



## **Water Lovers Delight in Panama City, Florida's Perfect Setting**

*Access to marinas, water activities and waterfront dining options attract visitors*

**Panama City, FL – May 8, 2018** – [Panama City, Florida](#)'s history and culture is defined by water: from St. Andrews Bay, which offers ready access to the Gulf of Mexico, to the many bayous and creeks that run through the city and empty into the bay. Panama City is known for its rich biodiversity and a favorable climate, making it an angler's paradise, a world-class destination for sailing and boating and an overall favorite destination of water lovers.

"St. Andrews Bay continues to draw international crowds to Panama City," says Jennifer Vigil, Destination Panama City president and CEO. "We cherish the water and the role it has played in Panama City's development. Surrounded by water on three sides, we truly are a community where life sets sail."

### **Marinas**

Panama City's three marinas, [Panama City Marina](#), [St. Andrews Marina](#) and [Sun Harbor Marina](#), provide access to outstanding year-round inshore and offshore fishing and shelling excursions to unpopulated barrier islands. Located on the boating world's "Great Loop," waters around Panama City boast ideal wind conditions that make Panama City a world-class sailing destination and host of numerous regattas.

### **Activities**

Sprawling more than 68,000 acres behind the protection of the Gulf of Mexico shoreline, St. Andrews Bay is home to abundant aquatic life. The bay spans more than 20 miles and includes a wealth of saltwater flats and seagrass beds that offer a rich bounty. Redfish, speckled trout, black drum, cobia, sheepshead and flounder are just a few of the species populating these channels. The clear waters of this extensive ecosystem are ideal for both novice and expert anglers.

Nearby Shell Island, an undeveloped barrier island occupying a seven-mile stretch between the Gulf of Mexico and St. Andrew Bay, is the perfect excursion for the sea loving. Only accessible by boat, its pristinely white beaches, natural dunes and emerald water attract locals and visitors alike. The warm waters around the island are home to friendly bottle-nose dolphins. It's ideal for shelling, snorkeling, fishing and maybe even a sea turtle sighting!

### **Dining**

Panama City's proximity to the Gulf of Mexico provides a year-round supply of fresh-caught seafood, and "Hook & Cook" is a unique way to enjoy it. Offering guests the opportunity to have a restaurant expertly prepare the fish they catch, "Hook & Cook" trips turn a fun day on the water into an evening of fishing stories shared over a delicious meal of fresh seafood. Charter boats that run out of Sun Harbor Marina are offered this service at [The Shipyard Grill](#).

Panama City features an abundance of waterfront dining options. [Bayou Joe's](#) is a waterfront dining experience unlike any other in Panama City. Tucked in the heart of Massalina Bayou, Bayou Joe's offers 180-degree views of the water and serves some of the best Southern-style fried oysters. Visitors enjoy watching the boats sail by while enjoying a meal at [Alice's on Bayview](#) and [Uncle Ernie's Bayfront Grill & Brew House](#), both overlooking the St. Andrews Marina. Arrive by land or by sea and enjoy the laid back atmosphere at [Barefoot on the Bay Bar & Grill](#). Also, taste the locally caught seafood and amazing views at [The Shrimp Boat](#), the casual waterfront restaurant has been a staple in St. Andrews since it was built in 1950.

Panama City is also home to Chef Ernie Hall, who was named by Food Network as one of the Top 16 Cooks in America. Head over to Chef Ernie's floating restaurant, [Just the Cook](#), for his award-winning Dan-D-Donut Burger, a rosemary-seasoned all-beef burger topped with Canadian bacon, Swiss and bleu cheeses, and a grilled red pepper, sandwiched between two locally made grilled doughnuts. The house boat turned restaurant occupies slip 81 at St. Andrews Marina.

Panama City's Oyster Trail, made up of more than a dozen restaurants, is designed to connect visitors to Panama City oyster purveyors, raw bars and restaurants, and to celebrate and support the watermen who harvest wild oysters, a generations-old sustainable industry and an engrained cultural treasure in the region. Whether craving raw, baked, chargrilled or fried, Panama City serves up the tasty local bivalves in almost every method imaginable. The Oyster Trail is open year-round as Gulf Coast oysters don't change significantly in flavor throughout the year. Because of the warm waters, the oysters never go dormant and stay mild and somewhat soft all year round. For more information, visit <https://destinationpanamacity.com/oyster-trail/>.

### **Attractions**

Enjoy a beautiful sunset at Oaks by the Bay Park, which features a boardwalk overlooking St. Andrews Bay. Or, take a ride on the [Governor Stone](#), Panama City's national historic landmark. The 140-year-old wooden schooner sails the St. Andrews Harbor on the second Saturday of each month, carrying passengers at no cost.

### **ABOUT PANAMA CITY**

Embraced by beautiful St. Andrews Bay on Florida's Emerald Coast, Panama City offers a myriad of water sports ranging from world-class sailing to some of the best year-round in-shore and off-shore fishing in the U.S. Off the water, visitors to the Northwest Florida city delight in the sunny destination's eclectically rich neighborhoods offering a thriving visual and performing arts scene, a range of dining that makes full use of bounteous local seafood, and diverse shopping and antiques. To contact Destination Panama City

directly call 850-215-1700. Please visit [destinationpanamacity.com](http://destinationpanamacity.com), and follow on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). Join the conversation at #destinationpanamacity.

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