

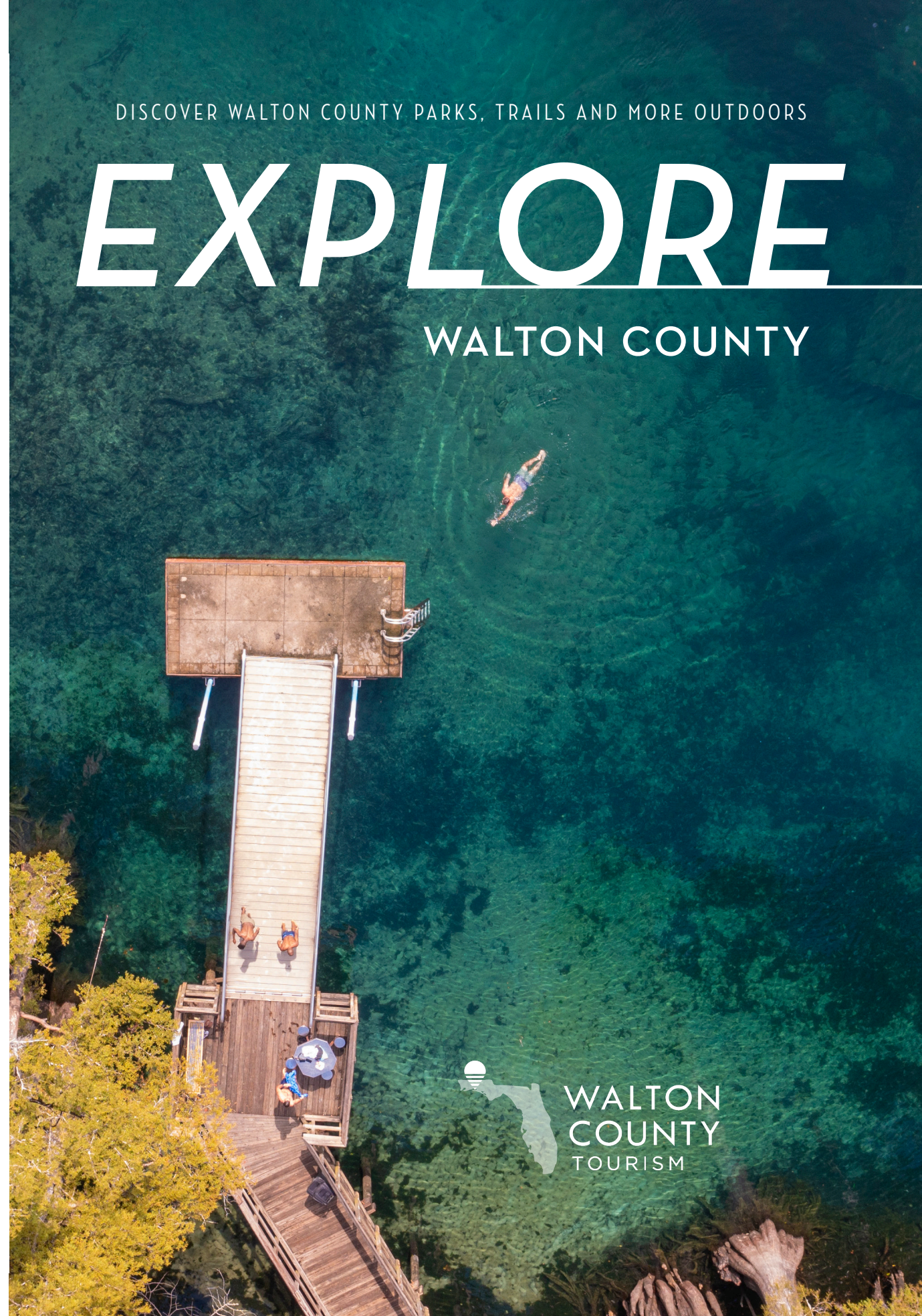


EVERY DAY A NEW DISCOVERY

DISCOVER WALTON COUNTY PARKS, TRAILS AND MORE OUTDOORS

EXPLORE

WALTON COUNTY



WALTON
COUNTY
TOURISM



.....

In Walton County, there's just more to explore:

Beautiful beaches, unique public parks, internationally recognized events, hundreds of miles of hiking and biking trails and endless outdoor adventures are all within easy reach.

.....





Let Walton County Speak to You

Pride, preservation and conservation.

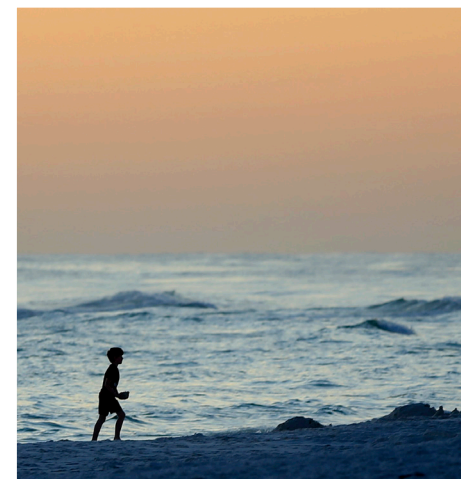
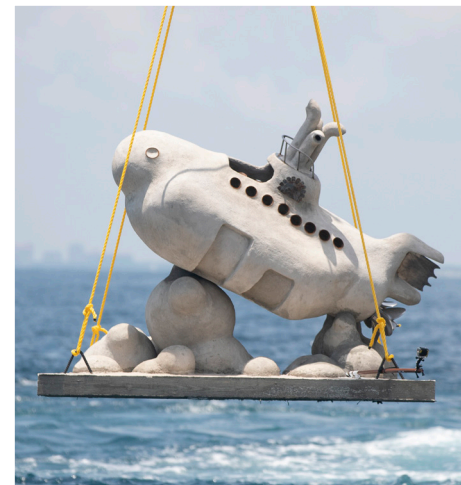
The Walton County motto is a declaration that this area is a special place where the importance of natural beauty takes center stage. From Paxton, a community with the highest geological point in Florida (345 ft.) to the 26 miles of sugar-white sand and turquoise water in South Walton, there's something for everyone who enjoys spending time outdoors in Walton County.

This publication was created to give visitors a road map to their next outdoor adventure in Walton County. You'll find adventures of all sizes within these pages. Make memories with friends and family while enjoying miles of hiking and biking trails (p. 14) or explore the area from a paddleboard on one of South Walton's 15 coastal dune lakes (p. 28). Scuba divers find adventure at the Underwater Museum of Art (p. 32) or with a crystal-clear freshwater dive at Morrison Springs (p. 40).

The area is also home to an incredible mix of events showcasing local arts, culture, live music, food and wine. From the Digital Graffiti projection art display in Alys Beach and the Sandestin Wine Festival to the annual Christmas Reflections holiday lights display in DeFuniak Springs, there's never a dull moment.

If relaxation is the theme of your ideal vacation, then the beach might need a spot on your to-do list. What soothes the soul more than lying on the beach, listening to waves lap in the distance as warm Gulf breezes dance in your hair? South Walton, located south of the Choctawhatchee Bay is the perfect destination for a beach vacation. Choose among 16 unique beach neighborhoods, each with its own personality and style. Renowned for turquoise water and sugar-white sand, South Walton is continually recognized as a premier destination that offers an upscale, yet casual place to build lasting memories.

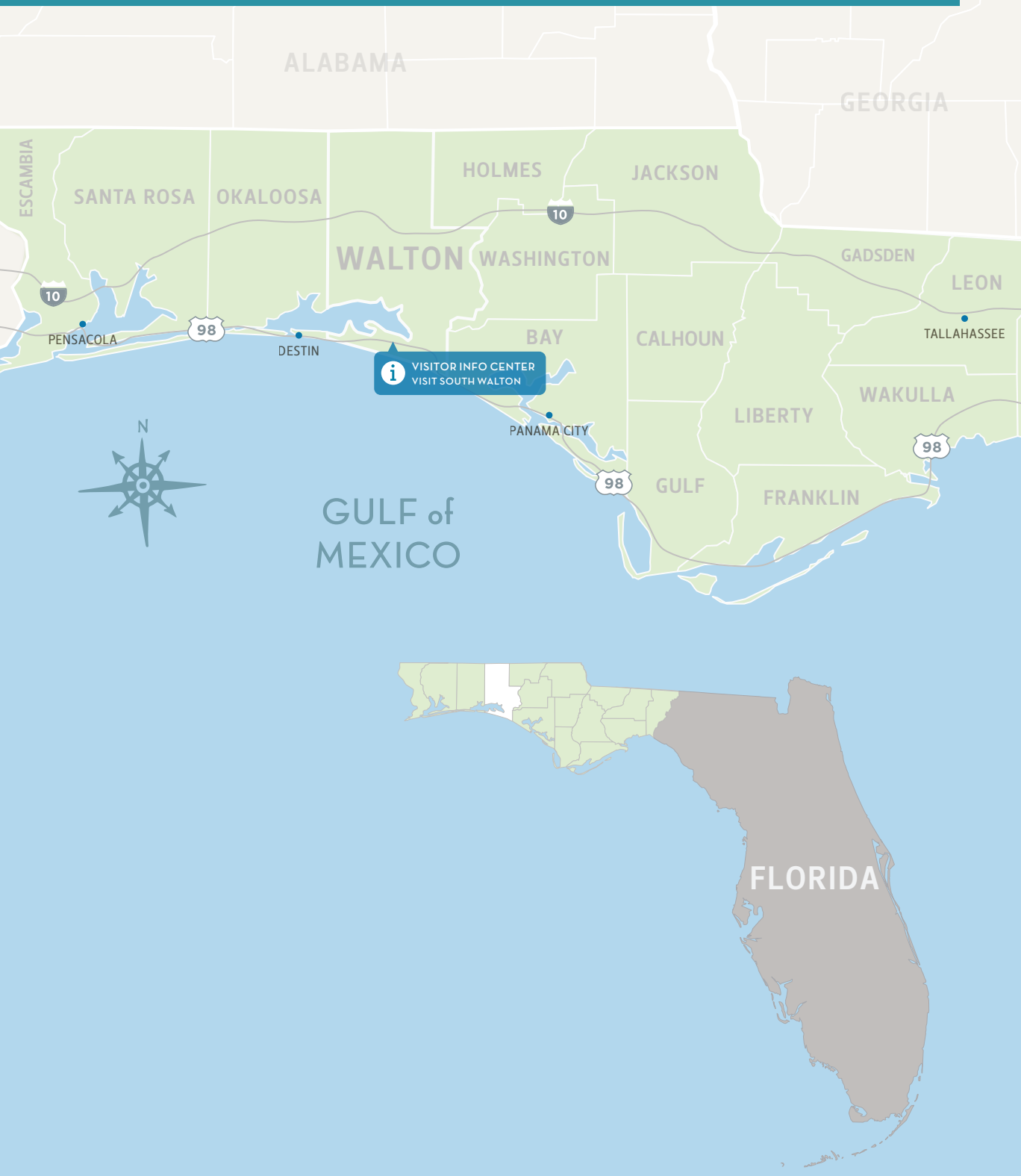
No matter how you choose to spend your time in Walton County, you'll enjoy an unforgettable experience. Relax, rejuvenate and explore.



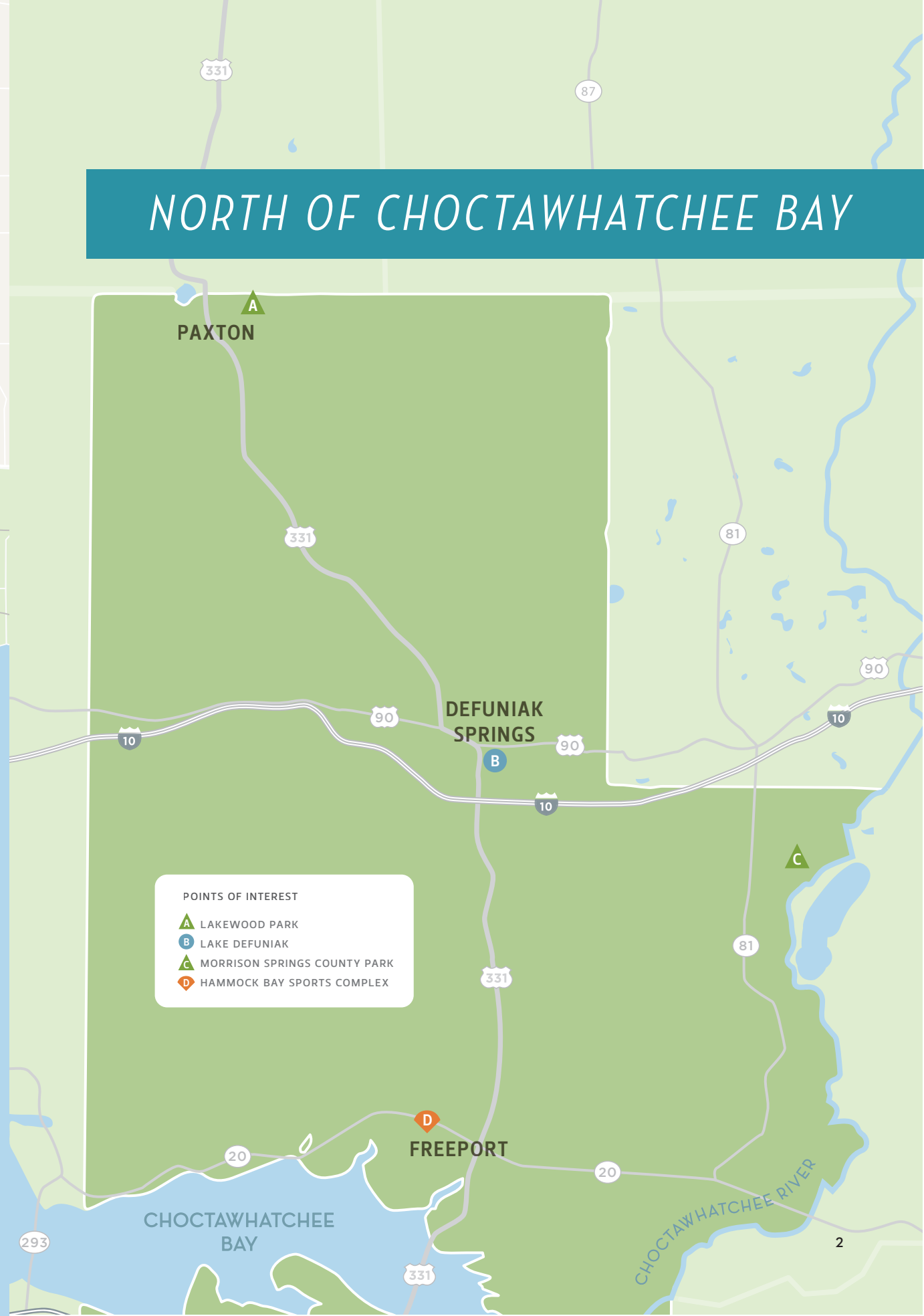
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More information at VisitSouthWalton.com

WALTON COUNTY, FLORIDA



NORTH OF CHOCTAWHATCHEE BAY



SOUTH OF CHOCTAWHATCHEE BAY



- REGIONAL BEACH ACCESSES**
- 1 MIRAMAR BEACH: SCENIC GULF DRIVE
 - 2 SCENIC GULF DRIVE: SCENIC GULF DRIVE
 - 3 DUNE ALLEN: W. SCENIC HWY 30A
 - 4 FORT PANIC: W. SCENIC HWY 30A
 - 5 ED WALLINE: S. COUNTY HWY 393
 - 6 GULFVIEW HEIGHTS: GULFVIEW HEIGHTS STREET
 - 7 BLUE MOUNTAIN: S. COUNTY HWY 83
 - 8 VAN NESS BUTLER JR: E. SCENIC HWY 30A
 - 9 SANTA CLARA: BRAMBLE GROVE PLACE
 - 10 INLET BEACH: S. ORANGE STREET
- LIFEGUARDED BEACHES ARE AVAILABLE IN PEAK SEASON. SWIM AT OWN RISK.
- BEACH WHEELCHAIR AVAILABLE

- BAY ACCESSES POINTS**
- 11 HAUGEN PARK: SHORE DRIVE
 - 12 LEGION PARK: CREST DRIVE
 - 13 CESSNA LANDING: N. COUNTY HWY 393
 - 14 KELLOGG NATURE CENTER: NELLIE DRIVE
 - 15 THOMAS PILCHER PARK: US HWY 331
 - 16 BAYSIDE RANCHETTES: E. MITCHELL AVENUE
 - 17 POINT WASHINGTON: N. COUNTY HWY 395
- EMERALD COAST PARKWAY / HIGHWAY 98
 - SCENIC GULF DRIVE / OLD HIGHWAY 98
 - SCENIC HIGHWAY 30A / COUNTY HIGHWAY 30A

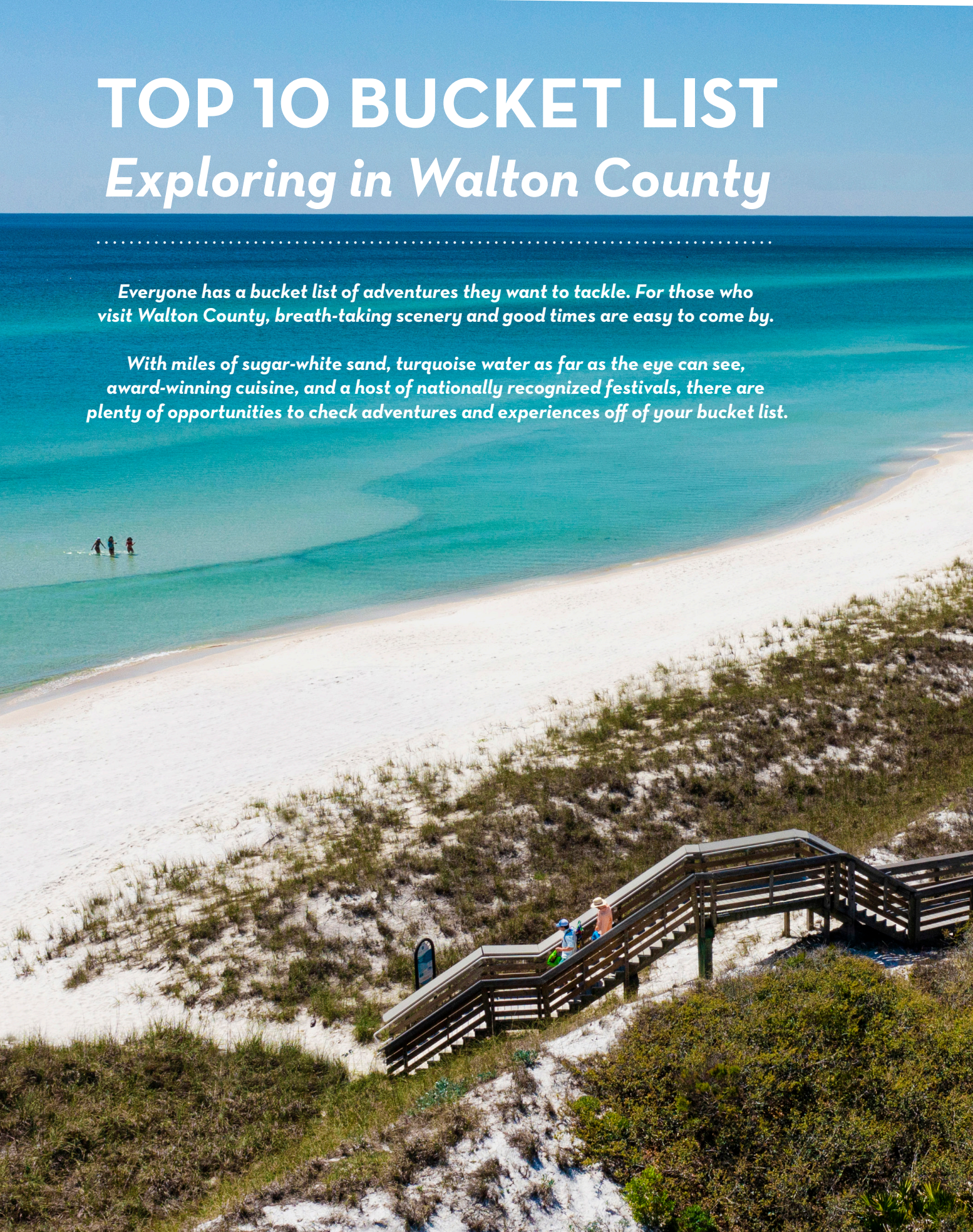
- POINT WASHINGTON STATE FOREST
- STATE PARK AREAS
 - A TOPSAIL HILL PRESERVE STATE PARK
 - B EDEN GARDENS STATE PARK
 - C GRAYTON BEACH STATE PARK
 - D DEER LAKE STATE PARK

TOP 10 BUCKET LIST

Exploring in Walton County

Everyone has a bucket list of adventures they want to tackle. For those who visit Walton County, breath-taking scenery and good times are easy to come by.

With miles of sugar-white sand, turquoise water as far as the eye can see, award-winning cuisine, and a host of nationally recognized festivals, there are plenty of opportunities to check adventures and experiences off of your bucket list.



1

Enjoy a romantic meal at one of South Walton's waterfront restaurants.

2

Visit Florida's highest elevation point (345 ft.) located at Lakewood Park.

3

Check out South Walton's snorkel reefs or dive the Underwater Museum of Art.

4

Visit during winter and fall to enjoy events like the 30A Songwriters Festival, Harvest Wine and Food Festival and the Sandestin Gumbo Festival.

5

Admire the giant art sculptures at Glendale Memorial Nature Preserve.

6

Collect or create a unique South Walton work of art.

7

Hop on a fishing charter directly from the sugar-white sand of Grayton Beach.

8

Visit Morrison Springs - one of Florida's more than 700 freshwater springs with crystal clear, jaw-droppingly blue water surrounded by towering bald cypress trees.

9

Get into the holiday spirit during the month-long holiday lights festival, Christmas Reflections in DeFuniak Springs in December.

10

Try stand-up paddleboarding on one of Walton County's diverse water ways.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January - 30A Songwriters Festival:

Listen to renowned songwriters as they take the stage at this one-of-a-kind event. Enjoy live music at multiple venues throughout South Walton during the three-day festival.

February - Crescendo! Sinfonia Gulf Coast:

Enjoy an energy-infused cultural and culinary experience showcasing winemakers, celebrity chefs, auction items and award-winning musicians. Crescendo! is an exciting new cultural extravaganza benefiting Sinfonia Gulf Coast and its music education and community engagement initiatives throughout Northwest Florida.

February - Sandestin Gumbo Festival:

Eat unlimited gumbo and dance to live Zydeco music at one of the largest and most popular winter events on the Emerald Coast. Sample a variety of gumbo styles and vote for your favorite to win "People's Choice!"

February - Seaside School Half Marathon & 5k:

This event-packed race weekend kicks off with Taste of the Race, live entertainment and an exciting race expo. On Sunday, join thousands of other runners for a race along Hwy 30A.

April - Sandestin Wine Festival:

The Sandestin Wine Festival is a highly anticipated event featuring local chefs and wine experts from around the world. Learn and explore the world of wine while enjoying live music and entertainment.

April - South Walton Beaches Wine & Food Festival:

One of South Walton's biggest events, this lively springtime gathering brings out the connoisseur in all of us. There's something for everyone, including diverse cuisine from celebrity chefs, live music and over 800 of the world's top wines.

May - Digital Graffiti Festival:

Watch the white walls of Alys Beach come alive during this dazzling artistic event. Lighting and design experts create stunning works of projection art that delight the senses. Since 2008, this first-of-its-kind event showcases light and color in a truly spectacular way.



May - Lakefest:

LakeFest is an annual festival in DeFuniak Springs celebrating safe, recreational activities for the entire family on the water and banks of Lake DeFuniak. The events are comprised of live entertainment, kayak/water sport races, hilarious cardboard boat races, water demonstrations, booth exhibits, water slides, bounce houses, kids activities, an historic district bicycle tour, and more.

May - South Walton Art Month:

Spanning the month of May, Art Month features visual, performing and literary arts programming in diverse formats at various venues throughout South Walton. Art Month includes: Under the Sea (a fundraiser for the Underwater Museum of Art), ArtsQuest Fine Art Festival, Digital Graffiti, Longleaf Writers Conference, the Rosemary Beach Sculpture Exhibition, Northwest Florida Theatre Festival, and more.

May - ArtsQuest:

ArtsQuest features over 125 juried fine artists who travel from all over the country to South Walton to exhibit and sell their work. Artist booths are lined up along Grand Boulevard, Grand Avenue, and other streets so attendees can stroll and shop for paintings, jewelry, sculpture, glass art, and more.

June - Emerald Coast Blue Marlin Classic:

This premier sport-fishing tournament, held at the Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort, boasts entertainment and activities as well as a live cooking demonstration, fireworks and live music. Admission to Baytowne Marina is free to watch skilled anglers weigh their catch as they vie for nearly \$2 million in prizes.

October - Baytowne Wharf Beer Festival:

Cheers to beer at this annual festival showcasing over 150 beers for your tasting pleasure. In addition to lagers, stouts and IPAs from around the country and the world, there's also a focus on local brews.

October - Bloody Mary Festival:

Dubbed as the largest tailgating party on the Gulf Coast, The Market Shops Bloody Mary Festival offers unlimited tastes of the area's most creative and innovative Bloody Marys served by the finest restaurants, access to the Bubbly Bar with all you can drink champagne, shopping opportunities, a photo booth and much more!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October - Oktoberfest:

Main Street DeFuniak Springs hosts its annual Oktoberfest outdoors amongst the historic charm of downtown DeFuniak Springs. Guests can enjoy seasonal beers, bratwurst and other German fare, axe throwing, and authentic German music, all while shopping the locally owned and operated brick-and-mortar merchants along Main Street.

November - South Walton Celebrity Golf Classic:

Enjoy a round of golf with sports legends and celebrities at the South Walton Celebrity Golf Classic, held at Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort. Proceeds will benefit Operation Renewed Hope Foundation.

November - Flutterby Festival:

Northwest Florida is a part of the migratory pattern of the Monarch butterfly, and every fall tens of thousands of these beautiful creatures enjoying the native flora that thrives in Walton County. The Cultural Arts Alliance of Walton County celebrates this natural event each year with a children's arts and science festival, The Flutterby Festival, held in WaterSound Town Center. Festival goers will enjoy arts and crafts projects, live performances, a student butterfly art exhibit and more!

November - Bayfest:

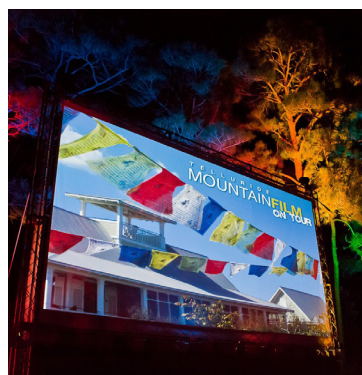
Held in Freeport, Bayfest is a family-fun festival filled with food vendors, arts & crafts, and live entertainment throughout the day. The festival is fun for all ages and includes face paintings a kids zone, car show, cook-off and much more.

November - 30A 10k & Fun Run:

This annual Thanksgiving day race is one of the area's most popular running fundraisers. Featuring 1- and 6-mile routes that start and end in Rosemary Beach, the 30A 10k & Fun Run is family-friendly and perfect for any age or skill level.

November - An Evening of Sparkling Wine and Holiday Lights:

Everything is better with a little bubbly, even the holiday season in South Walton. Spend the evening in the Village of Baytowne Wharf sampling a variety of sparkling wines and tasty eats. Enjoy holiday festivities, shopping and walking among glittering holiday displays.



November - Christmas Reflections:

See more than 10 million lights reflect off a perfectly round spring-fed lake glowing in holiday splendor. Enjoy a holiday family tradition in DeFuniak Springs as Chipley Park lights up with the annual Christmas Reflection displays.

November - Harvest Wine & Food Festival:

Sip and savor at this three-day event in WaterColor to benefit the Destin Charity Wine Auction Foundation's mission to assist children in need in Northwest Florida. Featuring celebrity chefs along with multiple wine tastings and a charity auction, there's fun for every connoisseur at this great event.

November - Hometown Christmas:

DeFuniak Springs kicks off the holiday season with the annual Hometown Christmas. Located at the Walton County Fairgrounds, the two-day event is great for the whole family featuring arts and crafts, food, drawings, Santa's house, free kids crafts, and more. Hometown Christmas is the perfect way to get into the holiday spirit.

November - MountainFilm on Tour at WaterColor:

This two-day outdoor film festival is dedicated to educating, inspiring and motivating audiences about issues that matter. Films selected for the festival explore themes of culture, preserving environments and promoting adventure.

December - Christmas Candlelight Tour at Eden Gardens State Park:

Follow a route lined with thousands of luminaries to the historic Wesley House. Take a free tour of the house and admire the beautifully appointed rooms, each decorated in different themes by local businesses and organizations. After the tour is complete, guests can vote for their favorite room and enjoy refreshments in the pavilion provided by the Friends of Eden.

December - Merry Main Street:

Main Street DeFuniak Springs hosts its annual Merry Main Street holiday events running every weekend prior to Christmas. Free to attend, Merry Main Street boasts live music and theatrical performances, an outdoor market, food trucks, rides on the Choctaw Express Train, visits with Santa and Mrs. Claus, kids character appearances by The Character Clubhouse, and more family fun – all taking place along Baldwin Avenue in downtown DeFuniak Springs.

Deer Lake State Park

FIND YOUR PATH TO
NATURAL BEAUTY





South Walton is home to more than 200 miles of hiking and biking trails with varied levels of difficulty. Some trails are paved and others all natural, so whether you're looking for a leisurely bike ride or stroll or a heart-pounding adventure, there's a trail for you in South Walton.

TRAILWAYS

1. Scenic Gulf Drive Trail
2. Topsail Hill Preserve State Park
3. Timpoochee Trail
4. Kellogg Nature Center
5. Greenway Trails
6. Grayton Beach State Park
7. Eden Gardens State Park
8. Point Washington State Forest
9. Deer Lake State Park
10. WaterSound Monarch Art Trail
11. Alys Beach Nature Trail
12. WaterSound Trail

LEVELS OF DIFFICULTY

Easy – flat and paved trails

Moderate – hard ground with some sandy, hilly areas

Difficult – extremely sandy and difficult hills

TRAIL LEGEND



Parking



Restrooms



Great Florida Birding Trail



Pets Allowed on Leash



Wheelchair Access

TRAIL ETIQUETTE

Yield to Pedestrians: Pedestrians always have the right-of-way.

Keep Right and Pass on Left: The trails are like U.S. roadways.

Keep the Trail Clean: Make sure you leave the trail pristine by removing all trash and personal items you brought with you.

Be Safe at Night: Cyclists must use head and tail lights after dark.

Pets on Trails: Dogs should be kept on a short leash and pet waste must be cleaned from the trail.

Protect Yourself and Others: It's the law that a bicycle rider or passenger under 16 years of age must wear a helmet, and bicyclists are not allowed to wear headphones at any time.



SCENIC GULF DRIVE TRAIL

2384 Scenic Gulf Drive
 Miramar Beach, FL 32550
 (800) 822-6877
 VisitSouthWalton.com



Scenic Highway 98 is the original beach cruising spot in South Walton. This paved path is perfect for a bikeride, stroll or even longboard skateboarding. The path runs right by Miramar Beach Regional Beach Access which offers expansive views of the coastline. It's also a local favorite for surfing and sunsets.

Scenic Gulf Drive
 3 miles, Easy



TOPSAIL HILL PRESERVE STATE PARK

7525 W. County Highway 30A
 Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459
 (850) 267-8330
[FloridaStateParks.org/
 parks-and-trails/topsail-hill-preserve-state-park](http://FloridaStateParks.org/parks-and-trails/topsail-hill-preserve-state-park)



Identified as the most pristine piece of coastal property in Florida, this undeveloped area features 1,600 acres of stunning bald cypress swamps, nature trails over mountainous sand dunes and two freshwater coastal dune lakes. Topsail Hill Preserve State Park is known for its 25-foot-high sand dunes and 14 unique plant communities.



- | | |
|--|---|
| ■ Morris Lake Trail
2.5 mile loop, Difficult | ■ Salamander Pond Trail
1.1 mile, Easy |
| ■ Old Growth Trail
1 mile, Difficult | ■ Campbell Lake Trail
5.2 mile loop, Easy |
| ■ Deer Track Trail
5.5 miles, Difficult | ■ Beach Tram Path
1 mile, Easy |



TIMPOOCHEE TRAIL

Along Scenic Highway 30A



Probably the most widely used trail in South Walton, the Timpoochee Trail is named after Timpoochee Kinnard, an influential Chief of the Euchee tribe.

Running parallel to Scenic Highway 30A, the 18.5-mile multi-use path winds its way from Dune Allen in the west to Inlet Beach in the east through 12 of South Walton's 16 beach neighborhoods, while also showcasing views of recreational areas, state parks, the state forest and 15 coastal dune lakes. The trail is paved, protected and mostly level, with just a few Florida hills making it perfect for a casual stroll, bikes or roller blades.



- **Timpoochee Trail**
18.5 miles, Easy



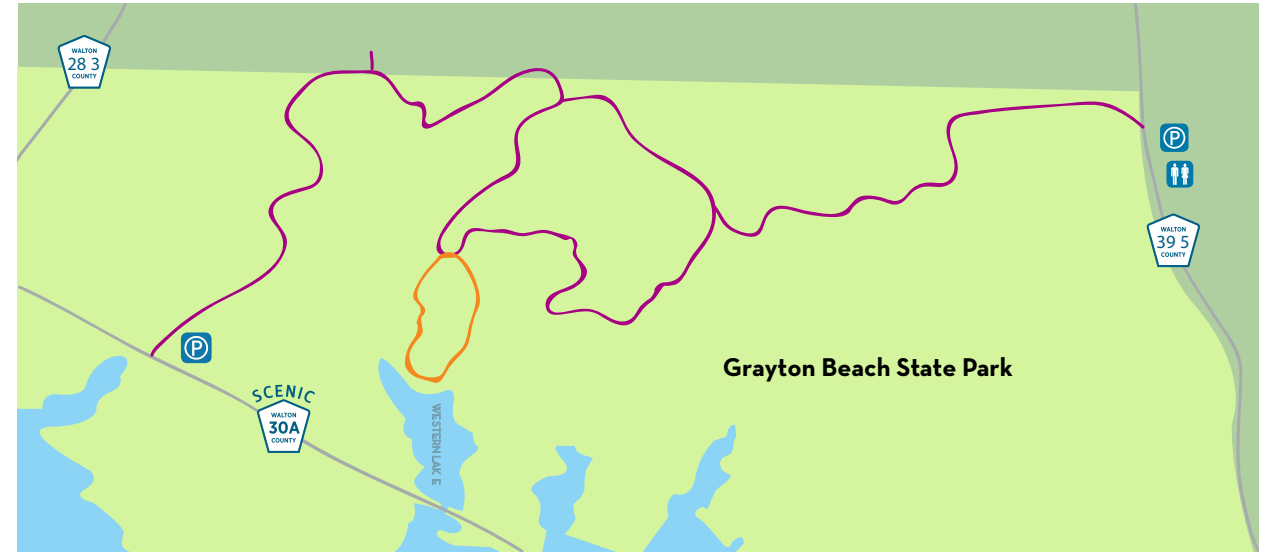
KELLOGG NATURE CENTER

776 E. Nursery Road
 Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459
 (800) 822-6877
VisitSouthWalton.com/hiking-biking-trails



This 10-acre parcel of land was donated to Walton County in 2003 by Mrs. Pat Kellogg to be used as a wildlife nature preserve and nature center. The hiking and biking trail is perfect for bird watching and outdoor recreation as it loops through pine flatwoods connected to Choctawhatchee Bay.

Kellogg Nature Trail
 0.3 miles, Easy



GRAYTON BEACH STATE PARK

357 Main Park Road
 Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459
 (850) 267-8300
FloridaStateParks.org/GraytonBeach



With pristine landscapes, picnic areas and bird watching galore, Grayton Beach State Park is a must-see for those exploring South Walton. The trails in the park wind through pine flatwoods and around small freshwater ponds, which are a natural habitat for wading birds.

■ **The Flatwoods Trail**
 3.81 miles, Easy-Moderate

■ **Western Lake Loop**
 0.7 miles, Easy-Moderate



GREENWAY TRAILS

63 South Centre Trail
 Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459
 (800) 822-6877
VisitSouthWalton.com/hiking-biking-trails

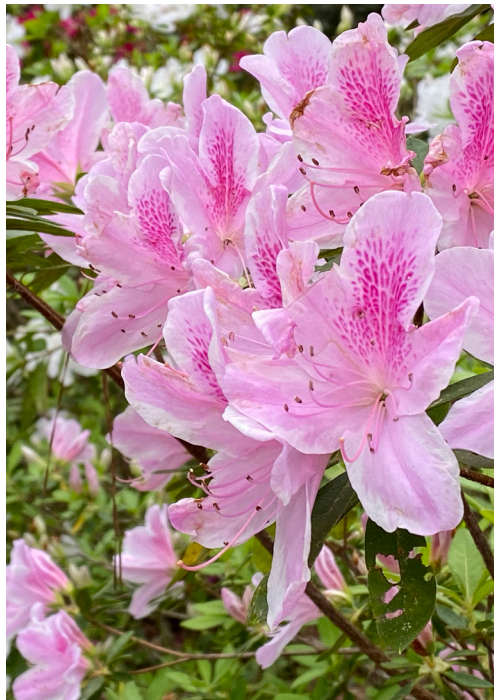


The multi-use trails are located within the Town Center Government Education Complex between J.D. Miller Road and U.S. Highway 331. The paved trail includes timber bridges, wetlands and native vegetation.

Greenway Hiking Trail
 875 feet, Easy

Greenway Multi-Use Path
 1 mile, Easy





EDEN GARDENS STATE PARK

181 Eden Gardens Road
 Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459
 (850) 267-8320
FloridaStateParks.org/parks-and-trails/eden-gardens-state-park



During the 1800s, Eden Gardens State Park was the home of lumber baron William Henry Wesley and his family. Tour the historic Wesley Mansion or just walk among the moss-draped, ancient live oak trees and extensive landscaped grounds that stretch to the Choctawhatchee Bay. The camellias and azaleas sprinkled throughout the park add color throughout the year.

Eden Gardens State Park Trail
 0.5 miles, Easy



POINT WASHINGTON STATE FOREST

FDACS Office
 5865 E. US HWY 98
 Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459
 (850) 267-8325
fdac.gov/forest-wildfire/our-forests/state-forests/point-washington-state-forest



Covering 15,000 acres, Point Washington State Forest offers explorers more than 27 miles of distinct trails that traverse through longleaf pine flatwoods, wet prairie, coastal scrub swamplands and sand hills.



Longleaf Greenway Trail

- Western Trail
2.5 miles, Easy
- Middle Trail
3.25 miles, Moderate
- East Trail
2.5 mile, Moderate

Eastern Lake Trail

- Yellow Loop
3.5 miles, Easy-Moderate
- Red Loop
6 miles, Moderate
- Orange Loop
11 miles, Moderate-Difficult



DEER LAKE STATE PARK

6350 E. Scenic Highway 30A
Santa Rosa Beach, Florida 32459
(850) 267-8300

FloridaStateParks.org/parke-and-trails/deer-lake-state-park



Deer Lake State Park shares its name with the coastal dune lake within its boundaries. A boardwalk across the dunes offers easy access to the beach where visitors can picnic, swim, and fish. It also offers a spectacular view of the dune ecosystem, one of 11 natural communities found in the park. The 1.5-mile loop trail is located on the north side of Scenic Highway 30A across from the park entrance.

Deer Lake Trail

1.5 miles, Easy-Moderate



ALYS BEACH NATURE TRAIL

140 Charles Street
Alys Beach, FL 32461
(850) 213-5500

AlysBeach.com/about/the-town/parks-nature-trails



The northern portion of Alys Beach contains a 20-acre nature preserve that provides a quiet and reflective getaway. A .75-mile trail meanders through the preserve, with most of it on an elevated boardwalk that offers views of slash pine forest, cypress trees, open meadows, wiregrass and wildflowers.

Nature Trail

0.75 miles, Easy

WATERSOUND MONARCH ART TRAIL

Trailhead starts south of the intersection at
Highway 98 & Watersound Parkway
culturalartsalliance.com/monarch-art-trail



The WaterSound Monarch Art Trail is an outdoor public art trail featuring eight large sculptures by local and national artists. The exhibit is a celebration of the annual migration of monarch butterflies through Walton County every Fall. The sculptures feature signage, seating areas, lighting and vegetation that attracts butterflies. The paved walking and bike path follows the east side of WaterSound Parkway for its mile-long stretch between Highway 98 and Highway 30A.

Watersound Monarch Art Trail

1 mile, Easy-Moderate



WATERSOUND TRAIL

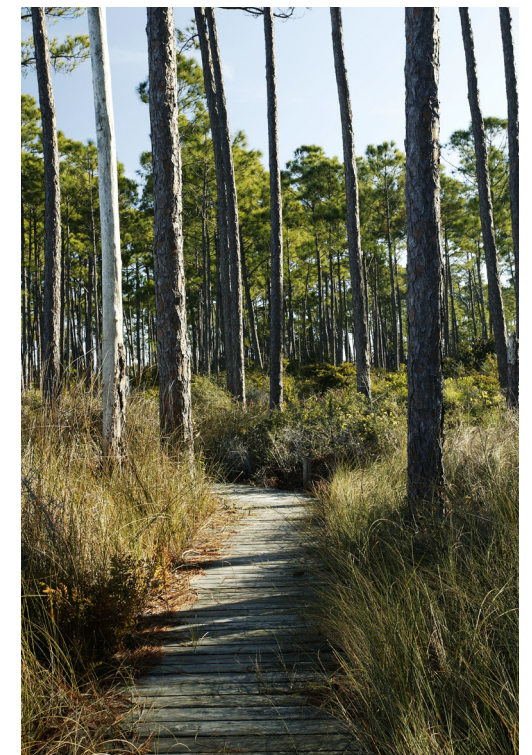
530 Pathways Drive
Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459
(850) 213-5299



The Watersound Trail connects Walton County and Bay County, running from the Watersound Origins community to the Panama City Beach Conservation Park. The trail can be accessed at Village Commons in Watersound Origins and offers a leisurely stroll on foot or a quiet bike ride through nature.

Watersound Trail

5 miles, Easy-Moderate





STATE PARKS AND STATE FOREST

With four state parks and a state forest, South Walton is truly a nature lover's paradise. Tucked amongst the scrub oaks you'll find opportunities for camping, miles of hiking and biking trails, prime examples of Florida's unspoiled natural vegetation, rare coastal dune lakes and diverse ecosystems.

TOPSAIL HILL PRESERVE STATE PARK is known for its towering sand dunes and 14 unique plant communities, and has been identified as the most pristine piece of coastal property in Florida. Topsail Hill showcases 1,600 acres of bald cypress swamps, nature trails that traverse mountainous sand dunes and two rare coastal dune lakes - Campbell Lake and Morris Lake. Visitors to Topsail Hill, which offers 3.2 miles of secluded beach, can spend the day soaking up sunshine, biking and hiking through the old growth long leaf pines, or reeling in bass and catfish. Want to stay longer than a day? Topsail Hill has more than 200 campsites and cabins to suit your style.



GRAYTON BEACH STATE PARK has trails that wind through pine flatwoods and around small freshwater ponds, which are a natural habitat for wading birds, water birds and lowland birds. Plovers, terns and gulls are common sights in this area. Grayton Beach State Park is home to two nature trails - The Flatwoods Trail and Western Lake Loop - that wind through acres of pristine landscapes. The park features a boat ramp, plenty of space for camping, sunbathing and exploring, whether by foot, bike or paddleboard. Speaking of paddleboards, Western Lake is the ideal spot to go for a leisurely paddle or kayak excursion. Grayton Beach State Park was hailed as the "Best Beach in the U.S." by Dr. Stephen Leatherman, aka Dr. Beach, in 2020.

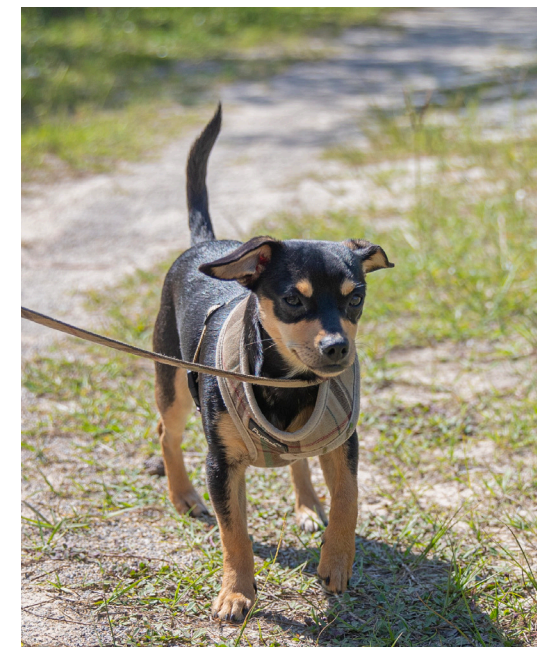


POINT WASHINGTON STATE FOREST boasts 15,000 acres and more than 27 miles of distinct trails that meander through coastal scrub, wet prairie, swamplands and longleaf pine flatwoods. Point Washington is a haven for bikers and hikers who can traverse trails that vary in length from the more relaxed 2.5-mile Western Trail to the more challenging 11-mile Orange Loop. There are four primitive campsites in Point Washington where visitors can stay the night. While camping you might notice several species of plants and animals, such as the gopher tortoise, flatwoods salamander and white-topped pitcher plants that are listed as threatened or endangered.

To learn more about the Florida State Parks and forests, and current fees, visit floridastateparks.org

DEER LAKE STATE PARK features a pristine coastal dune lake and bursts with a kaleidoscope of color from the summer wildflowers, plants and various species of birds and butterflies that make their home here. In Deer Lake State Park you'll find southern magnolias, woody goldenrod and scrub oaks, in addition to rare varieties of plants like the Gulf Coast lupine and spoonflower pitcher plants. Take a stroll along the 1.5 - mile Deer Lake Trail and explore the dune ecosystem, one of 11 natural communities in the park. Other favorite activities include fishing, enjoying a picnic lunch or just sunbathing and relaxing on the beach.

EDEN GARDENS STATE PARK is home to the Wesley Mansion, which was occupied by lumber baron William Henry Wesley and his family in the 1800s. Nowadays, visitors can tour the historic mansion or stroll through the carefully manicured gardens at Eden Gardens State Park. With gorgeous moss-draped ancient live oaks, camellias and azaleas sprinkled throughout the park, there are plenty of sights to soak up. The approximately 163-acre park is the perfect place to enjoy a serene lunch, an easy stroll through the park grounds, fishing in Tucker Bayou, or even a wedding.



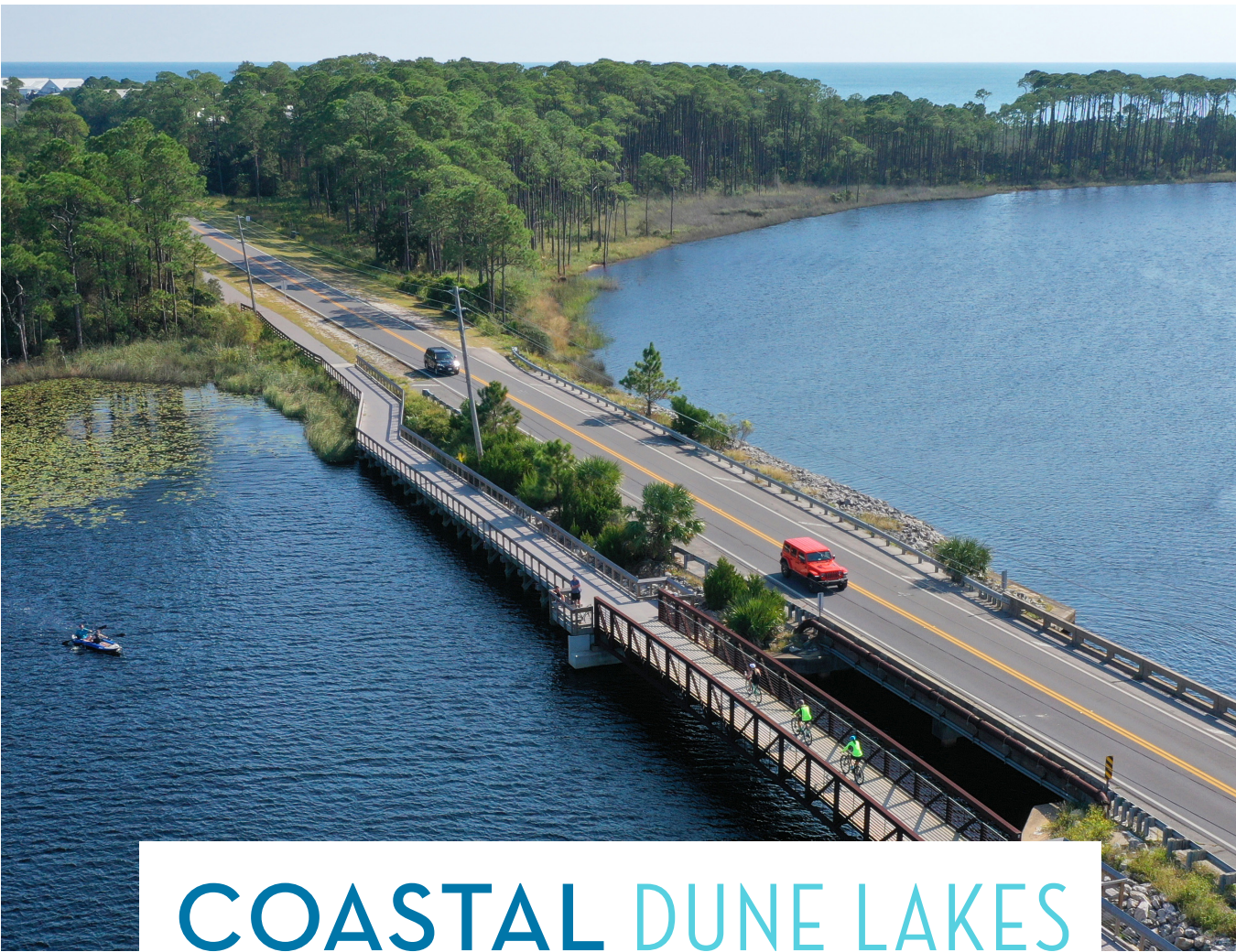


CAMPGROUNDS & RV PARKS

	Campsites	Cabins	Restroom Facilities	Gulf-front	Pool	Pet-friendly	
Bass Haven Campground LLC 350 Bass Haven Dr DeFuniak Springs	20	1	No	No	No	No	(850) 892-4043 facebook.com/bass-haven-rv-campground-221959954518727
Calypso Cove RV Park 18655 US Hwy 331 Freeport	46	16	Yes	No	No	Yes	(850) 835-4606 calypsorvpark.com
Destin RV Beach Resort 362 Miramar Beach Dr Miramar Beach	36	2	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	(850) 837-3529 destinrvresort.com
Eastern Lake Campgrounds Point Washington State Forest Santa Rosa Beach	4 primitive sites	0	Yes	No	No	Yes	(877) 879-3859 floridastateforests.reserveamerica.com/
Geronimo RV Resort 75 Arnett Ln Miramar Beach	34	0	Yes	No	No	Yes	(850) 424-6801 geronimorvresort.com
Grayton Beach State Park 357 Main Park Rd Grayton Beach	61	30	Yes	No	No	Yes	(850) 267-8300 floridastateparks.org/graytonbeach



	Campsites	Cabins	Restroom Facilities	Gulf-front	Pool	Pet-friendly	
Juniper Lake RV Campground 363 Black Bass Blvd DeFuniak Springs	21	0	No	No	No	No	(850) 892-3445
Live Oak Landing 229 Pitts Ave Freeport	65	35	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	(877) 436-5063 liveoaklandingrvresort.com
Peach Creek RV Resort 4401 US Hwy 98 E Santa Rosa Beach	14	contact directly	Yes	No	No	Yes	(850) 231-1948 campflorida.com
Sapphire Island Camping & RV Resort 5687 US Hwy 331 South DeFuniak Springs	25	0	Yes	No	No	Yes	(850) 520-4757 sapphire-island.com
Sunset King Lake RV Resort 366 Paradise Island Dr DeFuniak Springs	201	13	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	(850) 892-7229 sunsetking.com
Topsail Hill Preserve State Park 7525 W Co Hwy 30A Dune Allen	209	32	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	(850) 267-8330 floridastateparks.org/park/topsail-hill
Twin Lakes Camp Resort 580 Holley King Rd DeFuniak Springs	66	19	Yes	No	Yes	No	(850) 892-5914 twinlakescampresort.com



COASTAL DUNE LAKES

*Fuller Lake • Morris Lake • Campbell Lake • Stallworth Lake • Allen Lake • Oyster Lake
 Draper Lake • Big Redfish Lake • Little Redfish Lake • Alligator Lake • Western Lake
 Eastern Lake • Deer Lake • Camp Creek Lake • Lake Powell*

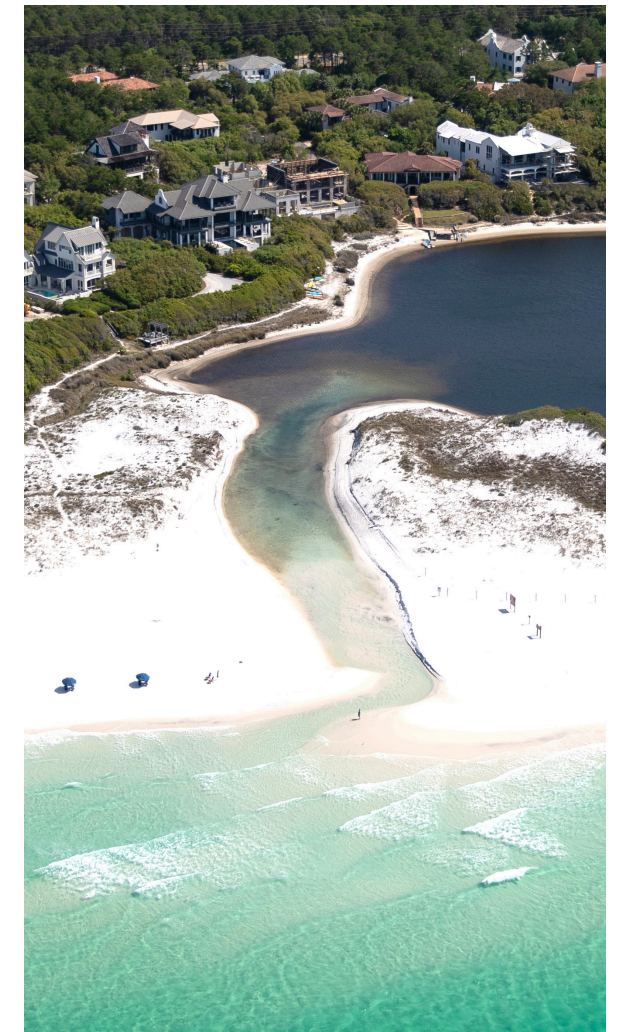
Nestled between the sugar-white sand dunes along South Walton's beach are some of the rarest and most spectacular natural features the area has to offer: coastal dune lakes. They're found in only a few places on earth: New Zealand, Australia, Madagascar and the U.S. Even in the same location, one coastal dune lake can vary drastically from its neighbors.

In South Walton, there are 15 coastal dune lakes dotted throughout the local landscape, and they're some of the most ecologically impactful and interesting features of the area. They're critically important to the coast because they store and filter water, and they also serve as a habitat for a unique mix of plants and animals. Without them, that mix of flora and fauna might not exist. Further, they provide a transition from saltwater to freshwater environments.

Coastal dune lakes are typically quite shallow, at an average depth of about five feet, and they're constantly changing, which is one of the reasons they're so fascinating. Because they're exposed to water from the Gulf and from inland, their salinity varies from lake to lake. Some lakes are nearly all freshwater, some are primarily saltwater, and some are brackish (a mix of both).

When the rains are heavy and the water level rises too high, the lowest point on the beach can give way (locally termed a "blowout") and create an outfall, where water flows toward the Gulf. In addition to being a pretty awesome thing to see, it redistributes the water properly and creates a natural equilibrium between bodies of water.

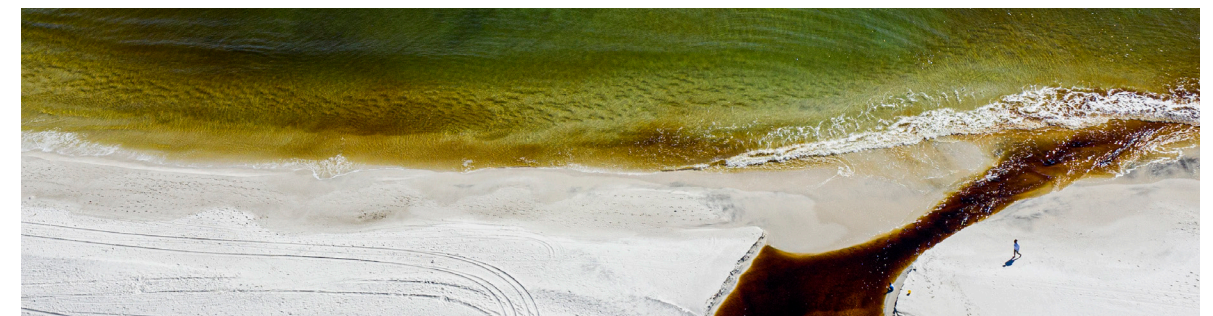
Because of the unique ecosystem they create, coastal dune lakes often look starkly different than the turquoise water of the Gulf. When organic material falls into the lake, it breaks down in the water, causing it to take on a copper color that looks a lot like tea. That's part of what makes them a perfect habitat for so much life – tons of nutrients.



There are plenty of activities that take advantage of their splendor. Fish, hike, boat or hop on a stand-up paddleboard and explore. One of the easiest ways to access South Walton's coastal dune lakes is through the state parks. You can spend time exploring the trails and natural splendor by hiking or biking at Grayton Beach State Park or Topsail Hill Preserve State Park, both of which provide direct access to dune lakes. A kayak or stand-up paddleboard is the perfect way to explore.

While we want everyone to enjoy these rare jewels, most importantly, join us in protecting and preserving these natural wonders. They help keep South Walton as beautiful and wild as it can be.

Find more information about coastal dune lakes in South Walton at [VisitSouthWalton.com](https://www.visitsouthwalton.com).



Underwater Museum of Art (UMA)



SOAK IN THE FUN
BENEATH THE WAVES



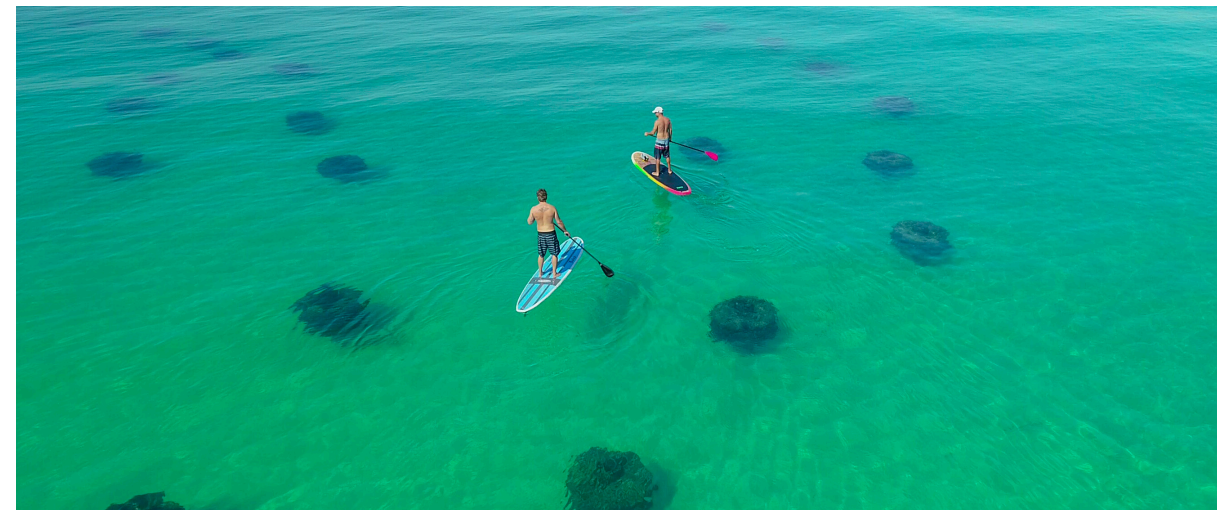
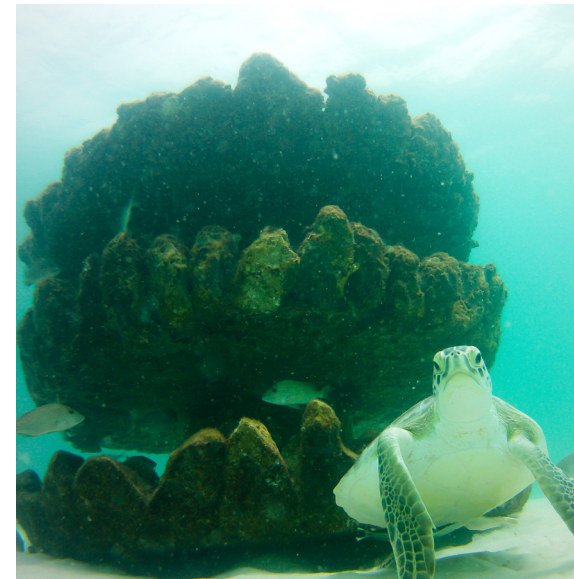


UNDERWATER REEFS

Want to experience our beauty from a different perspective? Try exploring the hidden gems beneath the Gulf's beautiful turquoise water, where you'll find snorkel reefs shaped like marine life and North America's first Underwater Museum of Art.

Walton County's sugar-white sand beaches and turquoise water are impossible to miss, but you may not know that some of its most beautiful sights wait beneath the waves.

Thanks to the efforts of the South Walton Artificial Reef Association, there are now a series of snorkel/dive reefs just a short distance from the beach. The reefs rest at a depth between 12-21 feet of water and are approximately 250-300 yards from shore.



Built in the shapes of a dolphin, grouper, turtle and a seahorse, these four near-shore reefs offer snorkelers and divers the opportunity to observe a variety of local marine life, attracted and protected by manmade reefs that have become part of the natural environment.

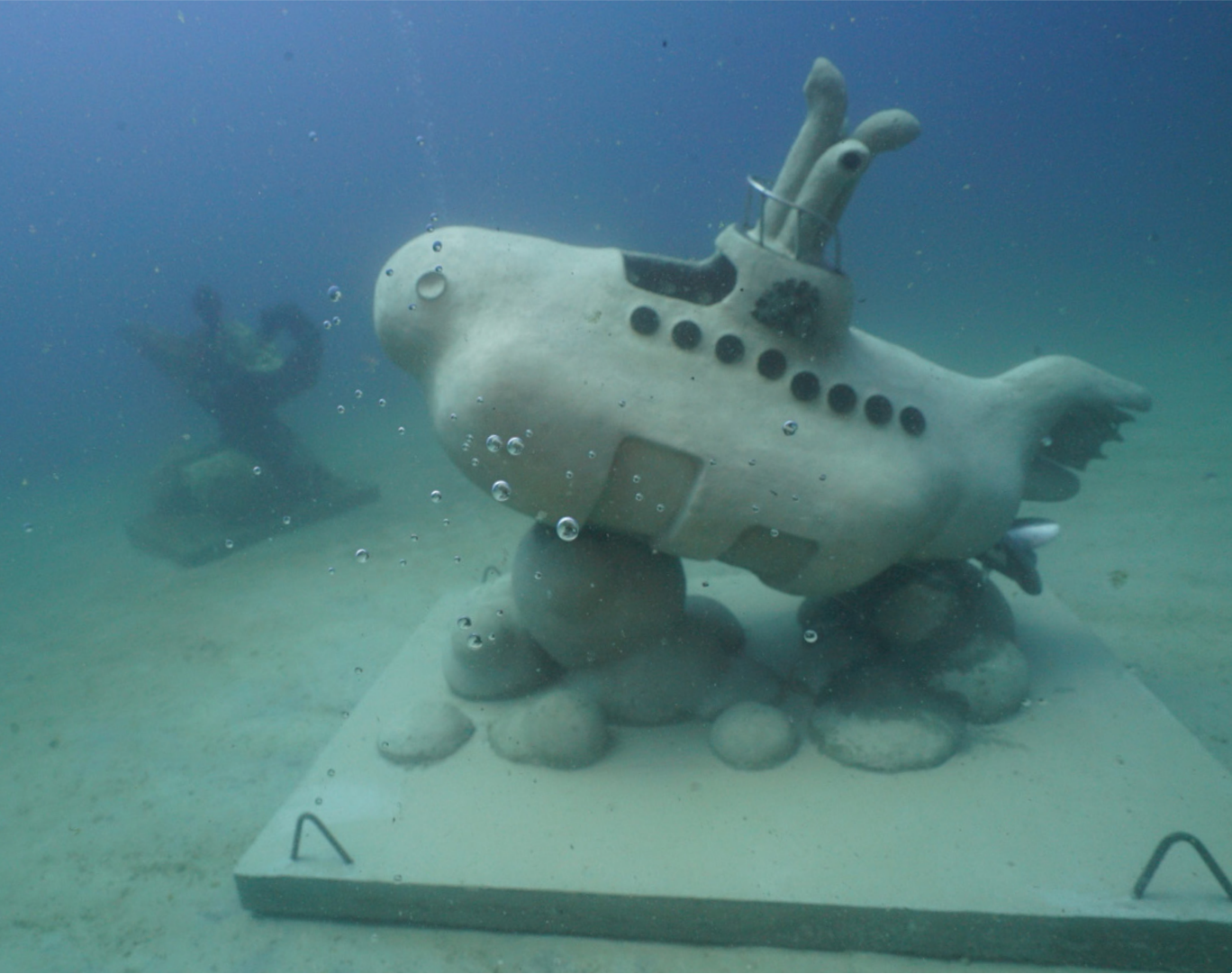
Easily reached by kayak or stand-up paddleboard, you'll find the SWARA snorkel reefs off the beach in Miramar Beach (Dolphin), Topsail Hill Preserve State Park (Seahorse), Grayton Beach (Turtle) and Inlet Beach (Grouper).

Exact reef coordinates can be found at [VisitSouthWalton.com/south-waltons-snorkel-reefs](https://www.visitSouthWalton.com/south-waltons-snorkel-reefs)

A bit further out into the Gulf of Mexico lies the Underwater Museum of Art, North America's first underwater sculpture museum. Submerged 0.93-miles from the shore of Grayton Beach, the museum is a collaboration between SWARA and the Cultural Arts Alliance of Walton County.

The inaugural UMA deployment took place in the summer of 2018 and featured seven sculptures, which included a giant pineapple aptly named "The Grayt Pineapple," created by local artist Rachel Herring and an 8-foot tall skull created by artist Vince Tatum. Former South Walton Artists of the Year Allison Wickey (Anamorphous Octopus) and Justin Gaffrey (Self Portrait) also contributed pieces to the museum.



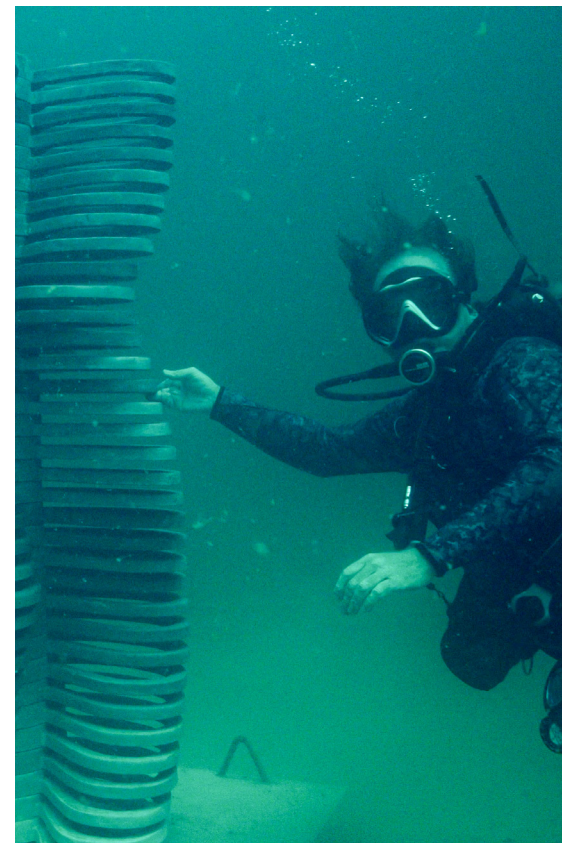


Sculptures from local and international artists are annually added to the UMA by crane from a barge. GPS coordinates are used so each work of art is installed in a precise location. This allows divers to easily locate specific sculptures while exploring the museum. Six sculptures were added in 2023 for a grand total of 40 sculptures on a One-acre patch of seabed.

In addition to providing a site for SCUBA diving that will be unique in the world, the sculptures are designed and selected with their suitability as marine habitat in mind, so even in the absence of SCUBA divers, the Underwater Museum of Art is certain to have many visitors, including schools of baitfish, grouper, sea turtles and dolphins.

Want to check out the museum for yourself? The sculpture garden's central piece, the SWARA Skull, is located at Latitude N 30 18.754, Longitude W 86 09.522.

For full descriptions of each sculpture, visit [VisitSouthWalton.com/underwater-museum-art](https://www.VisitSouthWalton.com/underwater-museum-art)





WALTON WATERWAYS

Is there any activity that says “Florida Vacation” more than a day of fishing? Dropping a line and reeling in the big one in Walton County is a unique experience, as some of the charter boats here launch directly from the sugar-white sand or the Choctawhatchee Bay.

People are drawn to water. Maybe it’s the fact that about 60 percent of the human body is water. Or maybe they are just looking for a break from dry land.

Luckily, Walton County is well-equipped to accommodate this. Sure, visitors have a great time exploring all the incredible land activities, but these places are also interconnected by amazing bodies of water that surround them - including rivers, bays and, of course, the Gulf of Mexico.

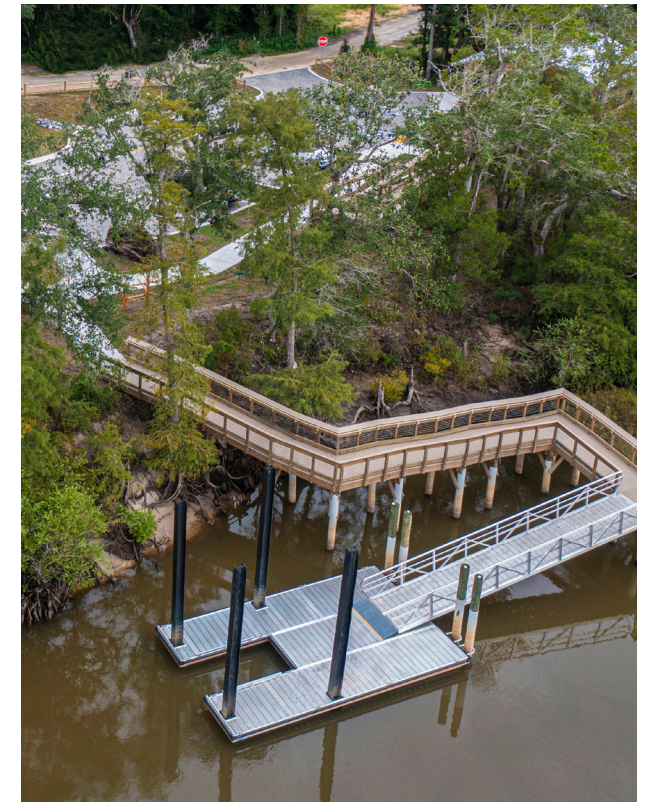
Grab a kayak or paddleboard and spend an afternoon paddling along local rivers, winding your way through the incredibly bio-diverse cypress swamps, head to the Bay at Grady Brown Park, or paddle along the Choctawhatchee River Blueway. No matter which location you choose, there are many rental options for your next adventure in Walton County.



Maybe what’s in the water is more exciting for you. Even if you’re just a novice angler, there are all sorts of opportunities to do a little sportfishing around Walton County.

Santa Rosa Charters specializes in unique back bay experiences on the Choctawhatchee Bay, which are fantastic for all ages. For inshore charter flats fishing and fly-fishing excursions, check out Florida Boy Adventures. Reel 30A offers exciting surf charters where they meet you right at the beach and guide you through everything you need to know. If you prefer to fish on your own, they also have premium fishing gear and tackle for rent and will deliver it right to you. Grayton Beach is one of the only areas in the country for beach launching, which is a great opportunity for your next fishing adventure. Don’t have your own boat to launch? Dead Fish Charters is another fishing charter option in Grayton Beach, providing bottom fishing trips where you will likely catch Grouper, Red Snapper, or Trigger Fish.

The many waterways of Walton County present a unique opportunity to get out and try things that you might not get to do back home. Thankfully, there are countless ways to experience the fun, whether you’re looking for a measure of adventure or you just want to unwind and appreciate the surrounding beauty.



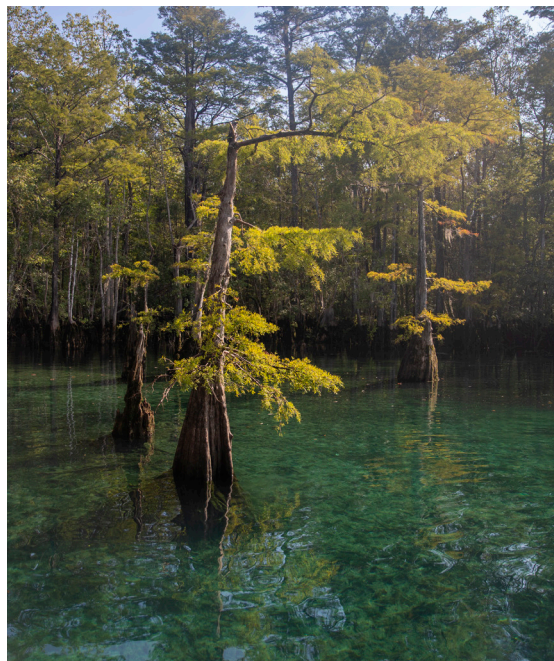
HIDDEN GEMS AND
MORE TO EXPLORE





MORRISON SPRINGS

Morrison Springs is one of Florida's more than 700 freshwater springs, with crystal clear, jaw-droppingly blue water surrounded by towering bald cypress trees.



Though Walton County is famous for its beaches, there's another body of water—and a stunning day trip—locals love and visitors shouldn't miss. Morrison Springs is one of Florida's more than 700 freshwater springs, with crystal clear, jaw-droppingly blue water surrounded by towering bald cypress trees.

More than 250 feet in diameter and 300 feet deep, Morrison Springs is surrounded by a county park stretching across 161 acres of floodplains and uplands, featuring large boardwalks overlooking the springs, a diving dock and a new boat ramp. Free, open daily and accessible to all abilities, the park is a haven for picnickers, snorkelers, swimmers, kayakers, boaters and scuba divers. And don't forget the paddleboard—Morrison Springs is one of the most beautiful places you'll find for this popular watersport.



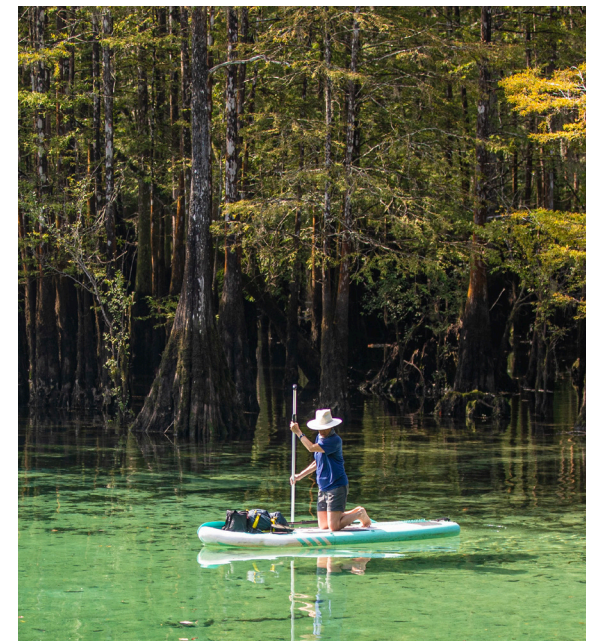
Because of its limestone base and sandy floor, which give the springs its exceptional clarity, Morrison Springs is one of Florida's most popular diving destinations. Certified cave divers come to explore the underwater cavern, but even beginners can enjoy real-life high definition views of aquatic wildlife. Snorkel through the refreshingly cool water and explore around the underwater roots of the cypress trees, where you'll find schools of fish and other small creatures making their home.



A beautiful, sandy beach is perfect for taking in the scene if you're in the mood for relaxation, bordering shallower areas where kids can splash and play to their hearts' content. Pack a basket and enjoy a picnic in the shade of the pavilion, equally perfect for family outings or a creative (and beautiful) date. The pavilion includes grills as well as ample table space, not to mention breathtaking views.

Whether you're looking for family fun, an outing with friends or just exploring on your own, you'll find an oasis you'll likely return to at Morrison Springs.

For more outdoor adventure ideas, check out [VisitSouthWalton.com/listings/outdoors-nature](https://www.VisitSouthWalton.com/listings/outdoors-nature)





GLENDALE MEMORIAL NATURE PRESERVE

The Glendale Memorial Nature Preserve is a 350-acre eco-friendly “green” cemetery in Glendale, that was chartered in 2002 and is maintained by two brothers and local farmers, John and Bill Wilkerson.

Located about 10 miles north of DeFuniak Springs on U.S. Highway 83, the driveway is marked on both sides with giant missile domes bought from a military surplus store for about \$75 in the ‘90s. Driving past the property on the highway you can also see a 100-foot historic fire tower and massive metal eclectic creatures nestled in the brush.

John Wilkerson created more than 20 metal sculptures he calls “Rustasauruses,” and they live throughout the preserve. Each is unique and made from old machinery and recycled metals and parts. Every sculpture comes with its own name and backstory including having their own religion – “Rustafarian.” Visitors can view the sculptures at anytime, but scheduled tours are also available; to ensure a spot call ahead due to limited availability.

While there are trails and boardwalks created to navigate burial sites, visitors can also enjoy the serene environment of the longleaf pine-wiregrass ecosystem and bamboo forests. About 80 percent of the land parcel remains undeveloped.



Before they founded the preserve, the brothers worked as farmers on the family farm growing a crop called chufa.

“My brother and I got a 350-acre farm the old-fashioned way, inheritance,” said Wilkerson. “Our parents got us to agree not to break it into little pieces.”

To keep all 350 acres intact and preserve the family farm, the brothers decided to start a nonprofit and founded the preserve to preserve the land forevermore as a cemetery.

The goal of the brothers is to preserve and protect their land while also honoring previous lives of people and pets. With environmental values at the heart of the preserve, efforts are made to educate people about the negative effects traditional burials have on the environment and offer services to reduce the amount of chemicals and materials that are buried in the ground each year.



To help reduce materials and toxic chemicals used in burials, the cemetery offers burials without vaults, embalming chemicals and unnecessary expensive procedures.

“You don’t need a casket. A blanket works just as good,” said Wilkerson.

Caskets must be biodegradable and made from wood or cardboard; shrouds or a favorite blanket can also be used. Handmade caskets are made onsite from lumber sourced from the preserve. Wilkerson also has an old-fashioned sawmill on the property that he put together himself and runs off a 1967 Chevy engine.

Grave markers are handmade onsite as well and are produced from recycled scraps of metal. Each grave is required to have an aluminum marker with the name of the deceased, birth and death date and a brass marker that shows the direction a person’s head faces. These markers are roughly the size of a baseball and attached to a rod that sticks out of the ground.

Landmarks of the property, like the outdoor chapel and a historic 100-foot fire tower, are both easy to-find locations where ashes are often scattered. The chapel is also a multi-functional building that can be used for weddings, community services and get togethers.

Visitors are welcome to walk the grounds at any time and enjoy the trails, boardwalks, lakes and tranquil environment. Scheduled tours of the property to learn about the unique backstory of each “rustasaurus” are also provided. For more information about the preserve please visit glendalenaturepreserve.org.





FLORIDA'S HIGHEST POINT

For a peaceful escape, take a day trip to Florida's highest elevation point. Located in Paxton, Lakewood Park is a perfect place to enjoy a leisurely stroll along the picturesque walking trails and savor the beauty of nature. Climb to Britton Hill - the highest point of geographical elevation in all of Florida - at a modest 345 feet above sea level.

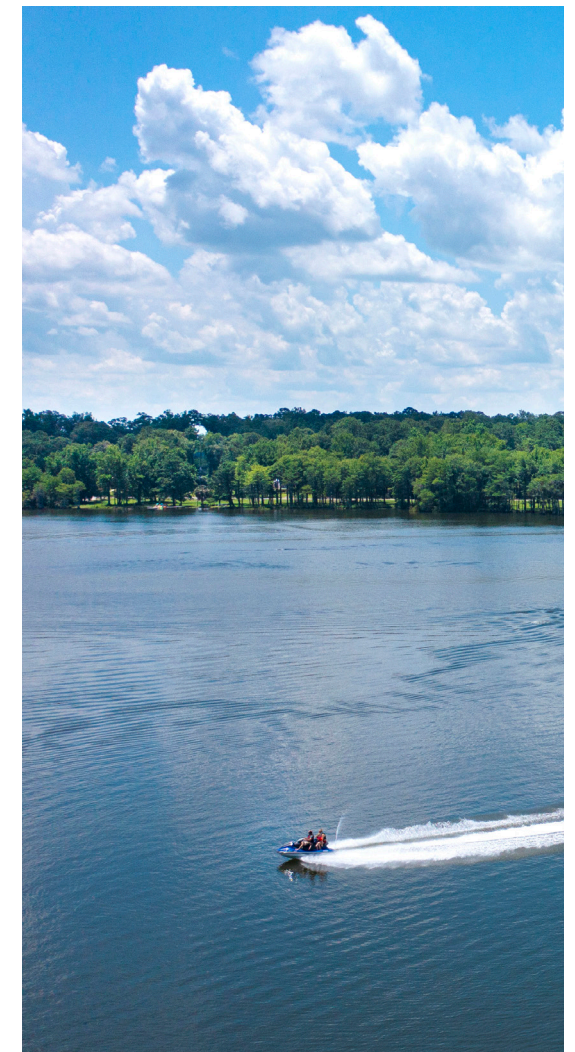
A big part of what makes Walton County such a unique place is the great diversity of history, scenery and activities. All of these local communities are filled with hidden treasures just waiting to be discovered.

Here, at the northernmost edge of the county, amid the pastoral beauty of rolling pastures and woodland areas, you'll find the quiet little town of Paxton.



With a small population, the town is very family-oriented and welcoming. A history of farming had already been well-established when Paxton became home to the area's first sawmill back in 1903. As commerce around the mill gradually expanded, the surrounding community began to flourish.

But it's from those early roots in farming that Paxton continues to grow today. Throw in the nearby baseball field, and it's always a hit with the kids! The Ag Center also hosts events during the year, including the annual Bobby Kemp Sr. Heritage Day festival in September.



The great outdoors also plays a vital role in the area's recreational culture. Paxton is nestled right against Lake Jackson, which straddles the Florida-Alabama line, providing an ideal outlet for leisure time and nature appreciation. Perhaps the best way to fully enjoy the lake is by getting out on the water. Bring a canoe or kayak to paddle around in search of local wildlife.

Most importantly, as you wander between attractions here, you'll encounter plenty of genuinely friendly locals who are happy to share their love of the area. It's a day trip that will reveal a whole new slice of life to lift your spirits.



HISTORIC DEFUNIAK SPRINGS

History buffs have no trouble finding hidden gems while exploring DeFuniak Springs! The city of DeFuniak Springs was founded in the late 1880s by the Pensacola and Atlantic Railroad. It was later incorporated in 1901 and named in honor of Fredrick deFuniak, the chief engineer of the L&N Railroad. The word “Springs” refers to the round, spring-fed lake in the center of town.



A walking tour of Lake DeFuniak lets you stroll back in time with an amazing display of architectural artistry. Nearly 200 historic buildings surround the lake, about 40 of which are noted on the National Register of Historic Places. Classic Victorian homes are prevalent, and even many of the newer homes offer an Old World elegance – constructed in styles such as Queen Anne and Colonial Revival.

Some of the incredible buildings were part of the Chautauqua Assembly that once thrived here. Built in 1896, St. Agatha’s Episcopal Church showcases what is known as the Carpenter Gothic style. And the Chautauqua Hall of Brotherhood once filled up for presentations by luminaries such as Harriet Beecher Stowe, William Jennings Bryan, and Red Cross founder Clara Barton.

While the assembly closed nearly 100 years ago, you can still take an informative walking tour around Circle Drive. Eighteen detailed signs carry you through the history of this once-gated resort. These are complemented by a map of the 1884 campus, offering a great then-and-now sense of perspective.

Along with being the home of the Chautauqua movement, the oldest continually operating library in the state of Florida also calls DeFuniak Springs home. Drop by to check out an impressive collection of historic weapons that include swords, spikes and spears from all over the world. The library is also home to a signed copy of "To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee.

If antique shopping is your favorite way to spend an afternoon, be sure to check out the unique shops along Mainstreet DeFuniak. Nook & Cranny is filled with beautiful antiques, local art and hard-to-find vintage glass pieces.

For a deep dive into local history, visit the Walton County Heritage Museum, located in the former L&N Train Depot on Circle Drive. Look for the historic, bright-red train car stationed next to the building.



ABOVE: The Walton-DeFuniak Public Library in 1891 on the day that a small oak sapling was planted.
BELOW: Over 100 years later, the sapling has grown into a beautiful tree.





DISCOVER FREEPORT

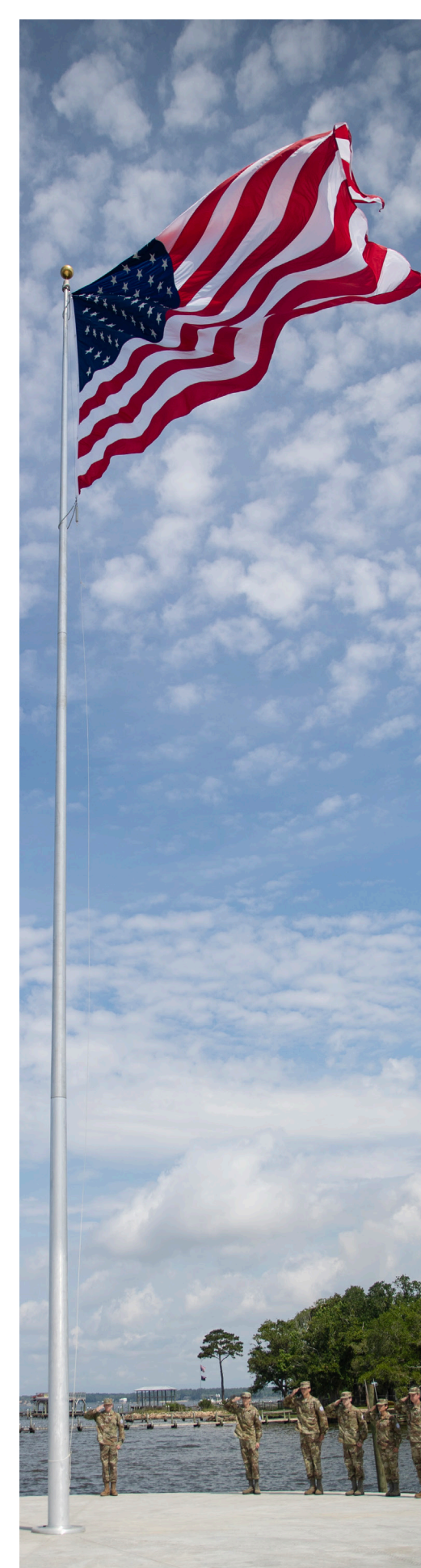
For those looking to explore beyond the beach, there's a whole world of culture and history waiting just north of the Choctawhatchee Bay. The first community you'll come across is Freeport, which serves as a lively crossroads between the north and south ends of Walton County.

Recreation on the Choctawhatchee Bay is part of a perfect day in Freeport. Stretching about 30 miles from end-to-end and between 4 to 6 miles across at any given point, Choctawhatchee Bay is ideal for boating, fishing, paddleboarding and swimming. The shores are lined with parks, playgrounds and green spaces for a perfect picnic or just enjoying the view.

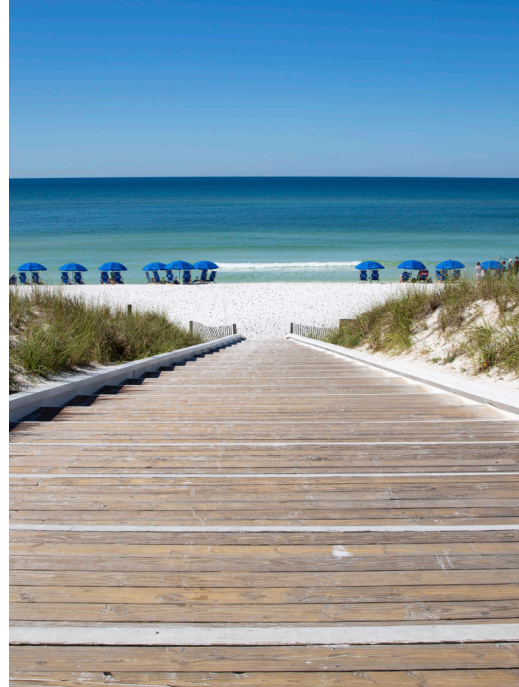
Nature lovers should take time to visit the E.O. Wilson Biophilia Center. Covering about 28,000 square-feet, they aim to turn visitors into conservationists through fascinating classes, interpretive exhibits and opportunities for interaction. The center educates more than 5,200 students each year from a five-county area of the surrounding Panhandle, and is open to the public Thursdays and Fridays in June and July. It's located on the equally impressive Nokuse Plantation - which, at close to 54,000 acres, is the largest block of privately-owned conservation land in the southeastern United States. Extensive trail systems meander throughout the plantation to further enhance the exploratory experience.

Next, stop by Casey Park for a visit to the Freeport Veterans Memorial - a moving tribute to active, retired and fallen service members. The memorial has been evolving for more than a decade and now consists of multiple venues, including an eternal Freedom Flame and the Grace Project, which honors women in service. This beautiful park is a perfect place to relax and reflect at the end of a day of exploration.

Freeport is a true paradise for outdoor lovers of all ages. Whether you're looking to spend the day learning about local wildlife or want to catch a colorful sunset over the Choctawhatchee Bay, there's something for everyone in Freeport.



WALTON COUNTY TOURISM










A BETTER BEACH EXPERIENCE

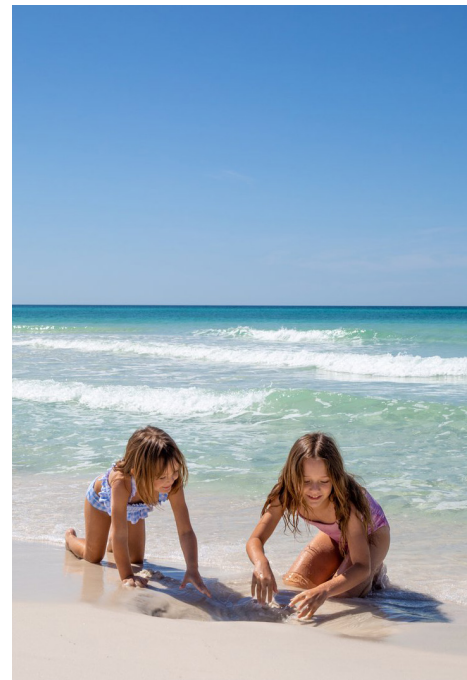
Walton County Tourism is committed to protecting all our beachgoers - from tourists to turtles. In the past year, we spent almost \$4 million on beach improvements and maintained a program that pays for more than 50 lifeguards. We also sent nearly 7.3 million texts last year on surf conditions from marine pests to dangerous rip currents. Learn more to improve your next visit.



Beach Safety in South Walton

For a complete guide on Walton County's beach rules, visit BeachSafety.com

-  Glass containers and littering are prohibited.
-  Vehicles, dogs and bonfires require permits.
Permits may be obtained through Walton County Code Compliance, (850) 622-0000.
-  Know Before You Go. Obey all beach flag warnings.
-  Leave No Trace. Items left on the beach overnight will be discarded.
-  Keep off the dunes.
-  Removal of sand, water or vegetation is strictly prohibited.
-  Sea turtle nesting season is May 1 through October 31.
If you find an injured, sick or dead sea turtle, or to report someone disturbing a sea turtle nest, please call the Walton County Sheriff's Office, (850) 267-2000.



KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

TEXT SAFETY TO 31279 FOR SURF CONDITIONS

BEACH FLAGS



DOUBLE RED FLAGS
WATER CLOSED TO PUBLIC*



RED FLAG- HIGH HAZARD
High Surf and/or Strong Currents



YELLOW FLAG- MEDIUM HAZARD
Moderate Surf and/or Currents



GREEN FLAG- LOW HAZARD
Calm Conditions, Exercise Caution



PURPLE FLAG- STINGING MARINE LIFE
Man O' War, Jellyfish, Stingrays

*Entering the Gulf during double red flag conditions can result in a \$500 fine and criminal charges. Absence of flags does not assure safe waters. Swim at your own risk. For emergencies call or text 911.

