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GOT SOMETHING TO SAY?

Love, love, love Texas Highways. Been reading every month for 25 years!

MICHAEL HUGGINS, Monroe, Michigan



OUR FAVORITE SOCIAL MEDIA OF THE MONTH...



My dad had a job sandblasting the star at the top of the San Jacinto Monument when I was a kid.

Karen Guillot, Deer Park

PoPo's [April] is awesome. Like eating at Grandma's table!

Jonana Doyle Roberts

To Glamp or Not to Glamp?

Why didn't I think of glamping [texashighways.com, April]? Some people love being outdoors but hate sleeping on the hard ground! Genius.

JAMYE CLOUGH STEWART,
Lubbock

My "glamping" is renting a cabin at Garner or Big Bend and bringing my pillow and my portable AC. Hoo-rah!!

RUBEN CASSIAN,
San Antonio

It seems what these people actually want is a hotel.

DAVID KILBY, *New Mexico*

Glamping is wrong and should not be done, or change the name to "wussying."

DAVID BELL, *Corpus Christi*

State Symbols

The "Symbols of Texas" article [March] was very meaningful for me. I was born and raised in Delta County, 19 miles south of Paris. My first pair of boots were Noconas (just like my Daddy's), and I grew up listening and learning to dance to Bob Wills' music. Western Swing is still one of my favor-

ites and I think I have every one of Asleep At the Wheel's CDs. At East Texas State in Commerce, I pledged and was a member of The Tejas Club for Men. The charter members of Tejas were all WWII veterans and recognized the meaning and historical significance of this Caddo Indian word. Also, we have ordered Texas Ruby Reds from Harlingen for more than 30 years. While my military and corporate careers have taken me away from my home state for the past 60 years, I continue to be a Texan,

enjoy every visit, and have thoroughly enjoyed your magazine for a number of years.

KENDALL WRIGHT
Mountain Brook, Alabama

Altitude Angst

I've been to the marker at the top of Guadalupe Peak [February] and it's scary as heck. I guess I don't do well with heights. The loose rocks and the clouds going by make you feel like you're going to fall off the mountain. Whew.

ARH MITCHELL,
Facebook



READERS RECOMMEND

Lefty and Sweets

There's a cool little Lefty Frizzell Museum in old-town Corsicana located in the Pioneer Village. Check it out and then celebrate with some chocolate and an ice cream cone at the Russell Stover Store.

DAVE LARGENT, *Dallas*

Set in a replica shotgun house, the Lefty Frizzell Museum displays memorabilia from the late, Corsicana-born country star, such as his Nudie suit, custom boots, and photos, as well as artifacts from other Texas country music stars. The museum, located at 912 W. Park Ave., opens Mon-Fri 8-5, Sat 9-5, and Sun 1-5. Call 903/654-4846. The Russell Stover Store is at 1995 Pecan Delight. Call 903/875-0180.



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UpFRONT



WHERE
WE'LL
BE NEXT
MONTH:

Find Your Shore

Those bumper stickers are spot on: Life is better at the beach—as soothing as toes scrunching in South Padre's white sands, as sweet as Key-lime pie in Port Aransas, and as easy as the Gulf breeze in Galveston. And a bonus for beach-goers: Texas has some 367 miles of coastline to explore. So slip on your flip-flops and find *your* shore with the help of this month's coastal special issue.

In the lineup: Helen Anders and Al Argueta recommend beach stays from funky to sumptuous; E. Dan Klepper cruises King Country along South Texas' coastal plains; and Erich Schlegel takes to the sea by sailboat. Plus, in this month's Next Weekend installment, June Naylor shares her restorative exploration of historic Galveston by bicycle, including the Tree Sculpture Tour and a muffaletta at Maceo Spice & Import Company.

On my own Galveston getaway this past winter, I was wowed by the latest beach restoration along the Seawall (above). Gone is the craggy riprap along that stretch of the shoreline, replaced by a 100-foot-wide, sandy expanse ripe for Frisbee-tossing, skimboarding, and lounging under colorful umbrellas. And it's all just across the street from several of the island's popular hotels, shops, and restaurants.

A partnership between local officials and the General Land

Office, the beach nourishment project began last year, first expanding the shoreline for a half-mile from the west end of the Seawall. The second phase, the 14-block Seawall replenishment between 75th and 61st streets, was completed in November, and will extend to 10th Street by this fall. Along with ecological and recreational benefits, the ongoing sand-management plan will offer the island city protection from storm surges and safeguard a major evacuation route. You can watch the project at www.galveston.com/sandcam.

"The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has pumped in some 725,000 cubic yards of sand so far for the restoration," says Mary Beth Bassett, public relations coordinator for the Galveston Park Board of Trustees. Bassett adds that "the sand comes from the USACE's routine dredging of the ship channel, and has been scientifically tested for quality to make sure it supports life."

This summer and beyond, that life will include beach-lovers reveling in new places to play, and more shore to explore.

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This summer and beyond, that life will include beach-lovers reveling in new places to play, and more shore to explore.



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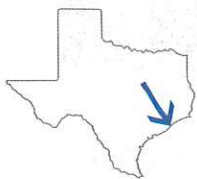


ANY TIPS ON THESE SPOTS? LET US KNOW ON FACEBOOK, TWITTER, OR INSTAGRAM

Jill Lawless, Editor

Scenic ROUTE

29° 17' 16.55" N
94° 47' 25.29" W



Gulf Coast

Seawall Boulevard on Galveston Island stretches about 10 miles along the island's Gulf of Mexico side. The drive offers views of the beach and surf as well as the spectacular Galveston Island Historic Pleasure Pier. Extending over the Gulf, the entertainment pier features 16 rides, midway games, shops, and food stands.



For more information, visit
www.pleasurepier.com.







From Scraps to Souvenirs

TREASURE HUNTING AT NAUTICAL ANTIQUES & TROPICAL DECOR

text by Heather Brand

GALVESTON'S SHIPS MECHANIC Row got its name back in the 19th Century when it was an artery of the island's shipping industry, located just a few blocks from the wharf. The street—also referred to as Mechanic Avenue—bustled with seaport trade back then, and the busy atmosphere persists today with tourists trawling historic downtown Galveston's shops, museums, and restaurants.

Amid the hubbub is a not-so-hidden treasure trove, Nautical Antiques & Tropical Decor, located on the first floor of the landmark J. Reymershoffer's Sons commission house building. The enterprising Czech immigrant John Reymershoffer built the structure in 1876 for a glass and porcelain import business. Although the building originally had three stories, Hurricane Carla destroyed the top floor in 1961 and only the bottom two floors were salvaged.

Nautical Antiques' best-selling items are the glass floats that fishermen once used to buoy their fishing nets and long lines.

As it turns out, Nautical Antiques & Tropical Decor also stocks glass and porcelain, in the form of glass fishing net floats and ships' crockery, along with countless other items. Shipping paraphernalia festoons practically every inch of the 4,200-square-foot store. The walls are decked with vintage gear like bright orange life rings, brass bells, old rigging, pulley blocks and deadeyes, and red and green lanterns, used for indicating port and starboard, respectively.

Michael and Adrienne Culpepper, partners in marriage and merchandising, have owned and operated the shop since 2000, sometimes accompanied by their good-natured chocolate lab, Popeye. They first opened the shop



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GAUGE YOUR INTEREST
The Culpeppers scour shipbreaking yards around the world to collect vintage components.

in a building farther east, at the corner of 23rd and Winnie streets, but they relocated to higher ground after Hurricane Ike destroyed their inventory in 2008. The move to their present location turned out to be a boon, as it placed them in the midst of the island's prime shopping and tourism area.

To restock their inventory, the Culpeppers close the shop once a year to travel as far afield as India, Bangladesh, Turkey, and China to visit shipbreaking yards, where vessels are taken apart to be discarded or sold for scrap. Adrienne and Michael scour the yards for choice items to bring back to Galveston. As 20th-Century ships are retired, their equipment becomes less common, so the Culpeppers acquire as much as possible on each excursion, packing shipping containers with vintage objects that get harder to find every year. They store the surplus of antiques—from ships' wheels to hand-knotted rope bumpers, teak hatch covers, foghorns, and portholes—in an 8,000-square-foot warehouse separate from the shop.

Nautical Antiques' best-selling items

are the glass floats that fishermen once used to buoy their nets and long lines. These beautiful green and blue orbs, ranging from baseball- to basketball size, are wrapped in a mesh of knotted rope, and they grace nearly every surface of the store. Floats hang from the ceiling, cluster in the corners, and pack overhead storage nooks. Anglers used the glass floats from the 1800s into the 1960s, when plastic floats replaced them. So even though Nautical Antiques has plenty of the glass bulbs in stock, Adrienne notes, there is ultimately a limited supply. Part of their appeal is the affordable price—\$40 for the large floats and \$12 for smaller floats.

In addition to salvaged items, the Culpeppers also carry a few artisan-made goods, such as brightly painted fish made from recycled oil drums in Haiti and artful sea creatures pieced together from driftwood. The hand-carved sculptures from Indonesia inevitably draw attention: The colorful wooden float-lines are both eye-catching and inexpensive at \$25. The mermaid figureheads are also hard to resist.

**GIRLS RULE!**

Housed in a two-story Victorian building in Galveston's East End Historical District, Farley Girls Cafe features a diverse menu of breakfast, brunch, and lunch offerings.

Sister Act

GALVESTON'S FARLEY GIRLS CAFE

text by June Naylor

“**Y**OU NEED A DOSE OF Farley Girls,” came the recommendation from a wise Galvestonian that Saturday morning.

Just the night before, my friends and I had finished a late night of wine and conversation on the Tremont House rooftop lounge, topping off a merry evening of dinner and music on The Strand. But my local contact, a longtime Galveston resident who knows every nook and cranny of the island city, led me to precisely the kind of breakfast required for kicking off another day of touring.

Heading to the East End Historical District, we arrived at a spot within easy walking distance of the University of Texas

**FARLEY GIRLS CAFE**

is at 801 Postoffice St., in Galveston. Call 409/497-4454; www.farleygirls.com. Hours: Mon-Fri 10:30 a.m.-3 p.m., Sat-Sun 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Medical Branch, the island's medical school and hospital. Our destination was Farley Girls Cafe, which occupies a two-story, yellow Victorian building, its columned porch decorated with hanging baskets of ferns. Outside, families and couples—some with leashed pups in tow—already gathered over morning meals.

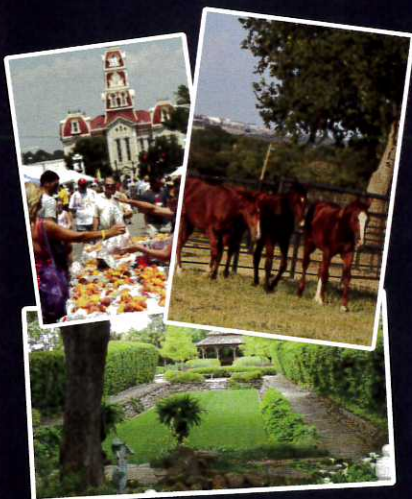
Inside, sunlight flooded through windows onto exposed brick walls, washing over an expanse of casual seating that leads to the order counter. Like everyone visiting the first time, I felt my jaw drop when I spied the descriptive menu offerings. My party of four agreed we would each try something different so we could share.

Settling into our table with cups of strong coffee and a carafe of mimosas, we admired a poster-size photo on the wall of two smiling young girls—the Farley Girls, we assumed. Soon, our attention shifted to our dishes, which

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EAT

arrived in short order accompanied by our coos of approval.

And just like that, our chattering table went quiet as we sank into the delight of enjoying food that tastes even better than it looks. My huevos rancheros arrived in a wide, shallow dish: a pair of over-medium eggs atop crispy corn tostadas, with layers of pepper-jack cheese, avocado slices, black beans, pico de gallo, and a nubby red salsa—each bite better than the next.

My husband's "Hangover Helper Bowl" combined everything he likes in a stick-to-your-ribs breakfast, with a foundation of crumbled bacon and sausage with fried potatoes, covered by scrambled eggs, pepper-jack cheese, guacamole, and salsa. A clever variation on the breakfast-brunch idea came in the lox pizza, a thin and crispy crust with puffy, browned edges slathered with cream cheese and topped with smoked salmon ribbons, capers, and tiny bits of purple onion.

As we finished our meal with a shared bowl of honey-drizzled fresh fruit with Greek yogurt, a woman stopped by the table to see how our breakfast was going. She introduced herself as Ryanne, and I realized she was the grown-up version of one of the two adorable girls pictured on the wall above us.

"You're a Farley girl!" I ventured. She laughed and nodded, explaining that Farley was her mom's maiden name, and that she and her sister Rosmond chose it as the name for their café when they opened it in 2012. It rolls off the tongue more easily than their maiden name, Duzich, after all.

That the sisters came to the restaurant business was practically inevitable, as for years their parents owned and ran a handful of Galveston restaurants, including Fisherman's Wharf, Fish Tales, and The Spot. Because Ryanne was six and Roz was 10 when the family moved from Corpus Christi to Galveston to embark on their new restaurant venture, the sisters truly grew up in the business.

Their parents have since sold their restaurants to pursue another dream, but Ryanne and Roz found their calling in familiar territory. Both chose culinary school for their studies, with Roz in Miami and Ryanne in Austin. Their specific interests landed Roz in the kitchen and Ryanne running the front-of-house restaurant operations, and eventually the two returned to Galveston to make their mark together. They're both keenly interested in fabulous food, which inspires the choices found at Farley Girls Cafe.

"Our entire menu came from the



Sandwiches
come with fries,
onion rings, or a salad.

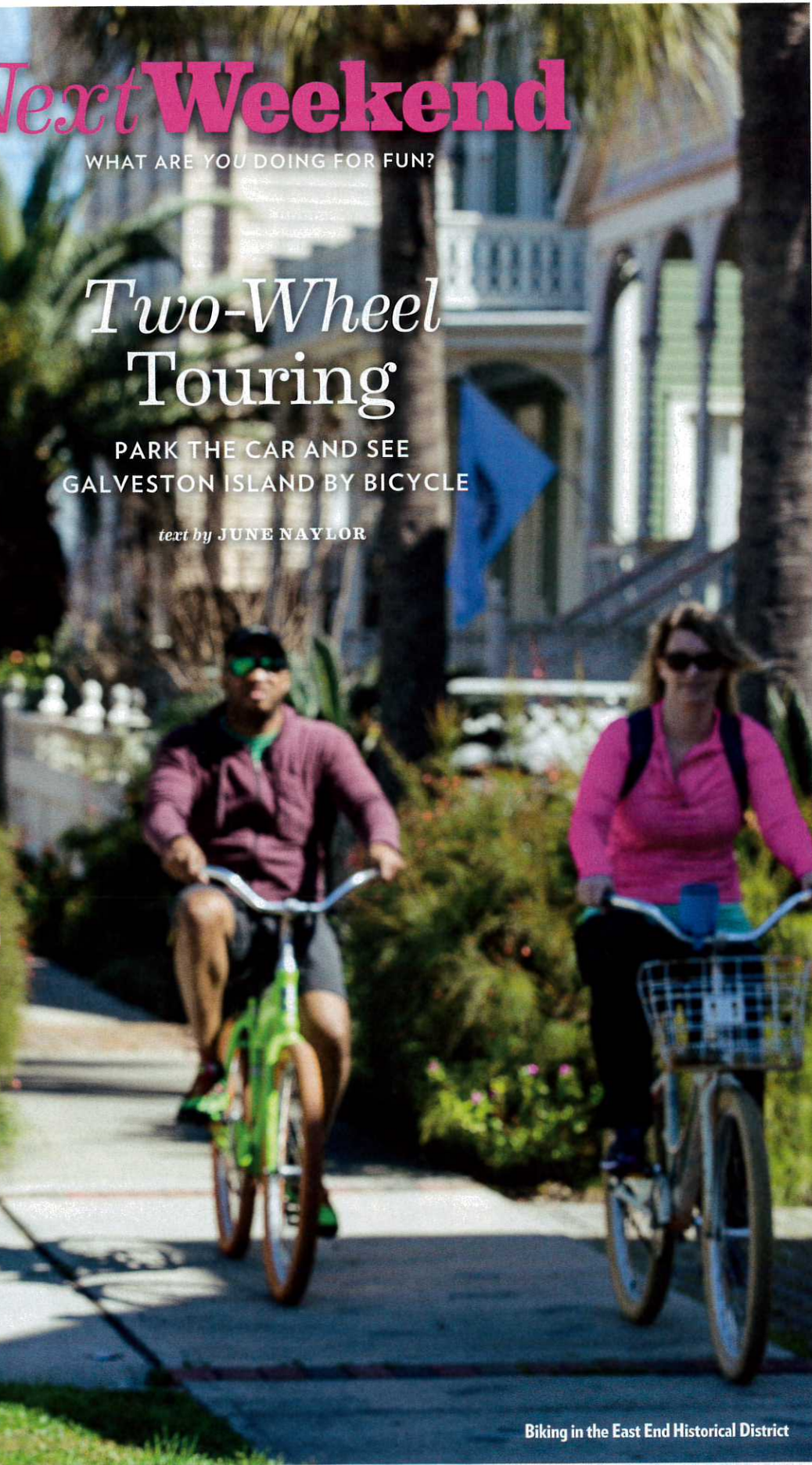
Next Weekend

WHAT ARE YOU DOING FOR FUN?

Two-Wheel Touring

PARK THE CAR AND SEE
GALVESTON ISLAND BY BICYCLE

text by JUNE NAYLOR



Biking in the East End Historical District

LUCKY US: A BRILLIANTLY SUNNY morning greets us on the day we plan to see Galveston by bicycle. It's been years since I've looked at my favorite island from a bike seat, and I'm eager to revisit the sensory experience of taking in the sights and sounds and smells of a place that's at once so historic and vibrant.

Venturing out under a deep blue, cloudless sky, my husband and I slather on sunscreen and head for our loaner bikes. As overnight guests at the Harbor House, we have the option of borrowing bicycles from the concierge at the hotel's sister lodging, the Hotel Galvez. We'd been advised to arrive early, before they're all claimed. Leaving our drivers' licenses as a deposit, we head out with two fat-tire touring bikes, equipped with baskets and old-fashioned bells, and helmets.

Rather than stick strictly to the Seawall, probably the most popular biking destination in Galveston, we want to explore some of the old neighborhoods. Bicycling along, we're free



ISLAND BICYCLE COMPANY,

at 1808 Seawall Blvd., is a full-service bike shop offering rentals, tours, and gear. Call 409/762-2453; www.islandbicyclecompany.com.

to stop frequently to admire and take snapshots of the fascinating, ornate gingerbread detail prevalent in the design of so many of Galveston's Victorian homes and commercial buildings.

We've decided to start our outing with the Tree Sculpture Tour, which is laid out on free maps available online and at the Galveston Island Visitors Center. I've seen bits and pieces of this tour by car, enough to know that enjoying this art show means wandering slowly in the open air for maximum appreciation.

Found primarily in the East End Historical District, just one mile—or about eight minutes by bike—from the Galvez, the collection of sculptures is an imaginative byproduct of 2008's Hurricane Ike. The storm's tidal surge

The DISTANCE to GALVESTON



Houston
50 miles;
1 hour

Dallas
290 miles;
4.75 hours

San Antonio
245 miles;
4.25 hours

Abilene
405 miles;
6.5 hours

Texarkana
340 miles;
5.75 hours



SEA AND SPICE

Flea by the Sea, which sells vintage décor, and Maceo Spice & Import Company are two Galveston sites easily accessible by bicycle.

brought winds and waves that destroyed thousands of Galveston's magnificent oak trees. Local artists saw an opportunity in the trees' wooden skeletons and created sculptures from their trunks and limbs.

There's no worry about parking, it's easy to keep a water bottle and backpack in the bicycle basket, and we feel more connected with the city than we might if exploring by car.

These works stand mostly in the front and side yards of private homes, scattered throughout 50 square blocks. We spend nearly two leisurely hours pedaling our way along Postoffice, Church, Winnie, Ball, and Sealy streets, occasionally parking our bikes to get a closer look and take photos of the carvings, many of which are painted with a shiny, clear sealant.

I'm awestruck by several, including the *Birds of Galveston* at 1620 Sealy, a multi-limbed sculpture depicting 17 different birds, including pelicans and spoonbills. *The Geisha* at 1717 Ball Street is a carving of a woman wearing an intricately decorated kimono, facing westward, presumably toward Japan. A favorite of mine is *Tin Man from The Wizard of Oz*, the sculpture at 1702 Winnie, which was the birth home of the late King Vidor, a 20th-Century filmmaker who directed part of *The Wizard of Oz*.

During our ride, one of my tires goes flat. No problem, however: We call the Galvez concierge on our cell phone, and the hotel delivers a replacement bike within minutes. The short delay simply gives us more time to walk along Postoffice Street, where there are five sculptures to examine.

As we roam around, we encounter other folks enjoying two-wheel touring. Many rent from Island Bicycle Company (located on Seawall Boulevard), the outfitter that also leases bikes to hotels like the Galvez and Doubletree,

Longview

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which in turn provide the bikes for their guests. In a friendly chat with fellow bicycle fans, we find we're of similar minds about the advantages of sightseeing by bicycle: There's no worry about parking, it's easy to keep a water bottle and backpack in the bicycle basket, and we feel more connected with the city than we might if exploring by car.

After the sculpture tour, we stop for a little pick-me-up at Sunflower Bakery, located at the corner of Postoffice and 14th streets. The bakery's glass case is filled with confections that make my heart go pitter-pat. We settle in for a snack in the yellow seating area next to windows overlooking the street. An iced tea, coffee, cranberry scone, and slice of chocolate meringue pie later, we're good to go again.

Heading west, we ride a half-mile along Postoffice (also called Avenue

E) to the historic Strand District. We pause to admire the handsome Grand 1894 Opera House and then continue two blocks to Church Street, arriving at Saint Mary's Cathedral Basilica. We poke our heads inside to see the magnificent architectural detail adorning this gorgeous place, known as the Mother Church of Texas and built in 1847 to emulate King's College Chapel in Cambridge. The church's interior restoration after Hurricane Ike's flooding was extensive, taking the better part of six years to complete.

Continuing west again, we park and lock our bikes at Postoffice and 25th Street. It's Sunday, and Galveston's Own Farmers Market is underway. We amble through the market in an empty downtown lot, enjoying a fresh green juice of blended spinach, celery, cucumber, and apple from Oasis Juice Bar &

Market's booth, and purchasing a jar of pickles from Jackie's Gourmet and raw honey from Pure Beeing. If we were residents, we'd visit the market weekly for pastured chicken, bison, fresh eggs, and produce from local growers.



NEW BEACH

Galveston has a new beach this summer as part of its beach replenishment project. The city recently added 600,000 cubic yards of sand to the oceanfront between 61st and 76th streets, creating "Babe's Beach" in an area that had been a non-recreational rock surface.

Crossing the street, we stroll through Deborah's Community Garden, a corner of lush green in the heart of downtown and one of a handful of the city's community plots. A gardener tending a raised bed of tomatoes, cucumbers, squash, and herbs tells us that several items sold at the farmers market are grown in these gardens. We also learn that the University of Texas Medical Branch students who help cultivate the garden donate their produce to help feed the local hungry. Such a discovery in the center of town—complete with three goats kept in a pen—gives us a greater feel for the depth of Galveston's personality.

Realizing it's lunchtime, we climb on our bikes again and pedal west just four blocks to Maceo Spice & Import Company. Opened in 1944, this throwback provides a glimpse into Galveston's Italian culture with its meat market and grocery shelves stocked with imported canned tomatoes, olive oils, vinegars, pastas, and 28 house-made spice blends. Vintage photos of the Maceo family decorate the walls, and a small scattering of tables fill quickly in the mornings with guests noshing on beignets and chicory coffee and at midday with patrons hungry for old-school deli sandwiches and daily specials like shrimp Creole, red beans and rice, and spaghetti and meatballs. (Beignets are

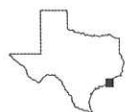
served on Sundays only; call first to confirm the store is open.)

Locals say Maceo's makes the best muffaletta this side of New Orleans, and we're game to investigate. Served on thick, round Italian bread, slathered with olive salad and piled with cut-to-order ham, salami, and provolone, I admit to enjoying this sandwich as much as those I've had at NOLA's Central Grocery.

Before pedaling down to the beach, we stop to poke around Flea by the Sea, just two blocks from Maceo's. It's one of the better vintage-goods shops I've come across in years, stocking collectibles like 1930s table fans, 1950s kitchen accessories, and cool 1960s lamps, bar ware, and cocktail tables—all in great condition.

Next we ride about a mile-and-a-half to Seawall Boulevard. We reach the waterside road at the Galveston Island Pleasure Pier, where we can see kids and parents enjoying the flashy rides. Heading east again on the Seawall, we relish the wind washing over us as we watch pelicans dive for their lunch and sandpipers run to and from the waves.

With the day running out on us, we scratch our original plans to ride around Stewart Beach Park and instead make one last stop—this time for a frosty afternoon beer at Ocean Grille and Beach Bar. The bar's Gulf-front patio is the perfect spot to toast our two-wheel adventure and recount all we've seen—and what we might have missed had we been touring in a car. On our way back to the Galvez, we pass Island Bicycle Company and see other bicycling enthusiasts turning in their bikes, too. Reluctantly, we give our bikes back to the hotel concierge, promising to return for another day of pedal-powered prowling. ★



GALVESTON

For Galveston tourism info, call the Galveston Island Visitors Center at 888/425-4753; www.galveston.com. The Visitors Center, at 2328 Broadway, opens daily 9-5.

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Come Sail Away

WILD IS THE WIND ON THE TEXAS COAST

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERICH SCHLEGEL



Day two of September's Ruff Rider Regatta, South Padre Island



Longtime sailor
Guy Le Roux
on his sailboat in
Corpus Christi.

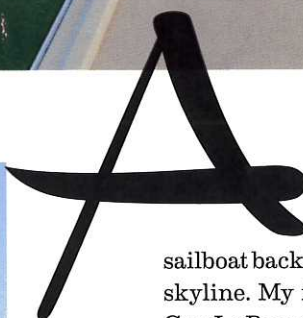


Dolphins surface in Corpus Christi Bay.

Sailboats ply Corpus Christi Bay.



*The Texas coastline is 367 miles long,
following a gentle arc from
Sabine Pass south to the Rio Grande.*



A pod of eight dolphins broke the surface of the water as we turned our sailboat back toward the Corpus Christi skyline. My friend and sailing mentor Guy Le Roux stood at the helm of his 20-foot sailboat in the steady southeastern breeze. The dolphins surfaced behind us, then appeared next to the bow. One after the other, they dove and leaped from the water alongside our boat. Guy slowed our speed to match the pod's, and for the next few minutes we played an aquatic game of leapfrog. Encounters with dolphins are so common that every major tourist destination on the Texas coast has dolphin-watch tours, but there is something magical about encountering these creatures from your own boat.

The Texas coastline is 367 miles long, following a gentle arc from Sabine Pass south to the Rio Grande. More than half of this coastline is protected by low-lying barrier islands, including 113-mile-long Padre Island. These islands harbor bays and lagoons that are protected from the Gulf of Mexico, resulting in large areas for safe sailing. And there is never a lack of wind on the Texas coast:

Sailing by the Kemah Boardwalk



Wind speeds average between 15-20 miles per hour across South Texas, and it's only a bit less windy in the Houston/Galveston area. The wind comes from the southeast off the Gulf of Mexico and blows more than 300 days a year; in general, the wind picks up around 10 a.m. and will blow strong and steady until after midnight.

There are three ways one can enjoy coastal sailing. One is to view a race from shore, as many cities and towns along the coast have sailboat races that offer great spectator viewing. The second is to charter a cruise; charter options range from wildlife-viewing excursions to snorkeling trips, fishing outings, and even sunset dinner cruises. The third is to launch your own sailboat (or rent one if you're certified to do so).

The Houston/Galveston area has its sailing hub in Kemah and neighboring Clear Lake. According to Troy Wise of Clear Lake's Lakewood Yacht Club, this region is home to one of the largest sailing fleets in the United States. "Thanks to Houston's size, we enjoy a tremendous depth of service and experience

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Keith Bass of the Yachting Center of Corpus Christi tows a kayak behind his sailboat. A two-hour introductory sailing class costs \$60 per person.

Best Places

SHORE THINGS

SIX SUPER STAYS
ON THE TEXAS COAST

TEXT BY HELEN ANDERS
PHOTOGRAPHS BY AL ARGUETA

*A view from Harbor House
at Pier 21 in Galveston.*

TEXANS STORM THE BEACHES FOR A WEALTH OF REASONS. So, when we envision the perfect beach hotel, each of us conjures a different image. You might want a hotel right smack on a broad, sandy beach where you can toss a Frisbee to your dog. For your neighbor, perfection might lie in a comfy inn with access to fishing or bird-watching. Some prefer lodging overlooking the Gulf of Mexico; for others, the glasslike calm of the bay fits the bill.

Bang for the buck ranks high for some of us; others will spare no expense for a pampered coastal cocoon offering luxurious amenities and service. Maybe you're after a bustling high-rise hotel near plenty of attractions. Or perhaps when you visit the coast, you simply want to ... coast.

Regardless of what you're after, you'll enjoy the sunshine, sand, and seafood of the Texas coast—and you can be sure there's a hotel along Texas' more than 350 miles of shoreline that's destined to become your happy place. From hundreds of excellent possibilities, we offer these six shining examples of Texas seaside stays.

Best Place

TO LIVE IT UP IN LUXURY

The Villas at The San Luis Resort, Galveston

Go ahead. Trot out those adjectives you usually reject as over-the-top: stunning, dazzling, sensational. The new Villas at The San Luis earns them. Just across Seawall Boulevard from the Gulf of Mexico, The San Luis Resort already ranks as one of the top properties in the historic haven of Galveston, but for weekday rates in June starting at \$499 per night, these five new single-story villas, tucked off to the side of the resort, raise the bar on luxury.

Each 800-square-foot, stone-trimmed retreat exudes tasteful opulence, with contemporary chandeliers dangling from tray ceilings; marble and slate floors; an elegant living room separate from the bedroom; and flat-screen TVs in every room, including the bathroom, where you'll also find vessel sinks, a soaking tub, and a four-direction shower. You'll feel pampered wearing the softest fleece robe ever, drying off with fluffy towels, and sleeping amid ultrasoft cotton-and-bamboo sheets. Your fridge comes stocked with water, soft drinks, and a split of champagne, and you'll find a coffee maker, fruit, chocolate-covered Oreos, and other snacks nearby, all included with the room rate. Free Wi-Fi? Of course.

Walk out your back door and enter a shuttered, private veranda with lounge chairs and a bubbling hot tub. Open those shutters and walk out to a pool with cabanas and a bar reserved just for guests of The Villas. Immediately, someone appears to ask if you would like a beverage or, perhaps, a steak dinner from The Steakhouse at The San Luis. In fact, throughout your stay, you'll often be asked about your needs ... but good luck finding one that hasn't already been met.



Galveston's sumptuous Villas at The San Luis feature private verandas and an enticing cabana-lined pool.