



Bay City - Matagorda County
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Things to Do in Bay City - Matagorda County

Go fresh and saltwater fishing in the same day, spot rare birds in what is known as the “Birding Capital of North America,” and experience 500 years of Texas history. These are among the many things to do in [Matagorda County](#), including in Bay City, Palacios, and Matagorda. Revel in the stunning beauty of the Texas Gulf Coast in any way you wish, from hiking and horseback riding to soaking up the sun on a sandy shore. Yet that’s not all. Explore Matagorda County’s history, step inside its unique shops, and take in its relaxed charm. Read on to see all the adventures the county has to offer, then plan your next Texas beach vacation here today.

Fish on 50 Miles of Shoreline

Thanks to the fresh waters of the Colorado River and all the possibilities of the Gulf of Mexico, Matagorda County offers the best of both worlds. Find a spot on the bank of a river or creek and cast your line for some catfish and black drum, or charter a deep-sea fishing trip and try your luck at snagging a trophy amberjack, red snapper, kingfish, or shark. You can even fish from the beach or wade into the surf snare redfish and trout. With so much fishing to do, it's no surprise Matagorda County hosts countless angling tournaments throughout the year.

Explore Matagorda Bay Nature Park

Relax on the beach, fish from gulf and river piers, hike scenic trails, and get in some first-rate birding. Indulge in many of the adventures available in the county all in one place at the [Matagorda Bay Nature Park](#). Covering more than 1,300 acres of pristine shoreline and coastal wetlands, the park has a bit of something for everyone. Rent a canoe or kayak and paddle the Colorado River and swim in the sea. Given its diversity of ecosystems, the park is a prime birdwatching location perfect for spotting herons, egrets, and the hundreds of other types of birds that either live in or migrate to this part of the Gulf Coast.

Play a Round on the Rio Colorado Golf Course

Aim your tee shot down a rolling fairway, sink a putt as you overlook the scenic bluffs of the Colorado River, and keep an eye out for alligators, deer, hawks, rabbits, and other wildlife. This is all part of the playing experience at the [Rio Colorado Golf Course](#), an 18-hole course set within tranquil coastal wetlands and prairies. Natural hazards and strategically placed bunkers make Rio Colorado a captivating challenge for all players, while the full set of tee boxes make it accessible to novices and experts alike.

Want a shorter round? Head to the Palacios Golf Course, a public nine-hole course with wide-open fairways located a stone's throw away from Tres Palacios Bay.

Paddle the Colorado River & the Gulf of Mexico

Thanks to its abundance of waterways, one of the best ways to see Matagorda County is by its waterways. Rent a kayak or a canoe and explore the Colorado River and the bayous and marshes in the area. Not only is this a great way to get some exercise, you'll be perfectly positioned to see alligators, birds, fish, turtles, pigs, and other wildlife. For a truly in-depth adventure, embark on a guided kayaking tour led by an expert familiar with the area.

Discover Bay City - Matagorda County's History

In the late 1860's, colonists and explorers led by famed French explorer Robert de La Salle arrived in Matagorda Bay. The expedition ended in disaster with the sinking of La Salle's flagship *La Belle*, one of many of the fascinating stories that comprise Matagorda County's history. Discover much of its storied past at the [Matagorda County Museum](#), where you can see one of the cannon's unearthed from *La Belle*, learn about the Karankawa Indians that lived here, and discover what life was like for early colonists and settlers.

The on-site Children's Museum is a recreation of an early 20th-century Texas town where youngsters can shop at an old-fashioned general store, browse a toy shop full of wind-up toys, and more.

There's even more history to uncover at the [City by the Sea Museum](#) in Palacios. See more artifacts from *La Belle's* shipwreck and check out the exhibits showcasing World War II Army base Camp Hulen, the history of fishing and agriculture in the region, and more. Don't miss a visit to the *La Petite Belle*, a half-scale replica of the *La Belle* located at the South Bay Marina in Palacios.

Shop Until You Drop

If you're the type who can't help but shop while you're in vacation, you'll find plenty to like about Matagorda County. Start in downtown Bay City, where you'll stroll past striking historic storefronts home to Western clothing and boutique shops, antique stores, and one-of-a-kind eateries. The downtown area is also the place to be on the third Saturday of the month, when more than 100 arts and crafts vendors set up shop to create a massive outdoor market.

Although Bay City has more than enough to keep you busy, there's even more shopping to do around the county. Hit up the shops along Palacios' Main Street, browse for souvenirs in Matagorda, and admire the quilts and home goods on display in Blessing. Take your time and explore Matagorda County and you just may uncover a few treasures of your own.