



Galveston Island, Texas
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Galveston Island



Feel the cool, soft sand embrace your toes as the Gulf Coast sunset casts luminous streaks of orange, purple, and yellow across the dimming sky. Watch the ferries drift by as you cast a line from a fishing pier. Explore neighborhoods full of breathtaking 19th-century homes before relishing a rush of adrenaline as you ride the world's tallest water coaster. All of these experiences await when you visit [Galveston](#), a historic city that epitomizes the marriage of coastal charm and all the cultural sophistication of a major metropolis. Located 50 miles southeast of Houston, Galveston is an accessible getaway ideal for a weekend beach retreat, unforgettable family adventures, and an escape to nature's glory.

If a retreat to a Texas beach is what you seek, Galveston is hard to beat. The island has 32 miles of soft sands and inviting surf that provide a nearly limitless amount of possibilities. One of the most convenient places to play on the beach is along Seawall Boulevard, a bustling hotspot lined with restaurants, high-end hotels, and

funky souvenir shops. There are also a few parks that offer a range of activities as well, such as the 2,000-acre [Galveston Island State Park](#) where you can play on the beach, fish, kayak along scenic paddling trails, and spot birds and other wildlife from the hiking and mountain biking trails.

Even as far back as the 19th century, Galveston has always been a major Texas beach destination. Once known as the “Playground of the South,” the island’s glitzy hotels and shimmering beaches brought tourists in droves, while the major port served as a booming center of commerce and immigration. The devastation wrought by the hurricanes of 1900 and 1915 forever changed the course of the town, but since then it has reclaimed its place as a major destination on the Texas Gulf Coast.

There are countless ways to experience Galveston’s stunning past. Cruise through its historic neighborhoods and tour stately 19th-century houses such as the [Moody Mansion](#), [Bishop’s Palace](#), and the [1859 Ashton Villa](#). Then stop by museums like the [Galveston Railroad Museum](#) and the [Texas Seaport Museum](#), home to the 1877 Tall Ship Elissa, to discover how the city’s port and rail lines helped shape it into what it is today. If you’re a fan of naval history, explore a World War II submarine and destroyer escort at [Seawolf Park](#).

While it would be easy to spend all of your vacation experiencing Galveston’s history, there are other ways to enjoy time on the island. Enjoy some spills with your thrills at [Schlitterbahn Galveston Island Waterpark](#), home to dozens of fast-paced and easygoing rides and a massive indoor waterpark. For roller coasters and Midway games, pay a visit to the [Galveston Island Historic Pleasure Pier](#), located along Seawall Boulevard. For an up-close look at the flora and fauna of the rainforest and the ocean, step inside the three eye-catching glass pyramids at [Moody Gardens](#). Along with exploring the pyramids, you can conquer the exciting ropes course and zip line or play a round on Moody Gardens’ 18-hole golf course.



Experience all the shops, art galleries, bars, and restaurants in Galveston’s The Strand Historic District. Catch a show at The Grand 1894 Opera House, “The Official Opera House of Texas.” Or visit during one of the island’s many fun and family-friendly annual events, such as [Mardi Gras! Galveston](#), the [Galveston Island Food and Wine Festival](#), and the [Brewmasters Craft Beer Festival](#). Stop by during the holiday season and you’ll be in a Winter Wonder Island as Galveston hosts more than 50 events, among them the ever popular [Dickens on The Strand](#). Breathtaking beaches, captivating historical sites and museums, thriving culture, and one-of-a-kind attractions makes Galveston an ideal destination for your next Texas beach vacation.