

PORT CITY: GALVESTON



Whether arriving early or extending the adventure, Galveston offers a vacation in itself for cruisers embarking from Port of Galveston. Leah Cast, director of communications for Galveston Island Convention & Visitors Bureau, gave associate editor Cortney Erndt the scoop on the Texas island's best.

Q: WHAT MAKES GALVESTON AN APPEALING PORT CITY?

A: Galveston is such a fascinating and charming town because it offers experiences groups wouldn't expect in a small island city. Yes, it is home to 32 miles of beaches, but it also is home to one of the largest collections of Victorian architecture in the country.

What's also great is that Galveston offers so much that is within walking distance of the port, including our historic downtown district filled with shops, restaurants and attractions. I can confidently say there is no other island city in America that offers as much variety as Galveston and that makes it a great place to explore for people of all backgrounds.

Q: WHAT ATTRACTIONS DO YOU RECOMMEND CRUISERS VISIT?

A: The Strand is definitely a top attraction. This is our historic downtown "main street" that is home to beautiful Victorian iron-front buildings that house unique boutiques, antique stores and other shops, as well as attractions like the Galveston Railroad Museum and the Legends of the Gulf Coast pirate museum.

Just next door to the cruise terminal is Pier 21, which is home to the Texas Seaport Museum and 1877 Tall Ship *ELISSA* among other museums and restaurants. Postoffice Street is a great destination for shopping and restaurants, like Rudy and Paco or The Grand 1894 Opera House, which hosts national touring acts and exciting shows year-round.

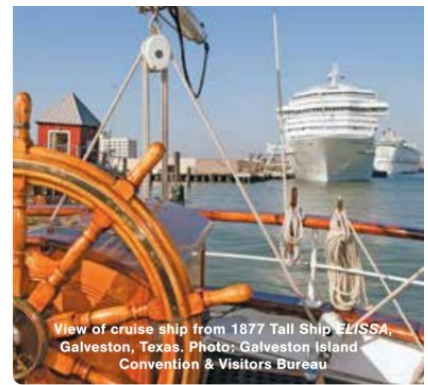
Outside of downtown, Moody Gardens offers group-friendly fun with three gigantic pyramid-shaped buildings that house an aquarium, living rainforest with free-roaming animals, a discovery museum, and 3-D and 4-D theaters. Other great attractions include The Bryan Museum, Bishop's Palace, Schlitterbahn Waterpark and the Galveston Island Historic Pleasure Pier.

Q: WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR FIRST-TIME VISITORS?

A: Check out our visitor guide, which is available at galveston.com/guide. This will give groups a great overview of attractions to visit as well as insider tips, like utilizing Galveston Island Pass to save on attractions. Another tip is to take advantage of pre- and post-cruise packages offered by many of the island's hotels. ■

Galveston Island Convention & Visitors Bureau
888-425-4753
galveston.com

Photo: Leah Cast/
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View of cruise ship from 1877 Tall Ship *ELISSA*, Galveston, Texas. Photo: Galveston Island Convention & Visitors Bureau



Moody Mansion, Galveston, Texas. Photo: Galveston Island Convention & Visitors Bureau



Pier 21, Galveston, Texas. Photo: Galveston Island Convention & Visitors Bureau



Historic downtown or 'The Strand,' Galveston, Texas. Photo: Galveston Island Convention & Visitors Bureau

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