to champagne toasts and appetizers, they'll cover all the details so you can enjoy your day.
- ♥ **Visit Chapel on the Dunes!** Book a tour of the sweet little Chapel and fill your salty soul with wedding bliss vibes. Don't forget to snap insta-worthy pics of your blushing bestie.
- ♥ **Stop in at Island Wine!** Experience a bit of the Texas Wine Country right here on the island. Enjoy charcuterie boards and Texas wine in a quiet, comfortable, kid-free lounge or get it all to-go and take it to the beach.
- ♥ **Shop Port A!** Port A is the home of unique, eclectic shops. Discover your new favorite wardrobe staple and the perfect swimsuit or grab a souvenir to commemorate the trip.
- ♥ **Make Dinner Reservations!** Leave the stilettos at home because flip-flops are acceptable at every restaurant on the island. Although reservations aren't required at most restaurants, a large party could mean a longer wait so plan ahead and reserve a private room or make reservations so your squad can spend more time having fun.
- ♥ **Have an Adventure!** Book a unique adventure the girls will talk about for years to come. Skydiving, parasailing, private golf lessons, surfing lessons, photo shoot... yeah, we do that!



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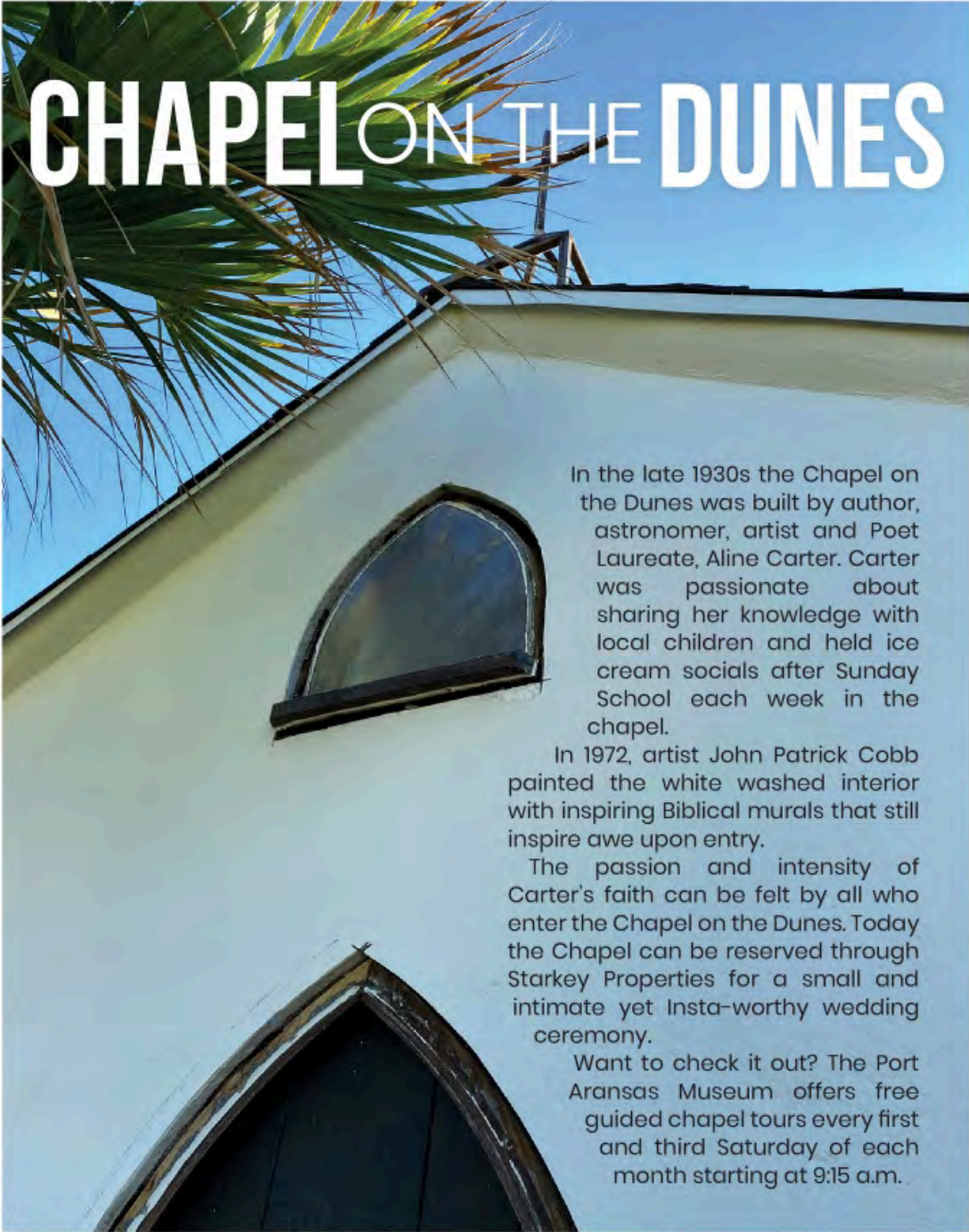
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# CHAPEL ON THE DUNES

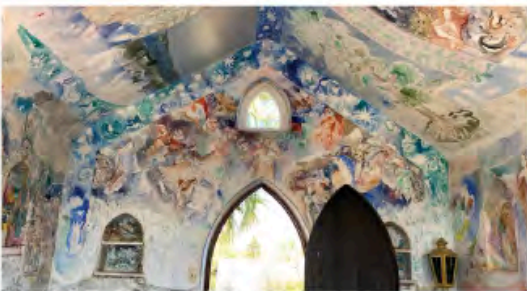


In the late 1930s the Chapel on the Dunes was built by author, astronomer, artist and Poet Laureate, Aline Carter. Carter was passionate about sharing her knowledge with local children and held ice cream socials after Sunday School each week in the chapel.

In 1972, artist John Patrick Cobb painted the white washed interior with inspiring Biblical murals that still inspire awe upon entry.

The passion and intensity of Carter's faith can be felt by all who enter the Chapel on the Dunes. Today the Chapel can be reserved through Starkey Properties for a small and intimate yet Insta-worthy wedding ceremony.

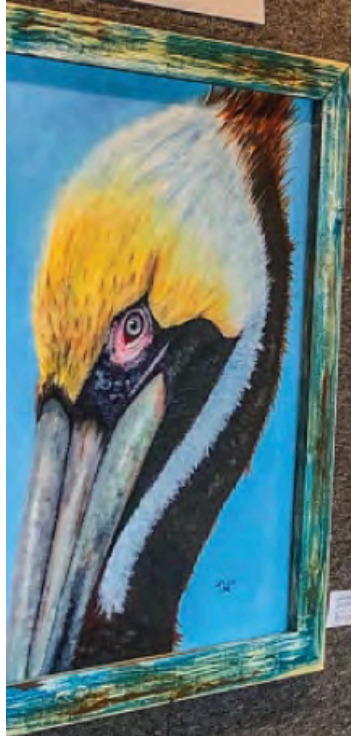
Want to check it out? The Port Aransas Museum offers free guided chapel tours every first and third Saturday of each month starting at 9:15 a.m.



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J. MORRIS 683 PHOTOGRAPHY

# GET INSPIRED

LET THE NATURAL BEAUTY OF PORT A INSPIRE YOUR INNER ARTIST

From pirates and musicians to sand sculptors and flounder giggers, our town has its fair share of eclectic characters. We love the authenticity of our town, which you can find in our live music scene, fishing community, arts and local makers.

Captivated by the natural beauty of Port Aransas, the local art scene is thriving. Photographers, painters, potters, sculptors, and even spoon makers are as individual as the grains of sand on our shores. From coastal chic to downright unique there is something for everyone in Port A.



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**Port Aransas Museum**  
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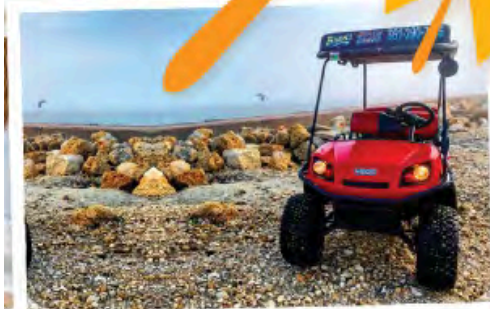
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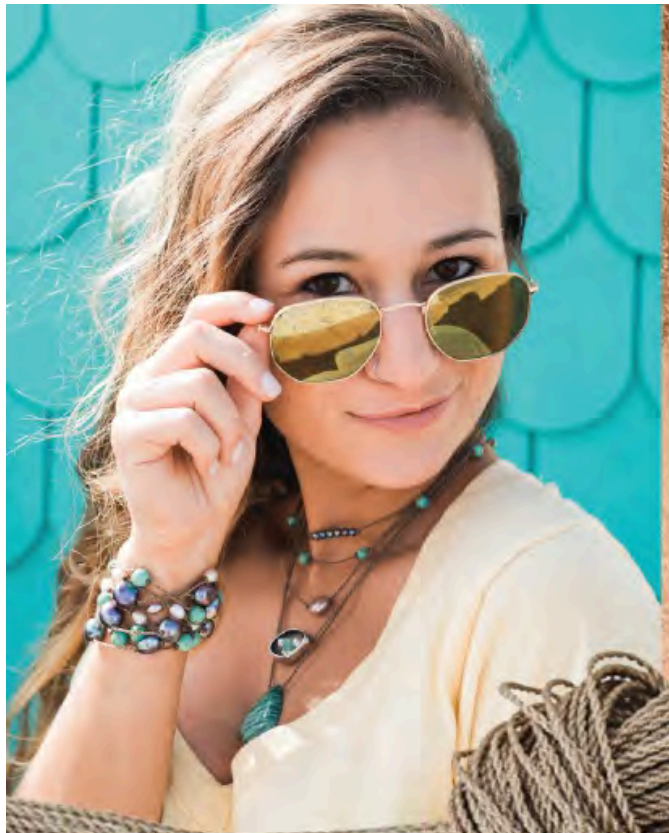
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361-749-7602
- The Dock**  
500 Cut Off Rd.  
361-749-0511
- The Islander**  
602 S. Alister St.  
361-749-5408
- Third Coast Beach Company**  
101 E. Avenue G  
361-749-5500
- Tippy Toes**  
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[www.TulaBlueRope.com](http://www.TulaBlueRope.com)



# ON THE ROCKS WITH SALT

## *Five Tips for Fishing at the Jetty in Port Aransas*

By Marlow Neel  
*Contributing Writer*

Fishing the south jetty can be an inexpensive way to put fresh fish in the cooler but it is also a serious test of your angling skills. The rocky edges of the south jetty are notorious for stealing tackle and tackling pride. Want to give it a go? Here are five tips for fishing at the jetties.

### **1. Pack the essentials**

The trek down the jetty to your honey hole is a long one. From the shore to the tip of the last hunk of granite is just about a mile. But while carrying your gear, bait, provisions and hopefully a stringer full of fish, that mile feels like a marathon. Pro-tip: Pack only what you need. If you can't fit everything in a backpack, grab a rolling cooler or a jetty cart to help haul your gear.

### **2. Watch your step**

Wearing a non-slick, rubber sole shoe can be the difference between an epic fishing trip and an adventure to the emergency room. The uneven rocks create a perfect habitat for small marine life, which in turn draws in the bigger fish anglers are after. However, those same rocks can be tricky to navigate loaded down with gear.

Avoid the dark spots on the rocks. Red, green and brown seaweed carpet the jetty just below the tide line. When the seaweed is dry, it is not a problem, but even the smallest amount of moisture, say from waves crashing on the rocks, and that innocent seaweed turns into a dangerous patch, slicker than ice.





**3. Bring extra tackle**

**FACT:** The jetty will steal your tackle. Do not fish like you are afraid to lose it. Imagine how much you will need on your worst day and bring more. See step 5 for a tackle saving tip!

**4. Use live shrimp**

Look for the white bait flag at Deep Sea Headquarters, Woody's and Port "A" Outfitters to grab at least a pint of shrimp per angler. Why use live shrimp? Because fish like it. All species of fish that frequent the jetty will eat live shrimp. Insert the hook under the horn, behind the eyes to secure your bait.

**5. How to make a lemon bottle rig**

This unusual rig is a secret of seasoned jetty anglers. The lemon bottle sets you up for good presentation and you are less likely to get snagged. Just remove the cap of a common lemon bottle and wrap the line around the threads, replace the cap to secure your line and tie off a 4 foot line to one eye in a 3-way-swivel rig. Off the other eye, tie 3 feet of 30 lb. fluorocarbon as your leader to the hook. Add a small split shot weight (two if the current is strong), 10 to 12 inches above the hook to keep your shrimp swimming down and you're all set.



**REMINDER!**

Please remember to throw away your trash and recycle your fishing line.

# GOOD THINGS COME TO THOSE WHO BAIT

## *Welcome to the Fishing Capital of Texas!*

Fishing culture is so deeply woven into the fabric of Port Aransas that it is no surprise this town was once named Tarpon, Texas. In the 1900s, the abundance of Tarpon around Port Aransas began to attract visitors from all over the country. Even President Franklin Roosevelt wanted in on the excitement and made the trip to try his hand at landing a "Silver King."

Today tarpon are somewhat elusive and hooking one even once is a huge source of pride for a modern angler. But as the saying goes, there are plenty of other fish in the sea and Port Aransas is estimated to be the home for 600+ species.

Inshore, offshore, by boat or land Port A is literally surrounded by opportunity to wet a line.

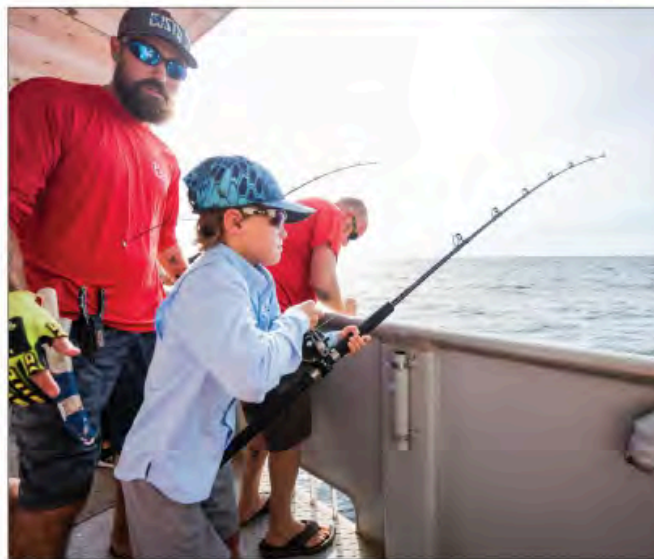
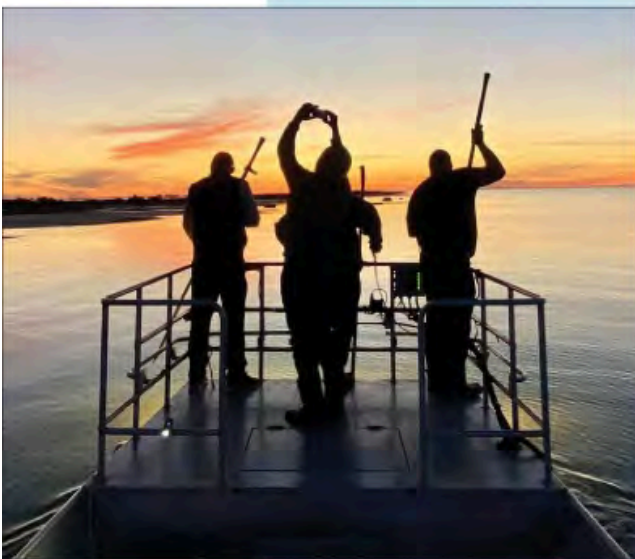


Photo Credit: Shannon Latkyette

# What's Biting & When?



## GULF FISHING

### Spanish Mackerel

Dates: May - Sept.  
Bait: Spoon, Live Mullet

### Ling (Cobia)

Dates: April - Oct.  
Bait: Live Perch, Ribbon Fish, Sardine, Jig

### Pompano

Dates: Oct. - April  
Bait: Shrimp, Fishbites

### Kingfish

Dates: Year Round  
Bait: Ribbon Fish, Cigar Minnow, Lure

### Dolphin (Mahi Mahi)

July - Oct.

### Sailfish

Dates: July - Sept.  
Bait: Mullet, Lure, Ballyhoo

### Marlin

Dates: July - Sept.  
Bait: Ballyhoo, Lure, Live Tuna

### Barracuda

Dates: Year Round  
Bait: Live Blue Runner, Ballyhoo, Lure

### Red Snapper (offshore)

Dates: June - Aug.  
Bait: Live Perch, Squid

### Grouper

Dates: Dec. - April  
Bait: Large Whole Fish

### Amberjack

Date: May - Aug.  
Bait: Live Bait, Jig

## BAY FISHING

### Redfish

Dates: Year Round  
Bait: Shrimp, Mullet, Lure

### Speckled Trout

Dates: Year Round  
Bait: Shrimp, Perch, Lure

### Drum

Dates: Year Round  
Bait: Shrimp, Crab

### Flounder

Dates: Year Round  
Bait: Shrimp, Lure, Finger Mullet

## **A FISHING**

### **PUBLIC FISHING CHARTERS**

**Deep Sea Headquarters**  
440 W. Cotter Ave.  
361-749-5597

**Dolphin Dock, Inc.**  
300 W. Cotter Ave.  
361-749-4188

**Port Aransas Fisherman's Wharf**  
900 Tarpon St.  
361-806-2132

**Woody's Sports Center**  
136 W. Cotter Ave.  
361-749-5252

### **FISHING GUIDES**

**Badfish Sportfishing**  
301 JC Barr Blvd.  
361-317-2233

**Bill Busters Sportfishing**  
136 W. Cotter Ave.  
361-749-5223

**Capt Joe's Flounder Ventures**  
P.O. Box 2431  
361-463-3217

**Coastal Bend Guides Association**  
1317 N. Hood St., Rockport, TX 78382  
361-205-7881

**Coastal Charters TX**  
136 W. Cotter Ave.  
361-850-0909

**El Gato Charters**  
900 N. Tarpon St.  
361-749-5554

**Fillabite Guide Service**  
2454 Greenbriar Dr.  
Ingleside, TX 78362  
361-215-2332

**Going Deep Fishing**  
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**Hot Spot Fishing Charters, Inc.**  
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512-750-1195

**Jackie Romeyn FishTales Guide Service**  
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361-749-9061

**Kenjo Fly Fishing Charters**  
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361-500-2552

**Pirates of the Bay Charters**  
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361-523-9452

**Port Aransas Boatmen**  
301 JC Barr Blvd.  
361-215-5928

**Rebel Charters**  
136 W. Cotter Ave.  
361-749-7330

**Reel McCoy Guide Service**  
2162 Main St. Ingleside, TX 78362  
361-688-6459

**Surrender At Sunrise - Flounder Giggling Trips**  
519 Bigelow, Rockport, TX 78381  
361-790-3271

**Winton's Guide Service**  
301 JC Barr Blvd.  
361-876-5226

### **MARINAS AND PIER**

**Horace Caldwell Pier**  
230 N. On the Beach Dr.  
361-749-5252

**Island Moorings Marina**  
3500 Island Moorings Pkwy.  
361-749-4100

**Port Aransas Municipal Boat Harbor**  
301 JC Barr Blvd.  
361-749-5429

### **BOAT REPAIR/SALES**

**Fox Yacht Sales**  
203 W. Cotter Ave.  
361-749-4870

**Island Boat Works, LLC**  
203 W. Cotter Ave.  
361-749-6107

**Mrs. Woody Jr's, Inc.**  
422 W. Avenue G  
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### **TOURS AND CRUISE**

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**Jetty Boat**  
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## **FISHING TOURNAMENTS IN PORT ARANSAS**

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- Anglers on Wheels

### **JUNE**

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- Powder Puff Women's Tournament

### **JULY**

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- Billfish Panchanga
- Outboard Fishing Tournament

### **AUGUST**

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- Texas Women Anglers Tournament
- Hook 'Em & Book 'Em Tournament

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- CCA Star Tournament

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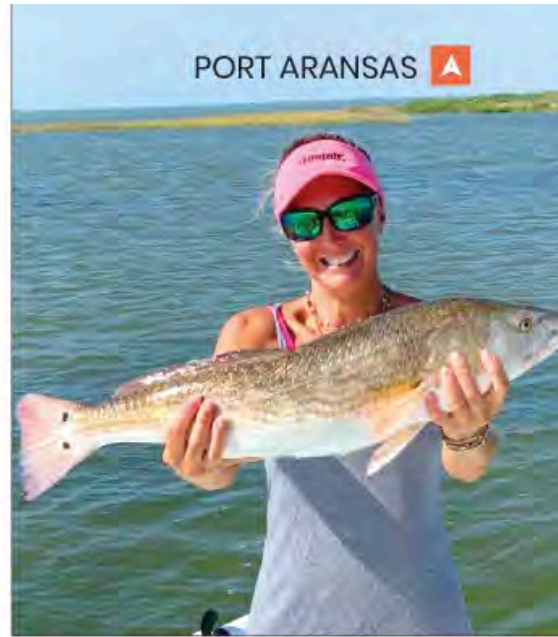
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# Cook your Catch

*5 ways to share epic fish stories over dinner*

By Kirby Conda Tello  
*Contributing Writer*



### Head into the Gulf

For visitors planning a deep-sea fishing excursion, Deep Sea Headquarters offers a Gulf Coast adventure of a lifetime. Visitors can charter the King Fisher to travel into the Gulf of Mexico to hunt for kingfish, shark, vermillion snapper, grouper, dorado and amberjack (depending on the season). Years of knowledge from the expert captains and deckhands help experienced anglers and first-timers alike catch their limits.

Back on the island, located right next door to Deep Sea Headquarters, Fins Grill & Icehouse's motto is "You Hook 'Em, We Cook 'Em!" Bring your fish pre-cleaned and ready to cook and Fins will prepare your fresh catch grilled, blackened, fried or garlic'd. Keep in mind, this means filleted to restaurant grade (no bones). Enjoy two sides with your entree or go the family style route to share with large groups where your fish and sides are priced per pound. The outdoor seating at Fins is perfect for watching boats come in and out of the marina.

### Troll the Bay

Keep it closer to shore on a bay fishing excursion with Coastal Charters. Coastal Charters offers multiple fishing tours with their Bay Fishing six-hour trip being a popular precursor to dinner back on shore. Anglers target redfish, trout, flounder and black drum on this trip that accommodates two to five guests on board. Coastal Charters offers fish cleaning services back at the docks.

The top-notch coastal hospitality continues at Virginia's on the Bay, which heats up the kitchen to cook your catch to perfection. Virginia's requires that your catch be cleaned prior to arrival, and serves up large family style sides alongside your grilled, blackened, or fried fresh catch. Give in to island time while you bask in the scenic bay views as your fresher than fresh meal is being prepared.

### Cast a Line

Anglers with less time on their hands can cast their lines from the bulkhead at Roberts Point Park for a laid-back fishing experience that offers views of the Corpus Christi Ship Channel. Experts have reported that anglers catch oversized redfish, black drum and trout here. Casting a line from the south jetty is another great family experience since the jetty is vehicle accessible and no boats are required. Just grab your gear and go.

*Continued on Page 70*

## **A FISHING**

*Continued from Page 69*

Whether you are dining for lunch or dinner, with friends and family or just a small group, Castaways Seafood and Grill is an ideal choice for tasty food at reasonable prices. Be sure your catch is cleaned and ready to go, then grab a bowl of Castaways Seafood Gumbo while waiting for the main course. It has a homemade roux with shrimp, fish, sausage and okra that is so good it runs out daily.

### **Try your Luck on the Pier**

You can also cast your lines from Horace Caldwell Pier, located within I.B. Magee Park on the beach. At 1200 feet long, the concrete and lighted pier is a great way for avid anglers to fish the Gulf of Mexico waters and catch fish that don't normally come close to the shore. You can rent fishing poles and buy your bait right on the pier at Keepers, a shop located at the entrance. Forgot the beer? No worries—you can buy that too!

If you're looking for where the locals go to get their catch prepared, you've found it in Moby Dicks. They take their pirate-theme to new heights, which makes for an entertaining experience for children and adults alike. Whether you've had a good or bad day on the water, Moby Dicks is sure to

provide comfort for the belly and the soul. Your catch requires cleaning and must be without bones. Priced by the pound, order your trophy catch grilled, fried or blackened.

### **Go Gigging**

For an unexpected way to catch a fish, book a flounder gigging trip with Surrender at Sunrise. While fishing in the dark, underwater boat lights help anglers spot the elusive flounder. Even in tough conditions, Surrender's expert Captain Dave has the patience and know-how to coach visitors through the experience. And for the "gigging" part, well, let's just say the fishing pole is traded in for a spear.

After a night on the water, lunch at Kody's Restaurant and Bar is a great way to relax, unwind and enjoy your hard work. Having perfected the balance of surf and turf, Kody's offers lunch and dinner specials on quality meats and the freshest seafood, including the flounder fillets giggers bring in. Kody's is known for their garlic fish, which is just one of many ways to have your catch prepared. If you've successfully gone gigging, blackened or fried will be a tasty sidenote to your epic fish story.

Find the full lineup of fishing excursions and cook-your-catch restaurants at [visitportaransas.com](http://visitportaransas.com).

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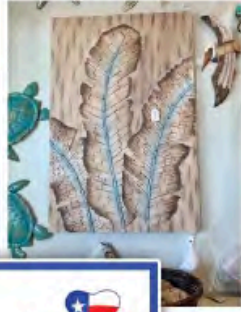


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Shake the sand off of your flip flops and enjoy the taste of fresh seafood rolled right out on your tabletop shrimp boil style or delicately prepared and served in style. Nothing tastes better than your own fresh caught fish enjoyed with a salty breeze while dining on the waterfront, or off the menu and dive into the fresh flavors of homemade crab cakes, seafood gumbo, shrimp po'boys, or fish tacos. Whether you like your seafood boiled, grilled, or fried, the seafood is the specialty at many Port A restaurants with selections of fresh Gulf shrimp and fish every day of the week.

Try seafood Tex-Mex style and feast on some of the best Tex-Mex north of the border at La Playa Mexican Grille. Classic takes on tacos, enchiladas, fajitas, and burritos will satisfy your cravings, while fresh

seafood takes center stage with house specialties like the blackened tuna tacos, camarones, or crabmeat enchiladas stuffed with sauteed lump crab meat and avocado topped with creamy roasted poblano sauce. Sizzling fajita platters, fresh seafood tacos, spicy huevos rancheros, homemade migas, and salty sweet ice cold margaritas can be found on nearly every Mexican restaurant menu in Port A, and none of them disappoint.

Come out of the water and dig into the deep south with Chef Gail at the Black Marlin Bar & Grill, where the award-winning shrimp and grits is a must - cheesy, creamy stone ground grits, creole cream sauce, smoked habanero cheddar cheese, corn, and andouille sausage. Land lovers can't go wrong with a thick juicy burger and fries or mouthwatering Prime Texas Wagyu Strip Steak grilled to perfection.

*Continued on **Page 74***





**A DINING & NIGHTLIFE**

Continued from **Page 72**



The Gulf Coast meets the East Coast at Dylan's Coal Oven Pizzeria, offering authentic New York style pizza, with perfectly crisp crust pizzas, classic salads, pastas, Italian sandwiches, signature coal oven wings, and freshly made cannolis. Craving supreme pizza piled high with fresh toppings? The locals love Port A Pizzeria's Signature Supreme, and the grub is always good at The Gaff – home of the "World Famous" Gaffer.

If breakfast is the most important meal of the day, Sunday Brunch is the most important meal of the week. Start your week right with patio dining and the perfect brunch menu of chicken and waffles, croissant crab sandwich, eggs benedict, omelet eggrolls, and stuffed waffles at Castaways Seafood and Grill. Pull up a seat at Tortuga's Saltwater Grill to try the biscuits and chorizo gravy or Tuga-style French toast topped with house caramel, spiced Mexican chocolate and candied pecans. Black Marlin has brunch down to a science and some of their best "experiments" are the twists on eggs benedict! Give your tastebuds a treat with scrapple & bacon, crab or fried chicken bennies.

Irie's, in its new location, offers brunch filled with all made-from-scratch goodies... whether it be tacos, benedicts, scrambles, or one of the other choices, Irie's will do your tummy right!

As the sun goes down on your island getaway, head to your favorite new restaurant and raise a glass to time spent together in the sand, great catches on the ocean, and start making plans for your next island getaway.

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730 Trout St.  
(361) 749-4440
- Black Marlin Bar & Grill**  
258 Snapdragon  
(361) 749-4653
- BlueWater Cowboy Saloon**  
229 Beach St.  
(361) 749-0106
- Cancun Mexican Restaurant**  
1023 State Hwy 361, Ste. E  
(361) 749-5596
- Castaways Seafood and Grill**  
337 N. Alister St.  
(361) 749-5394
- Coach's Island Grill**  
717 Tarpon St.  
(361) 333-6958
- Crazy Cajun**  
303 Beach St.  
(361) 749-5069
- Domino's**  
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(361) 749-3620
- Dylan's Coal Oven Pizzeria**  
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- Lisabella's Bistro & Bar**  
165 Social Circle  
(361) 749-4222
- MacDaddy's Family Kitchen**  
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- Moby Dicks Restaurant**  
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(361) 749-9447
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(361) 416-1831
- Oceans of Seafood**  
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361-749-4994
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- Seafood & Spaghetti Works**  
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- Venetian Hot Plate**  
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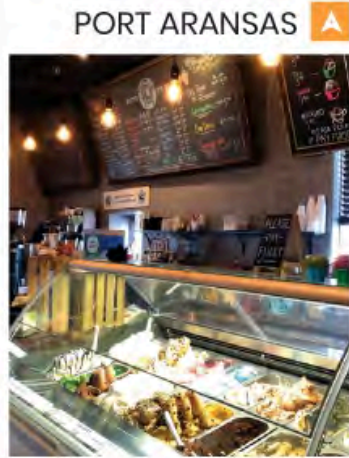


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PORT ARANSAS **A**

THE INSIDE

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The fun continues hanging out under the hut at Bron's Shaved Ice and To-go Bar. Cool down fast with shaved ribbons of soft,

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Or, stroll down to Port A Creamery and try the scoops of ice cream resting on fresh warm waffles, a favorite on the menu. Indulge in the Oreo Lover – a warm waffle topped with Oreo cookies and cream then drizzled with chocolate sauce. We have a sweet spot for these cool local ice cream joints.

Want something that won't melt? Scoop up some homemade candy at Winton's Island Candy to satisfy that sweet tooth. Whatever you crave-Port A can satisfy.



## GOOD TIMES & GOOD TUNES **GUARANTEED**

*The island's music scene  
invites visitors to dance  
the night away*

By Kirby Conda Tello  
*Contributing Writer*



is accessed through the outdoor patio, where visitors find a dance club hosted by a live DJ.

There have been plenty of times I've tagged along with band friends to listen to them rock out on Stevie Ray Vaughan and Jimi Hendrix covers and later find myself dancing the night away between center stage on the patio and flashing lights in the club area. I've encountered more than a few bachelorette parties at Treasure Island, and inevitably as the night ticks on, I find myself making new friends and getting in on buying a round of drinks for the bride and her gals.

**Party on the Bay**

On days where truly casual vibes are what we are looking for, my group of "island-time" friends like to enjoy the marina front bar at The Back Porch. This bar is such a fun little spot to catch live entertainment and enjoy a no-frills drink selection. How can you go wrong listening to a surf/rockabilly band called Riptide while overlooking the harbor?

Like a true Texan, I believe that there's nothing the sea breeze, a live band and a cold brew can't fix. Word on the street is that The Back Porch is the place to go in Port A for a "good time with good tunes." What more can you ask for?

**Where the Locals Gather**

Much like everyone who loves the little slice of heaven that is Port Aransas, Shorty's Place is dubbed the island's "oldest

*Continued on Page 80*

There is nothing quite like setting out for a night on the town flanked with live music, cold brews and a balmy coastal breeze. Port Aransas, has everything needed to set the mood just right—and then some. Port A is perfect for a night out with my girls or a more intimate experience for a date night.

**Three in One**

Many of my friends are musicians who play Port A venues. My introduction to the live music scene started at Treasure Island. Given five-star reviews from both travelers and locals, Treasure Island is known for being one of the best nightlife hangouts in Port A. The large outdoor space in the back is where live bands set up, but you can hear them from the indoor bar, too. The third bar area



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*Continued from Page 79*

and friendliest.” Whether it be impromptu jam sessions on the patio, JP’s Island Karaoke or a country artist who brings down the house, there is always live music at Shorty’s. It’s the perfect place to go with my eclectic group of friends who like a wide array of music genres. You can expect everything from classic country to blues, R&B and folk rock to grace their stage.

Port Aransas nightlife truly does have something for everyone. It’s the best part of setting out for a good time on the island because I know everyone in the crew will have a good time. Whether you’re a local like me or just in town for a few nights, Port A nightlife delivers that coastal hospitality that everyone craves. You will surely walk away with a few new friends who will always be eager to welcome you back.

For a daily lineup of local talent on stage at all area venues, visit Port A Live.



*Lisa Mayo*  
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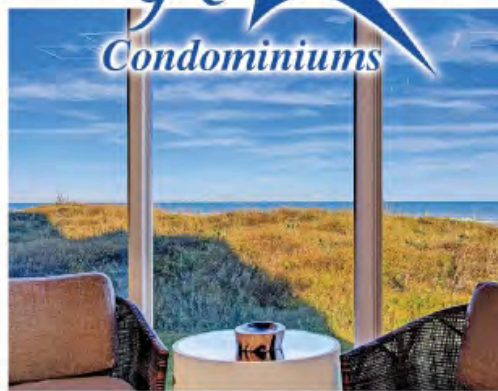
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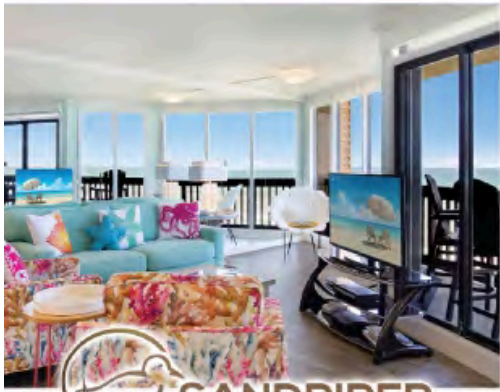
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**6**  
**Lodging Options**  
 in Port Aransas

Learn more about the **six most common lodging options** in the Port Aransas & Mustang Island Area.



**CONDOS**

Condos are a popular lodging choice for visitors. Typically, units are individually owned and are part of a larger complex with amenities.



**COTTAGES**

Cottages are typically smaller, more boutique style houses in small groups on a property. Perfect for a family looking for more space on a budget.



**BOUTIQUE HOTELS**

Boutique hotels offer modern upscale rooms. Many offer on-site amenities such as spa boutiques and saltwater pools. Some are adult only.



**HOTELS & MOTELS**

Hotels & Motels are best for smaller families more sensitive to a budget. They typically offer a smaller space and amenities.



**RV RESORTS**

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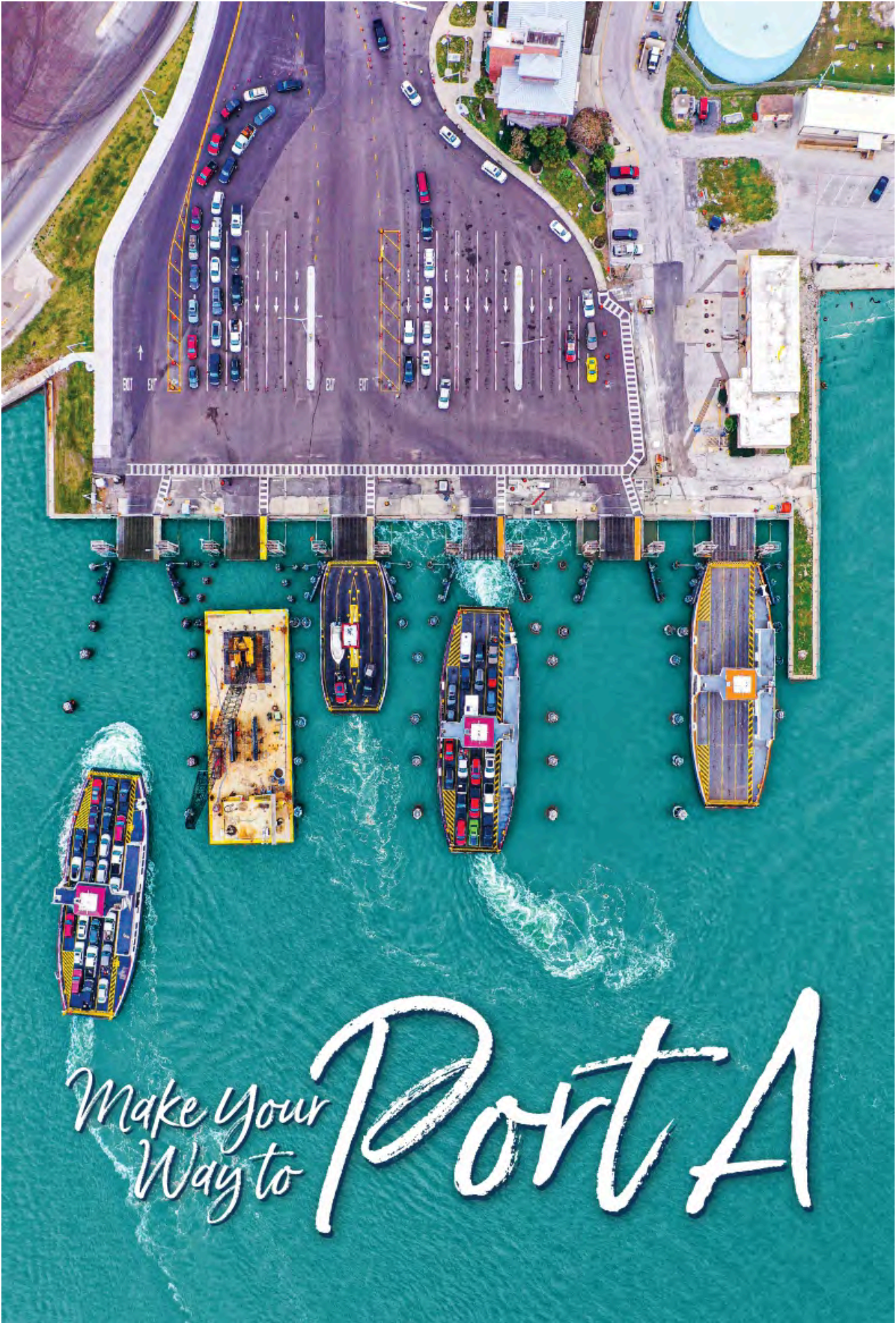
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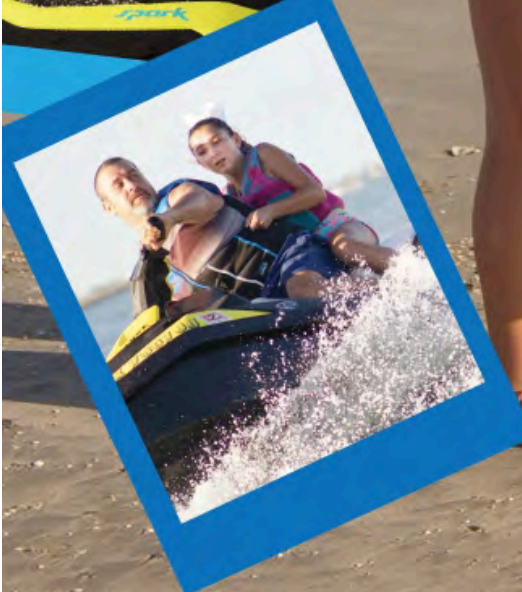
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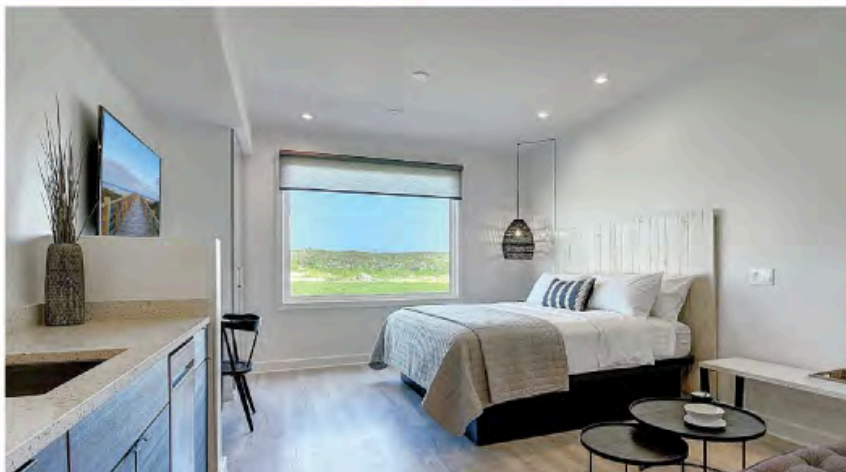
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- Secluded location surrounded by dunes and grasslands



Lively Beach Resort  
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Family fun at the prettiest village on the Texas Coast.  
Resort amenities, activities, and beautiful beaches—all for you.

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