

GALVESTON MILITARY TOURISM ITINERARY

Few destinations have weathered the test of time through war, colonization and natural disaster and lived to tell the tale like Galveston. Steeped in American history, the island offers veterans and history buffs alike a chance to discover remnants of its fascinating past.

USS Cavalla and USS Stewart

Check out Seawolf Park for a quick brush up on Texas naval history. The park serves as the berthing place of the WWII submarine the USS Cavalla, a memorial to the lost submarine USS Seawolf. The Cavalla was commissioned in February 1944 by the Electric Boat Company and is known for sinking Shokaku, a 30,000-ton aircraft carrier and Pearl Harbor veteran. In 1971, the USS Cavalla was delivered to her permanent berth in Galveston. Alongside the USS Cavalla at Seawolf Park lies the USS Stewart, one of only two surviving destroyer escorts in the country. You'll have a chance to examine Stewart's artillery and even peer through grates with views into the engine room. Seawolf Park's remarkable history will have you yearning to learn more, so plan on spending an hour or two here.

S.S. SELMA

Steel shortages during World War I led the United States to build experimental concrete ships, the largest of which was the SS Selma. Today, the ship is partially submerged in Galveston Bay. Built in Mobile, Alabama, the ship was launched the same day Germany signed the Treaty of Versailles, officially ending World War I. As a result, the 7,500-ton ship never served during the war but instead was placed into service as an oil tanker in the Gulf of Mexico. The S.S. SELMA is visible from Seawolf Park so be sure to add it to your must-see list while exploring the park's other marine treasures.

San Luis Resort and Fort Crockett Park

In Galveston, even the island's magnificent resorts have interesting stories to tell. The San Luis Resort owes its breathtaking view of the Gulf of Mexico to the military bunker on which it is built. The resort's foundation was built on top of Fort Crockett, a former government reservation originally built as a defense installation to protect the city and harbor of Galveston. Fort Crockett's four batteries are still visible today, one of them now home to a public park located on Seawall Boulevard across from the San Luis Resort. An interesting quick stop, bring your camera and plan on spending about 15 minutes taking in the view!

Tour the Tall Ship ELISSA

ELISSA is a three-masted, iron-hulled sailing ship built in 1877 in Aberdeen, Scotland by Alexander Hall & Company and now proudly resides in Galveston's storied harbor. She carries nineteen sails covering over one-quarter of an acre in surface area. Unlike some tall ships of today Elissa is not a replica, but a survivor. She was built during the decline of the "Age of Sail" to fill a niche in maritime commerce. Over her 90-year commercial history she carried a variety of cargos to ports around the world, for a succession of owners. Her working life as a freighter came to an end in Piraeus Harbor, Greece, where she was rescued from the scrap yard by a variety of ship preservationists who refused to let her die. The story of Elissa's discovery and restoration is nothing short of miraculous and is beautifully retold in photographs and a video presentation discoverable on tours at the [Texas Seaport Museum](#). Today Elissa is a fully-functional vessel that continues to sail thanks to Galveston Historical Foundation.