

2013 - 2014 Visitors Guide

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Membership Listing Legend:

☎ - Phone Number ☎ - Fax Number 🌐 - Website

PORT ISABEL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

421 Queen Isabella Blvd. ~ Port Isabel, Texas 78578
www.portisabel.org ~ 1-800-527-6102 ~ 956-943-2262
Fax: 956-943-4001 ~ email: director@portisabel.org

The Port Isabel Visitor's Guide is published by the Port Isabel Chamber of Commerce. It is designed to serve as a resource for the visitor, persons interested in business or residential relocation or out of the area inquiries.

The Port Isabel Chamber of Commerce is organized to promote business and community growth, to promote tourism, to advance the general welfare and prosperity of the city so that its business people will prosper and to enhance the quality of life and values of the community.

©2013 - 2014 (All editorial images: Valerie Bates, unless otherwise noted. Vintage & historic pics: V. Bates Collection. Fishing pics: Danno Wise, Black Dragon: courtesy photo.)

WELCOME TO PORT ISABEL!

If you are just here for a short visit or are interested in a permanent relocation, the City of Port Isabel wants to make sure your experience is everything you want it to be.

Port Isabel's most recent and exciting happening is the opening of our state of the art Port Isabel Event & Cultural Center! Located in Port Isabel's historic and cultural district, just a block off Highway 100 (309 Railroad Ave.), the newly opened Port Isabel Event & Cultural Center is poised to offer an event venue that is both convenient and flexible. With over 9,000 square feet, the PIECC can host a variety of events from social to business and everything in between.

Just visiting Port Isabel? You can experience the rich history of the Laguna Madre in the Port Isabel Historic Museum, the Treasures of the Gulf Museum and the Port Isabel Lighthouse. Or dine in a variety of fine restaurants, shop for souvenirs or just relax and soak up our coastal ambience. For the adventuring angler, Port Isabel is bordered by the hyper saline Laguna Madre Bay where you can fish for trout, redfish, drum or the prized and elusive snook. Over a dozen different species are catchable in a single day. Soak up the sun on South Padre Island, one of the top three beaches in the world, just 2.6 miles across the Queen Isabella Memorial Bridge. Take a dolphin watch, eco tour, pirate cruise, a walk on the longest lighted pier in Texas or enjoy a movie projected on the side of the Port Isabel Lighthouse during the Lighthouse Establishment Cinema. Annual events include the Pachanga in the Park, Community Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony, Lighted Boat Parade, Queen Isabella Market Day, Lighthouse Market Day, the Longest Causeway Run & Fitness Walk, Los Colores del Muerte (Day of the Dead Festival), the monthly Port Isabel Antique & Flea Market and the World Championship Shrimp Cook-Off.

Relocating or starting a business? Port Isabel also boasts a healthy business community with everything from light industry to retail to commercial and fosters a strong entrepreneurial climate that produces charter captains, artists, restaurateurs, retail specialty shops and support industries.

If you are interested in relocating your family, Port Isabel can offer good schools, a well equipped public library system, sports programs, Boys and Girls Club, good schools, spacious parks and a high-quality of life. With a population of 5,078, Port Isabel is big on everything you would expect to find in a small town. And with a climate that is mild all year around residents can enjoy all the amenities that the visitor can, including convenient public transportation aboard the WAVE to all points between South Padre Island and Laguna Heights.

The City of Port Isabel, the Commissioners and the Mayor's Office welcome and invite you to immerse yourself in the Port Isabel experience. Please let us know if we can be of any assistance with your travel or relocation plans.

Sincerely,

Mayor Joe E. Vega

City of Port Isabel Mayor



Joe E. Vega
Mayor of Port Isabel



Point Isabel Lighthouse

The Point Isabel Lighthouse is the heart of the Port Isabel experience! Open to the public, daily, weather permitting, a stroll to the top of the 70 ft. tower offers a 16 mile view. The lighthouse was constructed in 1852 as a working beacon for vessels entering the Brazos Santiago Pass. Decommissioned in 1905, the lighthouse is now a primary tourist attraction.

Tickets may be purchased in the Lighthouse, the Keepers Cottage (Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Center), the Treasures of the Gulf Museum and the Port Isabel Historical Museum.

Hours of Operation: Daily 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (weather permitting).
Summer Hours: Monday - Thursday 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Friday - Sunday 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Ticket Information: Individual Site Tickets to the Port Isabel Lighthouse OR the Treasures of the Gulf Museum OR the Port Isabel Historical Museum.

Adults: \$3.00; Senior Citizens*: \$2.00; Students**: \$1.00

Children 4 & Under: Free; Museum Member***: Free.

Combination Site Ticket: to the Port Isabel Lighthouse & Keepers Cottage AND the Treasures of the Gulf Museum AND the Port Isabel Historical Museum.

Adults: \$7.00; Senior Citizens*: \$5.00; Students**: \$2.00

Children 4 & Under: Free; Museum Member***: Free

*Senior Citizens (55 & over); **Students (K - College with ID);

***Museum Member (with Membership Card). Military ID: Free.

For more information: www.portisabellighthouse.com.





Welcome To Port Isabel!

On behalf of the Port Isabel Chamber of Commerce, I would like to thank you for your interest in our area. We hope the information contained in our new Visitors Guide will provide you with the help you need in planning your next trip, relocating to our area, or starting a new business venture within the community.

The Laguna Madre area encompasses the bay area of Port Isabel, South Padre Island, Laguna Heights and Laguna Vista. Port Isabel boasts a permanent population in excess of 5,000 and is separated from the shores of South Padre Island by the 2.6 mile long Queen Isabella Causeway. Its subtropical climate and heritage rich in culture and history make the city a favorite destination for millions of visitors each year. We hope you will be among them.

We are proud of our community and invite you to explore its great dining, shopping and lodging. Fishing, boating, shelling, surfing, swimming, bird-watching, windsurfing and more are among the many vacation opportunities available to you year round. We know you will appreciate all these amenities plus our close proximity to Mexico—located just 30 minutes away.

Once you arrive in Port Isabel, please stop by and visit us at the Chamber office, located next to the historic Lighthouse in the replica of the original Lighthouse keeper's cottage on Highway 100 in Port Isabel just before the entrance to the causeway. Our office is open Monday through Friday from 9 am to 5 pm and Saturdays from 10 am to 4 pm. We look forward to your visit!

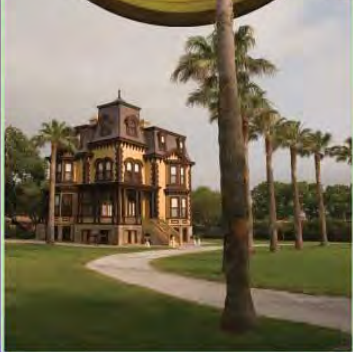
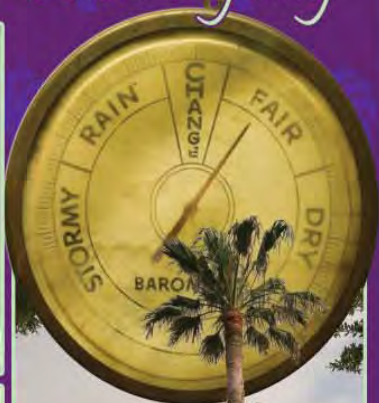
Sincerely,

Betty Wells

Port Isabel Chamber of Commerce President

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101 Things To Do In Port Isabel

1- CLIMB THE PORT ISABEL LIGHTHOUSE. The Port Isabel Lighthouse is the only lighthouse open to the public on the Texas Gulf Coast.



2- LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER'S COTTAGE. Visit the Lighthouse Keeper's Cottage for a free lighthouse memorabilia and artifact display.

3- TREASURES OF THE GULF MUSEUM. In 1554, a fleet of ships wrecked 30 miles north of Port Isabel. The Treasures Museum tells the tale of the survivors with a variety of displays. Gift shop.

4- PORT ISABEL HISTORIC MUSEUM. The Champion building, built in 1899, sports a fish mural painted by a one-armed man.

5- ILLUMINATING THE LIGHTHOUSE. The lighthouse is decorated and illuminated for celebrations or awareness during select times of the year.

6- BEULAH LEE PARK. In the center of Park District. Two gazebos, lots of outdoors.

7- PORT ISABEL EVENT & CULTURAL. Port Isabel's newest venue! Over 9,000 square feet of meeting and event space. 309 E. Railroad Ave.

8- TEXAS' LONGEST LIGHTED FISHING PIER. Don't have a rod and reel? Rent one. Don't want to fish... spectators are welcomed.

9- PORT ISABEL YACHT CLUB. Constructed in 1927, when Port Isabel was just incorporated and just a few years before the area got a deep water port.

10- BAY FISHING TRIP. Need a story to bring back home with you? Capable and local expert captain captains can find the fish. Skinny water, great big fish.

11- OFFSHORE FISHING TRIP. Skinny water not enough? Try an offshore fishing experience for a bigger fishing tale.

12- BUTTERFLY & BIRDWATCHING AT THE MUSEUMS. Specially selected foliage attracts birds and butterflies in public green areas all over town.

13- WATCHING PELICANS AT PELICAN STATION. Pelicans perch on the railroad pier pilings and boulders.

14- BUY FRESH SEAFOOD. If you don't want to catch your own, or just want to take home some succulent Gulf shrimp, shop Quik Stop, Joe's Seafood Market, Reyes Seafood or Gulf Seafood for your own fresh Gulf catch.

15- EAT FRESH SEAFOOD. Many restaurants offer to cook your catch and add their side dishes. Or choose from menus full of expertly prepared seafood.

16- SHOP TILL YOU DROP. Whatever you want? Browse and leave with just a postcard or a new address!

17- VIEW THE SHRIMP BOAT FLEETS. Visible from both South Shore & Port District, or from the end of Champion St.

18- CROSS THE ONLY SWING BRIDGE IN TEXAS. At the intersection of South Shore Drive and Garcia St., you can cross the only swing bridge in Texas.

19- GO ON A DOLPHIN CRUISE. Take a few friends or your family with you on a dolphin cruise and experience marine life close up and personal.

20- CITY OF PORT ISABEL CEMETERY. The City Cemetery is home to some of the earliest settlers to the area. Grave markers with countries of origins connect us to lands across the waters.

21- OLDEST CEMETERY IN PORT ISABEL. Located on Island Ave., right hand side, 1/2 block north of Queen Isabella Blvd.

22- VISIT THE QUEEN ISABEL INN. Constructed sometime in 1908-1909, the Queen Isabel Inn has been witness and triumphant to many of the area's hurricanes.

23- DRIVE MODERN VENICE. Carved from earth and water during the 1930s, Modern Venice offers a waterfront view for every resident.

24- DRIVE THE PORT ISABEL/SAN BENITO NAVIGATION DISTRICT. The southernmost deepwater port in Texas is home to shrimping fleets, related industry and can facilitate large



sea going vessels at its docks. Shrimp boats use the turning basin before heading back to dock. Barges, ships, fishing and pleasure craft pass through these waters.

25- PICNIC UNDER THE TREES AT THE PORT ISABEL LIGHTHOUSE STATE HISTORIC SITE. Enjoy an afternoon in the sea breezes, under the trees, steps from the historic Port Isabel Lighthouse.



101 Things To Do In Port Isabel

26- **READ AN ADVENTURE AT THE PORT ISABEL PUBLIC LIBRARY.** Take a break from all the action and settle in with a good book. Or check up on news from home on one of the library's computers. 213 Yturria St.

27- **TAKE THE WALK OF GENERALS.** Strategically placed in the Lighthouse District, the walk of Generals pays homage to the military giants that spent time in Port Isabel or on Brazos Santiago (Boca Chica beach).

28- **HIKE OR BIKE THE EL PASEO TRAIL.** 11 miles of marked trails will take you from the east end of Port Isabel to the County Park in Laguna Heights.

29- **VISIT ALL 8 DISTRICTS IN PORT ISABEL.** 8 districts offer a glimpse of the diverse character of Port Isabel.

30- **SEE THE WETLANDS BEHIND H.E.B.** The intersection of Highways 48 & 100 is a perfect example of the terrain of the Laguna Madre area before its settlement in the early years.

31- **WINDSURF THE LAGUNA MADRE.** No shortage of fuel here! Navigate the bay from the flats on South Padre Island to the Port Isabel Side Channel in Port Isabel.

32- **VISIT THE HISTORIC FORT POLK ON THE LIGHTHOUSE GROUNDS.** Ft. Polk was the first occupant at the site of the Lighthouse. Zachary Taylor built the fort in 1846 which served the troops until 1850. In 1852, the Port Isabel Lighthouse was constructed at the cost of \$15,000.

33- **TRY TO FINISH TEXAS' LARGEST FLOUR TORTILLAS.** So big, they dwarf a dinner plate. Filled with anything you want. Not a challenge for the faint hearted. Isabel's Cafe and Manuels Restaurant both boast of Texas Monthly's best tortilla ratings!

34- **VISIT ALL 11 KIOSKS ON THE EL PASEO WALK.** When walking or biking the El Paseo trail, take advantage of the 11 rest areas. Shade, benches, bike racks, trash receptacles.

35- **WATCH A MOVIE AT THE LIGHTHOUSE ESTABLISHMENT CINEMA.** Free to the public. Summers & Halloween weekend.

36- **SEND A POSTCARD HOME FROM THE PORT ISABEL POST OFFICE.** Share a memory. Don't just email home, buy and send an authentic postcard from Port Isabel.

37- **SEND AN EMAIL FROM THE PORT ISABEL PUBLIC LIBRARY.** Ok, sometimes the mail just isn't fast enough. Use the library's computers to let folks back home know what a great time you are having.

38- **FLYFISH THE LAGUNA MADRE.** Some of the best flyfishing on the Gulf coast will test your technique.

39- **WADE FISH THE LAGUNA MADRE.** Strap on the bait bucket and hit the Laguna Madre 'mano a mano'.

40- **VISIT THE OLD PORT ISABEL FIRE HALL.** Located southeast of the Port Isabel City Cemetery, the old Port Isabel Fire Hall is still used for community activities.

41- **VISIT LAFITTE'S WELL.** He had to get fresh water somewhere, why not dig a hole in Laguna Vista.

42- **PLAY GOLF.** On the shores of the Intracoastal Waterway at Long Island Village or on the banks of the Laguna Madre at SPI Golf Club.

43- **LAUNCH YOUR BOAT AT THE POMPANO CITY DOCKS.** You're not going to catch any fish if it stays on the trailer!

44- **STORE YOUR BOAT AT SEARANCH II.** Don't want to trailer your boat all the way from home? Might not be here for for awhile? Dry dock your boat in Port Isabel.

45- **DOCK YOUR BOAT AT THE POMPANO CITY DOCKS.** Check at City Hall for information on the City Docks' accommodations. Call 956/943-2682.

46- **WATERFRONT DINING.** Pelican Station, Pirate's Landing or White Sands, pick one, or try them all.

47- **SAIL THE BAY.** Challenge your skills, or drop anchor and enjoy the breeze and the peace and quiet.



48- **STAY IN PORT ISABEL.** Nostalgic to waterfront to modern to a waterfront rv experience. Moderately priced Port Isabel accommodations offer what you need.

49- **BUY FINE ART.** Take an original created by a local artist home with you. Many specialty shops feature local artist's wares.

(Continued on Page 39)

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Adventures depart daily, all year round, from Pirates Landing next to the lighthouse. The Black Dragon is also available for private charters for family reunions, company outings, weddings, school field trips and gathering of pirate enthusiasts! For more info contact Black Dragon Cruises (956) 943-6283.



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Looking for a place to stay?



Port Isabel offers a variety of accommodations from modern to nostalgic, from inland to waterfront, all conveniently located, long term or short term. Long Island Village features rv lots, park models, sea cottages and a full selection of amenities. Casa Rosa is conveniently located on Highway 100 as is nearby White Sands Motel. Southwind Inn is located in the heart of Port Isabel offers a breathtaking view of the Laguna Madre Bay.

Casa Rosa Motel & Port Isla Inn are Port Isabel's newest accommodations. Casa Rosa Motel is on Highway 100 midway through Port Isabel. Port Isla Motel is located 1/2 block off Highway 100 behind the old Whataburger location. (All phone prefixes are 956).

Casa Rosa Motel ☎ 943-2052 • 943-3465 . . . Highway 100

Port Isla Inn ☎ 772-2020 202 N. 2nd St.

Long Island Village Rental Village

☎ 943-6449 900 S. Garcia St.

🌐 www.longislandvillage.com

✉ longislandvillage@hotmail.com

Oyster Cove Condominiums

☎ 943-2376 401 Island Ave.

Port Isabel Port Motel

☎ 943-9998 Highway 100

Palms Condos ☎ 943-1715 506 Marina Dr.

Queen Isabel Inn ☎ 943-1468 300 S. Garcia St.

🌐 www.queenisabelinn.com

Southwind Inn ☎ 943-3392 600 E. Davis St.

🌐 www.southwindinn.com

White Sands Motel, Marina & Motor Lodge

☎ 943-2414 418 Highway 100

Woolverton Realty (Agent)

☎ 943-5506 110 Highway 100

🌐 www.woolvertonrealty.com

✉ realestate@woolvertonrealty.com

Yacht Club ☎ 943-1301 700 Yturria St.

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20th Annual World's Championship Shrimp Cook-Off Scheduled for November 3rd

Dozens of contestants and thousands of attendees will be treated to world famous shrimp recipes and a wide variety of family entertainment at the 20th Annual World's Championship Shrimp Cookoff, scheduled to be held in Port Isabel, Sunday, November 3rd from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The annual festival is a favorite among area residents and visitors and tests the skills of amateurs and professional chefs from throughout the Rio Grande Valley. Contestants are judged on appearance, aroma and taste of their specialty dishes and samples are available to the general public at a modest fee. In addition, attendees will enjoy live music by "The Agency", games and activities for kids of all ages, and vendors offering everything from funnel cakes to original artwork, gifts and collectibles.

For more information on this must attend event, contact the Port Isabel Chamber of Commerce at 1-800-527-6102 or email: director@portisabel.org.



Winners of 2012 World's Championship Shrimp Cook-Off!
Professional Division: Showmanship Award & 1st Place: Padre Ritagrille (SPI); 2nd Place: Sao Paulo; 3rd Place: Dirty Al's at Pelican Station (PI). **Amateur Division:** 1st Place: Team Ram Rods; 2nd Place: Delicias Express; 3rd Place: Port Isabel Veteran's Park Committee.

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FISHING!

PORT ISABEL, TEXAS

For generations, Port Isabel has been a launching pad for anglers fishing the Lower Laguna Madre and nearshore waters of the Gulf of Mexico. Today, fishermen continue to flock here, knowing the angling experience offered by Port Isabel is unrivaled by other destinations along the Texas coast.

Legendary for its production of trophy speckled trout (spotted seatrout), the Lower Laguna Madre yielded the current Texas state record trout in 2002. Redfish, one of the most popular gamefish along the Gulf Coast, are also found in abundance on the Lower Laguna's shallow, clear flats.

In addition to the traditional Texas inshore fare of speckled trout, redfish and flounder, the waters fronting Port Isabel are also home to a variety of 'more tropical species' than is typically found elsewhere in the Lone Star State. The only fishable population of snook in the United States outside of South Florida resides in the Lower Laguna, as do healthy populations of mangrove snapper, lookdowns, gag grouper, Spanish mackerel and more.

Tarpon also draw a good number of anglers to Port Isabel each year. A resident population of juvenile tarpon is available to anglers year around. Mature fish are typically found in fishable numbers from April through October - by far the longest 'tarpon season' on the Texas coast.

Anglers looking to head into the Brazos Santiago Pass and the waters of the Gulf of Mexico beyond will have an opportunity to catch not only tarpon, but also kingfish (king mackerel), bonito, blackfin and yellowfin tuna, red snapper, wahoo, ling, and a variety of billfish.



By Danno Wise

MUSEUMS OF PORT ISABEL

1- Constructed in 1852, the **Point Isabel Lighthouse** was built to guide ships through Brazos Santiago and the barrier islands. In 1952, the Lighthouse was opened as a State park and remains the only lighthouse on the Texas coast open to the public. The Lighthouse Keeper's Cottage, situated on the grounds houses the Chamber of Commerce and historic exhibits. Admission to the Keeper's Cottage is free.

POINT ISABEL LIGHTHOUSE HOURS:

Daily, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Last ticket sold at 4:00 p.m.



2- The **Port Isabel Historical Museum** is a state-of-the-art facility located in the Champion Building.

Built in 1899 as a dry goods store and residence, it now houses two exhibit levels, a theatre, a gift shop and one of the largest collections of Mexican artifacts from the U.S. Mexican War. The facade of the building features the famous 'fish mural' painted in 1906 by a local one armed fisherman.

PORT ISABEL HISTORICAL MUSEUM HOURS:

Tuesday - Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Last ticket sold at 3:30 p.m.

3- **Treasures of the Gulf Museum** focuses on three Spanish shipwrecks which met their fate in 1554 just 30 miles north of Port Isabel. Exhibits and artifacts tell the stories of the victims and the survivors. The Treasures Museum also features a Children's Discovery Lab, Ship theatre and Nautical Gift Shop.

TREASURES OF THE GULF MUSEUM Hours: Tuesday - Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Last ticket sold at 3:30 p.m.



317 E. RAILROAD AVE. ~PORT ISABEL, TX 78578
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WWW.PORTISABELMUSEUMS.COM

THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY'S HISTORIC ROOTS BEGIN IN PORT ISABEL, TEXAS!

VISIT THE PORT ISABEL MUSEUMS



ADMISSION:

~THREE SITE COMBINATION TICKET:

ADULTS	\$7.00
SENIOR CITIZENS (55 & OVER)	\$5.00
STUDENTS (K - COLLEGE W/ID)	\$2.00
CHILDREN (4 & UNDER)	FREE ADMISSION
MUSEUM MEMBERS*	FREE ADMISSION

~INDIVIDUAL SITE TICKET:

ADULTS	\$3.00
SENIOR CITIZENS (55 & OVER)	\$2.00
STUDENTS (K - COLLEGE W/ID)	\$1.00
CHILDREN (4 & UNDER)	FREE ADMISSION
MUSEUM MEMBERS*	FREE ADMISSION

ALL TICKET PURCHASES ARE FINAL

(*WITH MEMBERSHIP CARD)

317 E. RAILROAD AVE. PORT ISABEL, TEXAS 78578
956/943-7602

GROUP TOURS AVAILABLE

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30th Annual Causeway Run & Fitness Walk set for January 11th

The 30th Annual Causeway Run & Fitness Walk is expected to attract thousands of participants wanting to take advantage of the unique opportunity to cross the Queen Isabella Causeway on foot.

2013's event resulted in a record participation of nearly 5,000 runners and walkers. The 6.2 mile (10K) course starts at the Port Isabel Community Center and ends in front of Louie's Backyard on South Padre Island, where the awards ceremonies are held immediately following the race. Walkers along the 3K course will be transported by shuttle to the award's ceremony or back to the race's starting point.

Trophies as well as cash prizes are awarded to the overall male and female winners. First through third place trophies will also be presented in each of the 23 male and female age divisions.



For more information on the Causeway Run & Fitness Walk, contact the Port Isabel Chamber of Commerce at 1-800-527-6102 or email: director@portisabel.org.



The Port Isabel Economic Development Corporation is a non-profit 4B corporation governed by a Board of Directors and operated under the direction of the Port Isabel Economic Development Corporation Director and Administrator.

PIEDC utilizes ½ of one percent from the local sales tax which

is then committed to funding projects and initiatives for the City of Port Isabel's Economic Development benefit. Because of the tourism nature of our community and region, in addition to workforce training and business incentives, the PIEDC has flexibility to contribute to projects that enhance the aesthetic and cultural value of our City such as street and sidewalk beautification, festivals, museum enhancements, community events, and promotion.

The Port Isabel Economic Development Corporation has been a catalyst for local economic development for over sixteen years. In response to an ever-changing environment, it is now our mission to foster small business development and job creation throughout Port Isabel.

The Port Isabel Economic Development Corporation serves as a facilitator for businesses to utilize every resource available, while keeping the growth and prosperity of the local economy in mind. Opportunity abounds in Port Isabel. With a winning combination that includes affordable coastal real estate, Federal incentives, an available workforce and a friendly regulatory environment, the business climate of Port Isabel has become superior to many cities throughout the nation.

Recognizing that economic prosperity is a collective effort, the PIEDC takes great pride in the local partnerships that make it happen. We attribute much of Port Isabel's success to business and local government leaders that come together using sound judgment to promote and lead our community in the right direction. Through a partnership between the PIEDC and City of Port Isabel, visitors can utilize the Port Isabel Visitors Center, located in the Lighthouse Keeper's Cottage as a one-stop resource for not only visitors but also the growing business community. The PIEDC friendly staff provides economic development project updates and funnel requests for area demographics, relocation & expansion opportunities and quality of life information. The same valuable information and resource links can also be accessed anytime via the internet on our website www.portisabel-texas.com/edc.

The Port Isabel Economic Development Corporation provides a proactive visionary attitude toward business development, retention and our local quality of life. We are certain you will find Port Isabel a great place to be. PIEDC is here for you. Please feel free to call our office and ask about doing business in Port Isabel. PIEDC and City staff will be happy to help you get started in Paradise.

Edward P. Meza, PIEDC Director

Robert Salinas, PIEDC Administrator

Port Isabel City Hall • 305 East Maxan St. • Port Isabel, Tx 78578
Ph: 943-0705 • Fax: 943-2029 • edcadministrator@copitx.com
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- Emergencies..... 1-800-700-5325
- Police Department..... (956) 943-8855

(PORT ISABEL)

- Emergency Medical Service (956) 943-7829
- Police Department..... (956) 943-2283
- Constable Pct. #1 (956) 943-6757
- Justice of the Peace (956) 943-2520
- Sheriffs Office (956) 544-0860

Port Isabel-San Benito

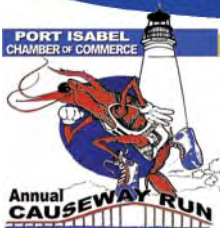
- Navigation District..... (956) 943-7826

(NATIONAL SERVICES)

- U.S. Coast Guard..... (956) 761-2668
- National Weather Service.... (956) 546-5377
- Dockside Taxi (A Taxi) (956) 943-4747

EVENTS

PORT ISABEL
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Annual
CAUSEWAY RUN

JANUARY~ Longest Causeway Run and Fitness Walk. The Port Isabel Chamber of Commerce hosts this annual event which features a 10k walk/run over the Queen Isabella Memorial Bridge from Port Isabel to South Padre Island.

APRIL~ Queen Isabella Market Day. Held the second Saturday in April, the Queen Isabella Market is hosted by the Museums of Port Isabel on the grounds of the Lighthouse. Vendors, food, live music and more.

JUNE~ Port Isabel Triathlon. Held the first Saturday in June. Bike, swim, run. Hosted by the Port Isabel Chamber of Commerce.

SUMMER & SPECIAL DATES~ The Lighthouse Establishment Cinema is hosted by the Museums of Port Isabel. Movies are projected onto the Port Isabel Lighthouse. Free admission. Concessions.

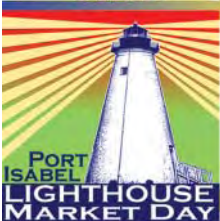
SEPTEMBER~ Pachanga in the Park hosted by the City of Port Isabel. Food, vendors, games, live music.

OCTOBER~ Lighthouse Market Day is hosted by the Museums of Port Isabel on the grounds of the Lighthouse. Food, vendors, live music, entertainment and more. \$1.00 admission to the Lighthouse.

OCTOBER~ Los Colores del Muerto, Day of the Dead Celebration. Hosted by the Museums of Port Isabel. Tours, open house, exhibits, etc.

NOVEMBER~ World's Championship Shrimp Cook-Off. Hosted by the Port Isabel Chamber of Commerce, the Cook-Off attracts dozens of competitors for the World's Best Title.

DECEMBER~ Lighted Boat Parade. Hosted by the Port Isabel Chamber of Commerce. Decorated boats sail the Laguna Madre Bay. Decorating contests sponsored by the City of Port Isabel.



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RELOCATION INFORMATION

Port Isabel, population 5006, is located 35 miles southeast of Harlingen and 22 miles northeast of Brownsville, Texas and 25 miles from the U.S./Mexico border. It lies on the eastern end of the Rio Grande Valley at the Brazos-Santiago Pass to the Gulf of Mexico. The latitude of Port Isabel is 26.073N. The longitude is 97.208W. It is in the Central Standard time zone. Elevation is 7 feet. Port Isabel is 180 miles from Monterrey, Mexico; 286 miles from San Antonio; 366 miles from Houston; 531 miles from Dallas; 688 miles from Mexico City; and 815 miles from El Paso, Texas.



Incorporated in 1927, the City of Port Isabel has a Home Rule type of government with five council members including the mayor, a city planning commission and a city master plan. The city has a full-time manager and staff. Emergency personnel include 18 police officers, 6 police vehicles, a volunteer fire department and fully staffed emergency medical services. The fire department has one fire marshal, 5 vehicles and a fire insurance rating of 0.42 full key rate and a fire protection class of 6. Service is provided to industry beyond the corporate limits.

Port Isabel and the Laguna Madre area is home to about 2,500 school age children attending one of four public schools; Garriga Elementary School (Grades K-2), Derry Elementary School, (3-5), Port Isabel Junior High School (6-8), and Port Isabel High School (9-12). Port Isabel is within 25 miles of the University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College, and 40 miles from Texas State Technical College, the University Preparatory School and the Marine Academy in Harlingen.

As historic and cultural preservation is a priority for the community, Port Isabel has three museums, the Point Isabel Lighthouse, the Treasures of the Gulf Museum and the Port Isabel Historic Museum. Port Isabel also has an accredited public library. Recreational, social and cultural facilities include: public swimming pool, golf courses, tennis courts, Laguna Madre Boys & Girls Club, high school auditorium and a community center. Clubs and organizations include: Port Isabel Chamber of Commerce, American Legion Post #498, Friends of the Library, Laguna Madre Art League, Laguna Madre Humane Society, Laguna Madre



Museum Foundation, Laguna Madre Yacht Club, Habitat for Humanity (Laguna Madre Chapter), Laguna Madre Golf Association and numerous committees and subcommittees.

The Port Isabel/Cameron County Airport is located ten miles from Port Isabel. Municipally owned, it has a lighted primary runway of 10,000 feet. The Brownsville South Padre Island International Airport is located in Brownsville, just 22 miles south with commercial and passenger service. The Valley International Airport, located in Harlingen, 35 miles northeast, is a hub serving the lower Rio Grande Valley and South Padre Island.

(cont. pg. 30)



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Port Isabel Texas 78578



The *Walk of Generals* is located in the Lighthouse District within Garcia St., Maxan St., Manautou St., and Railroad Ave. The *Walk of Generals* honors military leaders, institutions and civilians who played a vital role in the history of Port Isabel.

1. Thomas J. (Stonewall) Jackson
2. Robert E. Lee
3. Winfield Scott
4. Richard King
5. Rio Grande Railroad Company
6. Ulysses S. Grant
7. Jefferson Davis
8. Zachary Taylor
9. Romulo Diaz de la Vega
10. Don Rafael Garcia
11. Philip Henry Sheridan
12. John E. Wool
13. George Gordon Meade
14. George B. McClellan
15. Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard
16. Braxton Bragg
17. Samuel Ringgold
18. John S. "Rip" Ford
19. Fort Polk
20. William Jenkins Worth
21. Abner Doubleday



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www.lagunamadreartgallery.com

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PORT ISABEL ANTIQUE & FLEA MARKET

1st Sunday* of each month @ Beulah Lee Park

(* & select dates during the Winter Season~)

For more information call 956/455-6798





RELOCATION INFORMATION

(continued from page 27)

The Laguna Madre community is served locally by several publications including Port Isabel/South Padre Press (semi-weekly), Coastal Current (weekly), Island Breeze (two times weekly), and South Padre Parade (weekly). Rio Grande Valley newspapers serving the area include: Brownsville Herald and Valley Morning Star, El Nuevo Herald, La Frontera, Mid Valley Town Crier and the Bargain Book.

The climate is mild, semi-tropical. January mean minimum temperature is 51.4 F, July mean maximum is 92.5 F. Annual average temperature is 73.6 F. September is the month with the highest precipitation with an average rainfall of 5.13", March is the lowest precipitation month with 1.11". Annual average is 27.62".



Port Isabel has a diverse demographic picture. Median resident age is 34 years, median household income is \$28,413, median house value is \$82,349. Ethnic groups represented in Port Isabel breakdown following: 74.4% Hispanic, 24.5% Non-Hispanic, 15.5% from other races, and 3.01% from two or more races. *(Total can be greater than 100% because Hispanics could be counted in other races.)*

Industries providing employment include: arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services (25.1%); educational, health and social services (12.2%); retail trade (10.9%). Daytime population change due to commuting: +21.1%. Workers who live and work in Port Isabel: 38.5%

Taxation: Ad valorem rate per \$100 evaluation:

City of Port Isabel	0.626327
Cameron County	0.384291
State of Texas	none
Point Isabel ISD	1.081634
Laguna Madre Water District.	0.080820
Texas Southmost College.	0.162935
South Texas ISD	0.049200

Port Isabel is a historic community with roots dating back to inhabitation by the Coahilitecan Indians prior to European settlements. It's strategic location played an important role in the U.S. Mexican War, the U.S. Civil War and the California Gold Rush. Natural clay bluffs and a proximity to the Gulf of Mexico made it a safe harbor for passage to points west and north. The Laguna Madre area has been settled, ranched, fished, shrimped and still plays a vital role in Cameron County and south Texas. Whether considering a visit, a new home or a business home, our quality of life and diversity make Port Isabel a great place to stop for day or stay a for a lifetime.



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1st Saturday in December @ 6 p.m.



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956/943-2262 portisabel.org/boat-parade



101 Things To Do In Port Isabel

(Continued from page 9)

50- **BUY SOMETHING OLD.** Like antiquing? Area shops offer collectibles to fill every nook and cranny of your luggage.

51- **BUY SOMETHING NAUTICAL.** Need a seashell? A port hole? A whole boat? Bay Quest Outfitters, Harris Sea Castle, Anglers Marine Center, Quik Stop or Twenty Four Ten Net Works Hardware will fill the bill.

52- **KAYAK THE CHANNELS.** For an off road view of Port Isabel, take a kayak ride through all the channels.

53- **JET SKI THE LAGUNA MADRE.** Kayaking too slow? Jet ski the Laguna Madre Bay!

54- **FISH IN TEXAS' OLDEST FISHING TOURNAMENT.** Port Isabel is home to the Texas International Fishing Tournament. Held annually the first weekend in August.

55- **RUN ACROSS TEXAS' LONGEST CAUSEWAY.** Held annually in January, Longest Causeway Run & Fitness walk is a 10k run that starts in Port Isabel and ends across the Queen Isabella Memorial Bridge on South Padre Island.

56- **EAT THE WORLD'S BEST SHRIMP.** Many local restaurants serve fresh caught Gulf shrimp, expertly prepared. You can ample the finest at the Chamber's World's Championship Shrimp Cook-Off, annually, the first Sunday in November.

57- **VISIT THE VALLEY'S SPORTS HALL OF FAME & ONE OF THE LARGEST SPORTS MEMORBALIA COLLECTIONS IN THE RGV.** Drop in at Doubleday's Sports Bar.

58- **VISIT THE PIRATES AT PIRATES LANDING.** And enjoy a meal overlooking the Laguna Madre.

59- **SHOP MARKET DAYS.** Held twice a year in April and October, at the Port Isabel Lighthouse.

60- **VALLEY'S OLDEST DAY OF THE DEAD CELEBRATION.** Held the Saturday before Halloween, Port Isabel's Day of the Dead Celebration is a day long event with lots of family friendly entertainment and displays at the Treasures of the Gulf Museum and the Historic Museum.

61- **SEE THE BROWNSVILLE SHIP CHANNEL.** From the intersection of Garcia Street and South Shore Drive or in the Port District, you can see large ocean going vessels, oil rigs heading out to the Gulf and barges turn in from the Intracoastal Waterway or the Gulf of Mexico enroute to the Brownsville Ship Channel.

62- **SEE THE INTRACOASTAL WATERWAY FROM THE TOP OF THE CAUSEWAY.** The darker deeper water seen from the top of the Causeway is the Intracoastal Waterway.

63- **SEE THE ORIGINAL QUEEN ISABELLA CAUSEWAY.** Cross the swing bridge on the end of Garcia Street and continue following the road to the left.

64- **WATCH THE FIREWORKS OVER THE BAY.** Fridays from Memorial Day to Labor Day, the City of South Padre Island creates a breathtaking fireworks display on the north side of the causeway over the Laguna Madre Bay.

65- **BIKE, SWIM, RIDE.** Port Isabel Chamber of Commerce hosts a Triathlon, first Saturday in June.

66- **TRICK OR TREAT THE LIGHTHOUSE SQUARE.** Every Halloween, local businesses pass out treats.

67- **CROSS THE LONGEST BRIDGE IN TEXAS.** Going to South Padre Island? You've got to cross the longest bridge in Texas at 2.6 miles over the Laguna Madre Bay.

68- **CAMP IN PORT ISABEL.** Enjoy the sounds of seagulls and the fresh sea breezes.

69- **SPRING BREAK IN PORT ISABEL.** From February to April, south Texas sees the migration of college students taking a little 'R & R'.

70- **WATCH THE LIGHTED BOAT PARADE.** The Port Isabel Chamber of Commerce hosts their Annual Lighted Boat Parade the first Saturday in December.

71- **VISIT ONE OF THE TOP THREE BEACHES IN AMERICA.** Cross the Queen Isabella Memorial Bridge to South Padre Island.

72- **WI-FI.** Need to make it a working vacation? Catch the free Wi-Fi at various locations around town.

73- **CANNON FIRE OVER THE BAY.** 6 p.m. daily, at the Cannon Bar, watch the crew of the Black Dragon fire a 6 pounder!

74- **TOUR PORT ISABEL'S 8 REGISTERED HISTORIC MARKERS.** The Port of Matamoros, located at Pirate's Landing; the Charles Champion Building; the Queen Isabella Causeway; Fort Polk located at the Point Isabel Lighthouse; Queen Isabel Inn; Alta Vista Apartments on Yturria St.; and the newest site, the Palangana Cemetery.



101 Things To Do In Port Isabel

76- PLAY IN ALL THE PARKS. Berrell Mock, Washington Park, Veterans Park, Episcopal Church Park, the Laguna Madre Park, Veteran's Park, Triangle Park and the Port Isabel Lighthouse State Historic Site.

77- HISTORY BY THE MURALS. From contemporary to historic, see the murals at the Port Isabel Museums, the fish mural on the Champion building, the mural on Port City Mercantile, inside Our Lady of the Sea Catholic Church, Pirate's Landing Restaurant interior and Doubleday Sports Bar.

78- CHECK OUT THE UT/ROBERT RUNYON PHOTO DISPLAY. The 50 photos that decorate the walls of Pelican Station Restaurant illustrate Port Isabel's ties to the railroad.

79- COMMUNITY GALLERY. On the Highway 100 side of the Treasures of the Gulf Museum, displays illustrate our past, present and future.

80- SEE A REAL SHRIMP BOAT. The Lady Bea II is on display at the north end of Garcia St.

81- TROPICAL LANDSCAPING. Everywhere... medians, corners, Triangle Park, Beulah Lee Park, First National Bank of Edinburg, Treasures of the Gulf Museum and Port Isabel Historic Museum.

82- ANCHORS & NAUTICAL ARTIFACTS. Drive, hike or bike and keep an eye out for all the anchors and floats that adorn both private and public properties.

83- ARCHITECTURE. The Port Isabel Lighthouse, the Keeper's Cottage, the Yacht Club, Alta Vista Apartments, Isla Vista Apartments, Wireless Station buildings, Champion building, Queen Isabel Inn, the Thompkins building, Old Port Isabel Fire Hall, shops on Maxan Street... discover our uniqueness.

84- TAKE A RIDE ON THE THRILLER. For an exciting and exhilarating trip on the Laguna Madre Bay.

85- ZACHARY TAYLOR'S WELL. Located between the Port Isabel Historic Museum and the Treasures of the Gulf Museum or Jean Lafitte's well in Laguna Vista.

86- SITE OF THE MILITARY HOSPITAL. Used from 1846 - 1865, this military hospital saw more discomfort caused by disease than injuries caused by both the US/Mexican and the US Civil Wars it was in use for. It's located at the Pirate's Landing Pier parking lot.

87- CATCH UP ON THE LOCAL NEWS. Pick up a Port Isabel/South Padre Press, Coastal Current, or the Parade for all the local information.

88- STAY IN SHAPE. Local gyms and fitness centers offer a full range of services.

89- TAKE A BOATER'S SAFETY COURSE. Check with the Laguna Madre Yacht Club for their next scheduled classes.

90- ATTEND THE CHURCH OF YOUR CHOICE. Churches are located from Laguna Vista to South Padre Island.

91- WANT TO MAKE IT PERMANENT? If you are considering a move to the area, check out the real estate agents that could make your dream come true.

92- GET A NEW DO. Treat yourself to a new look or get help finding a creative way to live with the humidity.

93- GET ALL THE AREA INFORMATION YOU WILL NEED. Stop in at the Port Isabel Chamber of Commerce and Information Center at the Lighthouse Keeper's Cottage.

94- LEARN A LITTLE ABOUT OUR LOCAL HISTORY. Like our page at [facebook.com/portisabeltx](https://www.facebook.com/portisabeltx).

95- WATCH A SUNSET. Sunsets over the Laguna Madre are spectacular and free!

96- WATCH A SUNRISE. If you didn't stay out too late, take in a sunrise before heading to breakfast. They cost the same as a sunset.

97- TRY ALL THE 'ALL YOU CAN EAT FISH' SPECIALS. Pirate's Landing, White Sands, Mexiquito Restaurant, Marcello's Italian Restaurant. How hard could that be?

98- TAKE A NIGHT TIME FISHING TRIP. The Isabella leaves the Pirate's Landing Fishing Pier for a night fishing trip on the Laguna Madre Bay!

99- VISIT THE BAHIA GRANDE ON HWY 48. The world's largest wetlands restoration project is home to a variety of wildlife species.

100- PORT ISABEL'S ANTIQUE & FLEA MARKET. First Sunday, 1st & 3rd Sunday during winter months.

101-PLAN. To come back again!



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