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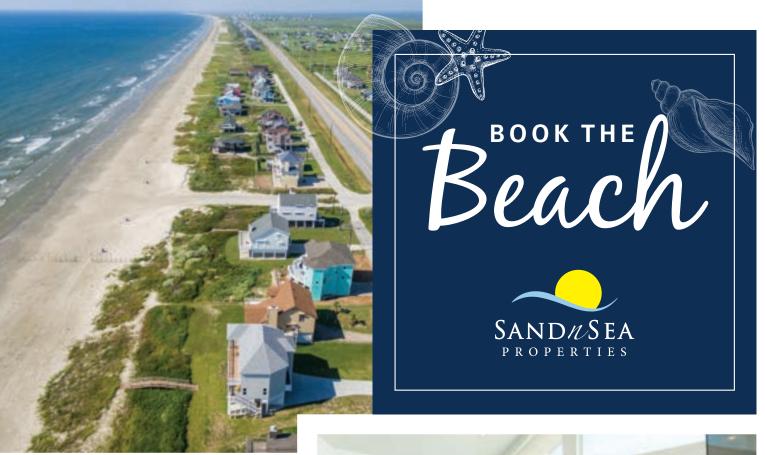
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WELCOME

A Letter From the Editor

A Vacation of Firsts in a City of Firsts

utting issue two of Island Soul together and choosing the four covers is one of my favorite responsibilities—and greatest challenges. Galveston Island is among the most photogenic places in all of Texas and along the Gulf Coast. From the bustling historic downtown to the lapping waves on East Beach, down the Seawall Urban Park to the serene West End, the images are amazing. There are photos of the iconic World War I and World War II ships at Seawolf Park, and vintage fishing fleets and state-of-theart cruise ships in the harbor. There are images of cuisine from gourmet to dive bar favorites that are sure to whet your appetite. Photographs of wildlife at our preserves are captivating, and the images of outdoor activities to either chill or thrill the enthusiast will make you want to grab your own chair, board or boat and join in. There are so many unique defining elements converging to make this place a truly memorable vacation or conference destination.

But when I was reviewing the amazing images of our Island, considering covers for this issue, I noticed I forgot to do something: Of the four covers I had selected originally, I forgot to include one with the beach. That's how jam packed our Island is with activities. Sure, most people are familiar with Galveston because we are, indeed, an island with 32 miles of Gulf shoreline. One refrain I hear time and time again from visitors is that once on the Island, they are shocked by all the activities that do not include sitting on a chaise lounge, soaking up the sun, with a paper-umbrella-adorned drink ... and perhaps enjoying a great read.

Throughout each issue of Island Soul, we are going to encourage you to explore this amazing Island. For our first-time visitors, we hope that this will help you plan your time on the Island and include all the things that make you smile when mapping out your itinerary. For our visitors who are returning, we hope that the stories found here will encourage you to take a left, where you have historically taken a right, and experience even more of the Island, our history and our diverse culture on your next visit. New to this issue, we have created a pullout map and guide found at the center of this



magazine, filled with great references and information to carry with you as you explore.

So, let's begin the journey. This issue will take you to Moody Gardens & Aquarium (page 36), on a tour of The Grand 1894 Opera House (page 68), a trip down memory lane to explore Galveston as a "City of Firsts" (page 26), and to celebrate our Island as the birthplace of Juneteenth. Of course, we want you to visit our beaches for some fun in the sun (page 42), be introduced to some of our favorite local cuisine (page 14), and spend time exploring unique neighborhoods like Pirates Beach (page 24).

At the end of the day, I had to make a very tough decision—which cover images would need to be left on the cutting room floor for this issue. I will leave that as a "treasure hunt" for you to figure out on your own. With so much to do here in Galveston, and eight covers a year to do it (Island Soul is published twice a year, in March and in September), anything that we may have missed in this issue will certainly show up down the line.

We are looking forward to welcoming you in Galveston. With so much to experience, we are confident that your next trip to the Island will not be your last: That the stories found here will introduce you to something new. And that your travels will bring you to Galveston Island very soon for a vacation of firsts in a city of firsts.

Mind

Michael W. Woody, Chief Tourism Officer Galveston Island Convention & Visitors Bureau; Editor-in-Chief, *Island Soul*

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FEATURES

Spring/Summer 2022

The always beautiful Stewart Beach

A 'City of Firsts'
Throughout American history, Galveston Island has refined its image to serve as a place for everyone.
BY CRAIS. BOWER

Not-So-Secret Garden

Discover three pyramids of adventure at Galveston Island's Moody Gardens. BY ELLISE PIERCE

Get Out and Stay Out

Not to burst your bubble, but with so many outdoor activities on Galveston Island, you won't be able to do them all. BY TOM DELAMATER





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DEPARTMENTS

Spring/Summer 2022

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Our editor-in-chief shares his thoughts about life on Galveston Island.

Fresh Catch

new life into the Island's beaches.

Neighborhood Spotlight

Explore the outdoors and the swashbuckling history of Pirates Beach.

Bespoke Rentals

Ryson Vacation Rentals makes your Island experience turnkey and easy

Wedding Bliss

Rich History

Galveston's Juneteenth legacy celebrates 'absolute equality.'

Things to Do

With so much happening on the Island

Island Institutions

The Island is a hot spot for foodies looking to diversify their culinary portfolio. 14

58

Marketplace

A roundup of museums, dining, surfing and more.

Relax in Luxury

The Island B&B scene has something for everyone, and then some.

Never a Dull Moment

Galveston locals know how to throw a celebration. Make sure you don't miss out.

Beachside Boutiques

From souvenirs to the latest fashion, there is a shop for you.

A Blast from the Past

A century later and The Grand 1894 Opera House is still bringing in top-tier acts.

ENGAGE WITH US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Enjoy a beautiful Texas sunrise from any one of our beaches, like the one here on East Beach.

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FRESH CATCH

The Latest Happenings on the Island



THANKS TO A MASSIVE \$12 MILLION COLLABORATION among the City of Galveston, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Texas General Land Office, visitors to Galveston Island can expect a sparkling new look for the beaches. It's called the Babe's Beach Nourishment Project, and it's likely to have a giant impact on the Island for years to come.

"The tourism economy benefits from wide, healthy beaches," says Kelly de Schaun, Galveston Park Board chief executive officer. "Here in Galveston, that's especially important since the tourism industry supports one of every three jobs on the Island."

The improvements don't just include the beaches as a destination for tourists. They also provide a safer environment for nearby residents.

The project involves dredging large quantities of sand from the bottom of the Houston Ship Channel and using that sand to expand the beaches westward. The expanded beaches serve as protection against storm surges and also provide recreational space for beachgoers with every yard that's added.

Beach nourishment isn't a one-time thing. "Over time, natural processes can erode beaches," de Schaun says. "Because the Army Corps of Engineers dredges the ship channel every 18 to 24 months, the Park Board is able to partner with them and nourish the beaches periodically."

The dredged sand was tested by the Corps of Engineers to ensure its safety, and only beach-quality sand was used in the beach nourishment. Wildlife was also monitored throughout the process to ensure minimal impact to existing populations.

The expanded beaches are a huge draw for people with all types of relationships to the Island. As de Schaun puts it: "No doubt, many who choose to live in Galveston do so to enjoy the beach. And so do the seven million visitors who come to the island."



FROM LEFT: Joey Smecca, Danny Hart, and Johnny Smecca

All in the Family

Meet the three brothers bringing healthy food and other creative concepts to Galveston.

DO YOU HAVE SIBLINGS? If so, you may know that brothers and sisters tend to have their own niches, their own talents. That's certainly true of the Smecca & Hart brothers—Johnny & Joey Smecca and Danny Hart—who have been using their respective skills to bring great food to Galveston for over two decades.

Galveston Restaurant Group, created in 1997, is responsible for some of the tastiest, most inventive restaurants in the area (see sidebar). While Joey curates the menus, Danny handles operations and Johnny manages marketing, advertising and more. Together, the group has remained resilient through multiple hurricanes and a pandemic—all while serving the community via food donations and their employees via a focus on retirement funds.

"Our people are part of our family, just like Galveston is part of our family," Johnny says. "We believe in giving back to the community that has given us so much, so we'll never turn down a request to help people."

The Seven Concepts

Discover the delicious dining options made possible by Galveston Restaurant Group.

THE GUMBO DINER

Classic American dining meets the vibrant flavors of New Orleans in this local favorite, which offers everything from beignets and chicken and waffles to classic Gulf shrimp. The Gumbo Diner also serves breakfast all day, every day. THEGUMBODINER.COM

SKY BAR STEAK & SUSHI

This establishment may be best known for its award-winning happy hour, but the savory sushi will make you want to walk through its doors well before that happiest of hours. Come watch super-talented sushi maestros craft delectable seafood dishes right before your eyes. SKYBARGALVESTON.COM

MARIO'S SEAWALL ITALIAN RESTAURANT

Operated by first generation brothers, this is Galveston's most storied Italian restaurant, merging the tastes of Texas and Italy for nearly 50 years. Like fine wine, it continues to get better.

Pasta, pizza and every other classic Italian dish is available at this can't miss eatery, recently named restaurant of the year. MARIOSSEAWALL.COM

PAPA'S PIZZA

No Galveston getaway is complete without a slice of pie from Papa's. Gourmet 'zas are always on tap as well as savory sandwiches and other tasty Italian options. Always fresh, always delicious. . FREEHOTPIZZA.COM

TAQUILO'S TEX-MEX CANTINA

Margs, queso, guac and more are always flowing at the aptly-named Taquilo's, which boasts award-winning chips and salsa alongside a sensational ceviche bar. You can never go wrong with the shrimp fajitas, just as you can never go wrong with grabbing a drink and posting up under the umbrellas lining Postoffice Street just outside this terrific Tex-Mex eatery. TAQUILOS.COM

SALTWATER GRILL

This fine dining experience is home to the Smecca brothers' original kettle cooking. And just like any Galveston Restaurant Group establishment, Saltwater Grill gives you plenty of options. The Certified Angus Beef is simply savory, and elsewhere on the menu, the supertalented brothers have combined classic Gulf Coast seafood with the delectable delights of Asian fusion food. Come for the food, stay for the unbeatable nightlife atmosphere. Saltwatergrill.com

LITTLE DADDY'S GUMBO BAR

San Fran meets the Big Easy at this award-winning establishment that is perfect for a lunchtime po-boy or a fun night out. It's highly possible Little Daddy's Gumbo Bar will become your newest culinary obsession, and if so, don't fret: the Smeccas have opened a location in League City, too. Still, nothing compares to chowing down on some sweet, sweet gumbo while relaxing in the heart of Galveston Island. Littledaddysgumbobar.com

EXPERIENCES OF A LIFETIME

Where to Find the Cultural Gems of Galveston



Build Your Own Beach Vacation

Ryson Vacation Rentals makes your Island experience turnkey and easy. BY SAM OSTERLING

THERE ARE INFINITE WAYS TO EXPERIENCE Galveston Island, from beaches to fishing, from historic homes to festivals. For an out of town visitor, the variety of options can be incredibly intimidating.

"Convenience is the biggest thing for our guests," says Shawna Keeling, Gulf Coast Concierge director for Ryson Vacation Rentals. Guests turn to Ryson Vacation Rentals to build a unique and luxurious experience for their time on the Island.

For starters, a great luxury vacation begins with a fantastic rental space, and Keeling says their dedication to providing guests with such a space is why Ryson Vacation Rentals has an entire luxury division.

Every home in the luxury division has a wide variety of amenities. "They're all either canal or beachfront," says

Jason Keeling, founder of Ryson Vacation Rentals. "They've all got some sort of special touch—usually a pool, a hot tub and a firepit of some kind." On top of that, many of the luxury homes feature outdoor kitchens, boat lifts and more.

"One of our biggest things is grocery delivery," Shawna says. You'll arrive for your vacation, and everything's already bought, stocked and put away.

For the kids, many of the rental homes feature bunk rooms set up specifically for them. They can fit as many as six kids, sometimes with gaming systems and flat-screen TVs.

When it's time to venture from their luxurious home base, Shawna says, the concierge experience makes for a much less stressful time for vacationers. "We're local," she says. "And we know what we like to do."

So you can book golf carts for transportation around the



island. Or you can rent a sports car, like a Corvette, for a day. And as with grocery delivery, the concierge experience means that your cart will be waiting for you on your arrival, ready to be zipped around the Island.

The Keelings say that one of the more popular experiences for guests are their beach bonfires. Bonfires can be a hassle to host. The logistics of food, entertainment, fuel, location and safety are all difficult to navigate.

Ryson Vacation Rentals' concierge service, Gulf Coast Concierge (gulfcoastconcierge.com), makes bonfires easy. As Jason says, "A host sets up a bonfire in front of the house or in another beach location. They set up the chairs, tables, even get the fire going." All the guests have to do is arrive. When they do, everything they'd ever want at a bonfire will be there waiting.



Planning a vacation through a concierge service truly means the possibilities are endless. On top of the bonfires and golf carts, grocery delivery and kids' rooms, the Keelings say that guests should feel free to be creative. "If we don't have it, we'll try to make it happen," Shawna says.

In-home massages? A fully set-up day at the beach? Both are well within reach. You can even set up a fishing trip. Another popular option is an in-home chef. Shawna says they work with a local chef who can do anything from a delicious multi-course meal in your rental to a prepared picnic to enjoy on the beach.

And they're not stopping there. Event planning will also be a growing space. "Our event planners just planned a beach wedding for a guest to rave reviews," Shawna says. "They helped the guests choose vendors, then set up the beach, even custom-built the altar, which was pretty cool."

Booking a vacation with a concierge service can truly make it as stress-free as it can possibly be. Guests are able to book with Ryson for their entire Galveston Island experience: rental properties, vehicles, bonfires, meals and more. But they can also pick and choose the experiences they're most looking for, such as set up just a beach bonfire or a fishing tour.

"You can build your own package," Shawna says. There's any number of ways to use such a service to build a Galveston Island experience you'll never forget.

EXPERIENCES OF A LIFETIME

Where to Find the Cultural Gems of Galveston



Let Freedom Ring

Galveston's proud Juneteenth legacy celebrates the enduring concept of 'absolute equality.' BY WENDY WEINHOLD

ASK GALVESTON NATIVE SAMUEL COLLINS III about Juneteenth, and chances are he tells you stories about freedom and family.

Collins is co-founder of the Juneteenth Legacy Project. Juneteenth commemorates June 19, 1865, the day enslaved people across Texas were liberated when Union Army Maj. Gen. Gordon Granger issued General Order No. 3, which ordered "absolute equality" among enslaved people and slaveholders. The more than 250,000 enslaved black people in Texas were among the last group to learn of the Emancipation Proclamation, which declared freedom for enslaved people more than two and a half years earlier on Jan. 1, 1863.

This moment is depicted in the "Absolute Equality" mural that marks the spot where General Order No. 3 was first issued. The 5,000-square-foot mural that adorns the side of the Old Galveston Square Building faces the spot where Union soldiers set up headquarters in downtown Galveston at the corner of Strand and 22nd streets.

Collins says he learned as a child about Juneteenth through his family and then, as an adult, he was inspired to learn more after he purchased a historic property near Galveston. Collins' property, Stringfellow Orchards, was originally built in the 1880s by a Confederate Army veteran, and Collins says it was used to house Confederate soldiers. Collins worked to restore the property that serves as the office of his

financial consulting business, and he also hosts Juneteenth celebrations on the grounds.

"Everybody has to make the pilgrimage to Galveston," Collins says. "This is hallowed ground. We want other cities and the world to celebrate, and we want the world to come celebrate Galveston."

Juneteenth reflects Galveston's essential role not just in the history of Texas but in the future of a story the United States holds most dear: the democratic vision of freedom for all.

Come to Galveston in June for Freedom Days on the Island, but there's no reason to wait until then to learn more. Reedy Chapel, Lakeview Cemetery, the "Absolute Equality" mural and many other historic sites are welcome spots year-round for visitors interested in Juneteenth.

Collins says Galveston hosts many activities that stretch across late May and June. Of course, June 19 is a special day, but the holiday is celebrated with weeks of banquets, pageants, parades, historical re-enactments, marches and more. The events offer a chance to celebrate a part of the history of the United States that is often under-explored because of its complexity.

Collins says U.S. history about slavery and enslavement is often a story about suffering, but in Galveston, there is a different story to tell. The city, which was the commercial

center of Texas in the 1800s, was home to many black people who were successful at a time when few were afforded equality, and Juneteenth plays an important role in preserving their stories.

People first came—and continue to come—to Galveston because of its location on the Texas coast, its scenic beauty, its history and, perhaps most important, its perseverance. The Island community has flourished despite threats from everything from pirates to hurricanes. And now that Juneteenth has been declared a national holiday, Galveston's legacy has expanded again.

"Galveston is an island of accomplishment and achievement. There are so many iconic figures from Galveston who help to mark its story," Collins says. "Too often, these individuals have been left in the footprint of history. We absolutely should celebrate this history."

Norris Wright Cuney is one of those people. Galveston native and genealogist Sharon Batiste Gillins says Cuney, whose mother was enslaved by his white plantation-owning father, settled in Galveston at the end of the Civil War and prospered. Cuney was a politician, mason and labor advocate who was head of Galveston's customs house. His appointment in 1889 as U.S. Collector of Customs for the port made him the South's highest-ranking black federal appointee at the time.

"If you don't know the contributions of a people, if you don't know what they did to make a community what it is, then it's easy to think they don't matter," Gillins says. "History favors the people who write the history."



Of Cuney's many accomplishments, Gillins finds particular merit in his work to negotiate equal wages for black and white men, especially the men working at Galveston's port. These "screwmen" were well paid for their work screwing down bales of cotton into the hulls of ships. The tighter they screwed down the bales, the more cotton could be sold.

Cuney's life was "a life of obscurity beyond Galveston," but Gillins says Cuney's legacy is an "economic win for generations to come." Gillins' grandfather and father were longshoremen. She says their ability to earn good wages thanks to Cuney's advocacy paved the way for her family's economic freedom and middle-class lifestyle, including her undergraduate education at Howard University and graduate education at the University of the District of Columbia.

"Our families kept Juneteenth going," Gillins says. "This wasn't in the schoolbooks, or else everyone would already know."

Cuney is buried in Lakeview Cemetery, and a giant obelisk marks his grave. He is the namesake for Wright Cuney Park, located between Broadway and Harborside Drive near the wharfs in Galveston. The city's annual Juneteenth celebration is held there.

Cuney's name is on the cornerstone of another important spot in Galveston's Juneteenth history, Reedy Chapel African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church. The church was among the first places Granger and his troops, many of whom were black soldiers, posted the emancipation order. As word spread that slavery had ended, people gathered at places like Reedy Chapel for spontaneous celebrations.

Each year, hundreds of people gather in the Old Galveston Courthouse Square to trace the footsteps of people who walked in the first citywide celebration of emancipation on Jan. 1, 1866. That processional from the courthouse to Reedy Chapel ends with a program in the church that includes speakers, songs and prayers.

The church represents a special place for Gillins, who is also a member. Reedy Chapel is a stop on the Freedom Walk, and it has its own rich history as Texas' first "mother" African Methodist Episcopal church, founded by enslaved people in 1848.

"We know about the Fourth of July, and it celebrates freedom. Freedom is important to celebrate," Gillins says. "All freedom-loving people should join Galveston in celebrating freedom."

Galveston is a porthole to history, and celebrations of freedom here are creating new pages for the history books, one Juneteenth at a time.

ISLAND INSTITUTIONS

Where To Dine Around Galveston



Al Fresco Dining

Galveston Island has every kind of cuisine, cooked to perfection. BY ART STRICKLIN

THE COMBINATION OF SUN, scenery, sand and fun has drawn generations of visitors to Galveston Island, and all those activities and views tend to make a person awfully hungry.

There's where the Island dining scene really shines with a variety of options; options that have filled and satisfied thousands of residents and guests.

"We love to see the boats come in, the yachts that are tied up," says resident D'Nita Cruse, who comes to dine with her husband, Steve, friends and family on a regular basis. "So to be there in the late afternoon when you get the ocean breeze and decide where you're going to eat is very special. We've lived in a lot of places, but there is nothing like it."

Katie's Seafood House next to Katie's Seafood Market claims to be the only boat-to-table seafood restaurant on the Island. General Manager Brett Otteman says the facility has its own fishing boats and purchases fish from other local

fishermen, and has a seafood market and kitchen to prepare fresh seafood as soon as it hits the dock.

"Sometimes I will get a call from a captain on the way into dock on what he has caught and what he is bringing in,"

Otteman says. "I don't set that day's dinner special until I get the call and know what we're going to get. The only thing we sell is fresh off the boat."

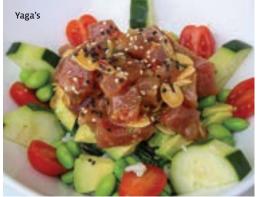
Different seasons call for different menu items, from snapper to grouper to shrimp, but at Katie's, the Catch of the Day may truly be from that day.

Katie's Seafood Market has been a Portside Pier 19
Galveston institution since 1998 and always has local market fish ready to buy and take home. In 2019, the restaurant opened next door to the market with the goal of Otteman and his talented staff taking the best and the freshest to the table and the market.

"The key for us has always been dock to market to table,



Among the Best of the Rest on the Island is Fisherman's Wharf, part of Landry's, Inc., which has produced seafood and family dining establishments. There is Flip Flops Beach Bar and Grill, as inviting and casual as it sounds, with the motto "Eat, Drink and Relax." You can have breakfast all day while greeting the sunrise and sunset over Galveston Bay. Willie G's is another familiar seafood location on Pier 21. "It's a really nice place, my go-to for seafood comfort food," local resident D'Nita Cruse says. The same can be said for the rest of Galveston Island dining: comforting and charming, quite an Island combination.



always fresh," he says. "We have existed by word of mouth for the market and it's carried over here."

The Spot is actually five spots all serving great seafood, great drinks and better times. The Spot, located on the Seawall, is known for incredible fish tacos and juicy hamburgers along with ice cream to finish the meal.

The other four locations, RumShack, Tiki Bar, Squeeze and Sideyard, are great locales to relax with friends and enjoy the scenery and temperate weather. They offer a wide variety of drinks, from the finest rum, tropical cocktails, craft beers, margaritas and tequilas.

The Spot is truly the spot for fun, food and charity with owner Dennis Byrd heavily involved in many local community organizations.

If you ask many locals, **Number 13** is No. 1 for prime steaks, seafood and memorable dining on the Island. It's across the water from the massive Moody Gardens complex and offers private wine lockers for those who want to make sure their favorite vino is in stock for their special meals.

The restaurant takes its name from the secret alias of pirate brothers Jean and Pierre Lafitte, who once roamed these waters and might have enjoyed a fine steak and a bottle of wine to celebrate another seaside plundering.

Yaga's Café is a more casual spot on the Strand and has indoor and outdoor dining. You can eat outside under the Southeast Texas sky with your dog by your side. There are varieties of salads and pastas on the menu, along with burgers and seafood.

On the weekend, Yaga's turns up the volume with live music and dancing for those young and young at heart.

Stuttgarden Tavern offers a wide variety of international and domestic beers on three levels, where you can watch the massive cruise ships come into port.

The first level features a dog-friendly patio along with pool and shuffleboard tables. The second floor is a large indoor beer hall with 40 taps at the ready. The third floor has a shaded patio to watch the ships come and go with a cool drink in hand. The best part is that although the boats sail off to sea, you can stay at Stuttgarden as long as you want.

One of the many charms of Galveston Island dining is that it's locally based and everybody really does know your name if you come in more than two or three times. Life can really be a beach at times, and you'll be well fed while you're here.

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12701 MARIA COURT Spanish Grant 2BR/2BA SqFt: 1,409



4115 GREENWING TEAL CT.Sunset Cove
5BR/5.5BA SqFt: 3,453



23009 BUENATerramar
2-3BR/2BA SqFt: 1,080



21914 FRIO DRIVESea Isle
5BR/5.5BA SqFt: 2,477



11831 SUNBATHER LANEThe Sands of Kahala Beach
4-5BR /4.5BA SqFt: 2,878



18803 W DE VACA LANE Indian Beach 4BR/4.5BA SqFt: 2,670



21918 LAMPASASSea Isle
3BR/2BA SqFt: 1,053



3827 PERIWINKLEBeachside Village
5BR/5.5BA SqFt: 2,400



1620 SEALYEast End Historical District
4BR/2BA SqFt: 2,542



The bed and breakfast scene on Galveston Island is not only for couples (though it's great for couples, too). BY JENNIFER BLALOCK

as many visitors to Galveston have already discovered, access to luxurious beachside accommodations does not require a passport; nor does it require a first-class plane ticket. Some of America's most sumptuous bed and breakfasts are just a quick drive along I-45. From sweet and secluded to over-the-top opulence, Galveston Island's historic bed and breakfast community offers a gateway to luxury for everyone to enjoy.

Check out *Island Soul*'s list of first-class amenities sure to satisfy every sophisticated traveler's wanderlust and whim with ease, access and affordability.

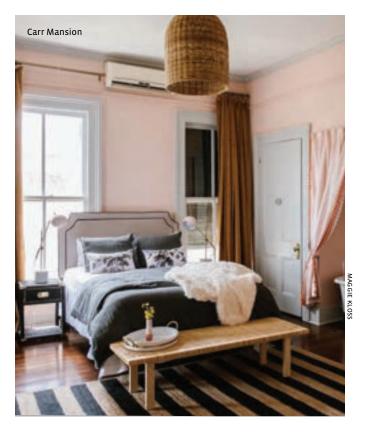
For the Vibe

Vacation vibes are everything to the seasoned traveler. The backdrop provided by all of Galveston's incredible bed and breakfasts will result in memories and selfies to last a lifetime. Picturesque settings, exclusive amenities on overload, and easy, inclusive vacation experiences are available at these and other luxury locations.

For the Foodies

Fine dining is a highly anticipated element of luxury travel. No worries here: The Galveston Bed & Breakfast community has fine dining down to a science, offering delectable breakfasts, lunches and dinners in the comfort of your own elegant home away from home.

According to owner/innkeeper Polly Jones, guests at Avenue O Bed & Breakfast, nestled on two lush lots in the Silk Stocking Historic District, won't want to leave their cozy room—except when it's time for breakfast, lunch or dinner. Jones, who also serves as the Inn's head chef, offers a truly personalized fine dining experience for guests, who can nibble on the to-diefor steak with lobster mac. She suggests that you top off your dinner with the old-fashioned elegance of their signature banana split. "Our guests come as customers and leave as friends," Jones says. "Even the most skeptical visitor becomes our best referral, vowing to never stay anywhere else!" AVENUEO.COM





For the Green Thumbs

The mental health benefits of nature, outdoor gardens and plant life have increased our collective interest in gardens, and Galveston's B&Bs are the answer to a vacay where green is truly the new black.

Grab your complimentary cocktail upon arrival and head to the visually stunning garden, outdoor pool and natural sanctuary of the Carr Mansion. From weddings to retreats, this B&B is truly one to add to the list of Galveston "Must Stays." carrmansion.com



All Are Welcome

Bed and breakfast vacations aren't just for couples anymore. From friend-cations to girls' trips to family events, Galveston's bed and breakfast scene offers retreats, events and travel experiences sure to meet everyone's holiday and travel goals.

- Hop on a bike at the Carr Mansion and enjoy a ride with ocean breezes and views.
- Enjoy a cozy movie night on your private room's flat screen TV, snuggled in your impeccably decorated and comfortable bedding at the Schaefer House.
- Need a quick work check-in while you're doing your best to unplug? All of Galveston's luxury bed and breakfasts offer complimentary Wi-Fi.

For the History Buff

The historic and architectural elegance of the B&B in Galveston will transport travelers to another time and place. Each of Galveston's picturesque bed and breakfasts is just as aesthetically pleasing on the inside as from the curb.

The Schaefer Haus' elegantly designed and decorated rooms create immersive guest experiences, evoking a European and global feel, including the soft white sophistication of the Heidelberg Room and the polished splendor of the chandelier-adorned Paris Room. Guests will feel like they've entered another world, escaping the mundane and experiencing the wonder of Victorian opulence without the complications and stress of international travel. SCHAEFERHAUSGALVESTON.COM



Eco-Art Kayak Adventures
Explorers and Adventurers Wanted!

Join Artist Boat spring, summer, and fall for guided kayak tours! Explore beautiful Galveston Bay on Eco-Art Adventures with artists and biologists for a unique coastal experience within Galveston's marshes and estuaries. No experience needed. Perfect for

families, groups, solo explorers, and beginners.

Register and schedule your adventure online.



Bucket Brigade
Meet the Marine Biologists!

Free guided interpretive beach tours are designed to teach you how to explore the creatures and features of Galveston's Gulf waters and shorelines. This free 45-minute tour provides hands-on exploration. Guests learn what is in our water, why seaweed is a good thing, and how you can connect to the Gulf. Fun and educational for all ages! View the online calendar and pre-register your entire family. Tours are available Friday-Sunday, Memorial Day to Labor Day.



Project S.I.T. Seawall Interpretive Trail

A Gallery of Art Can Be Met at the Beach!

The seawall is the world's longest sidewalk, and now features a Texas-sized art installation. Artists and Artist Boat have transformed 70 concrete benches into educational works of art that depict the coastal heritage of Galveston Island and the Gulf of Mexico. Explore the benches from 6th Street to 61st Street and be inspired as you learn about whales, sea turtles, shrimping and crabbing, and other topics related to the island, bay, and Gulf. Biking the trail and stopping along the way is recommended, but you can walk the whole trail if you're feeling ambitious.



World Ocean Day Festival
Celebrate, Create, and Activate
Your Ocean Passions!

Celebrated in June, World Ocean Day is a global celebration hosted by partners of the United Nations. Artist Boat hosts a festival at East Beach where festival-goers enjoy curated ocean entertainment, booths offering hands-on educational activities, and more. Join this growing global celebration!



The Beautify the Bucket Competition allows participants to take a role in beautifying Galveston beaches while improving stewardship behaviors by painting a trash barrel based on coastal themes. Viewing and judging during World Oceans Day. Visit our website and register for a barrel to beautify.





Edward and Helen Oppenheimer Bird Observatory Have the Urge to Bird?

Visit a truly peaceful place and experience the last of the great wilds of Galveston Island at the Coastal Heritage Preserve. Enjoy an elevated and shaded ADA-accessible bird observatory with seating, a half-mile trail, freshwater ponds, and prairies. Open yearround and free to everyone. 13102 Stewart Rd, Galveston, TX 77554

ECO (explore, create, observe) and Eco-Art Camp

Designed for the artist & explorer at heart, campers 5-17 will experience science and art enrichment with artists and biologists. Older campers will explore through kayak adventures, and younger campers explore by foot. Camps are during spring, summer, and winter school breaks. Visit the website to learn more and register.





Voluntourism

Put Your Passion for the Planet to Work by Restoring Habitat on the Island!

Artist Boat works to restore prairies and dunes, enhancing ecosystems with trash and invasive species removal, stewarding seedlings, and more. Join them for their big species-counting days with Bio Blitz or Big Sit. Visit our site for open workdays or to book a stewardship event.

Private Adventures Specially Curated Adventures!

Take your crew on an adventure!
Kayaking, nature hikes, vessel tours
for school-aged groups, corporate
retreats, and youth or adult clubs.
Birding tours on the Upper Texas
Coast, Galveston, and Bolivar via bus.
Call to book an adventure.





Eco-Art Residency
Host an Artist in Your Community,
School or Office

By hosting an artist, you and your group will design and create public art of any scale before you know it. During their residency, budding artists learn about the species and ecology they're observing and how to draw, paint, and collaborate. Create works from paint or clay. Visit their website for information on how to tailor your residency to create the coastal art of your dreams.



Be One In A Million
Are You One in A Million?
Do You Dream Of Saving Wilds?

Join Artist Boat in its quest to save 1,400 acres on west Galveston Island. Halfway to their goal with 700 acres conserved, they're asking 1 million people to donate \$10 to raise \$10 million in two years to protect and finish purchasing the 1,400 acres of precious wetlands and coastal prairies from Bay to Beach! Help them finish creating the Coastal Heritage Preserve! Visit website to learn more.

BEACHSIDE BOUTIQUES

Where to Shop Around Galveston



Tina's on The Strand

The Shop Heard (and Seen) Around the World

There's no need to venture to the big city when it comes to retail therapy. BY JENNIFER BLALOCK

AS SPIRITUAL SHOPPING ENCOUNTERS GO, there is something transcendent about strolling through the one-of-a kind stores lining Galveston's beaches. Each offers its customers a bevy of unique and carefully curated bounty, inviting the vacationer to discover their travel treasures while feeling like they're old friends, with the shop's signature Texas hospitality.

What makes the Galveston shopping experience so unique? Each storefront offers an escape, connecting the shopper to a hands-on, full-service encounter, reminiscent of a time when the customer's satisfaction was the priority of the store. From beachy home décor to authentic antique and nautical collectibles to evening wear, you can be sure to have a truly singular shopping experience.

Finding the perfect fit for that evening's oceanside dinner won't be a problem at **Tina's on The Strand**. Specializing in women's clothing and home décor, the store's sophisticated elegance is a step into luxury. Manager Boyce Pryor and her staff are known for their mastery of fashion and fit, which they've been providing to customers visiting the Island for 15 years. Co-owner Wendy Morgan says of the specialty shop she runs with her mom, Tina LeCornu, and sister, Leslie LeCornu: "Tina's is dedicated to bringing you the most beautiful jewelry, accessories and home décor south of Houston." Tina's staffers pride themselves on their amazing in-person customer service, guaranteeing any visitor's shopping experience will include the most personalized fitting. "Our



Nautical Antiques & Tropical Decor

goal is to make sure the clothing purchased helps a woman stand out, nailing that all-important first impression." Hard to find, straight off the runway clothing from Johnny Was, Magnolia Pearl, Lior, Bryn Walker, Simon Sebbag, French Kande jewelry, Gigi Moda and so many other "all the rage" designers are on the easy to peruse racks of the super chic storefront.

With the whimsical allure of Galveston Island's stunning yachts and bustling cruise ships, it's not hard to find your inner captain eager to capture that look and feel for your own home. Nautical Antiques & Tropical Decor boasts a wide array of distinctive items sure to grab the attention of family and friends. "Our antiques are truly items salvaged off working vessels and our tropical décor is perfect to accent and complement the overall design aesthetic," says co-owner Adrienne Culpepper, who, along with husband Michael, has run the shop for over two decades. Their loyal and discerning customers include film set designers, interior designers, beach house owners and folks just visiting the Island looking for an authentic memento from their Galveston vacation to spark conversation and memories on the mantel back home.

Online shoppers can still enjoy the unique finds offered at Galveston's boutiques. The discerning gift giver will love the "Where did you find this?" response they're sure to receive from any of these Galveston originals:

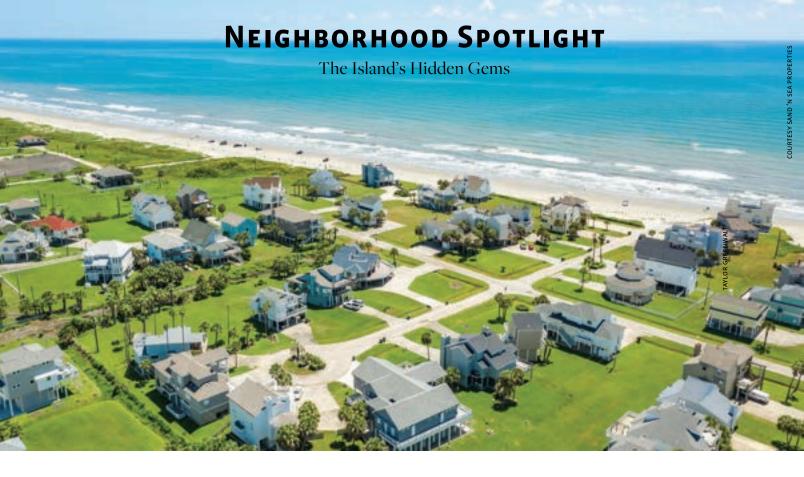
Visit Tina's on The Strand's website to grab one of their hand-blown glass aromatherapy diffusers or their signature-smell candles. Choose from among their island-exclusive French Kande or Simon Sebbag jewelry for that anniversary or "just because" piece she's sure to love. tinasonthestrand.com

Have a seafaring lover in your world whose man cave is missing that perfect nautical find? &Tropical Decor has an easy-to-use online store at piecesofship.com. "Everything we offer in the store can be viewed online. We work hard to make the shopping experience just as easy on the web as it is Michael Culpepper.

Though Luna Home & Gifts does not offer an online store, they do ship items that customers have them on Instagram and Facebook.

The last of our trifecta of Galveston "can't miss" shopping excursions, but certainly not the least, is Luna Home & Gifts. Boasting some of the Island's most exquisite clothing, home and gift items, Luna prides itself on paying attention to the finer details of décor and fashion. Roy Burchett, the store's

managing director, makes sure the store is stocked with the latest trends. The visually gorgeous shop is rife with handcarved furniture, biophilic design and items made from materials that are both sustainable and luxurious. From private shopping events to exclusive finds, Luna will appeal to the most ardent fashion lover as well as the dedicated home shopper. Their shelves boast items with Texas flavor, certain to keep the memory of your Galveston vacation top of mind.



Pirates Beach

Though there are no swashbucklers left, there are plenty of marauder stories, a booty of food and activities galore on this historic stretch of sand. BY WENDY WEINHOLD

SOME OF GALVESTON'S MOST BEAUTIFUL natural resources can be found on Pirates Beach, and this community on the Island's West End is a great place to get away from the crowds and dig your toes in the sand. Bird watchers, artists and nature lovers are all sure to find the area a perfect destination to relax and settle into "island time."

Established in the 1960s by oilman and real estate developer George Mitchell, the Pirates Beach community is home to more than 700 single-family homes, many of which are located a few steps from the Gulf. The community offers visitors welcome respite, and its resources include a bank, Galveston's oldest country club, multiple grocery stores, restaurants, churches and a fire station.

Pirate enthusiasts and treasure hunters should take note of the abundance of pirate-related legends that inspired the community's name. One legend says famed Galveston pirate Jean Lafitte may have buried his treasure near the Pirates Beach community at a site once known as Three Trees.

Home to Lafitte's fort and settlement that was built after the famed pirate arrived in Galveston in 1817, Three Trees was also the site of a bloody battle between Lafitte's band of pirates and people of the Carancahua Native American tribe. To locate the spot, look for the Texas Historical Marker on Stewart Road, between 11 and 12 Mile Road.

Stocking Up

Grab a bite to eat or stock the fridge at one of the quaint and colorful Pirates Beach food markets. Allex's Seafood is the perfect spot to find fresh seafood, Seven Seas Grocery & Market stocks mouth-watering steaks and cuts of meat, and locals will tell you not to miss the Philly cheesesteak sandwiches sold at Hummel's General Store & Deli. Each of these shops is located off Termini-San Luis Pass Road, and all are open daily.

Hummel's owner Patti Hummel and her late husband, Bill, opened the store in 2006 after moving to Galveston to start what they thought would be their retirement but turned into an extension of their careers. She says her husband was from Philadelphia, and he knew how important it was to get the right kind of bread to make a good Philly sandwich.

"The people who come in here are friends," Hummel says. "When they get hungry for something, you want your customers to be able to rely on you."





Seeking Adventure

Nature lovers will find themselves at home on the West End, where there are many spots to look for birds, kayak through the wetlands and learn more about the Island's unique ecosystem. Pirates Beach and Galveston Island State Park offer ample space for recreation and lounging on the shore.

March is the perfect time for birding as it marks the start of migration season, and West End-based Artist Boat offers guided access to many bird watching spots. Open year-round, the nonprofit's Edward and Helen Oppenheimer Bird Observatory is located at the Coastal Heritage Preserve and features a halfmile loop trail.

Artist Boat Executive Assistant Kelsey Malan says the most recent annual bird count taken at the observatory put the

total at over 300 species. Formed in 2003, the nonprofit collective of artists and scientists specializes in educational activities for adults and children, including seasonal kayak tours that resume in March.

The four-hour Artist Boat kayak tour is a great activity for adults and children 7 and older. The tour through the Coastal Heritage Preserve starts by teaching paddling techniques, then offers watercolor painting instruction on the water. Malan says participants use water from the wetlands to paint their nature portraits, so they get to take a piece of the wetlands home with them.

"On the water, they teach you about how wetlands and prairies are important," Malan says. "The wetlands protect Galveston from the storms."

Dining Out

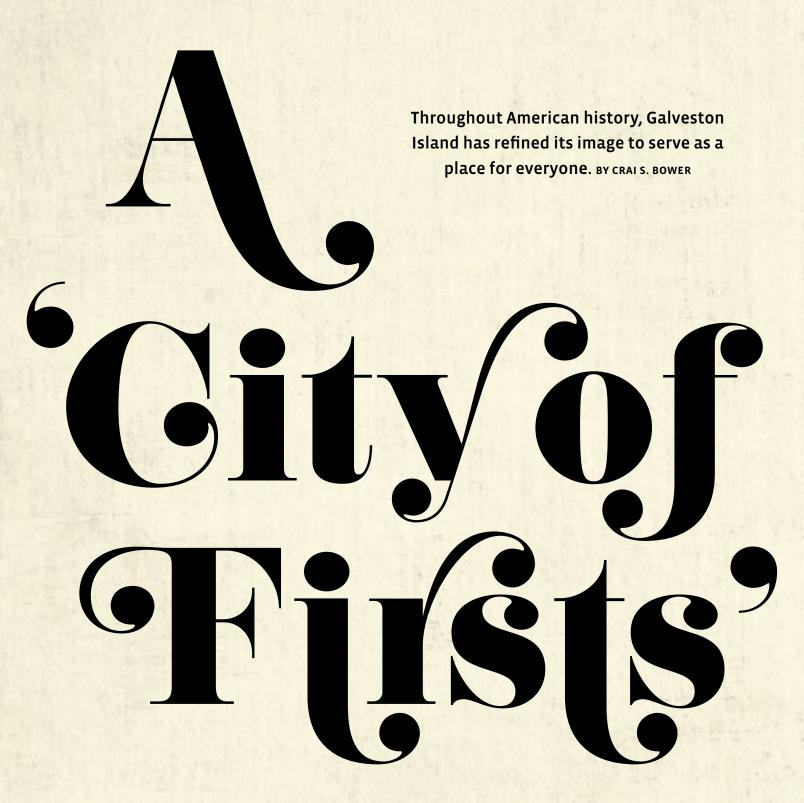
Whether you're looking to enjoy a cocktail, pizza, fresh seafood or a steak, Pirates Beach restaurants are ready to address your appetite. Hours and days of operation vary for the area's many restaurants, and reservations are always a good idea.

Casual diners and families will find they fit right in at the Tipsy Turtle Seaside Bar and Grill, where the menu features tacos, sandwiches and appetizers, along with specialty cocktails and beers. Fresh seafood is served daily at Nate's Westend Seafood & Steaks, and the menu also includes everything from burgers and homemade soups to a range of dinner entrees and a variety of steaks (we recommend the 12 oz. ribeye).

Galveston's oldest pizzeria and Italian restaurant, Mario's Pizza, is another place not to miss. The slogan on the front of Mario's says it all: "We speak very little English, but we make the best pizza!"

Reservations are encouraged at Waterman's Restaurant and Marina, where the interior features more than 10,000 square feet of aged longleaf pine. The wood is a remnant of Galveston's economic prosperity as a shipping center and was salvaged from the port's 100-year-old cotton warehouses. The restaurant bills itself as "Galveston's hidden treasure" and features breathtaking views of the water and outdoor dining on its expansive patio.



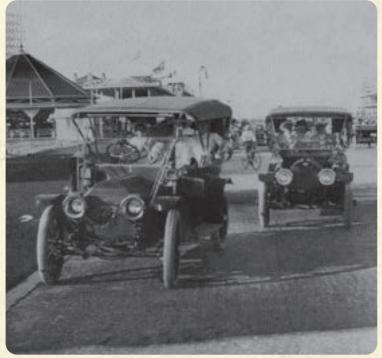














VISITGALVESTON.COM | 27



Galveston customs inspection circa 1910



hen asked to name significant historical ports of immigration, most Americans would quickly name Ellis Island and perhaps San Francisco's Angel Island. Yet ask those same people to

name the largest port of entry in the Southern U.S. and they would probably draw a blank, or perhaps identify Miami or New Orleans. Few would proffer the correct answer: Galveston.

In addition to their role as the Gateways to America for thousands of new arrivals, these cities benefited directly from the immigrants who left an indelible mark on their host city. In welcoming so many immigrants, Galveston achieved a moniker as the "City of Firsts" in Texas. Of course, it is critically important to note that many of Galveston's most celebrated citizens did not hail from ancestors who willingly chose to emigrate to Texas but were brought here as part of the slave trade.

This fact may explain why Galveston is also the birthplace of Juneteenth, now a federal holiday honoring June 19, 1865, when enslaved Africans were emancipated (see page 12 for more on Juneteenth). Going forward, Galveston established

several other novel African American institutions, including Central High School, the first public high school for African Americans in Texas.

Galveston's unique position as the City of Firsts began in 1528, when Cabeza de Vaca and his ship's crew washed ashore on Galveston Island, becoming the first Europeans to set foot in what would become Texas 317 years later in 1845. The unique geography—a barrier island that protects, along with Goat Island, what is now the Galveston, Trinity and East Bays—made it a naturally strategic landmass.

Not surprisingly, the 17th-century French explorer René-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle was intrigued by the area and, perhaps less surprisingly, the infamous pirate and privateer Jean Lafitte chose the Island as his base of operations in 1817. He remained here until he was forcibly evicted by the fledgling U.S. Navy. Galveston became the primary port of immigration in the Southern U.S. for many of the same reasons Lafitte established his residency here: a central location with protected bays that is easily accessed.

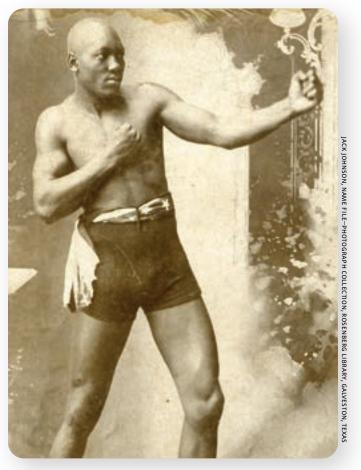
"Galveston's ethnic diversity remains one of its biggest appeals," says Lauren Martino Henry, archivist with the Rosenberg Library. "This is the first location where people landed in the Southern United States."

A Houston native, Henry was drawn to Galveston because of its history, ethnic diversity and slower pace of life. A seventhgeneration Texan, she is also a byproduct of immigration, her parents being of German and Sicilian descent. She also possesses an encyclopedic knowledge of Galveston's fecund cultural history, a tremendous resource for someone curious about Galveston's role in immigration and especially in the African slave trade and subsequent emancipation.

"The Strand's nickname as 'The Wall Street of the South' may receive the most recognition, but the African American firsts are equally impressive," she says. "Galveston is the birthplace of Jack Johnson, the first African American heavyweight boxing champion who became an important spokesman and activist against segregation in the Jim Crow era. Jesse McGuire Dent is less known but equally important, the first African American schoolteacher to sue a school district for equal pay for black teachers. She won her lawsuit, too."

Henry says Galveston's African American educators always demanded equal educational rights for their students. Many of these teachers developed into national leaders in education. Lunch counter sit-ins here were among the first in America, first organized by Kelton Sams at the Star Drugstore. Local emancipated African Americans established the first Baptist, American Methodist, Episcopal and Catholic churches here. University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) was the first state-subsidized hospital for African Americans as well as among the first in the South to fully integrate in the 1960s. The famous Green Book listed a dozen options for African American travelers, from hotels to service stations.

"The Strand's nickname as 'The Wall Street of the South' may receive the most recognition, but the African American firsts are equally impressive."



Jack Johnson

Founded in 1886, UTMB also established the first medical college in the Lone Star State, with an enrollment of 23 students. The John Sealy Hospital Training School for Nurses opened that same year. The choice of Galveston made sense for such institutions, given the city's reputation as a cultural and intellectual hub. Residents here enjoyed the state's first opera house, worked in the first building built specifically for a newspaper, The Daily News, and studied in the first public library, the Rosenberg Library, still in operation today.

The United States recognized Galveston's prestige as well, establishing the first U.S. Post Office, national bank and customs house in Texas. The Catholic Church built its first cathedral, hospital and parochial school, The Ursuline Academy, here as well, an obvious location given the number of ethnic communities that planted new roots here. Interestingly, the city's narrow geography prevented the cultural isolation typical of larger urban environments, a true melting pot of various European and African cultures.

Galveston's size restrictions also served to protect vulnerable cultures from the political and social isolation and discrimination they faced in larger cities across the



The Ursuline Academy circa 1940

United States, cities like New York. There, the Jewish population encountered many of the same prejudices upon immigration that they had experienced when fleeing Russia and Eastern Europe at the turn of the 20th century. Several Jewish organizations recognized this dilemma and created the "Galveston Movement," a plan that diverted 10,000 Jewish immigrants to the Port of Galveston rather than the traditional passage through Ellis Island. Jewish settlers were aided by Rabbi Henry Cohen and members of the B'nai Israel synagogue, who guided these immigrants from the Galveston docks to the Texas countryside. B'nai Israel is one of two synagogues in Galveston today.

Galveston's thriving port and the surrounding Texas environment also greatly benefited Italian immigrants. They came in large numbers to work processing and shipping cotton, rice, flour and other agricultural products. They also joined shipbuilding operations, fishing fleets and worked at the port. Though no Italians lived in Galveston in the 1870s, more than 1,000 were counted at the turn of the century, including hundreds of Sicilians who had fled famine on their native island. Religion, both Catholic and Protestant, the importance of family, the culture of food, interdependence and Italian media outlets sustained the population, which is still in evidence today.

Galveston's largest European community hailed from Germany. Germans had long established themselves on the Island. Between 1836 and 1845, more than 10,000 Germans emigrated to Texas, drawn by tales of arable land in the Texas

Hill Country and established communities of Germans who had pioneered the area, having migrated from the eastern United States. German farmers worked easily with German merchants to establish a commercial relationship that filtered throughout Texas and even, via the Galveston shipping trade, sent goods and agricultural products back to Germany.

Even in the 19th century, Galveston's thriving culture and commerce naturally depended upon technological advances. Given the sound local economy and cultural tolerance, the city was the site of the first electric lights and electric streetcars in the state. It was also the port of call for the first ship to sail through the Panama Canal.



The Pleasure Pier circa 1955



The original Murdoch's Bathhouse before being destroyed by the hurricane of 1900.

Of course, the first European ever to step ashore in Texas was Spaniard Cabeza de Vaca, having abandoned his shipwreck near present-day Galveston almost 500 years ago. After enduring a harsh winter in which 65 of the 80 men perished, de Vaca labeled the island Malhado, the "Island of Doom." He then spent four years in the captivity of various indigenous tribes. He eventually escaped and spent eight years traveling the Southwest, where he encountered—and grew exceedingly respectful of—several indigenous tribes.

The invaluable Hispanic influence on Texas is well known. Hispanic immigrants also contributed widely to the City of Firsts. In 1829, Thomas Gonzales, a native of Tamaulipas, Mexico, relocated to Galveston and he started a wholesale grocery on The Strand. Gonzales opened a cotton firm after the Civil War, supplying textile factories throughout Europe. Boyer Gonzales, the son of Thomas and his wife, Edith, became an outstanding watercolorist in the style of Winslow Homer, with whom he became friends several years earlier.

The Rosenberg Library possesses over 200 of Gonzales' paintings, including several he exhibited in the Texas Pavilion at the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis. Boyer's son, Boyer Gonzales, Jr., also rose to artistic prominence, primarily as a teacher, having established San Antonio's Museum School of Art and chaired the art departments at the University of Texas and the University of Washington. Galveston is also cited as the birthplace of the Texas-Mexican literary renaissance.

It is not just through artistic expression that Hispanic influence has benefited Galveston's cultural milieu. Several of the city's renowned restaurants are anchored in the cocina, including The Original Mexican Café dating back to 1916, followed 15 years later by the Dove Chili Parlor, aka La Paloma Mexican Cafe, and Modesta's Café. Though Galveston is famous for its Victorian architecture, there are also prominent examples of Mission Revival, a testament to the influence of Spanish-born noblemen like Bernardo de Gálvez, a Revolutionary War hero and the first governor of Louisiana, after whom the Island is named.

Port cities have long stood among the most dynamic urban environments across the globe, producing a unique cultural mélange with few parallels. It is not surprising that America's largest city for immigration, New York, receives more than 5 million more tourists than the secondmost visited-city, Miami, itself a wonderful cultural mix of diverse ethnic communities. Galveston's smaller size and significant stature as the City of Firsts and home to robust cultural diversity is therefore a much more impressive and approachable option.

Award-winning journalist Crai S. Bower appears regularly as a travel commentator on KUOW (NPR), American Forces Network and Rick Steves' Travel, where he is the Canadian travel expert. His television appearances include Q13 Fox, WGN Chicago, WPIX New York and The Los Angeles Times.

GALVESTON Vacation Rental Management



Vacation Rentals

Ryson Vacation Rentals continues to be the fastest growing vacation rental company on the island. For 15 years, Ryson has offered the most competitive owner income opportunities. We strive to make your success our priority.



What does Ryson have to offer?

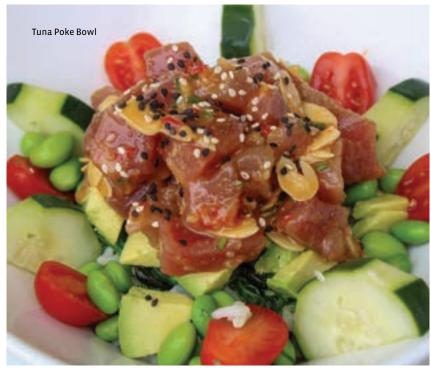
- Local Reservation Staff
- Dedicated Owner Liaison
- Dedicated Revenue Manager
- 24/7 Operations Staff
- Housekeeping Staff
- In-House Laundry Facility
- Marketing Team
- 3D Property Immersions
- Professional Photography and Videography

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Fine, Fresh Seafood

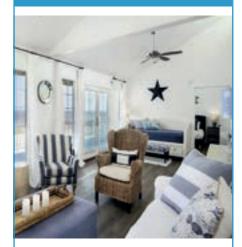
WHEN YOU'RE IN A beautiful beachside community like Galveston, it's practically a crime to not try the seafood—especially when you have options like BLVD. Seafood. This acclaimed seafood restaurant features locally-sourced, never-frozen favorites like shrimp, crab, oysters and more fish than you can shake a fork (or net) at. The restaurant itself offers an alluring aesthetic. BLVD. Seafood is a repurposed 7-Eleven with stunning views of the Gulf of Mexico, and the only thing more expansive than those glimpses of the Gulf is the menu itself. In addition to an array of craft cocktails and fine wines, you can choose from expert Executive Chef Chris Lopez's wide variety of seafood specialties and soulful Southern favorites. Chef Lopez, who was the recently voted Best Chef in Galveston, will take good care of you. BLVDSEAFOOD.COM





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and surrounding areas in
South Texas. Hosting some
of the best properties on and
around the island – from the
West End to the East End,
and everywhere in between
– you're sure to find the
perfect place for your stay!



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EVENTS FOR ALL

The Island is Ready for Your Events



Your Own Slice of Paradise

These perfect parks will help make your Galveston getaway even more gorgeous. BY TYLER HICKS

you've ALREADY MADE ONE incredible decision. But why stop at just one? When you decided to come to Galveston Island, you chose a place that truly offers the best of many worlds: Fine dining, entertainment and, of course, a beautiful beach are all quite literally at your fingertips any time of day. If anything, the sheer number of options available to you can feel a little daunting—especially if you're planning an event, meeting or wedding. That's why Island Soul decided to help make it easier for you. After all, leisure is the name of our game.

Here are two of many amazing locales available for any kind of event you may have in the works.

R.A. APFFEL BEACH PARK (EAST BEACH)

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced companies to get creative. For many folks, that means outdoor events (and even some outdoor meetings). And while your colleagues are likely chomping at the bit to return to the indoor, in-person events they know and love, something tells us they won't complain about a meeting or event that is literally beachside. East Beach provides idyllic scenery away from the sounds of the Seawall, giving you and your companions some privacy. Plus, you can rent out parts of the park for your private use. You read that right: You can carve out your very own slice of paradise.

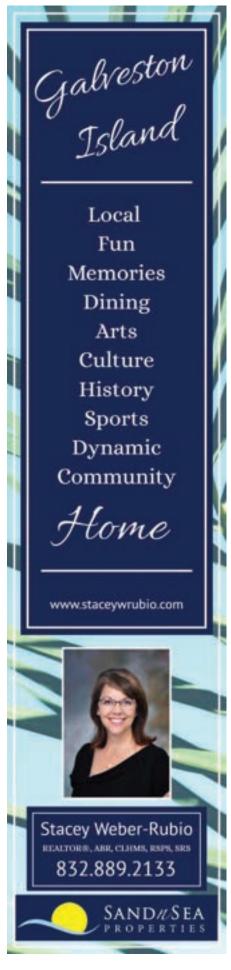


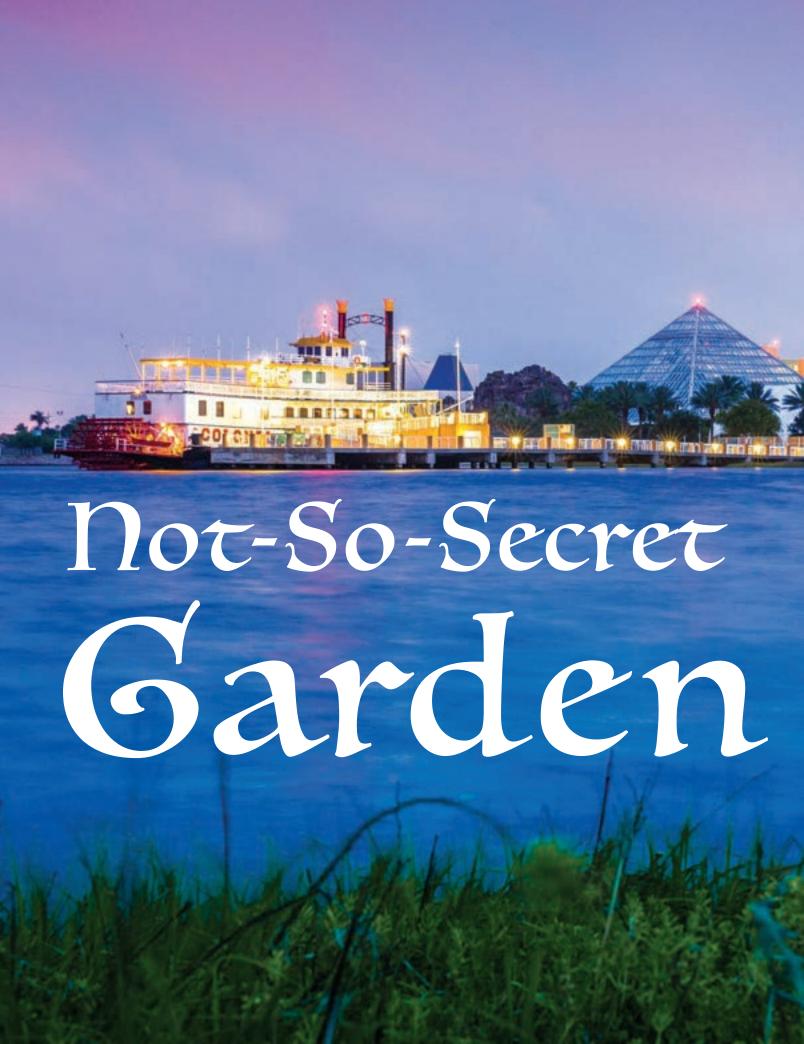
Nestled at the far eastern tip of the Island, East Beach is perhaps best known for the views it offers of the Gulf, the Channel, the Big Reef and the East End Lagoon. An elevated pavilion is the perfect place to host nuptials or address your colleagues, and a boardwalk and entertainment stage give you plenty of other ways to play host. This park has been home to everything from wonderful weddings to the most intense volleyball and soccer showdowns, so you'd be hard-pressed to find a more versatile venue this side of the Gulf.

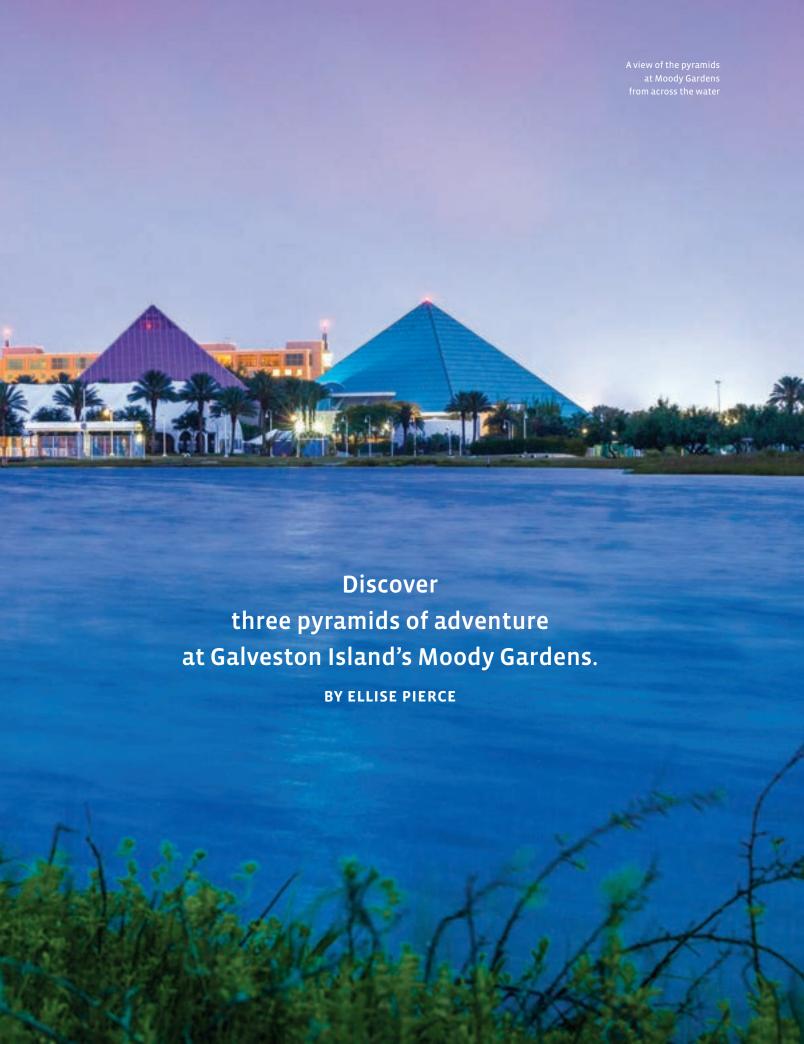
SEAWOLF PARK

Have you ever seen one of those movies where two people destined to be together finally announce their love? If not, trust us: They're out there, because piers are the ideal location for romantic events of every kind. Fortunately for you, Seawolf Park has a picture-perfect pier befitting everything from fishing to weddings. Yet

even if you're not looking for anything romantic, Seawolf Park can still be the place for you. It also offers a playground, ample entertainment space and two must-see tourist attractions. Calling all World War II buffs: This park is home to the submarine USS Cavalla and the USS Stewart, one of only three WWII destroyer escorts left in the entire world. Even better, the park is also home to what remains of the World War I tanker S.S. Selma, the largest concrete ship ever constructed. But perhaps best of all, the sun-soaked Seawolf Park offers unforgettable views of a different side of Galveston. Surrounded by the sea, you and your fellow event attendees can take in all of the sights, sounds and sea-foamy smells that make this corner of the world truly stunning. And when you plan your day at Seawolf Park, it will literally be vour corner of the world. What's better than that?









A

long Offatts Bayou on Galveston Island, tranquil waters lap against the shore as an 1800s-style paddlewheel boat eases up to the dock. Hundreds of passengers disembark and make their way onto the beach, where a trio of massive glass pyramids—and the

 $adventures\ in side\ each\ of\ them-awaits.$

Moody Gardens is Galveston Island's premier educational and leisure destination for families. Once you step inside one of three 10-story pyramids—an aquarium, a rainforest and one dedicated to all things science—the fun begins. In each micro-environment, you become completely immersed in these authentic living worlds, whether you're watching the swimming sharks overhead in the Aquarium Pyramid's Caribbean tunnel or listening to the call of the macaws in the Rainforest Pyramid.

"Moody Gardens was founded on teaching through activities that are fun and interactive," says Jerri Hamachek, marketing director. "Creating experiences that educate and entertain is still what drives Moody Gardens today—it's behind everything we do."

Since its humble beginnings in 1983, with just eight horses, a barn and riding arena to assist those with severe head

injuries through hippotherapy, Moody Gardens has grown into the impressive 240-acre complex that it is today. The horses and barn are long gone, but Moody Gardens' mission as a nonprofit remains firmly intact: to be a nature-inspired educational and recreational destination, and one that also promotes conservation and research.

"Moody Gardens is unique in that it has something for everyone to enjoy and learn about," Hamachek says. "The exhibitions are interactive and engaging, so there's always a part for the visitor to play."

FIND THE TREE SLOTHS IN THE RAINFOREST PYRAMID

As you enter the Rainforest Pyramid, a lush, tropical acre of real rainforest under glass, you'll walk along an open-air canopy bridge walkway that's nearly four stories high. The walkway threads its way through the natural habitat, which is home to more than 1,700 species of exotic plants and animals—some of them on the verge of extinction. Along the bird's-eye route, you'll see families of giant Amazon River otters playing in the waterfall below you while the free-roaming cotton-top tamarin monkeys and the white-faced saki monkeys watch from their perch in the cannonball trees and whistle as you walk by. Try to spot the elusive two-toed sloths, usually hanging upside down in the ficus trees, which camouflage them so well they disappear. There are also

dozens of bird species flying and flitting about, including the bright red scarlet ibis, the victoria crowned pigeons with blue mohawks that like to follow people on the trail, and the colorful sunbitterns, whose broad wings resemble Indian blankets.

At the ground level, there's another trail to discover—and lots more animals—but these guys are kept in secluded areas where they're safe from human contact, and vice versa. See if you can find the third eye on the prehistoric Komodo dragon, which hails from the Indonesian island of the same name. There's also a pair of giant anacondas, known as one of the world's largest snakes, a colony of more than 50 vampire bats, and even an ocelot—a spotted wildcat that looks like a leopard's "mini me."

WALK UNDER WATER AT THE AQUARIUM PYRAMID

Reach into the shallow seawater pools and touch silky cownose rays, prickly and leathery starfish, and pencil urchins, which resemble pin cushions more than No. 2's. Then meander through an ocean tunnel and watch schools of blacktip reef sharks, zebra sharks, leopard sharks, and brown sharks swim right over your head (try to count their rows of teeth). You've just stepped inside the Mangrove Lagoon in the Aquarium Pyramid, part of the Caribbean exhibition space.





A sloth hanging around in the rainforest pyramid

The Caribbean's only one part of the real-life, interactive ocean experiences at the Aquarium Pyramid, the largest aquarium in Texas. There are more than 10,000 marine animals that live in its five distinct ocean environments: the Gulf of Mexico; South Atlantic; South Pacific; North Pacific; and Caribbean, all meant to mimic the real ones and show the diversity of each.

"Each ocean exhibit highlights different marine sanctuaries and their relationship to the seas," Hamachek says. "There are strong conservation messages throughout that underscore the vital importance of keeping these animal and plant species alive and thriving for the entire planet."

And that adds the value of collaboration, even by happenstance. In the Gulf of Mexico exhibition, there's a 25-foot scale model of an oil rig platform; it shows how these man-made ocean structures provide valuable attachment surfaces for a variety of sea organisms to create reef ecosystems, such as the 56-square-mile Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary just off the coast of Galveston Island, one of the healthiest coral reef systems in the world.

In the North Pacific waters, playful spotted harbor seals, fur seals, and California sea lions splash and play and swim from the top to the bottom over three levels of viewing; there's a giant Pacific octopus that lives here, too. As you make your way into the South Pacific exhibit, don't miss the vibrant orange, red and blue Atlantic sea nettles jellyfish floating through the waters—you'll recognize their distinctive mushroomy UFO shape right away. "They're incredible," Hamachek says. "Everyone loves watching them. They dance in the water; their tails are long, and when they move, they morph into different shapes and twist around."



Stay

Moody Gardens Hotel, Spa & Convention Center offers nearly
450 rooms that fit guests and families of all sizes. There are two
great dining options, depending on your mood. Café in the Park
is best known for its lobster bisque. Shearn's Seafood and Prime
Steaks Restaurant offers fresh-caught Gulf fish, such as red snapper,
Texas redfish and Gulf shrimp. When it comes to activities, Moody
Gardens Hotel Spa and Convention Center's got you covered.
For the kids, there's Moody Gardens Kids Crew Club,
with cookie decorating and pool dives for pirate's treasure. and
for the adults, there's a full-service spa and outdoor heated
pool with a swim-up bar. Cheers!



Tee Up

Down the road from the Moody Gardens Hotel, Spa & Convention Center is Moody Gardens Golf Course, rated one of the top three courses in the Houston area and one of the top 50 courses in the U.S. It also comes with a gorgeous view. The par-72 seaside course has five sets of tees to accommodate golfers of every level.

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The stars of the aquarium, though, are indisputably the penguins, now with two large exhibit spaces of their own. One houses the newly acquired, warm-climate Humboldt penguins, and the other, the king penguins, which resemble their more famous cousins, the emperor, along with four other penguin species. For the most penguin-y experience of all, time your visit to feeding time, 10 to 10:30 a.m., or go for an add-on "Penguin Encounter," a behind the scenes meet-and-greet with one of the penguins, which comes with a penguin painting made right before your eyes.

The Aquarium Pyramid also houses Moody Gardens' on-site marine biology research department. Some of its current projects include a deep-dive study of the underground caves near the Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico and measuring the effects from Hurricane Harvey on marine life along the coast of Texas. Moody Gardens' research team also frequently works in tandem with other marine life conservation organizations when they need help. "Conservation is a big part of what we do and so is research," Hamachek says. "It's not just an aquarium with cute penguins, although we have that, too."

MAKE YOUR OWN MUSIC AT THE DISCOVERY PYRAMID

Strum the strings of an acoustic guitar. A violin. An electric

guitar. Then learn how the sounds they make are different—and the same. Or speak directly into a series of microphones, some old and others new, and watch the plotter screen that measures the sound waves of your voice. Push a button to alter the tone of your voice to sound as deep as Darth Vader, or go the other direction and sound like something that leans more "chipmunk."

At the Discovery museum's "JAM: Journey Through Amazing Music" exhibition, it's all about creating and learning about sound, from how it's created to the differences between various types of sounds, plus the history of sound and its place in cultures around the world.

"You can explore anything from the actual science of sound, demonstrated with guitars and other string instruments, to learning about how sound travels," Hamachek says. "There are sound devices that capture sound waves and measure them right before your eyes. You can talk on this and touch that, and see how waves travel and learn about the different musical tones that come from different instruments. There are 20 different sound galleries in all."

The most popular activity in the sound exhibit? The karaoke booth. "Music is expressive, and it evokes a lot of joy," Hamachek says. "It's positive and artistic, and it usually brings on dancing. I think that's why it appeals to all ages."

A TRIO OF THEATRE EXPERIENCES THAT MIGHT MAKE YOU JUMP OUT OF YOUR SEAT

If you think you just felt a splash of water while watching Shark: A 4-D Experience or a hot blast of air during San Andreas: 4-D Experience, you're not imagining it. You're seated in Moody Gardens' 4-D Special FX Theatre, where the show plays in high-definition 3-D technology while special effects such as water splashes, ocean breezes, herbaceous scents and even blasts of artificial snow amp up what's on the screen by literally bringing it to life as you sit in your seat.

"There's nothing else like it in Texas," Hamachek says. "The 4-D theater is one of less than 10 of its kind in the U.S., and it not only captivates, it totally surprises our young audiences. The suspense of 'What's going to happen next?' becomes a big part of the fun of watching these educational documentaries unfold."

The Audience Recognition Theater, located in the Discovery Pyramid, is another Moody Gardens first. Now showing: a brand-new interactive movie, 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea: An Interactive Adventure. It actually invites the audience members to become a part of the crew in the submarine voyage. Led by Deep, a robotically-enhanced pufferfish, you'll help operate the ship, choose the direction it goes and see coral reefs, ice caves, an ancient lost city and more.

A longtime innovator in big-screen entertainment, Moody Gardens' IMAX 3-D theater was the first in North America and is still pushing boundaries today. Its 3-D theater boasts the world's first Giant Screen 6 Primary Laser Projector System, which means that colors on screen are up to three and a half times brighter than what you'd find in standard theaters. That along with advanced new 3-D glasses technology makes documentary films like Wings Over Water, which chronicles the migration of various species of birds as they make their way over various bodies of water, more realistic than ever.





HAVE A HIGH-FLUNG ADVENTURE. THEN GO CHILLAX ON THE BEACH

Snap into your harness, step to the edge of the zipline platform and zoom 60 feet in the air—right over Palm Beach and the Lazy River. Too fast? Hit the Sky Trail Explorer Ropes Course, where you can challenge your agility via dozens of obstacles, including Criss-Cross Tight Ropes, where you're actually balancing on a rope and walking across from one point to another (think circus performer), and Burma Buckets, a rope bridge made up of U-shaped ropes that you walk on.

"It's part of our recreational side of our mission," Hamachek says. "It's educational because you're learning about teamwork and discovering your own abilities and development along the way. We also offer it as a teambuilding exercise for corporate groups. Learning to work together or as individuals to develop balance and agility is something that all ages can benefit from."

Along the eastern shore, there's the family-centric Palm Beach, so named because that's where its white sand came from: 10,500 tons were hauled in from Florida. Today, it's home to a Lazy River, wave pool, tower slides, spray arches and even a sand volleyball court. During the summer months, the concert series Bands on the Sand features local musicians on the weekends, which draws an eclectic crowd. "People float along Lazy River while others might be dancing or eating a burger from the Shoreline Grill—you see seniors, children, families, the whole gamut," Hamachek says.

Ellise Pierce is an award-winning writer specializing in travel, food and the arts. She is the author of the cookbook/memoir Cowgirl Chef: Texas Cooking with a French Accent, and frequently contributes to Four Seasons, Virtuoso Life and Cowboys & Indians magazines. When she's not traveling, she can be found in the kitchen, recreating dishes that remind her of her favorite places.





face it, you're different. For most people, a day at the beach means relaxing in the warm sun and escaping the hustle and bustle of everyday life. But you're not "most people." For you, the real enjoyment lies in exploring the wide variety of unique and exciting outdoor activities that await.

That's especially true on Galveston Island, where visitors and locals alike are drawn to the sprawling beaches and favorable year-round climate that offer ideal conditions for fun in the sun. From surfing and sailing to paddleboarding, kayaking and more, Galveston truly is an outdoor lover's paradise.



SURF'S UP

The Gulf Coast, often referred to as the "Third Coast" of the United States, is notorious for its changing weather conditions, but that's what makes the Texas surf scene—particularly on Galveston Island—ideal for beginners and experienced surfers alike.

The Texas coast is known for producing small, choppy waves that are often unpredictable. According to Boog Cram, owner of Ohana Surf & Skate and a lifelong surfer, the continental shelf off the coast doesn't allow for deepwater swells.

"The cooling and warming seasons are our peak periods," he says. "Waves in the spring and fall can be knee- to head-high, which is significant, and can produce good conditions that will attract experienced surfers."

But the generally calmer waves make Galveston Island the perfect location for novice surfers and first-timers. There are more than 32 miles of beaches, with the most popular spots being Pleasure Pier and the jetties located at 37th, 47th, 51st and 61st streets. Cram, who began surfing at age 12 and has worked in surf shops since his teens, is one of several retailers on the Island who offer surfing lessons, along with surfboards and gear for rent or sale.

"Our primary months are June, July and August," he says. "A lot of tourism traffic comes through and it's our busiest time of year." But, he emphasizes, the relatively mild winters on the Gulf make surfing on Galveston Island a year-round activity.

STAND-UP PADDLEBOARDING

Stand-up paddleboarding, or SUP, is one of the fastest-growing water sports in the world. It involves using a paddle to propel yourself through the water while standing (or kneeling) on a board and toning your core. Part of the reason for its growing popularity is that it's easy to learn.

"People are surprised they can do it," says Marlo Landreth, co-owner of SUP Gulf Coast, a beach concessionaire paddleboarding business. "A lot of people think they're too old, or too out of shape, or that it's too complicated. But if you take a lesson and have basic athletic ability, you can do it. And once you do, it's like riding a bike. Once you get the feel for it, you're set for life."

But SUP isn't just for beginners. The sport has become a popular option among hardcore surfers, too. "On the Gulf, our waves can be unpredictable," Landreth says. "When the conditions aren't good for surfing, we get a lot of surfers who rent paddleboards because they want to go out on the water. Small paddleboards can be used as surfboards, and anybody can use them."

Other activities can also be performed on a SUP, including fishing, racing and yoga. And SUP can be done on almost any body of water, although the Gulf Coast offers a distinct

advantage over inland waterways. "We see dolphins all the time," Landreth says. "From sunrise until about 10 a.m., you'll see them. Sometimes it's one or two, and sometimes it's a pod. It's an amazing experience."

Perhaps paddleboarding's best feature is its accessibility; it can be enjoyed by anyone, regardless of their familiarity with the sport or their skill level. "The point is not to be the best paddleboarder," Landreth says. "We want you to get out on the water and be happy—to enjoy yourself, see some dolphins and have fun."

KAYAKING

Most people know what a kayak is, or at least have a pretty good idea. But, as with paddleboarding, most don't realize they can enjoy it regardless of whether they've tried it before.

Kayaking, especially in the form of guided tours, continues to grow in popularity on Galveston Island, in no small part due to the innovative and educational programs offered by local experts and guides. Artist Boat is a nonprofit organization that offers a variety of kayaking adventures consisting of guided tours to some of the most scenic areas of Galveston Bay. According to founder and owner Karla Klay, their mission

Lessons & Equipment Rental Surfing and paddleboarding lessons and equipment rentals are available at many locations on Galveston Island, including: **OHANA SURF & SKATE** 2814 AVENUE R ½, GALVESTON, TX 77550 409-763-2700 | OHANASURFANDSKATE.COM **SUP & SURF GULF COAST** (beach concessionaire) 409-692-8629 | SUPGULFCOASTTX.COM For kayaking tours and equipment, contact: **ARTIST BOAT** 13330 SETTEGAST ROAD, GALVESTON, TX 77554 713-569-0722 | ARTISTBOAT.ORG **BEACH TOWN TOURS** 11624 SPORTSMAN ROAD, GALVESTON, TX 77554 832-630-2440 | BEACHTOWNTOURS.COM



An Undeniably Refined Resort

STRETCHING EIGHT BLOCKS along the island's renowned Seawall Boulevard, The San Luis Resort is a 32-acre walkable property offering beautiful, unobstructed views of the Gulf of Mexico as well as meeting space in each of its three hotels – The San Luis Hotel, Hilton Galveston Island Resort, and Holiday Inn Resort Galveston – On the Beach. Undeniably refined, The San Luis Resort sets the standard for luxury. More than 250,000 square feet of meeting space, 700 residentially-appointed guestrooms, 10 exceptional restaurants and 3 pools with fire pits and swim up bars represent a few of the many features that set The San Luis Resort apart.

Each hotel within the resort features an array of endless entertainment and activities set in relaxing environments that offer a variety of fun for all ages.

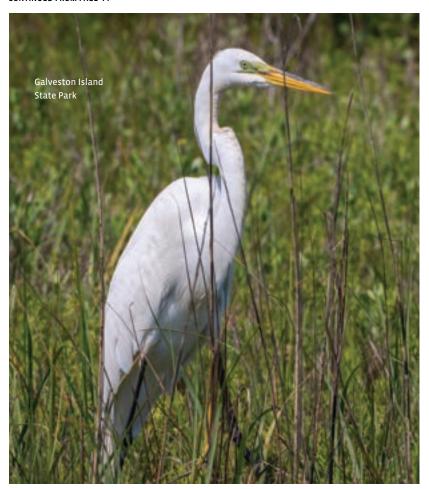
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Galveston Island State Park

No list of outdoor activities on the Island would be complete without mentioning the park, which offers 2,000 acres for camping, fishing, hiking, swimming, bird watching and more. However, 2022 hours and accessibility will vary because of construction and renovations.

"Visitors are always welcome, but access to some areas will be closed at certain times," says Kyle O'Haver, assistant superintendent and acting manager. "By summer 2022, we expect the beach side to be fully open."

Visitors are encouraged to call ahead or visit the park website for information on open areas and available activities in 2022.

TPWD.TEXAS.GOV/STATE-PARKS/GALVESTON-ISLAND

is to promote awareness and preservation of the environment through the arts and sciences.

"Our primary focus is on the eco-art adventure experience," Klay says. "It's a four-hour tour, where participants learn proper paddling skills, how to fit a life jacket and how to work with a partner."

Participants explore the environment and encounter different fish and bird species along the way, with the opportunity to work on a plein-air watercolor painting during the tour. No previous skill of any kind, with kayaking or painting, is necessary.

"The history of science is also the history of visual art," Klay says. "We encourage people to be still and experience the quiet, while also learning how scientists and artists see the world."

Klay says the adventures free participants from their everyday worries and stress. "Seeing the things they do, and translating that knowledge into a personal experience, is very powerful for them."

Mike and Julie Richmond, owners of Beach Town Tours in Galveston, conduct guided tours year-round. Julie says kayaking is a sport for all skill levels. "We allow children as

young as 5 to go on tours, and we have people in their 70s," she says. "About 75 percent of our customers have either never kayaked or gone only one time."

Their guided tours last two hours, and participants are matched to kayaks based on their height, weight and experience level. "It's a win-win for everyone when you're in the right boat," Richmond says. "We also offer a short lesson of five or 10 minutes for beginners and novices before we go out."

While some experienced kayakers are more than capable of going on their own adventures, both Klay and Richmond emphasize the advantages of participating in a tour with a group.

"I always encourage people to go with guides," Klay says.

"They know more about the locations and the natural species, and are trained to recognize your level of skill and help you improve those skills."

YOU'RE NOT DONE YET

There are plenty more options for outdoor recreation on Galveston Island, including water sports that typically require more specific skills, such as sailing, boating, water skiing

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and jet skiing. Lessons and rentals are available at numerous locations throughout the Island.

An ever-growing sport that has experienced a surge of interest, particularly among young people, is skateboarding. According to Cram, there's been a skate park boom across the United States, including one in Galveston.

"We get people of all ages, from all over the world," he says.
"It's a free, open park, with challenging bowls and contours.
Anybody can use it, and it's a great place for kids and families to hang out."

In addition to surfing instruction, Cram's shop offers skateboarding camps. He's not the only one with an expanded menu of activities. In partnership with Kathleen DiNatale from Yoga Haven, Landreth offers beach yoga on weekends.

"We have the best instructor on the Island running our classes, and they're suitable for everybody," she says. "Guests can do an hour of yoga and an hour of paddleboarding after."

Beach yoga is available on Saturday mornings beginning in late April.

Klay's Artist Boat organization offers a low-intensity outdoor recreational opportunity that is enjoyed by people of all ages. Their Bucket Brigade Interpretive Beach Tours explore the animals and environment that add to the variety and character of Galveston Island.

"It's exactly what it sounds like," Klay says. "People walk with buckets, wade into water, look for things and experience the ocean environment for themselves."

Bucket Brigade tours last 45 minutes and take place on weekends, May through September.



Beach Town Tours also offers a Crabbing Experience on Saturdays and Sundays, which is especially popular among families with small children. "It's a 90-minute walking adventure along the shoreline, and they'll see blue crabs, stone crabs, fiddler crabs and more," Richmond says. "If people catch any crabs, they can keep them."

A GREAT DESTINATION

Landreth's SUP & Surf Gulf Coast is one of several businesses that offer more than equipment rentals and activity lessons. She also rents chairs and umbrellas for the beach and just takes the time to answer questions from passers-by.

She says Galveston is the ideal place to experience all that oceanfront life has to offer. "It's a great destination and has been improving for years. People didn't always realize it, but now they do."

And as soon as you get on the Island, you'll realize it as well. You'll also be back for more, since you won't have done everything.

Tom Delamater is a longtime writer, editor, television host and producer. He has traveled throughout the United States and Canada and worked as an editor for publishing houses in California and Texas. Tom taught college classes in journalism, broadcasting and marketing and is currently based in Ohio, where he serves as an editorial and marketing consultant for clients from coast to coast.



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THINGS TO DO

Fun is Around Every Corner in Galveston

Your To-Do List

Sure, you can lounge in the sun and splash in the surf, but if you're looking for a little more adventure, check out these awesome activities. BY TYLER HICKS

THE SPRING AND SUMMER months are the perfect time to visit Galveston Island. That means the list of activities and outings available to you is practically limitless. Okay, maybe not limitless, but pretty darn close.

To help you make the most of your gorgeous Galveston getaway, we've compiled a "to-do list" just for folks like you and your crew.



Historic Galveston Island Pleasure Pier

The picturesque seaside views alone are worth the visit, but of course, the real draw of the aptly-named Pleasure Pier is the attractions. Imagine the best fair ride or roller coaster you've ever been on, then picture what that would be like if it were over the beautiful green-blue waters of Galveston Island. Coasters, flyers, swinging ships and plenty of rides for the kiddos make Pleasure Pier a must-see.





Galveston Water Adventures

Speaking of rides, you won't want to miss this one. Galveston Water Adventures offers some of the most thrilling boat rides you'll ever experience. Enjoy turns, spins and high speeds galore aboard a jet boat that is both wildly fun and safe for the whole family. Not a fan of speed on the high seas? Don't worry: Breathtaking sunset cruises and dreamy dolphin tours are also available via this trusty crew from Historic Pier 21.



Galveston Harbor Tours

If you're looking for a tour of this historic Island and its many beautiful nooks, crannies and coves, take a ride on the Galveston Harbor Tours. Built and operated by the Texas Seaport Museum, the Seagull III is the perfect vessel for you and your friends or family to tour Galveston Bay. Enjoy the literal smooth sailing and take in all the history and lore you can feast your eyes on.



Hev Mikev's

After you've had your fill of rides, coasters and stunning tours, it's time for the real main attraction: ice cream. Handmade ice cream, to be exact. Hey Mikey's has all the flavors and toppings your heart (and stomach) could ever desire. Try specialty dishes like a panini-pressed donut and ice cream nachos. Yes, you read that right, ice cream nachos. How could you say no?





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Bishop's Palace

In the mood for more history? Take a stroll to Bishop's Palace, a Victorian-style house nestled in Galveston's East End Historic District. Also known as Gresham's Castle, this popular attraction boasts more than 19,000 square feet of intricate and ornate decorations that will transport you back to another era. And speaking of another era: In 1900, the Greshams—the manor's original owners—welcomed hundreds of Galveston residents into their home during the great hurricane. All of the families survived—and the palace withstood the storm.





Tin Cup's

Tin Cup's Caddy Shack combines two things that essentially every trip needs: drinks and golf. Enjoy a full-service bar replete with every drink you can imagine, and in between sips, take a shot or two—on the range, that is. Tin Cup's also boasts horseshoe pits and a plentiful putting green, which means you can return home with your golf chops thoroughly refined.



West Market

This destination offers a little something for the whole family (sensing a theme here?). Antiques, acupuncture and a yoga studio are all part of this trendy downtown district, and if you want to see it all, you can hop on a Segway and take a tour of the whole area. Then, you can take a quick trek to any of the fantastic restaurants that are just a stone's throw away.



Schlitterbahn Waterpark

No trip to Galveston would be complete without an adventure to Schlitterbahn Waterpark and its insane roster of slides and rides. Some of the dips and drops are so wild and daunting that even the most courageous thrill-seekers will be amazed. And if a nautical luge isn't your speed (pun intended) you can always take a jaunt on the lazy river and let your worries float away.





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Happy Hour Daily 'til 7pm



Turtles About Town

Turtles About Town is a public art project created by the Turtle Island Restoration Network, a leading advocate for the world's oceans and marine wildlife. In partnership with a group of local businesses and Clay Cup Studios, the network commissioned an array of entertaining turtle sculptures that you and your family are now invited to peruse. Make a game of it or simply enjoy the art.



Galveston Slingshot Rentals

Who said Galveston is only about aquatic adventures? These slingshot rentals offer plenty of ground-bound fun via some fast three-wheeled roadsters. Experience the thrill ride that's getting rave reviews by renting one of these speedy machines and taking your friends and family along for the most fun you can have (at least without getting in the water).



Salt Water Gift Shop

This cozy bike rental shop lives by the slogan "Grab life by the handlebars," and it has a collection of one-wheel, two-wheel and three-wheel rentals. Beloved by locals for its wide selection of both bikes and beach merch, the Salt Water Gift Shop is a must-stop shop for anyone planning a dip or a trip to the dunes.



Red Light Coffee Roasters

Interested in a different kind of beverage? Try Red Light Coffee Roasters, a delectable coffee house that definitely has the goods (and by goods, we mean beans). You can't go wrong with any of the options on this roaster's menu, and the warmweather months are the perfect time for coffee lovers to try their iced coffees and lattes.



Jet Ski Rentals

Speaking of the water (which, in Galveston, we basically always are), this is your chance to enjoy the beautiful Galveston Island waters the way they were meant to be: on the back of a jet ski. Well, in all seriousness, you can enjoy Galveston any and every way you want. But a jet ski is one of the best ways to take in the sights, sounds and surfs that this illustrious island has to offer, so rent yours ASAP.



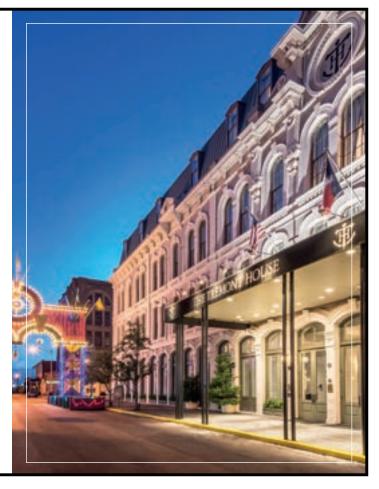


Historic Galveston's Legendary Lodging

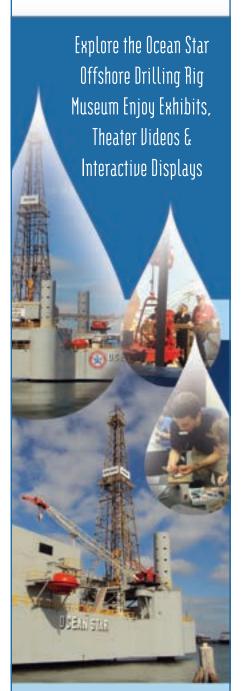
The Tremont House has long been the lodging of choice for Galveston visitors. Located in the historic Strand district, it is within walking distance of a wide array of shops, restaurants, museums and galleries. The hotel is a romantic retreat and home of The Rooftop Bar, Galveston's only open-air rooftop lounge.

Create new memories and make your reservation online or by phone today!

2300 Ship's Mechanic Row, Galveston Island, Texas 409.763.0300 | www.TheTremontHouse.com



Offshore Adventure Awaits!







Freedom Walk

Did you know that the first Juneteenth took place in Galveston? On June 19, 1865, two and a half years after Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, Union Maj. Gen. Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston to declare that those still enslaved must be freed. Now, in this engaging exhibit, you can walk in the steps of Granger and his troops and learn everything you can about this seminal, often overlooked moment in history. For a detailed self-guided tour, go to VISITGALVESTON.COM.



Galveston Children's Museum

This museum offers an enticing array of interactive experiences that are perfect for the tykes in your group. In between days on the beach and nights on the town, you can watch your little ones draw, create, learn and explore in the workshop, building zone or any number of the other intriguing exhibits on offer.



91st Street Fishing Pier

We're honestly shocked that we made it so far down this list without mentioning fishing, but that just goes to show you: There's so much to do in Galveston. When it comes time to cast your line, look no further than the gorgeous, sizable 91st Street Fishing Pier, which is one of the nation's longest privately-owned piers. It's perhaps fitting, then, that so many large fish have been caught on this very pier. What will you catch during your trip?



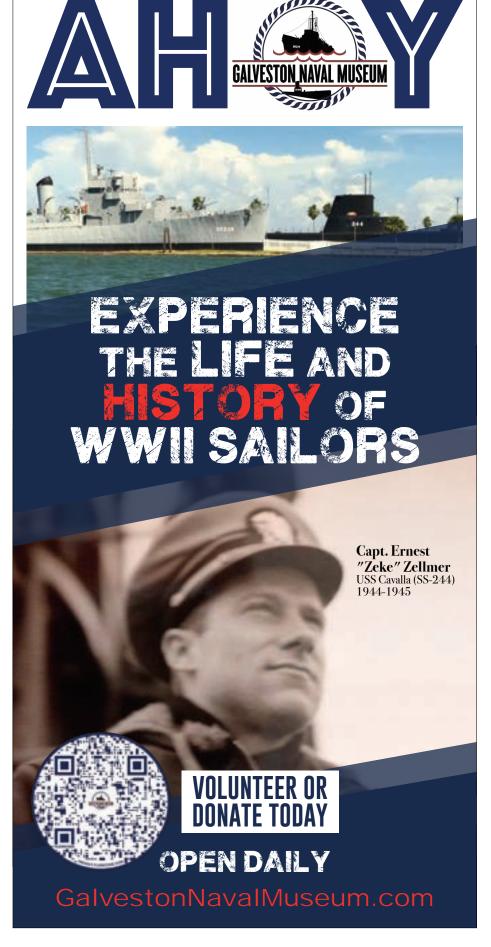
Magic Carpet Putt Putt

Magic Carpet Putt Putt is too good to not mention. Located on Galveston's Seawall (just before the West End begins), this magical miniature golf extravaganza includes both an easy and a hard course. This way mini golf novices can still have fun while the veterans try to improve their handicap. There's such a thing as a handicap for mini golf, right?



Galveston Island Brewing

Speaking of drinks, you deserve a good one. If you and your party want some local flavors, you'd be hard-pressed to find a better spot than this terrific taproom and its sensational selection of crisp drafts. To make matters even better (as if they could be even better), Galveston Island Brewing is just a short walk from the beach.





C-Sick Surfin'

C-Sick Surfin' is Galveston's oldest professional surf school, teaching at the 43rd Street lifeguard stand since 1999. The beginner's two-hour surfing lesson is \$50. We also offer advanced lessons. C-Sick provides everyone with soft-top surfboards and wetsuits when needed. We teach on the beach. Photographer available. All lessons by appointment. C-SICKSURFIN.COM



Galveston Duck Tours

By land and sea, Galveston Duck Tours offers a unique way to see Galveston Island. Starting at 25th Street & Seawall, your captain will present you with facts about the island and its storied history. The tour takes you through historic downtown Galveston, the historic East End District and into the protected waters of Offatts Bayou, where you'll observe wildlife that thrives on and around the barrier island.

GALVESTONDUCKTOURS.COM



Adams League Historic Inn and Event Venue

Welcome to the Adams League Historic Inn—Galveston's newest inn and event venue located in the historic Silk Stocking District. We provide a unique experience for all your event and retreat needs or quiet time away with friends and family. The building is 160 years old and has a colorful history but has retained its historic charm. It includes eight bedrooms with individual ensuite bathrooms and is decorated in romantic Victorian style with modern conveniences. ADAMS-LEAGUEINN.COM



A Night on the Tracks

Take a trip back in time and spend a night on the classic midcentury sleeper the Bonnie Brook. You and your guests will have the museum to yourselves while enjoying 24-hour porter service. Conveniently located at 25th Street & Strand. For more information, Visit GALVESTONRRMUSEUM.ORG.

MOD Coffeehouse

Located at the corner of Postoffice and 22nd Street, Mod Coffeehouse has been serving handcrafted beverages and treats for over 20 years in a Victorian building with a touch of midcentury modern charm. Not only do they make great coffee, they've also created a warm, welcoming place for all who enter. MODCOFFEEHOUSE.COM





Historic, Hurricane, and Ghost Bus Tours!

Explore Galveston's fascinating (and sometimes haunted) history in the comfort of Galveston Experience Company's tour buses with dual A/C, oversized windows, flat-screen TV and experienced tour guides.

Galveston Experience Company tours are rated "Excellent" by TripAdvisor and you'll see why we get almost exclusively 5-star reviews. We even provide a free souvenir photo of your group!

Book online or stop by our store and visitor info center on the Seawall. Contact us to confirm accessible bus availability for your specific tour.

GALVESTONEXPERIENCE.COM



East End Lagoon

Located at the far east end of the island, the East End Lagoon Nature Park and Preserve is a unique and valuable area spanning almost 700 acres of diverse habitat in Galveston. The preserve is a favorite stop for bird watchers and offers a walking trail with interpretative signage. EASTENDLAGOON.ORG



Adventures at Sea!

Wave Dancer Charters is a private fishing company with more than 30 years experience in the Gulf of Mexico. Charter trips for up to six people include everything you need at no additional cost. We provide rods, reels, tackle, bait, ice and water. On arrival back to the dock, your catch will be cleaned and bagged for your trip home.

WAVEDANCERCHARTERS.COM



All Aboard!

The Galveston Railroad Museum is home to over 5 acres of trains and complete with the actual 1932 art deco depot that once serviced Galveston passengers. The museum is fun for all ages. Free parking in the museum's lot and in-and-out privileges make this a must-see for anyone visiting downtown Galveston. Visit GALVESTONRRMUSUEM.ORG for hours and ticket prices.



Moody Mansion

Galveston's 28,000-square-foot Moody Mansion, listed on the National Register of Historic Places and a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark, is faithfully restored to its original splendor and open daily for self-guided tours at 2618 Broadway. Exhibits focus on the family of W.L. Moody, Jr., founder of one of America's great financial enterprises. Based originally on cotton, his businesses grew into banking, ranching, insurance, newspaper publishing, railroads and hotels. The mansion also houses the Galveston Children's Museum on the ground floor. MOODYMANSION.ORG



Island Silver

"The Gulf Coast's Premier Sterling Silver Jewelry Store"

Along with gold and diamonds, Island Silver carries a huge selection of well-priced sterling silver jewelry with more than 30 brands in stock. Whether you're vacationing, here for the day, leaving on a cruise or an Island resident, be sure to visit Island Silver in downtown Galveston. Island Silver is conveniently located at the corner of 25th and Mechanic Street. ISLANDSILVERJEWELRY.COM



Seawolf Park

Located on Galveston's Pelican Island, Seawolf Park is one of the Island's most popular fishing piers, picnic sites and playgrounds, and is home to Galveston Naval Museum. Seawolf Park is a good spot for black drum and redfish. Perfect for families, the park is open 24 hours and includes fish cleaning stations and restrooms nearby. Parking is \$6 per vehicle, and fishing prices are based on residency and age. Season passes are also available. VISITGALVESTON.COM/SEAWOLF



STEAK . SEAFOOD . SPIRITS



Located on the beautiful west end of Galveston Island, Waterman Restaurant has the most spectacular sunset views on the island and offers everything needed for that special get away dining experience. Kick back and relax with a full compliment of bar drinks and enjoy our patio areas overlooking Galveston bay.

14302 Stewart Road 409.632.0233 www.watermansrestaurant.com







Attractions

Hotel

Golf

Stay, Play & Play

From the secrets of the rainforest to the ocean's depths, a world of wonder awaits.

Explore it, right in your backyard at Moody Gardens.

Immerse yourself with vivid colors and wildlife from across the globe at the Rainforest and Aquarium Pyramids. Moments later, you're digitally transported via the latest technology at the MG 3D and 4D Special FX Theaters and 20,000 Leagues Interactive Adventure. Onward as the thrill of the Ropes Course and Zip Line, Discovery Museum and Colonel Paddlewheel Boat awaits. And whether it's morning golf, a spa afternoon, a special group activity, or an annual membership that provides you with a full year of fun and learning; your unique journey becomes whatever you'd like it to be. So much, so close ... found here at Moody Gardens.





For information: 409-744-4673 www.moodygardens.org

NEVER A DULL MOMENT

Special Events March 2022 - October 2022



GALVESTON FAMILY BEACH CHALLENGE

DATES: Various Dates March -

September 2022

TIME: 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

WHERE: Stewart Beach

ADMISSION: Free

GALVESTONCHALLENGE.COM

Giant battleships, huge bean bags and limbo showdowns are coming to East Beach March for the return of the Galveston Family Beach Challenge. The challenge transforms a portion of Stewart Beach into a gigantic obstacle course, allowing families to compete in life-size versions of classic favorites like giant Jenga and dominoes, sack races and sandcastle building. Participants will have the chance to win the grand prize of a \$500 gift card plus tickets to popular Galveston attractions.

SANDCASTLE LESSONS

DATES: Various Dates March -

September

TIME: 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. WHERE: East Beach

ADMISSION: Free (there is a charge to

park at East Beach)
VISITGALVESTON.COM

Visitors to East Beach can participate in "Sandcastle Days." This free, family-friendly event series teaches beachgoers how to create spectacular sandcastles with lessons taught by professional sandcastle builders. The East Beach lessons will take place at

11 a.m., 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. on various weekends along the beachfront near the pavilion. Registration is not required for the lessons and equipment will be provided on a limited basis. Participants are encouraged to bring their own sand buckets and shovels.

THE GRAND 1894 OPERA HOUSE

DATES: Various Dates Year Round **WHERE:** 2020 Postoffice Street

ADMISSION: Prices Vary

THEGRAND.COM

As one of the few remaining theatres of its era in Texas, The Grand 1894
Opera House delivers entertainment of all kinds to its patrons, just as it has for more than a century. Catch great musical acts like Rob Landes (April 3) and the Music of Billy Joel and Elton John starring Michael Cavanaugh (April 28); see theatrical hits like Alice in Wonderland (April 28) and The Little Red Hen (May 9); and if you're in town during a scheduled concert, enjoy our own Galveston Symphony Orchestra.

MEMORIAL HERMANN IRONMAN 70.3

DATE: April 3, 2022 **TIME:** 5 a.m. – 4 p.m.

WHERE: Moody Gardens, 1 Hope Blvd. **ADMISSION:** Free for spectators. Race

registration varies

IRONMAN.COM

Galveston will host some of the nation's finest athletes April 3 as they compete in the annual Memorial Hermann Ironman 70.3 Texas triathlon. The race will begin with a 1.2-mile saltwater swim in Offats Bayou followed by a 56-mile bike course along the Gulf Coast and a 13.1-mile run that will lead athletes to the finish line at Moody Gardens' Discovery Pyramid. The Memorial Hermann Ironman 70.3 Texas is also a regional Ironman TriClub Championship race.



DAY SAILS ABOARD THE 1877 TALL SHIP ELISSA

DATE: April 8-22
TIME: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
WHERE: Pier 21
ADMISSION: \$250

GALVESTONHISTORY.ORG

The 1877 Tall Ship Elissa is much more than an artifact from a bygone era. The Official Tall Ship of Texas is a fully functional vessel that continues to sail annually during sea trials in the Gulf of Mexico. Thanks to the Galveston Historical Foundation and the dedication of hundreds of volunteers who keep her seaworthy and train each year to sail her, the Elissa brings guests for sails April 8-22. The six-hour sails in Galveston Bay showcase the athleticism and coordination it takes for the volunteer crew to maneuver the ship. The Elissa is a three-masted, ironhulled sailing ship built in Aberdeen, Scotland, by Alexander Hall & Company. She carries 19 sails covering over onequarter of an acre in surface area. From her stern to the tip of her jibboom, she measures 205 feet.



FEATHERFEST & NATURE PHOTO FESTIVAL

DATE: April 21-24
TIME: Varies

WHERE: Locations vary
ADMISSION: Prices vary
GALVESTONFEATHERFEST.COM

As one of the nation's top locations for birding, Galveston Island will host the 19th annual FeatherFest birding and nature photography festival April 21-24. FeatherFest is one of the largest birding festivals in Texas, and the only one with a dedicated nature photography track. The event features unique outdoor field trips, workshops and social events for nature enthusiasts of all skill levels. FeatherFest is held during the spring bird migration—the best time to visit world-renowned Galveston area birding hot spots, such as Bolivar Flats and High Island.

THE GRAND KIDS FESTIVAL

DATE: April 30 **TIME:** 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

WHERE: Postoffice Street from 20th –

23rd streets

ADMISSION: Free

THEGRAND.COM

Galveston can always rekindle the kid in you, but no event will be more exciting for kids of all ages than The Grand Kids Festival hosted by The Grand 1894 Opera House. Designed to introduce children and families to the arts, this year's festival marks its 25th anniversary and will take place April 30. The event features three blocks of activities, entertainment areas and vendor booths. Attendees will be able to enjoy live performances, storytellers, arts and crafts, face painting and more.

48TH ANNUAL HISTORIC HOMES TOUR

DATE: May 7-8 & 14-15

TIME: Varies

WHERE: Locations vary
ADMISSION: \$35-\$40
GALVESTONHISTORY.ORG

Rich in history and standing as a testament to survival, the Galveston Historic Homes Tour will return for its 48th year the first two weekends in May. The tour features numerous historical and architecturally

significant homes located throughout the Island's vibrant historic neighborhoods. Organized by the Galveston Historical Foundation, the event gives the public a chance to tour the insides of private residences and homes that are not open to the public during the year.

YAGA'S WILD GAME & BBQ COOK-OFF

DATE: May 13-14
TIME: Varies
WHERE: Pier 21
ADMISSION: Free

YCFUND.ORG

Galveston is calling all backyard chefs, sportsmen/women and outdoor enthusiasts to show off their culinary skills May 13-14 at the 26th annual Yaga's Wild Game BBQ Cook-off. The event will feature a wild game cook-off, live entertainment, silent auction, "Run Wild 5K" and children's activities. This event benefits the Yaga's Children's Fund.



GALVESTON ISLAND BEACH REVUE

DATE: May 20-21
TIME: Varies

WHERE: 2102 Seawall Blvd.

ADMISSION: Free

GALVESTONBEACHREVUE.COM

Retro swimwear is chic and vintage is king at the Galveston Island Beach Revue, which will take place May 20-21.

WHY PAY MORE FOR LESS?

Best hotel value in Galveston:

- On the famous Seawall, across the street from the beach!
- Fabulous free breakfast, made to order from family recipes
- Absolutely the BEST POOL!
 - Family friendly rates

Book by phone for the best values:

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www.GaidosSeaside.com



SEASIDE INN

3700 Seawall Boulevard Galveston Island



Contestants from across the country will catwalk across Galveston's historic Seawall shoreline modeling vintage and vintage-inspired swimwear that echoes the "good ol' days" of Galveston's summertime history. Contestants will compete for cash prizes and top honors.



GALVESTON JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION

DATE: Throughout June

TIME: Varies

WHERE: Locations vary

ADMISSION: Free (some events' ticket

prices vary)

VISITGALVESTON.COM

When you head to Galveston in June, you'll be coming home to where it all began as the Island hosts several days of festivities to Juneteenth—a holiday that originated in this historic Texas beach town. This year's festivities will include a variety of events, including African American heritage exhibits, reenactments, picnics and concerts. The annual reading of the Emancipation Proclamation in front of the official Juneteenth monument will take place June 19 to help commemorate June 19, 1865, the date the last slaves were freed in the South.

INDEPENDENCE DAY FESTIVITIES

DATE: July 2-4
TIME: 7:30 p.m.
WHERE: Various
ADMISSION: Free

VISITGALVESTON.COM

If you're looking for a change of scenery to celebrate Independence Day, Galveston Island is just the place to make your holiday a true getaway. From picnics on the beach to fireworks to a traditional hometown parade, Galveston will offer plenty of excitement for families to enjoy.







BIGGEST SELECTION AND VOTED BEST RENTAL COMPANY IN GALVESTON!

SALT WATER GIFT

SHOP offers the Largest and Coolest Selection of Fun Forms of Transportation for Your Island Getaway. Our selection grows & changes every month and includes the following.

- 50cc Gas Mopeds
- Fat Tire e-scooters
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- Razor e-Scooter
- e-Bikes
- e-Skateboards
- Golf Carts
- OneWheels
- Traditional Beach Cruizer Bicycles
- Pedal Surreys
- f swsllcgalveston
- G SaltWaterShopGalveston
- @GiftSaltwater
- saltwater_gift.shop.sosalty



SaltWaterGiftShop.com 18th & Seawall Blvd. 409.497.2571



AIA SANDCASTLE COMPETITION

DATE: August 20-21 **TIME:** 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

WHERE: East Beach, 1923 Boddeker Drive ADMISSION: Free (there is a charge to

park at East Beach)

AIASANDCASTLE.COM

Each year, Houston-area architects, designers, engineers and contractors take their tools to Galveston's East Beach for what is considered one of the world's largest amateur sandcastle competitions. The Houston Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) sponsors this annual contest in which the public is invited to watch more than 60 teams compete for the best sandcastle design. While the building and awards take place on Saturday, the best time to view the structures is the Sunday of the event. Avoid the crowds and bring the family to enjoy these architectural marvels at your own pace on Sunday. Plus, enjoy free sandcastle building lessons.

GALVESTON ESPORTS SUMMIT

DATE: August 26-28

WHERE: Galveston Island Convention Center at the San Luis Resort, 5600

Seawall Blvd.

ADMISSION: See Website GALVESTONESPORTS.COM

The Galveston ESports Summit is an experience offering an opportunity to look, learn and participate in the fastest-growing entertainment industry

in the world. Visitors will have the opportunity to observe and participate in Esports Tournaments, see the awardwinning Galveston Ball High Robotics team, view exhibits, participate in panel presentations, and experience handson opportunities including virtual reality, new games and technology. More than 5,000 visitors will attend the 3-day event. In addition to the Friday seminars for educators, professionals and parents, there will be exhibits and presentations featuring new and innovative games and equipment. Daily panels will focus on the influence esports has on STEM education, mental and physical health, diversity in gaming, as well as appearances by voice-over and game celebrities, game developers, demonstrations, gaming areas and tournaments for all ages.

GALVESTON ISLAND SHRIMP FESTIVAL

DATE: September 23-24

TIME: Varies

WHERE: Saengerfest Park, 2302 Strand

Street

ADMISSION: Prices vary

GALVESTONSHRIMPFESTIVAL.COM

Galveston Island is a seafood lover's paradise all year round, but this September, Yaga's Entertainment Inc., will bring foodies a little taste of heaven at the Galveston Island Shrimp Festival to be held September 23-24. Featuring some of the best shrimp gumbo the Gulf Coast has to offer,

this year's festival features a seafood cook-off, gumbo tasting, L'il Shrimps Parade, live music, a children's area and a Strand merchant walkabout.

"GHOSTLY GALVESTON" FESTIVITIES

DATE: Throughout October

TIME: Varies

WHERE: Locations vary ADMISSION: Prices vary VISITGALVESTON.COM

The place of the deadliest storm in U.S. history, Galveston Island is a popular destination for "haunted" exploration. From a 111-year-old "haunted" hotel to Galveston's storied harbor, cemeteries and Victorian mansions, there are numerous ghost tours to be explored throughout October. Both the historic Grand Galvez and the Galveston Historical Foundation offer haunted history tours throughout the month. Enjoy spooks year-round with historic guided haunted walking tours, cemetery tours and more.



ARTOBERFEST

DATE: October 15-16

TIME: Saturday 10 a.m. – 6 p.m., Sunday

11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

WHERE: Postoffice Street

ADMISSION: \$5
ARTOBERFEST.COM

If you love art, then you don't want to miss the 25th annual ARToberFEST to be held in downtown Galveston on October 15-16. This juried fine art festival will feature various artists, food and live music on Postoffice street amid Galveston's Victorian architecture, art galleries and shops. Admission is \$5 for adults with proceeds benefiting The Grand's education and community outreach programs.



ISLAND OKTOBERFEST

DATE: October 21-22

TIME: Varies

WHERE: First Evangelical Lutheran

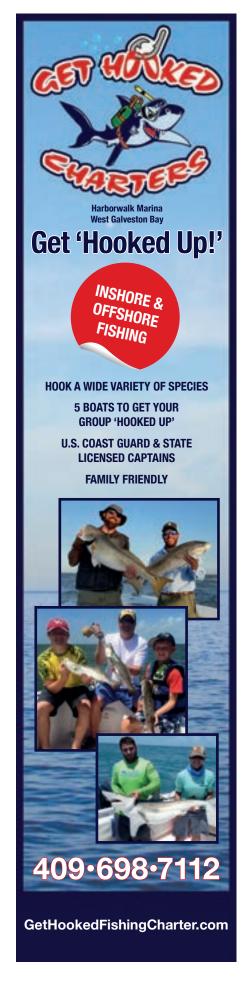
Church, 2415 Winnie Street

ADMISSION: Free

ISLANDOKTOBERFEST.COM

Island Oktoberfest will "oompah"
back to Galveston for its 40th year,
celebrating German heritage with
a full weekend of food, drinks, live
performances, games and special
activities. The festival will take place
October 21-22 at First Evangelical
Lutheran Church in Galveston and will
feature an expanded entertainment
lineup. Admission to Oktoberfest is free
and attendees are encouraged to dress
in traditional German costumes.

There's always action on the Island.
Go to visitgalveston.com/events
for a full list of happenings, dates,
prices and times, as well as to see
new events and cancellations.



A BLAST FROM THE PAST

Dive Into the History of the Island

Something to Sing About

The Grand 1894 Opera House continues to draw the best talent from around the world, just like it did a century ago. BY ADAM PITLUK

THERE'S SOMETHING ROMANTIC ABOUT a building that has stood in the same spot and has weathered so much, well, weather for almost 130 years. That romanticism is heightened only by the consideration that one person has been responsible for the caretaking and curating of that building for more than a third of its life.

As partnerships go, Maureen Patton, executive director of The Grand 1894 Opera House, signed an implied contract with the people of Galveston 40 years ago when she promised to help enrich the cultural life of the Gulf Coast region. Part of that promise was to not only present musical and theatrical acts by the most noteworthy artists, but to preserve the bones of the building that housed them.

"So much of what The Grand is remains the same as it was 127 years ago," Patton says. "It was built as a live performance theater, and that's what it is today."

The main changes are in the way The Grand does business. Gone is the ticket case with the racks of hard tickets available for purchase before the show (although in a nod to nostalgia, season ticket holders still get hard tickets mailed to them). Implemented is a completely digitized ticketing scheme, as well as an alert notification system over text that lets patrons know if a show is going to be postponed or canceled because of inclement weather or road conditions. Of course, not everyone was on board at the onset with a technological retrofit, as a very appropriate concern was that The Grand would lose its yesteryear appeal.

"I remember saying to my board, 'I want to be sure that everybody understands that once we start with technology, there's no stopping with technology," Patton recalls. "But I believed it would drive us and make us more efficient.

Perhaps the two best measures of Patton's stewardship of The Grand occurred during two very different catastrophes. The first was Hurricane Ike in 2008. The theater sustained all kinds of structural and cosmetic damage, and the orchestra pit and all the seats up to row L were completely under water. In all, Ike caused more than \$6.5 million in damages. The second was COVID-19, which completely shut down

operations for 18 months and prompted Patton to upgrade the duct system of the theater to prevent the spread of the virus. In both cases, and in true learning-from-the-past fashion, Patton took a page from the history book on how to fix The Grand in the face of a calamity.

After the great hurricane of 1900, The Grand was absolutely devastated, as was most of the Island. Not only did the former caretakers and city officials feel that a repaired theater would signal strength and community among Islanders, but it would also serve the practical purpose of hosting meetings and planning sessions for other Island reconstruction arrangements. Even in a more primitive time of construction, the theater was repaired in 13 months.

More than a hundred years later, Patton remembers the contractors asking her what year she wanted The Grand to be up and running after Hurricane Ike. Her reply: "We need to open our doors in no more than 13 months."

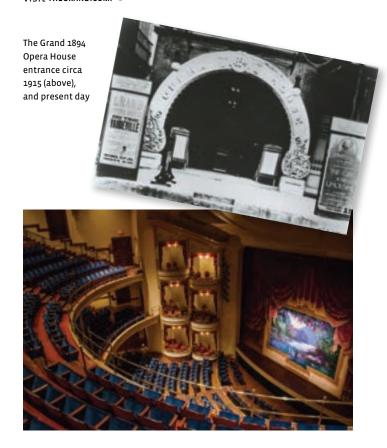
And that's what she did.

"This theater is a survivor," she says. "We're going to do what we've always done, and we're going to survive."

Here's to another 40 years at the helm for Maureen Patton, and to another 127 years of splendor for The Grand 1894

Opera House. For a list of shows and ticket information,

Visit THEGRAND.COM.



renéwileygallery

Galveston Island, Texas









GRAND GALVEZ

MODERN SOPHISTICATION A CENTURY IN THE MAKING