



# *Galveston Island: High End Vacation Homes*

By Dale Reynolds

**O**ften when you find a vacation or recreation spot that is little known to the outside world, locals will ask that you please don't tell anyone else. They simply want it to themselves and don't want it overrun by newbies.

Texas' Galveston Island south of Houston could easily be one of

those places. Its miles of pure white sand beaches offer relaxation while tempting the sun gods. The water gently rolls in from the Gulf of Mexico...gently most of the time.

There are times when the weather becomes very challenging and aims its fury at the island. In 2008 Hurricane Ike took aim at the island and when it was over the damage tally came to a whopping \$12 billion. —————→





But Galveston and its residents weren't about to say "Uncle" to a freak of nature. No sooner had the wind and rain stopped than Galvestonians set to work rebuilding their little bit of paradise.

One of the first things put in place was an ordinance requiring that new building had to be above flood level. Anything on ground level had to be breakaway leaving the main structure undamaged. As a result all new buildings on the island stand on stilts, above ground and any water that might come visiting.

Many of them have placed light walls or lattice work fencing around the base of the buildings to provide extra room and yet offer a degree of privacy. Residents have often resorted to creative designs to brighten the lower sections of their homes.

Along the beachfront are many new homes, a good deal of them fairly high-end vacation rentals or private ownership, have a



commanding view of the water. If there is a downside to any of this, it is the necessity of climbing a flight of steps to get into your home. The upside, aside from the fact that it is protected from storm surge, is a higher view of the surrounding area.

The interior of the waterfront homes, many evoking the class and comfort of an earlier time when a leisure class knew how to live well and comfortable, are open and airy with a sparkle.

Check out [www.sandnsea.com](http://www.sandnsea.com) for more information on rental properties or purchasing a vacation home.

There is a lot more to Galveston. There is a protected marshland where visitors can climb a low tower to observe birds and other wildlife in their natural habitat. The island's railroad museum also harkens back to a time in history when life was a lot slower and more easygoing.



One of the main must-see stops on the island is the Moody Garden Pyramid complex. There is a fully-contained rain forest populated by virtually every flora and fauna you would expect to see while trekking through a South American rain forest.

Moody Gardens also offers a 3-D theater, a rope climbing challenge and zip line and a ride on the Col. PaddleWheel river boat.

In cooler weather Moody Gardens imports expert ice carvers from a small town in China and they create an amazing ice city in a temperature controlled environment.

Galveston Island is conveniently near the mainland and less than an hour from Houston's three airports on a straight run. [www.moodygardens.com](http://www.moodygardens.com)

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