



# 2022 Annual Report

Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce

## SHAPING THE TRUE TEXAS COAST TOGETHER

*Traditions, Stewardship, Balance, & Results*

[VisitPortAransas.com](https://www.VisitPortAransas.com)

**PORT ARANSAS**  
the island life



# A NOTE

## *from the president*

Traditions, stewardship, balance, and results continue to be the driving forces of your Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce. Over the past year, we have continued to shift gears and evolve into a stronger, focused, and more efficient organization working hard for our community and businesses.

As we exit the pandemic waves and enter a more settled pattern of living in a tourism destination, Port A is paving the way for a stronger tomorrow. From our city hall's leadership, to our school district's excellence, to our own organization's forward thinking and dedication, we continue to see growth, evolution, and the promise of great days ahead.

Our organization's focus is on delivering responsible, refined tourism and stewardship results to our city and residents. Organizational excellence is at the core of what we do. In fact, we are going through a process of international accreditation and certification for staff and our organization that will ensure long term success for us all.

Tourism promotion, backed by incredible levels of leading research for Port Aransas continues to be at our forefront. The results from our advertising, promotional, and educational campaigns have garnered great success. Our commitment to this community will continue to shine through our deliverables, like the city's wayfinding and signage program and our Respect Our Island Home campaigns.

We take pride in being a progressive agent of positive change for Port Aransas now and in the future. Thank you for partnering with us in so many ways. The next few pages will illustrate the many ways we continue to strive for excellence and to make Port Aransas all that it can be for residents, businesses, and our visitors.

BRETT STAWAR  
PRESIDENT & CEO  
Port Aransas Tourism Bureau  
& Chamber of Commerce

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*Save the Date*

## January

20–29: Restaurant Week  
27: Tourism Summit

## February

9–12: Chocolate Crawl Shop Around  
23–26: Whooping Crane Festival

## April

12: Port Aransas Day at the Capitol  
21–23: Spring Fling Shop Around  
27: Shred Day

## May

9: National Tourism & Travel Week Rally

## Beachtober

Port A Live Music Weekend  
Shoptoberfest Shop Around

## November

Holiday Shop Around  
Sand Santa and holiday  
collaborations



# Our Organization



## THE VISION



Port Aransas will be known as the premier family beach destination in Texas.

## THE MISSION

We work to enhance the community's quality of life by attracting visitors who share our love of the Texas Gulf Coast.

## THE PURPOSE

We support our community by advocating for sensible development and leading the marketing of Port Aransas and Mustang Island.

### Meet the Team

**Brett Stawar**  
President & CEO

**Lisa Shelton**  
Special Events & Community  
Relations Manager

**Melinda Compton**  
Marketing & Digital Content  
Manager

**Rhonica Stuart**  
Operations Support Specialist

**Shelley Witcher**  
Business Development &  
Sales Manager

**Candy Kelly**  
Bookkeeper

**Cameron Fowler**  
Stewardship & Branding  
Specialist

**Micayla Canales**  
Welcome Center Assistant

**Tricia Perrine**  
Welcome Center Assistant

### Board Members

**Keith McMullin**  
Chairperson

**Fred Samudio**  
Treasurer

**Marnie Pate**  
Hotel/Lodging

**Kim Winton**  
Retail

**Shannon Lafayette**  
Professional Services

**Tanya Chambers**  
Ex Officio

**Laurie Soechting**  
Vice Chairperson

**Greg Carr**  
Hotel/Lodging

**Scott Clanton**  
Hotel/Lodging

**Shawn Etheridge\***  
Bar/Restaurant

**Ed Buskey**  
At Large

**David Parsons**  
Ex Officio

**Marsha Starkey**  
Secretary

**Bill Bauder**  
Hotel/Lodging

**Celeste Edwards**  
Hotel/Lodging

**Chris Collins**  
Bar/Restaurant

**Will Cocke**  
Fishing/Marina





## Partner Updates

### Celebrating the Small Business Backbone of Port A

The Port Aransas experience would not be what it is without residents and employees who make it their business, literally, to ensure that visitors have the time of their lives and will want to come back again and again. In 2022, we recognized the dedication of our partners through two programs—Partner of the Week and the brand new “Hospitality Heroes” program. Hospitality Heroes were nominated by business owners and management to recognize those employees who go above and beyond in the line of duty as ambassadors for the island and contribute to a positive working environment. These heroes were recognized at the annual Tourism Summit in May.

Interested in partnership? A partnership with the Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce is an investment in your business and in the future of island life. It provides you with a variety of benefits that include a partner directory, networking opportunities, advertising opportunities, a web presence and, of course, a professional and friendly staff promoting your business.



## GIVING BACK TO PORT A

The Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce Foundation gave back over \$50,000 to the community of Port Aransas. Our partners, along with proceeds from special events, sponsorships, and fundraisers, contributed to these awards.

**\$32,000**

*Local Nonprofit  
Organizations*

**\$21,600**

*Local  
Scholarships  
Awarded*

**344**

**TOTAL PARTNERS**

Partner benefits include networking opportunities, referral services, advertising opportunities, a web presence, and more.

**27**

**NEW PARTNERS**

These businesses have made the leap to invest in the future of Port Aransas, promote island life, and keep business booming.

# Partner Events & Initiatives

Partnering Together to Make Port A Shine



## Restaurant WEEK

Local restaurant partners hooked visitors' taste buds on the local foodie scene by participating in Port Aransas Restaurant Week. This winter event generated buzz around the thriving food culture and drove visitors into restaurants for prix-fixe lunch and dinner menu options.

## Tourism Rally

The second annual Port Aransas Tourism Rally, in celebration of National Travel & Tourism Week, was the first week of May. In a new initiative, partners nominated "Hospitality Heroes," who make our island shine, for recognition at the event! The rally will return on May 9, 2023.



## PORT ARANSAS shop local

To boost in-store shopping at local boutiques, we host four weekend-long Shop Arouns (Chocolate Crawl in February, Spring Fling in April, Shoptoberfest in October, and Holiday Shop Around in November.) Shoppers are treated to light refreshments and a plethora of deals that will make them want to return again and again.



The 2022 Margarita Madness event led us to partner with another 16 "salty" contenders for the championship title, and Trout Street Bar & Grill's refreshing Hibiscus Basil Margarita came out on top!



## Sand Santa

With the help of our generous sponsors, we are proud to host the annual "Sand Santa" sculpture. The sand sculpture, along with events hosted by partners such as the Community Tree Lighting and Holiday Golf Cart Parade, set Port A apart as a Winter Wonderland...on the beach!





Whooping Crane Festival came back in a big way in 2022 after a year of absence due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The 25th anniversary of the festival saw record crowds, with nearly \$100,000 in total sales and 2,340 individual tickets sold for sessions, tours, and workshops. Despite blustery weather conditions, the namesake bird was spotted on nearly every boat tour and on numerous bus trips, and the festival was able to donate tens of thousands of dollars to local nonprofits.

# Signature Events

60

Excursions, classes, & workshops

115

Bird species identified

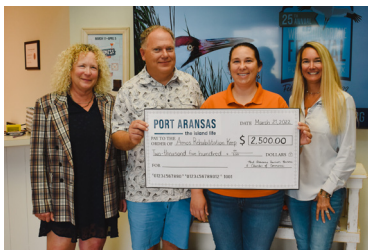
30+

Trade show vendors

1,000+

Volunteer hours

QUICK FACTS



▲ Landsharks Concert and Live Music Weekend

▲ Shoptoberfest and Taco & Margarita Trail

▲ Wooden Boat Festival

▲ Barrier Island Ultra, Port A Days, & Bassmaster Redfish Cup Championship

OVERVIEW



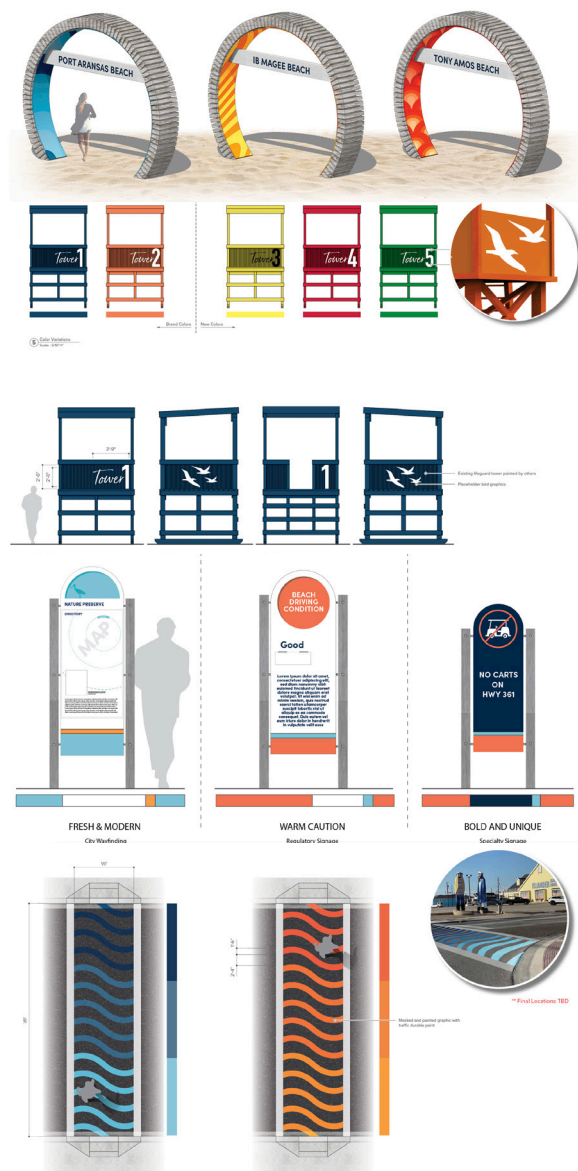
Beachtober returned this October, with a new format and fresh festivities to look forward to! Every weekend was chock full of events focused on major draws to the island such as live music, food and drink, heritage, and shopping.



# Wayfinding

Beginning in late 2021, the Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce partnered with RSM Design, a principle-centered design agency, for a wayfinding audit. Experts examined the signage in and around Port Aransas and compiled a comprehensive report to help Port Aransas determine steps forward on ways to better welcome and guide our visitors. Over the past year, the project has continued to develop with input from the Port Aransas community. Today, the City of Port Aransas, with support from the Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce, continues to push in its path towards final designs and hopes to begin implementing some of the proposed designs in the coming year.

## DESIGN SAMPLES



## MOCKUPS



# Destination Stewardship

## RESPECT

### *Our Island Home*

With the help of Better Destinations, Strategic Marketing & Research Insights, The Travel Foundation, and Madden Media, we launched the Respect Our Island Home Campaign in 2022! "Respect Our Island Home" focuses on finding a balance between locals and visitors through teaching people how to visit the Port A Way and be good stewards of our beautiful island.

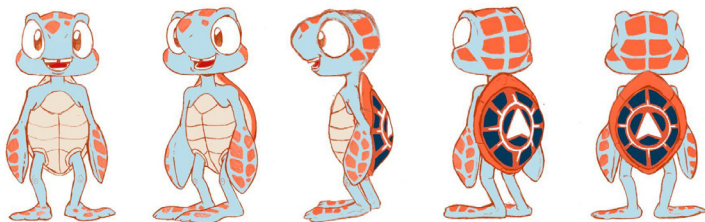
One of the key features of this campaign is Flynn the sea turtle, who has been a big hit with locals and visitors alike. Creating Flynn allowed us to connect with people in a unique way, and to unite them with our mission to maintain our island oasis. Flynn's addition to the campaign yielded fantastic results and ads run through Meta generated over 4,000 unique users to our Respect Our Island Home page.

We have big plans for Flynn and the campaign in 2023, so be on the lookout for opportunities to join Flynn in Respecting Our Island Home!

Campaign ads in summer  
2022 garnered

2,392,599

impressions



# EARNED MEDIA

464

*Earned Media Stories*

Total earned mentions of Port Aransas in print, online, and broadcast, January 22 to December 22, 2022.

1,553,962,205

*Media Impressions*

Including earned viewership and readership, combined with broadcast, print, and online coverage, January 22 to December 22, 2022.

\$18,873,297

*Earned Media Value*

Total earned media value for Port Aransas, January 22 to December 22, 2022.

Named One of the  
“South's Best Beach Towns”

**Southern Living**

Southern Living FOOD HOME GARDEN TRAVEL HOLIDAYS CULTURE STYLE NEWS ABOUT US

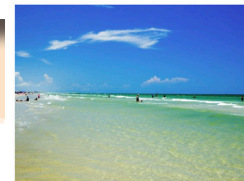
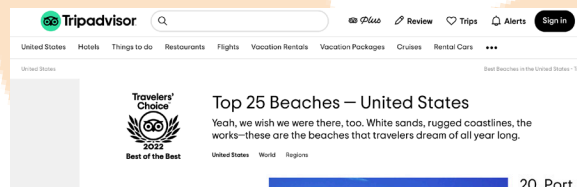
## The South's Best Beach Towns 2022

By Kaitlyn Yelborough | Updated on June 7, 2022



Named one of the Top 25  
Beaches in the United States

**Tripadvisor**



20. Port Aransas Beach  
Port Aransas, Texas

"The surf was great and loved the fact that you could drive on the beach. We enjoyed a campfire one evening and played some guitar under the full moon."

Shop for a place to stay  
• 20 Hotels  
• 4,162 Vacation Rentals  
• 3,481 Vacation Rentals  
MORE

*Media highlights*

AFAR "The 10 Best State Parks in Texas You Need to Visit"

AUSTIN CHRONICLE "Day Trips: Texas SandFest, Port Aransas"

THRILLIST "Here's Your Guide to Discovering Texas' Barrier Islands"

CULTUREMAP (Statewide) "9 Top Things to Do On a Family-Friendly Port Aransas Vacation This Summer"

FODOR'S TRAVEL "13 Best Hidden Beaches Across the U.S."

SOUTHERN LIVING "Texas Coast Comeback"

HOUSTON CHRONICLE "9 Unique Festivals Near Houston That Are Worth the Drive"

10



# Awards

## ISLAND GUIDE

### 2022 Finalist, Destiny Awards Category: Printed Collateral Materials

In January, we printed 75,000 copies of the 2022 Island Guide. Through a partnership with Texas Monthly, 45,000 were distributed in key markets like Austin, Dallas, and beyond. The remainder were distributed to statewide visitor centers, local partners, online requests, and our own Welcome Center.

The magazine is an elevated spin on a visitor guide; it's an inspiration tool used to energize travelers to plan a trip to Port Aransas. The guide's theme was "Curate Your Coastal Experience," and focused on creating a personal experience in a destination anchored by eras of past visitors' traditions. The 96 pages dive into island life with informative editorial pieces, personal interviews from influential locals, and captivating imagery showcasing the experience visitors have when they make their way to Port A.

At the 2022 ESTO conference put on by U.S. Travel, the guide was recognized as a finalist in the Printed Collateral Materials category of the nationwide Destiny Awards.



## SALTY STORIES

### Second Place, Texas Destination Excellence Award in Video/Podcast Series

The Texas Association of Convention & Visitor Bureaus, or TACVB, crowned the Salty Stories series with a second place win in the Video/Podcast Series category at the 2022 Annual Convention. These awards "recognize outstanding contributions to destination management in Texas," and that's just what they've done!

## RESPECT OUR ISLAND HOME

### First Place Winner, Texas Destination Excellence Award in Community Engagement

TACVB awarded first place to the "Respect Our Island Home" campaign featuring the newly-developed Flynn the sea turtle at its helm. The Community/Local Engagement Promotion category awards those campaigns whose promotion supports the local community and residents.

## SALTY STORIES

### Bronze, HSMAI Adrian Awards

The Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMAI) recognized the island, awarding us an Adrian Award. The first installment of the Salty Stories video series featured "behind the scenes" stories from three local partners.



## MARGARITA MADNESS

### Bronze, HSMAI Adrian Awards

Recognition from HSMAI continued with the awarding of another Adrian Award for the Margarita Madness campaign. The integration of an online voting system, fresh branding, and unique marketing snagged us the award.

# Digital Marketing ▲



## E-NEWS

Visit Port Aransas is utilizing a professionally-redesigned and artfully-branded consumer newsletter to attract high yield visitors to the destination. This consumer newsletter is sent out on the first Thursday of every month to over 72,000 salty fans. We sent close to one million emails in 2022 and maintained an open rate of 29%, nearly ten points above industry standard. We have already begun segmentation for quarterly, hyper-focused interest newsletters that will continue to grow our e-news database engagement.

In addition to the consumer newsletter, the Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce continued to commit to a weekly partner newsletter to communicate with and celebrate the business community of Port Aransas.

**60%**

Increase in newsletter subscribers, thanks to targeted efforts such as lead generation ads.

**72,000+** EMAIL SUBSCRIBERS

## SOCIAL RECAP

Despite industry-wide, declining organic reach due to changing algorithms, 2022 was a year of growth for Visit Port Aransas social media. All platforms (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Pinterest, Twitter, and LinkedIn) are at record-breaking follow numbers (18.7k on Instagram and 63k on Facebook!)

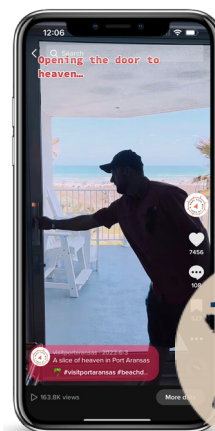
See the "star socials" below, the individual posts on each channel with the highest reach in 2022!



**42.2k**  
Facebook  
Post Reach



**22.4k**  
Instagram  
Reels Reach



**163.8k**  
TikTok  
Views

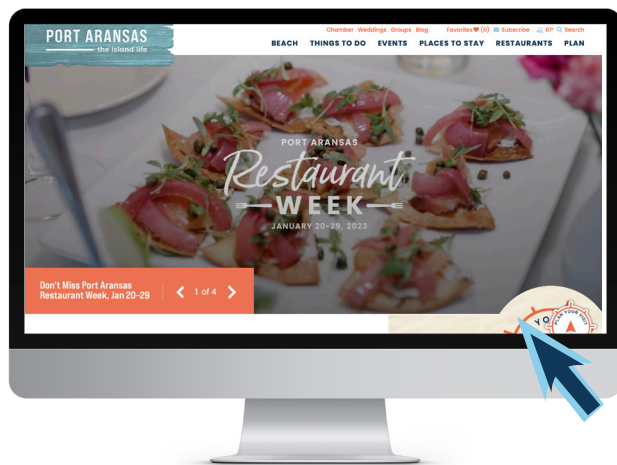


# Web Traffic

## WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

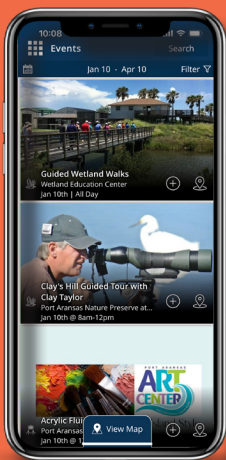
The Visit Port Aransas website continued to grow in 2022, and mid-year we finally hit one million unique users!

Design continues to evolve to cater to visitor needs and wants as well as the Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce's developing marketing plan. A custom interactive map, new social integration, and integrated online Island Guide are all set to come in early 2023.



## THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT!

The Visit Port Aransas app is a helpful tool for travelers and residents alike! Interactive "trails" for events like Shop Arounds and Restaurant Week enable users to easily follow along and engage in our event, and the "events" feature is handy for helping plan an itinerary fit for any family. The app continues to grow by leaps and bounds.



**28,367**  
Total Users (162% increase  
over 2021)

**3:42**  
Average Session Duration

### Site Snapshot

PAGEVIEWS

**3 MILLION+**

USERS

**1.1 MILLION**

49.56% increase over 2021

AVERAGE SESSION DURATION



**1:35**

ENGAGEMENT RATE\*

**53.62%**

\*Engagement rate is a new Google Analytics 4 metric measuring the percentage of engaged user sessions. An engaged session is a session that lasts longer than ten seconds, has a conversion event, or has at least two pageviews or screenviews.



# Paid Advertising

## TRADITIONS ANCHOR HERE...ON THE TRUE TEXAS COAST

Creative innovation—built on a research foundation—and a continuing partnership with Madden Media as the marketing agency for the Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce led to tremendous successes in the advertising arena in 2022.

A total of nine campaigns across 21 unique channels saw these successes. Media campaigns were divided into seasonal and events-based focuses and targeted to key audiences within Texas and touch-states.

In the fall, we launched a rebranded version of the “Traditions Anchor Here” tagline we continue to build on—a simplified, sleek version that visually highlights what the island has to offer and the traditions that the island is so conducive to forming.

We also tried out a couple new platforms, such as TikTok, to expand awareness of Port Aransas to new audiences, and will continue to do so with additional “Out of Home” buys in luxury malls and outdoor spaces that will draw visitors into the tradition-making of the True Texas Coast, an idea we intend to develop even further in 2023.



## Annual Media Performance



122,237,704  
Branded Impressions

863,533  
Clicks To Site

\$0.90/\$6.33  
CPC/CPM - All Media

SEM	Paid Social	Display	Audio	Video
195,429 Clicks	360,818 Clicks	252,269 Clicks	365 Clicks	2,612,388 Views
1,817,522 Impressions	29,125,023 Impressions	79,527,764 Impressions	743,432 Impressions	84.28% View Rate
Above industry average of 9.19%. 10.75% CTR	Beats industry average of 0.9%. 1.24% CTR	Beats Industry Average of 0.47%. 0.70% CTR	Meets Industry Average 0.2% CTR	Industry Average is 29.6%. \$92,727 Spend
\$86,310 Spend	\$193,149 Spend	\$356,350 Spend	\$12,000 Spend	466 Site Users
Drove 27% of your site traffic. 317,009 Site Users	146,094 Site Users	94,614 Site Users	260 Site Users	9% Engagement Rate
49% Engagement Rate	38% Engagement Rate	27% Engagement Rate	9% Engagement Rate	

PORT ARANSAS  
the Island Life

# Paid Advertising

## SALTY STORIES

A touchstone of the marketing strategy in 2022 involved the launch and use of the Salty Stories video and podcast series in remarketing efforts. Three videos and four podcast episodes showcased some of the entrepreneurs in Port A who showcase the “salty” way of life—whatever that may mean to them. This storytelling method allowed visitors to take a deeper dive into the destination and was a useful tool to hook those already interested in an island getaway.

The next iteration of the series is even more robust, and will feature stories from the Amos Rehabilitation Keep, the local surfing scene, the Port Aransas Sandcastle Guy, and the anglers invested in the “Fishing Capital of Texas.” We are excited to continue to tell the story of the island we all call home.



### Video Watch Analytics



#### Farley Boat Works:

1,473 Views, 47 hours 42 minutes total watch time.



#### Winton's Island Candy:

1,561 Views, 47 hours 11 minutes total watch time.



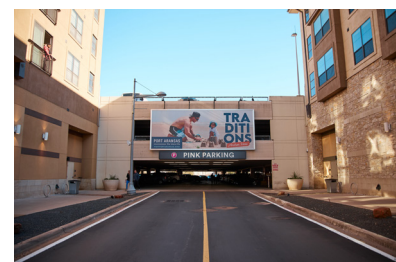
#### Owens Family:

1,139 Views, 38 hours 54 minutes total watch time.

## AUSTIN ACTIVATION

In February 2022, we took the beach to Austin! More specifically, this marketing experience brought the tactile, in-person experience of a Port Aransas vacation to the Domain NORTHSIDE in Austin, Texas. The event was supported by event marketing including PR packages and a local iHeart Radio partnership that drew attendees to the outdoor mall for an interactive photobooth, sand sculpting demonstration, giveaway entry, and interaction with Port Aransas representatives.

The results? Close to 1,000 leads generated and a nearly-million dollar condo sale in Port Aransas to follow less than a month later that the buyer attributed directly to attending the activation. We look forward to repeating the success when we return to the outdoor mall in February 2023!



# Group Sales

The Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce works with fishing tournaments and other large groups to ensure they feel welcome and will continue to bring their group events to Port Aransas, the "Fishing Capital of Texas." We encourage groups to choose our destination as their headquarters and to bring travelers with them! Once those visitors see Port Aransas in all of its glory, they are sure to return with family and friends to continue contributing to the growth of our destination.

Some events, like the Bassmasters Redfish Cup Championship, were so impressed with Port A's clean fisheries and impressive hospitality that they chose to bring their event back for a second year. Others, like Deep Sea Roundup, celebrated another successful year after decades in the destination. We are looking forward to 2023's groups—like the Saltwater Legend Series making its way to Port A—and getting ready to welcome them with open arms!



Photo courtesy of B.A.S.S.

## Sponsored groups include...

- Police Foundation's Hook 'em & Book'em Tournament
- Teach Rhymes with Beach Conference
- Ultra Expeditions
- Texas SandFest
- The Great Texas Birding Classic



- Anglers on Wheels
- Bass Master's 2022 Redfish Cup Championship
- Deep Sea Round Up
- Palmfest
- Harvest Moon Regatta



Photo Credit: Shannon Lafayette Photography



4,435

WELCOME CENTER VISITORS

Visitor foot traffic at Welcome Center  
January 1 through December 31, 2022



6,681

VISITOR PHONE CALLS

Visitor phone calls to the Welcome Center  
January 1 through December 31, 2022





# Tourism Economics

## VISITATION BY THE NUMBERS

AVERAGE LOS\* (DAYS)

4

\*LOS: Length of Stay  
Source: KeyData

FERRY COUNT TO PORT A

1,025,057

TOTAL VEHICLES AS OF DECEMBER 2022

Source: TXDOT

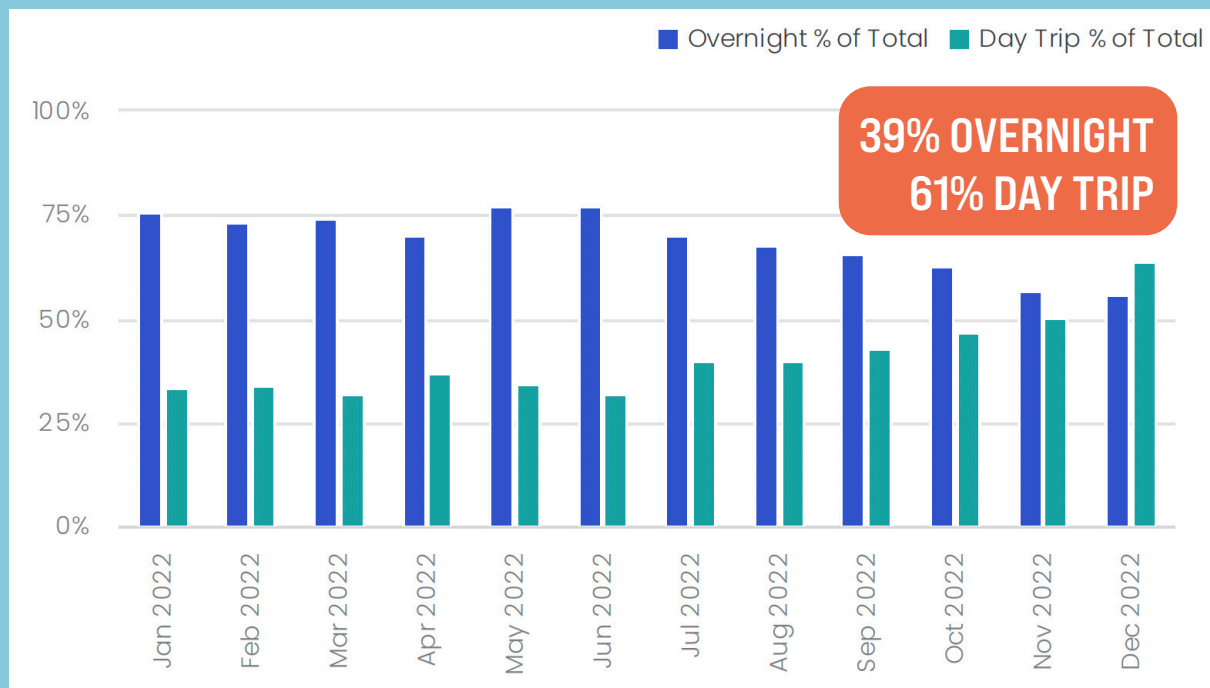
FERRY COUNT TO PORT A

1,821,262

TOTAL PASSENGERS AS OF DECEMBER 2022

Source: TXDOT

### OVERNIGHT VS. DAYTRIP VISITORS



Source: Affinity/NEAR



# Tourism Economics



## A CLOSER LOOK AT ORIGIN MARKETS

### AVERAGE VISITOR SPENDING

**\$314**

Source: Affinity/NEAR

**TOP**



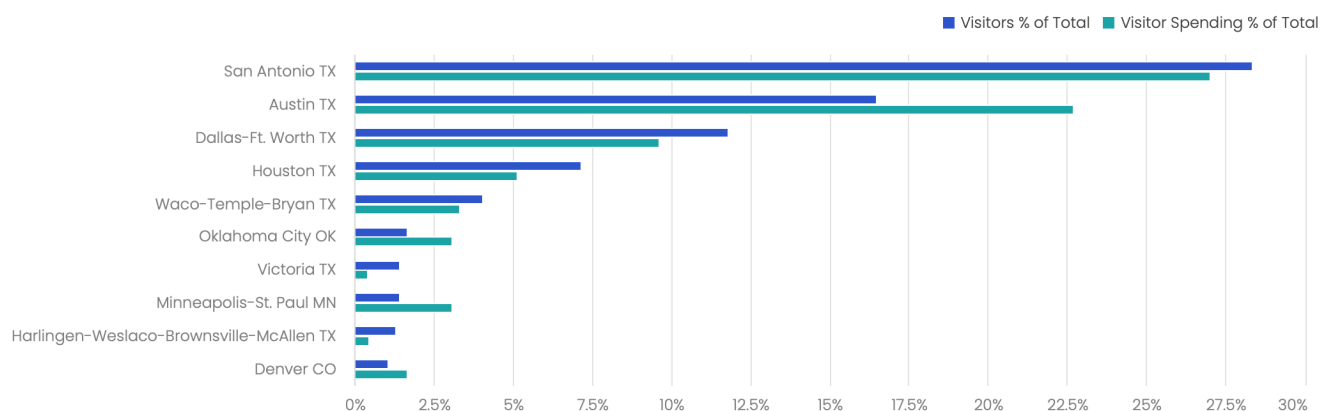
**ORIGIN  
MARKETS**

1. San Antonio
2. Austin
3. Dallas/Fort Worth
4. Houston
5. Waco

### ORIGIN MARKETS BY SPEND PERCENTAGE



Top 10 Origin Markets by Visitation with their Spend



Source: Affinity/NEAR

### SALES TAX COLLECTION

**\$3.8 MILLION**

(Including general fund and RDC)

Source: City of Port Aransas FY 22

### HOT TAX COLLECTION

**\$9.6 MILLION**

Source: City of Port Aransas FY 22





# Looking Ahead

## TRADITIONS ANCHOR HERE, NOW AND IN THE FUTURE

Exciting initiatives are coming to Port Aransas in the near future! As your destination marketing and management organization, The Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce is diligent and focused on shaping the road ahead. We're the content curators of the city, the voice of the brand, and we hold the organized capacity and oversight to bring Port Aransas to even more greatness.

Here are just a few of the projects you can expect to see come to fruition in 2023:

- ▲ Influencer program utilizing new partnerships and resources to reach niche target audiences.
- ▲ Travel writer boom—there are already six writers set to come in town, all before April!
- ▲ Events coming to or returning to Port Aransas, such as the Saltwater Legend Series coming to our waters in February.
- ▲ Port Aransas making a splash in a big way at IPW, the leading international inbound travel trade show that is being hosted this May in San Antonio, and a fam tour of high-profile travel agents and media in the following weeks.
- ▲ New opportunities to showcase the destination in partnership with statewide travel organization Travel Texas, such as at the Chicago Auto Show and Circuit of the Americas.
- ▲ Expansion of the Respect Our Island Home campaign through entertaining and educational video content.
- ▲ Broadband Technical Services audit to begin the process of addressing connectivity needs for the continued support of local businesses, residents, and visitors.

We are excited to continue to work with our city leaders, residents, and business community to make Port Aransas thrive in 2023 and beyond. Thank YOU for all that YOU do to make Port A shine.



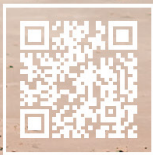




TRADITIONS  
ANCHOR HERE

## VISIT THE TRUE TEXAS COAST

One visit and you'll see why generations of  
Texans have anchored their favorite traditions  
in Port Aransas. **VisitPortAransas.com**



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