

WELCOME to PARADISE



Relocation Guide



YOU

HAVE FOUND THAT SPECIAL PLACE

You'll love living on South Padre Island.

South Padre Island is a gem in the Laguna Madre community located at the tropical tip of Texas. Sometimes referred to as the "third coast," the sparkling blue waters of the Gulf of Mexico border the Island on the east and the incredibly beautiful Laguna Madre Bay is on the west.

Uncongested beaches and miles and miles of sand dunes are found on the beaches of South Padre Island. Our beaches are consistently rated among the top in the United States (rated #1 by Condé Nast). Water sports of all kinds are prominent including fishing, kiteboarding, kayaking, etc.

The South Padre Island community is a place boasting a wealth of colorful history from pirates to Civil War battles. Residents immerse themselves in the richness of the bi-cultural surroundings.

The low cost of living, subtropical climate and unspoiled natural beauty make the area perfect for relocation. A growing community of residents and businesses make the area a great place to live for anyone. Our people are our greatest asset – friendly and warm, offering real Texas hospitality even though many moved from other areas.

South Padre Island has sea breezes to cool the air in summer and lower the humidity from the mainland even across the causeway. In winter, the waters of the Gulf keep the Island several degrees warmer than the mainland.

Whatever lifestyle you're seeking, from multi-million dollar homes and condos on the Gulf to more modest and affordable housing, you'll find it on South Padre Island.

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THE BEACH

Miles of pristine beaches are the reason most people visit and relocate to South Padre Island. And it is within walking distance from any point on the Island.

SOUTH PADRE ISLAND'S ACCOLADES, AWARDS & RANKINGS

2014

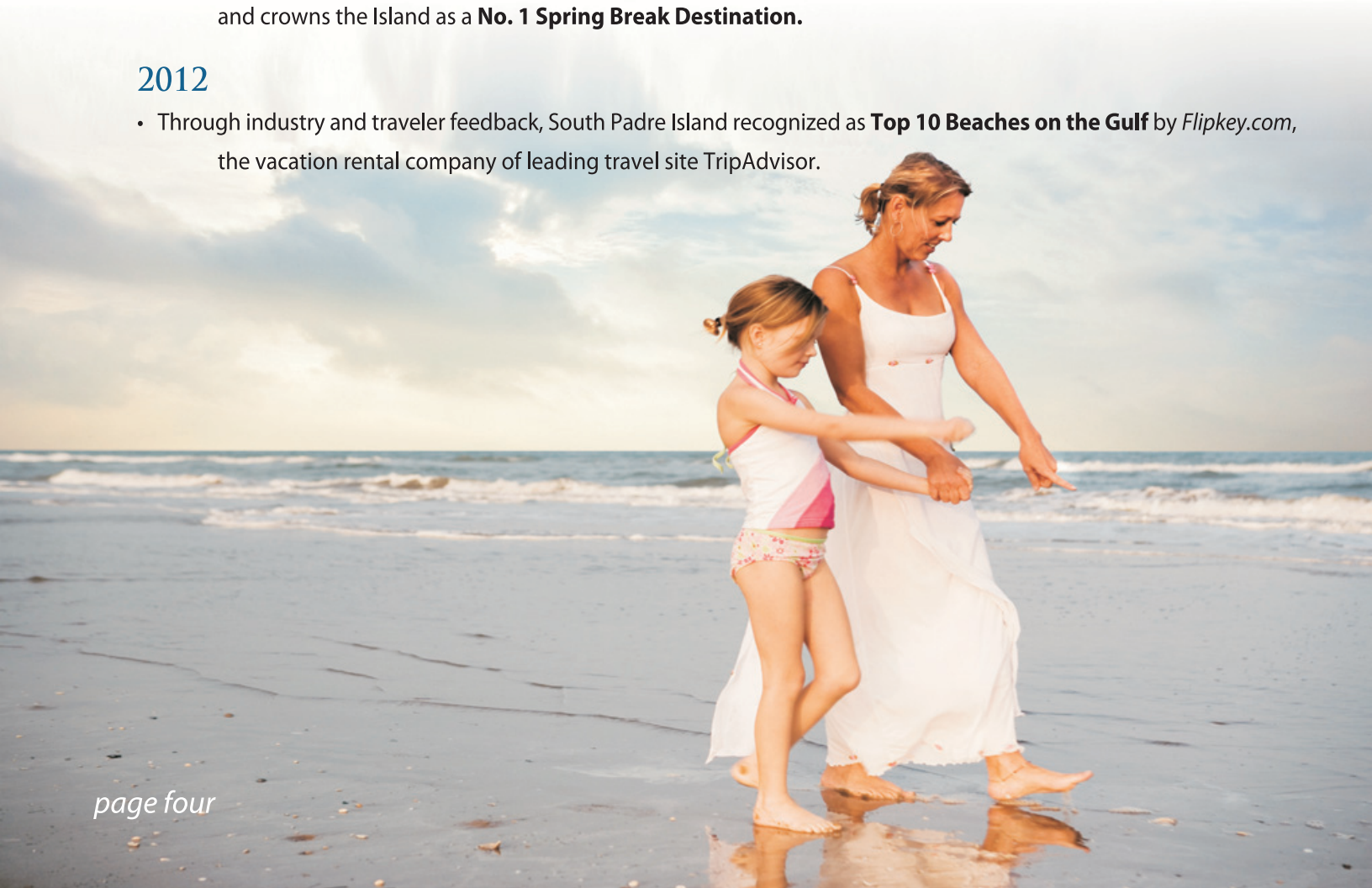
- South Padre Island named among **Best American Beaches** by Travel Channel
- Sea Turtle, Inc. named among **Gogobot's 15 Best Kids Attractions in the U.S.**
- South Padre Island named #6 on **10 Adventure Packed Birding Destinations** by Men's Journal
- Clayton's Bar & Grill named among 5 of the **World's Best Beach Bars** by *thrillist.com*.
- Voted among the **2014 Texas Top-40 Travel Destinations** by readers of Texas Highways magazine.

2013

- SPI listed by *Cosmopolitan.com* on the **100 Hot-City Guide** and Sand Castle Days, named as a **"Need to Know" event**.
- Condé Nast Traveler named South Padre Island among the **World's Top 30 Island Beaches**, and crowns the Island as a **No. 1 Spring Break Destination**.

2012

- Through industry and traveler feedback, South Padre Island recognized as **Top 10 Beaches on the Gulf** by *Flipkey.com*, the vacation rental company of leading travel site TripAdvisor.



climate~

South Padre Island experiences a humid subtropical climate, similar to that of Florida but with less precipitation and slightly higher summer maximum temperatures.

253 days of sunshine

AVERAGE/YEAR

67°F (19°C)

Average HIGH in January

52°F (11°C)

Average LOW in January

95°F (35°C)

Average HIGH in July

77°F (25°C)

Average LOW in July

The warm season is long, as the average high temperatures are 90-99° F(32-37° C), and the average low temperatures typically around 77° F(25° C).. The region experiences relatively high dew point values, around 75° F(24° C) in the summer time, resulting in higher relative humidity values from June through September.

Average **wind speeds** are about **18 MPH**, which makes it seem cooler in summer and ideal for water sports and activities.



(Taxes)

Not such an ugly word in Texas

INCOME TAX

TEXAS HAS NO STATE INCOME TAX!

REAL ESTATE TAXES

Real estate taxes are 2.01% of appraised value.

Appraised value discounts are available for homesteads and for those taxpayers over 65 years of age.

SALES TAX

Sales tax is 8.25% including:

6.25% Texas (statewide)

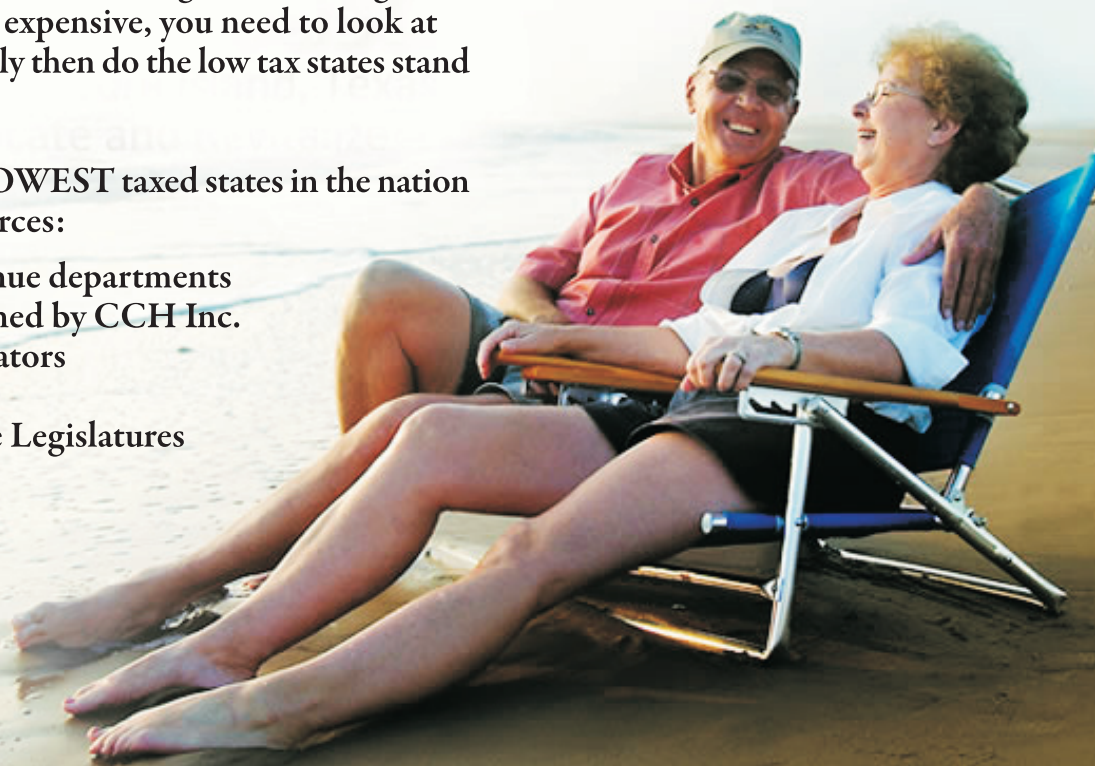
2.00% South Padre Island

TAX BURDEN BY STATE

If all other things are equal, a state with a lower burden is a more attractive place to live than a state with a higher one. To get a true sense of which state is less expensive, you need to look at state and local tax burdens. Only then do the low tax states stand out.

Texas is NUMBER 12 of the LOWEST taxed states in the nation according to the following sources:

- Individual state tax and revenue departments
- State Tax Handbook; published by CCH Inc.
- Federation of Tax Administrators
- The Tax Foundation
- National Conference of State Legislatures



why **Texas** is different!

Strong diverse economy: Texas is strong in industries that are still growing (such as professional & business services, education & health services, government) and has the second largest economy in the nation by GDP according to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

"Texas remains the best place in America to live, work and raise a family," said Bill Hammond, president of the Texas Association of Business. "Our business climate, diverse culture, and unique sense of independence make our state the envy of the nation."

Top State to Relocate:

According to Allied Van Lines 42nd Annual Magnet States Report, Texas is the No. 1 destination state for residential relocations for the 5th year in a row. New data from the U.S. Census Bureau confirms that Texas gained more residents than any other state, and had the 3rd largest percentage growth.

Texas homes are more affordable. Using a ratio of the average family income compared to income required to qualify for a loan, the Housing Affordability Index indicates the proportion of the population that can afford to buy the average home sold during a certain time period. The higher the index, the more affordable the housing in that area. See the Housing Affordability Index Comparison Chart below from the Real Estate Center at Texas A&M.

MLS Area	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Texas	1.90	2.14	2.43	2.36	1.88	1.59
USA Total	1.73	1.99	2.29	2.16	1.77	1.33

March 2013 cost of living index in South Padre Island:

86.8 (less than average, U.S. average is 100)

Read more: www.city-data.com/city/South-Padre-Island-Texas.html#ixzz0czyr9RtJ



COMMERCIAL SPACE

NAME/DESCRIPTION	ADDRESS	SQ FT/ COST INFO
Sea Ranch Marina/office/retail	33256 State Park Rd. 100	3000 sqft. 2nd floor / \$3,000/month
Sea Ranch Marina/office/retail	33256 State Park Rd. 100	1200 sq ft. 1st floor / \$1,200/month
Retail/Office	140 Padre Blvd.	11,000 sqft/\$7900/mo.
Franke Plaza office/retail	700 Padre Blvd.	Suite D-3/ 820 sq ft/\$1,025/mo.
Restaurant	1100 Padre Blvd.	Seats 200; \$6000/mo. Net/net/net
Night club/Retail	1601 Padre Blvd.	30,000 sq ft/75 cents/sqft
Office/Retail	2800 Padre Blvd.	Suite E 1300 sqft/\$995/mo 1 yr lease req
Office/Retail	2800 Padre Blvd.	Suite F 1300 sqft/\$1195/mo 1 yr lease req
Office/Retail	2812 Padre Blvd.	1844 sq ft; \$1900/mo
Office/Retail	3500 Padre Blvd.	3 spaces /2000 sqft / \$1.00 sqft
Office Center	3901 Padre Blvd.	7,000 sq. ft./\$7000/month
Office/Retail	4908 Padre Blvd.	2,976 sq ft/\$3000/month
Office/Retail	5009 Padre Blvd.	#5 and #6 / \$600 per month each
Franke North Plaza office/retail	5800 Padre Blvd.	#203 /187 sqft/ \$225/mo
Franke North Plaza office/retail	5800 Padre Blvd.	#204 / 262 sq ft / \$250/mo
Office/Retail	5912 Padre Blvd.	2000 sq ft / \$3000/month
Office/Retail	6001 Padre Blvd.	900 sq ft / \$2,000/mo

The supply for the availability of boulevard-front and off-boulevard office space has always been met by the market demand on South Padre Island. Call any real estate broker for current information.



@internet

Currently installed and available on the Island (Mar. 2011)

Via Coax Cable: 15Mbps download x 2Mbps upload.

Via Fiber: Minimum is 5Mbps X 5Mbps up to 1Gbps X 1Gbps



CITY GOVERNMENT

The City of South Padre Island has a council-manager form of government, operating under a Home Rule Charter. There is a City Council with 5 council members and presiding Mayor which serve on a “Place” system. They serve 3-year staggered terms.

City Council elections are held in November. To vote in the election, you must register 30 days prior to the election (see voting registration).

The City Manager is the chief executive officer for the City. Under the City Manager are key department heads including the Public Works Director, Police Chief, Fire Chief, Finance Director and City Attorney.

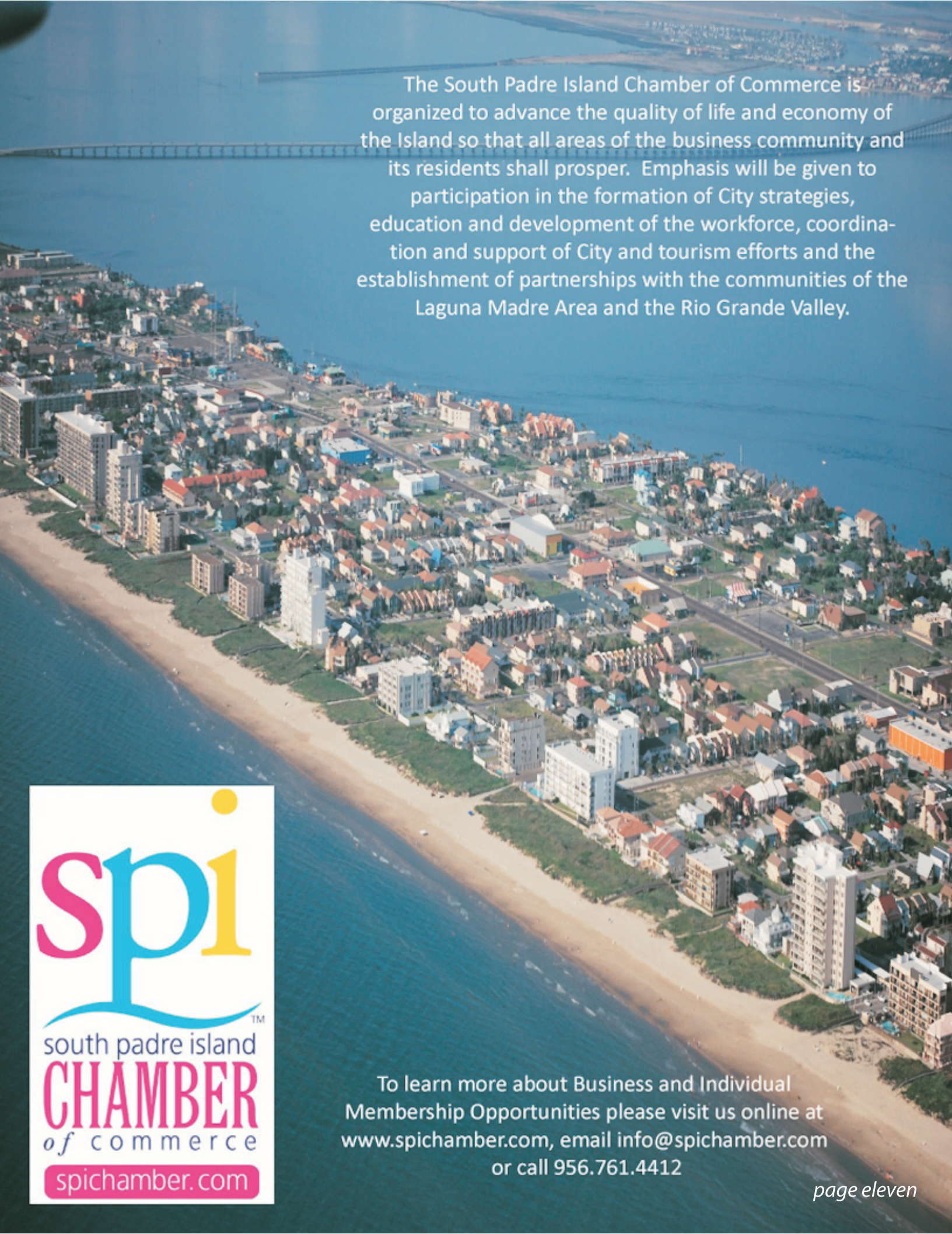
The City Council meets on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall. These are public meetings and the public is encouraged to attend. Agendas are posted at City Hall and on the City’s website: www.MySPI.org.

The City Council meetings can also be viewed on the website by clicking on “Meetings on Demand”.

For additional information, you may call 956-761-6456.

The City is assisted by a number of citizen committees and boards whose members are appointed as volunteers by the City Council. The information is also available on the city’s website: www.MySPI.org.





The South Padre Island Chamber of Commerce is organized to advance the quality of life and economy of the Island so that all areas of the business community and its residents shall prosper. Emphasis will be given to participation in the formation of City strategies, education and development of the workforce, coordination and support of City and tourism efforts and the establishment of partnerships with the communities of the Laguna Madre Area and the Rio Grande Valley.



To learn more about Business and Individual Membership Opportunities please visit us online at www.spichamber.com, email info@spichamber.com or call 956.761.4412



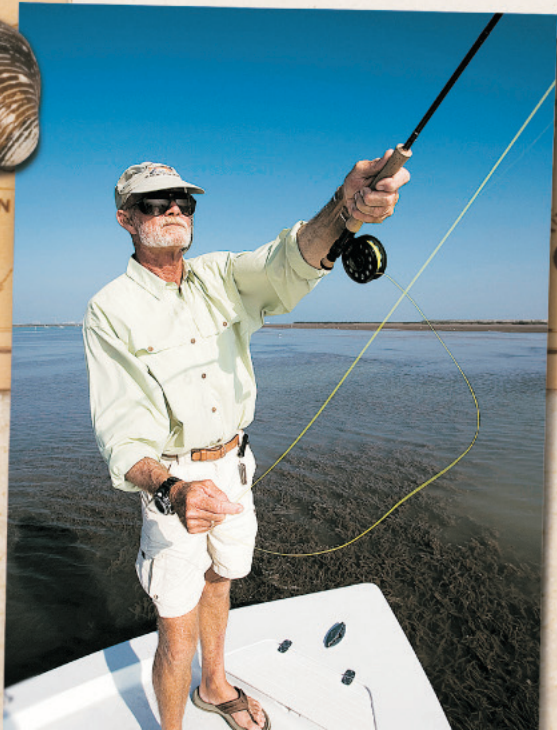
Planned my trip on sopadre.com
Asked for additional information
by using info@sopadre.com
Had another question, which was
answered at 800-SOPADRE
Results ☺ memorable!



sopadre.com



For a weekend...
For a month...
For a lifetime....



SOUTH PADRE ISLAND



sopadre.com

EDUCATION

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Students from South Padre Island may attend public school in the Point Isabel Independent School District. There are two elementary schools and a high school in Port Isabel (right across the causeway). For more information, you may call 956-943-0000 or visit www.pi-isd.net.

The South Texas Independent School District (956-565-2454, www.stisd.net) includes five magnet schools in Mercedes and Donna (75 minutes away) specializing in science and medicine, a preparatory academy and business education and technology academy. These schools are listed among the top 100 schools in the nation.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

There are a number of good quality private schools in Laguna Vista, Brownsville and Harlingen, some with car pools from the Island.

HOME SCHOOLING

Home schooling is another option elected by some parents in the area. Information can be obtained by visiting the following website:
www.homeschoolcentral.com/support/texas_homeschool.htm

COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

The University of Texas, Brownsville and Texas Southmost College are just 35 minutes from the Island and the University of Texas, Pan American in Edinburg is less than 90 minutes away, both full 4-year universities. UTB allows anyone 65 or over to audit their classes for free.

Harlingen (an hour away) offers South Texas Community College, Texas State Technical College and South Texas Vo-Tech.



Staying Informed

Newspapers – General Area – daily home delivery available

Valley Morning Star – (956) 430-6200

Brownsville Herald – (956) 542-4301

Newspapers – Laguna Madre Area and South Padre Island

Port Isabel/South Padre Island Press – Delivery, vending boxes and on sale at various stores on the Island and in Port Isabel.
(956) 943-5545



Coastal Current Weekly and *Parade* are free publications. They contain entertainment and recreational information.

Services Available to

SENIORS

The State of Texas is senior-friendly. A list of services available for seniors is available at: www.dads.state.tx.us/services/contact.cfm

The City of South Padre Island has capped municipal property taxes for citizens 65 and over.

The University of Texas, Brownsville allows anyone 65 or over to audit their classes for free.

Also, in the unlikely event of a hurricane evacuation, there is a service available for anyone who may need special health or transportation assistance by dialing 211 and registering ahead of time.



HISTORY

South Padre's rich history reads like an adventure novel. Recorded history begins in 1519 with a Spanish ship bound for the Gulf of Mexico. When passing South Padre Island the sailors called it Isla Blanca or White Island. Back then, the island was inhabited by the Karankawa Indians, a tall people rumored to be cannibals.



texasbeyonhistory.net

After the Aztec people of Mexico were conquered by the Spanish, the numerous galleons headed for Mexican treasure found their way to the Gulf of Mexico. Several ships were lost to sand bars and storms, and three ships were sunk in 1553. The survivors of these three wrecks reportedly swam to the Padre shore where they were greeted by Indian arrows. Only two of the 300 surviving passengers made it to a safe haven in Mexico to tell their tales. Over the years, many of their coins and treasures have been recovered off Padre's shores. Treasure hunters still search for the lost riches.



We know that Jean Lafitte, the pirate noted for his role in the War of 1812, explored the South Padre territory. A well in Laguna Vista bears his name, and legend says he dug the well and returned often for fresh water.

The island is named after a Catholic missionary priest - Padre



Jose Nicolas Balli. He founded a settlement here in 1804 and ranched in the area. The statue in Isla Blanca Park, which welcomes fisherman and seaman safely home, is in his image. The Mexican government eventually gave title of the island to the priest.

John Singer, brother of the famous Singer Sewing machine inventor, took up residence on South Padre in 1847 when his ship was lost off the coast. Documents tell us that the family buried thousands in coins and jewelry before they fled during the Civil War. Their fortune was lost to the shifting dunes and remains somewhere on the island to this day.

Important historical battles took place in the area during both the Texas struggle for independence and the Civil War. The last battle was in May 1865. After this battle, Robert E. Lee surrendered to Ulysses S. Grant very near the Rio Grande Valley.

In the mid 1950's a man named John Tompkins idealized "Padre Beach" as a thriving seaside community. His efforts brought early development to the island in the early 60's. The island in those days was accessed by ferry and was largely a fishing village. That changed in 1974 with the completion of the Queen Isabella Causeway. At two and a half miles long, it is the longest bridge

in Texas.

The first homes, constructed in the late 60's and early 70's, are what locals refer to as "beach



houses." They were frequently built by World War II vets who had seen the Bali Ha'i building style of the South Pacific. Most were painted brightly with left-over paint and were built on wood pilings. These homes still stand as a testament to their construction and rugged storm smart style.

The earliest properties in the island include the Bahia Mar complex, the Tiki



Resort, The Padre South Hotel, and a few other wood frame hotels and condos on the beachfront. The majority of our resort and condo complexes were built in the early to mid 80's when there was a surge in development. That great time of progress stopped suddenly when the peso devalued and the savings and loan scandal upset the Texas economy.

Now the growth on South Padre Island is occurring at a solid and healthy pace. As the north island territory opens up, a new era of master planned communities and upscale development is anticipated.

VEHICLE REGISTRATION

The first thing that is required in the State of Texas is vehicle liability insurance.

Secondly, you must obtain a safety inspection for your vehicle. There are several service stations in area that do these inspections.

You can register your vehicle at any Tax Assessor-Collector Office in Cameron County. For information call (956) 943-8101

New registrants have 30 days to register their vehicle in their new county.



DRIVERS LICENSE

You get your Texas drivers' license at any Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) license bureau. For specific information check www.txdps.state.tx.us.

VOTERS REGISTRATION

To be eligible to register to vote in Texas, you must:

- be a U.S. citizen;
- be a resident of the county
- be 18 years old (you may register at 17 years and 10 months);
- not be a convicted felon (unless a person's sentence is completed, including any probation or parole)
- not be declared mentally incapacitated by a court of law



You may register to vote at anytime.

Postage-free Voter Registration forms may be obtained from:

- South Padre Island City Hall at 4601 Padre Boulevard;
- or-
- Cameron County Courthouse (Registrar's Office)
974 E. Harrison Street

Getting Settled

Electric

Electricity deregulation in Texas means customers can choose their electric service from a wide variety of "Retail Electric Providers" (REPs). www.powertochoose.org

Water & Sewer

The Laguna Madre Water District manages water and sewer needs (956) 943- 2626

Telephone

Telephone service is available through AT&T, 1-800-342-5792 or Cable Provider, Time Warner (Voice Over Internet Protocol-VOIP)

Computer/Internet Service

Internet service providers are listed in the Yellow Pages under "Internet Access". Most standard providers are available. There are several businesses on the island that provide computer services.

Cable TV

Time Warner is the main provider. To establish an account, contact them at 1-800-222-5355

Satellite TV

Dish service is available through AT&T (The Dish Network) or DirectTV, 1-800-280-4388

Trash Service

The City of South Padre Island contracts with Republic Services, Inc. for trash pick up on the Island. Bulky trash and brush pick up is during the first three days of the month only. You will need to establish your individual account with them at 1-800-423-7316.

Recycling is available every Saturday from 8-11am at 4501 Padre Blvd. For additional information, call (956) 761-8123

Republic Services also provides a residential weekly curbside Recycling Collection Program. To sign up, call them at 1-800-423-7316.

WORSHIP

SOUTH PADRE ISLAND

Island Baptist Church

107 W. Mesquite
956-761-5029

Shoova Israel

106 W. Oleander
956-455-4917

Chapel by the Sea

Interdenominational
Isla Blanca Park
956-761-5636

PORT ISABEL

Church of Christ

310 Tarnava St.
956-943-1844

First United Methodist Church

101 W. Adams
956-943-2485

Fishers of Men Lutheran Church

603 S. Tarnava
956-943-2005

Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses

301 W. Monroe
956-943-5962

Lighthouse Assembly of God

110 Port Rd
956-943-5372

Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church

705 S. Longoria
956-943-1297

St. Andrews Episcopal Church

North Shore Drive & Yturria St.
956-943-1962

LAGUNA VISTA

Christ's Harbor Church

Nondenominational
1441 Santa Isabel Blvd.
956-943-5595

Cornerstone Church

30640 Holly Beach Rd.
956-434-1425

LOCAL GROUPS & CLUBS



American Legion Post 498
Port Isabel
(956) 943-3666



Property Owners Who Care
South Padre Island
(956) 772-1933
www.powc-spi.org



Elks' Lodge 1032
Brownsville
(956) 542-0864 or 542-3545



Rotary Club (Meets at noon each Friday)
Marcello's Restaurant, Port Isabel
(956) 943-7611



Point Isabel Masonic Lodge #33
402 South Shore Drive, Port Isabel



Surfriders Foundation - South Texas
Chapter, (956) 433-1472
www.surfrider.org/southtexas

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



Boys' and Girls' Club of Laguna
Madre, (956) 943-6310
www.lagunamadrekids.com



Port Isabel Museums,
(956) 943-7061 or 943-7602
www.portisabelmuseums.com



City Boards and Committees
(see City Government Section)
www.MySPI.org



Sea Turtle, Inc, (956) 761-4511
www.seaturtleinc.org



El Paseo Arts Foundation,
(956) 943-4700
www.elpaseoarts.org



South Padre Island Birding & Nature
Center, (956) 761-6805
www.spibirding.com



Friends of Animal Rescue
(956) 772-1171



South Padre Island Community
Foundation, (956) 761-7051
www.spicf.org



Laguna Madre Art League,
(956) 943-8409
www.lagunamadreartleague.com



Surfriders Foundation - South Texas
Chapter, (956) 433-1472
www.surfrider.org/southtexas



Laguna Madre Humane Society,
Port Isabel, (956) 943-3888
(Volunteers also needed in their Thrift
Shop at 2500 Padre Blvd.)



UTPA Coastal Studies Lab,
(956) 761-2644
www.utpa.edu/csl

MEDICAL SERVICES

Excellent medical, dental, chiropractic and air transportation services are available on the Island and in Port Isabel, and hospitals are available in Brownsville and Harlingen.

SOUTH PADRE ISLAND MEDICAL CLINICS

International Family Clinic
2217 Padre Blvd.
(956) 761-4649

South Padre Island Clinic
3808 Padre Blvd.
(956) 761-3996

Hospitals

BROWNSVILLE

Valley Baptist Medical Center
1040 W. Jefferson St.
(956) 544-1400
www.valleybaptist.net

Valley Regional Medical Center
100-A Alton Gloor Rd.
(956) 350-7000
www.valleyregionalmedicalcenter.com

HARLINGEN

Harlingen Medical Center
5501 S. Expressway 77
(956) 365-1000
www.harlingenmedicalcenter.com

Valley Baptist Medical Center
2101 Pease St.
(956) 389-1100
www.valleybaptist.net



SPORTS

FISHING



Port Isabel and South Padre Island are home to the annual Texas International Fishing Tournament - the largest fishing tournament in the state. See Events on page 35.

Where can you go that you can fish all day and have a local restaurant cook your catch to your specifications? Texas has become one of the top destinations for sport fishing. Of the approximately 600 different species, the most common locally caught fish are the red or black drum, spotted sea trout, snook and southern flounder in the bay, as well as blue marlin, sailfish, tuna, tarpon, red snapper, king mackerel amberjack and pompano in the gulf. Choose from many charter companies and personal guides to take you on the fishing trip you will never forget. The State of Texas requires all residents and non-residents to have a fishing license. Go to www.tpwd.state.tx.us for more information.

SPORTS

SURFING



spadre.com

Learn to surf at South Padre Island, Texas, the #1 surfing destination in the Gulf of Mexico! With warm clear water and gentle waves most of the year, the surfing area at Isla Blanca Park is an ideal location for beginners of all ages.

STAND UP PADDLEBOARDING

Stand Up Paddleboarding (SUP) is the new sport taking the waterways by storm. Perfect for all ages and skill levels, South Padre Island has the perfect environment for paddleboarding. The Laguna Madre Bay offers flat, lake-like calm waters to leisurely paddle, or the Gulf gives experienced surfers a great place to hone their skills.



SPORTS

KITEBOARDING

Kiteboarding is fast becoming the hottest new water sport and South Padre Island offers year-round, world-class kiteboarding conditions. The Laguna Madre's waist deep water and consistent winds offer beginner to expert riders near perfect flat-water conditions to hone their skills. Advanced kiteboarders will enjoy riding the Laguna Madre and the waves of the Gulf of Mexico.

Experienced, certified instructors are available to teach you about this exciting sport.



WINDSURFING



The Laguna Madre bay separates South Padre Island from the Texas mainland and is recognized as one of the world's top windsurfing destinations. The sailing season off South Padre runs from September through May. Water depth varies from three to five feet, daytime winds average 18 mph, and the average yearly temperature is in the 70s. Novices and pros come to sail the bay, the Jetties, Boca Chica, and the Ditch, site of some of the fastest windsurfing speeds in North America.

GOLF

The Rio Grande Valley offers great golfing for handicappers of all levels. Keep in mind that our temperate climate allows golfers to tee off 12 months a year. The closest championship course is the South Padre Island Golf Club, located 15 minutes away. Other courses are located in Brownsville (30 minutes) and Harlingen (45 minutes). For more information about any of these courses, call the South Padre Island Convention & Visitors Bureau at 1-800-SOPADRE (767-2373).

TENNIS

South Padre Island's sunny days make for perfect play - regardless of your skill level. All of the major hotels and condominiums feature tennis courts which are available to their guests. The staff at the South Padre Island Visitors Center (800-767-2373) can also offer suggestions on private and group lessons.



SPORTS

SCUBA DIVING



divesouthpadre.com

Welcome to Texas Gulf scuba diving and the clear blue Gulf waters of South Texas!

Whether you need gear, advanced or specialty instruction, or a just fantastic blue water dive, you're in the right place. You can dive the beautiful underwater sites in the area, including a dozen oil rigs and many wrecks, including the Texas Clipper, all of which provide an artificial reef habitat with abundant, healthy marine life.

SNORKELING

Snorkel all day in the beautiful Gulf of Mexico. 70% of the world lies just below the surface and snorkeling is the first step towards exploring this underwater world.

See the many varieties of local sea life au natural. A great activity for all ages!



KITE FLYING



Kites may be flown for recreation, art or other practical uses. Kites can be flown in aerial ballet, sometimes as part of a competition. Enjoy a sport boasting skies ablaze with color, high flying action and choreographed movement. Our sand flats draw kite fliers from all around, and hundreds of spectators, many of which participate in the fun with their own kite flying adventures.

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AREA ATTRactions

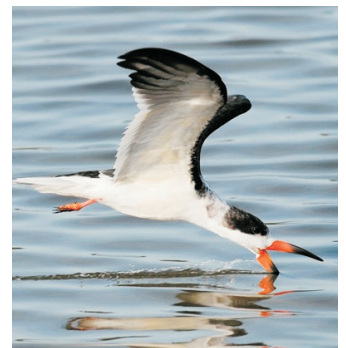


A satellite of the World Birding Center, which was established in 1999 through Texas Parks and Wildlife and U.S. Fish and Wildlife, the South Padre Island Birding and Nature Center is located just south of the South Padre Island Convention Centre on the north end of the Island, 6801 Padre Boulevard.

The new facility includes a 10,000 square foot Visitor's Center with exhibits that take visitors on an educational voyage from the waters of the Gulf of Mexico, through the dunes on our beautiful beaches and into the Laguna Madre Bay. These exhibits will teach you that nature includes our dunes, the seaweed, the plants on the dunes and much, much more. The center also features a gift shop, an auditorium, a half-mile of boardwalks and five bird blinds that run along the wetlands of the Laguna Madre.

South Padre Island is a haven for birds and birders, as well as all nature enthusiasts. The impressive diversity of birds during a migration "fall out" is a spectacular viewing experience and the observation tower at the Birding Center is a popular place during both the Spring and Fall phenomenon.

For more information about the Center call 956-761-6801 or visit www.spibirding.com.



The World Birding Center, is a network of nine sites dotted along 120 miles of river road from South Padre Island west to Roma, with habitats ranging from dry chaparral brush and verdant riverside thickets to freshwater marshes and coastal wetlands. WBC is a collaboration of Texas Parks & Wildlife, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services, and nine valley communities. See www.theworldbirdingcenter.com for more information.

HOLD ON TO EVERY MOMENT



SCHLITTERBAHN
WATERPARK & RESORT
SOUTH PADRE ISLAND, TEXAS



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AREA ATTRACTIONS

The Whaling Wall

Wyland's Whaling Wall #53, named *Orcas off the Gulf of Mexico* is a mural that spans three walls of the South Padre Island Convention Centre. Painted by artist Wyland, the purpose all his famous murals is to raise awareness of the dangers facing our marine creature friends. Spanning 153 feet in length and 23 feet in height, it took over 111 gallons of paint, 100 volunteers, and nearly four days to complete. The mural was dedicated on March 14th, 1994.



Sea Turtle Inc.

Sea Turtle, Inc., a non-profit organization founded in 1978, was the home of Ila Loetscher, known by many as the "Turtle Lady." Ms. Loetscher dedicated her life to saving and rehabilitating sea turtles,

including the endangered Kemp's ridley sea turtle.

Sea Turtle, Inc. is located at 6617 Padre Boulevard.

Phone: (956) 761-4511



The University of Texas Pan American Coastal Studies Lab

The U.T.P.A. Coastal Studies Lab, located in Isla Blanca Park at the south end of the Island, has aquarium displays of fish and other marine life indigenous to the area, as well as an extensive shell collection. The aquarium and museum is open Monday-Friday, 1:30-4:30 p.m. (956) 761-2644 / www.utpa.edu/csl



AREA ATTRACTIONS

Bay Tours

All sorts of bay tours are available. Check the local telephone directory for further information.



The Museums of Port Isabel Complex ***Three Unique Museums within walking distance of each other.***

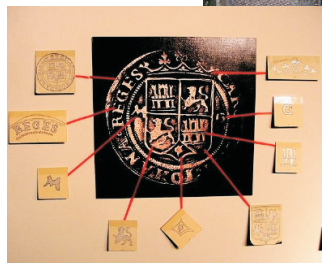
Port Isabel Lighthouse

Constructed in 1852, the Point Isabel Lighthouse was built to protect and guide ships through Brazos Santiago and the barrier islands. In 1952, the Lighthouse was opened as a State Park and remains the only lighthouse on the Texas coast opened to the public. More Information call (956) 943-2262



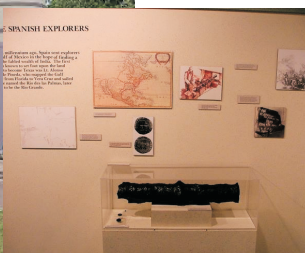
Treasures of the Gulf Museum

Treasures of the Gulf Museum spotlights three 1554 Spanish shipwrecks. Meeting their fate just 30 miles north of Port Isabel, they are brought to life with murals, artifacts and hands-on activities. More information call (956) 943-7602



Port Isabel Historic Museum

Port Isabel Historic Museum is a state-of-the-art facility located in the Champion Building. Built in 1899 as a dry goods store and residence, it now houses two exhibit levels, a theatre, a gift shop and one of the largest collections of Mexican artifacts from the U.S. – Mexican War. More information call (956) 943-7602.



AREA ATTRACTIONS

Dolphin Research & Sea Life Center



Scarlet Colley

Providing an interactive look at sea creatures in order to teach people about Dolphins in the wild and other sea animals. This Center offers a hands-on experience as well as teach about conservation. For more information on hours and price call (956) 299-1957 or visit www.spinaturecenter.com



Scarlet Colley

Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge



Dennis Eccleston

The south Texas landscape is a unique blending of temperate, subtropical, coastal, and desert habitats. Mexican plants and wildlife are at the northernmost edge of their range, while migrating waterfowl and sandhill cranes fly down for the mild winters. This combination makes Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge world famous for its birds, and home to a mix of wildlife found nowhere else. For more information, call (956) 748-3607



Tom Smylie - U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service



Historic Brownsville Museum

641 E Madison Brownsville, Texas 78520 (956) 548-1313

The Historic Brownsville Museum is located in the old Southern Pacific Depot building constructed 1928. A magnificent example of Spanish colonial revival architecture, the building is a Texas Historical Marker and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Historic Brownsville Museum houses a variety of exhibits that interpret events from Brownsville's past. Exhibits include data from the earliest military fort in our area to the arrival of French teaching nuns to displays of agricultural and ranching tools & much more.

Sabal Palm Audubon Center

8435 Sabal Palm Grove Rd., Brownsville, TX 78521 (956) 541-8034



For birders and nature-lovers, no visit to South Texas is complete without a stop at the Sabal Palm Audubon Center. The Center is home to many native species of plants and animals that reach the northernmost limit of their Mexican range here and do not occur elsewhere in the U.S. Cradled in a bend of the Rio Grande along the U.S./Mexico border, the Sabal Palm Audubon Center harbors one of the most beautiful and critical ecosystems of South Texas and Northern Mexico. Sabal Palms once grew profusely along the edge of the Rio Grande in small stands or groves extending about 80 miles upstream from the Gulf of Mexico. Today, only a small portion of that forest remains and is protected on 557 acres of this Audubon sanctuary. Open daily 7am - 5pm.

Gladys Porter Zoo

500 Ringgold St., Brownsville, TX 78520 (956) 546-7187

The Gladys Porter Zoo is a tropically landscaped, visitor-oriented zoological and botanical park, dedicated to the preservation of nature through education, conservation and research.

The Gladys Porter Zoo is located on 31-acres in central Brownsville, Texas. Visitors to the Gladys Porter Zoo will encounter a diverse ensemble of 377 species of animals and 225 species of plants. The park is divided into four zoogeographic areas: Africa, Asia, Tropical America and Indo-Australia. There is also a Herpetarium and Aquatic Wing, a Free-flight Aviary, Macaw Canyon, Bear Grottos, a California Sea Lion exhibit and Komodo dragon exhibit. Small World features a nursery and an animal contact yard where children can touch and interact with domesticated animals. Large numbers of wild birds find sanctuary on the Zoo grounds, drawn to the plants and waterways that provide them with food and shelter.



7200 Paredes Line Rd., Brownsville, TX 78526
(956) 541-2785

Palo Alto Battlefield National Historic Park

On May 8, 1846 troops of the United States and Mexico clashed on the prairie of Palo Alto. The battle was the first in a two-year long conflict that changed the map of North America. Palo Alto Battlefield National Historical Park preserves the site of this notable battle and provides an understanding of the causes, events, and consequences of the first war between independent Republics.

Iwo Jima Memorial Museum

320 Iwo Jima Blvd, Harlingen, Texas (956) 412-2207

This is the original sculpture used in casting the famous bronzed Marine Corps Memorial in Arlington, VA., depicting the raising of the US flag over Iwo Jima on Feb. 23, 1945, during World War II. It is over 100 feet high and weighs 130 tons. It was given to the Marine Military Academy in October of 1981.

A WWII museum located across the street from the statue displays many artifacts from that era and the more recent battles of "Desert Storm."



Valley Race Track – Live Greyhounds

2601 S. Ed Carey Drive, Harlingen, Texas 78552 Call 956 412-RACE (7223)



There is always something going on at Valley Race Park. They offer live or simulcast horse and greyhound racing year round and a whole lot more. Every day they offer great food from their restaurants and concession areas.

Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge

Alamo, Texas 78516 Phone: (956) 784-7500

Along the banks of the lower Rio Grande is the Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge, a 2,088 acre refuge established in 1943 for the protection of migratory birds. Considered the 'jewel' of the refuge system, this essential 'island' of thorn forest habitat is host or home to nearly 400 different types of birds and a myriad of other species, including the indigo snake, malachite butterfly and the endangered ocelot.



The Arts

The **Laguna Madre Art League** (LMAL) of Port Isabel/South Padre Island, Texas was organized for the expressed purpose of promoting interest, appreciation, support and skill in the visual arts. They have numerous activities and shows throughout the year.
www.lagunamadreartleague.com

The **El Paseo Arts Foundation** serves the communities Lower Laguna Madre Area. Their mission is to encourage, support and promote the arts for the benefit and education both of area residents and visitors. They produce or support a year-long schedule of events including community theater, concerts, performances, local fine arts shows, cultural events focusing on area history and educational events.
www.elpaseoarts.org

The **Brownsville Society of the Performing Arts** brings special, world-class musical concerts to town throughout the year. Their signature event is the very popular annual Latin Jazz Festival in October, and includes a week of the best regional and national acts.

The **Brownsville Art League** stages major events including two international shows in March and April.

The **Camille Lightner Theatre** presents an ongoing schedule of live productions, about every six weeks, with special dinner theatre and spring break events.

The **Valley Symphony Orchestra and Chorale** is the premiere symphonic music organization in the Rio Grande Valley. The VSO&C's mission is to inspire our community by performing the highest quality live symphonic music and supporting the best symphonic music education in the Valley.



GETTING HERE

It lies in the sun beside the sparkling Gulf of Mexico. It is a place where sparkling beaches, warm water, friendly hospitality and relaxing activities come together. It's not your imagination, it's the ideal vacation paradise, and it's South Padre Island.

Located on the tropical tip of Texas, getting here is easy. Whether you drive, fly or arrive by boat, the Island is easily accessible. If traveling in by air, vacationers can fly into one of three airports in the Rio Grande Valley. Ground transportation is available at all three airports along with most major car rental companies and taxi service. If traveling by car, the scenic route to the Island is made easy by well maintained four-lane highways. If arriving by boat, the Intercoastal channel provides access to all boats, from the smallest to the largest!

BY LAND

Take I-69 South from San Antonio, then east on Texas Hwy. 100 approximately 28 miles.



From Austin 340 miles
From Dallas 531 miles
From Houston 367 miles
From San Antonio 285 miles

From El Paso 815 miles
From Mexico City 666 miles
From Monterrey 225 miles
From Tampico 336 miles

BY AIR

Brownsville South Padre Island International Airport (30 minutes)

United, American Airlines/American Eagle, Aeromexico

Valley International Airport Harlingen (50 minutes)

Southwest, United, Delta, Sun Country

There is a shuttle service that operates with door-to-door service on the Island. See www.southpadreshuttle.com for details.



BY WATER

Call the Port Isabel/San Benito Navigation District, (956) 943-7826, for regulations and additional information.



ON THE ISLAND

The WAVE - South Padre Island's free shuttle (956) 761-8178. This free shuttle bus service operates daily from 7:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. (11pm during peak season) with service every 30 minutes at locations throughout the Island, Port Isabel and Laguna Heights. It provides handicapped accessible service. It connects with MetroConnect in Port Isabel which can provide connections to a variety of locations in the Brownsville area.
www.MySPI.org



EVENTS



Photo: tift.org

August



All Summer & Fall



Photo: padregetaways.com

April



Photo: sandastledays.com

October

South Padre Island is home to many events, big and small. However, some are considered to be signature events that bring attendees from all over the world. Every April, motorcycles roar in for the **BEACH-N-BIKER FEST**. Firework shows every Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights from Memorial Day through October makes us the **FIREWORKS CAPITAL OF TEXAS**. August brings the **TEXAS INTERNATIONAL FISHING TOURNAMENT** (the largest in the state) as well as the annual **LADIES KINGFISH TOURNAMENT** and a host of smaller fishing events. October is **SAND CASTLE DAYS** with competitors from all over the world. Check out all our events at www.sopadre.com

The Relocation Guide for South Padre Island
is an e-publication created by the
South Padre Island Economic Development Corporation



Economic Development Corporation

(956) 761-6805

info@southpadreislandcdc.com

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South Padre Island, TX 78597

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