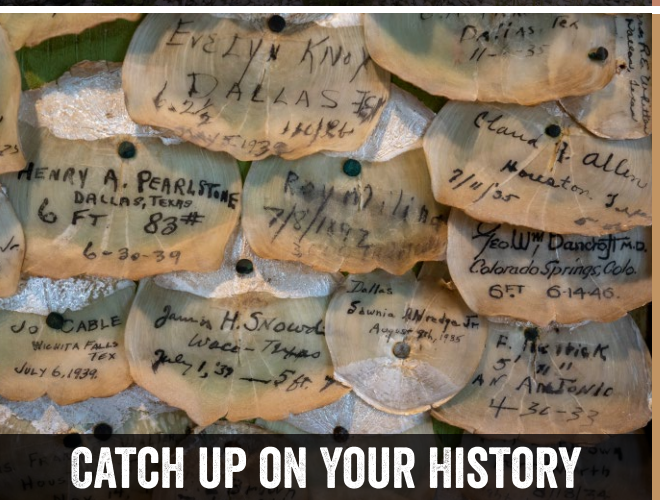
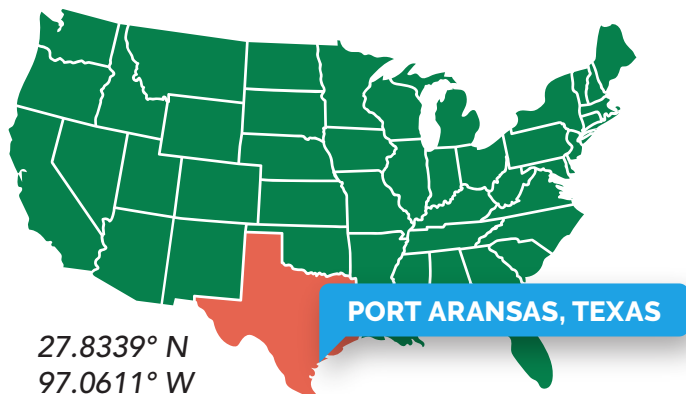




Nestled along the sandy shores of Mustang Island in Texas lies the quiet little beach town of Aransas. This small, charming beach town is home to around 3,000 people. But don't let the size of this town deter you. It has been home to the Karankawa Indians and was a favorite place for Captain Jean Lafitte, the pirate. Stories still circulate of a hidden pirate treasure somewhere on the island. Tarpon fishing was a big sport in this little town, and even President Roosevelt fished the waters off the shores in 1937. Though small, this town's history and things to do are mighty.

10

Port Aransas boasts some great shopping, so whether you're searching for souvenirs galore, clothing, swimsuits, home décor, a new beach chair or anything else in between, you're sure to find it at one of the several stores

located on the island. The island offers big beach-style souvenir shops, gift shops, and smaller, locally-owned boutiques. Be sure to grab a kite at the kite shop to fly proudly while beach-side. It's the thing to do!

9

There are plenty of restaurants and ice cream shops in Port Aransas to satisfy even the most particular of palates. There are several seafood restaurants (this is an island, after all), but you'll also find some unique restaurants taking a different spin on seafood options.

Local favorites are Seafood & Spaghetti Works, San Juan Restaurant and Virginia's on the Bay. You'll also find a pizza joint, hamburgers, Tex-Mex and even a Caribbean-inspired restaurant, Irie's Island Fare, offering a tantalizing island-fare menu complete with beignets.

8

The Port Aransas Community Theatre has been putting on great productions since the 1990s. Locals rave about the talent, and the theater

promises not to disappoint. Shows run throughout the year, so check their website for schedules and showtimes and to purchase tickets.

7

Who knew the tiny town of Port Aransas held so much history? Located on E. Cotter Avenue, as you head toward the beach (you'll see signage and a small parking area) lie the remnants of WWII gun mounts. Also located on E. Cotter Avenue (back toward town) is the historic Tarpon Inn, constructed in 1886 from lumber from Civil War barracks for the Union Army. Though a hurricane destroyed the original building from 1886,

the current building has been standing since 1925. Be sure to go into the lobby to see the signed Tarpon scales, some dating back to the late 1800s. Lydia Ann Lighthouse was constructed in 1856 and is the second oldest lighthouse in Texas. Though closed to the public, you can still see the lighthouse via the water. Some local kayak tours take guests by the Lydia Ann Lighthouse to see her up close and personal.

6

Don't let the location behind the water treatment facility deter you; the birding center still has beautiful views across the salt marsh. As a migratory and permanent home to many species of birds, the Birding Center has hundreds and hundreds of birds to view at any given time. Walk out on the 750-foot-long boardwalk atop the wetland to view the birds and then continue along the 750-foot-long

path across the salt marsh to benches to sit and enjoy the view. Located on the north end of the salt marsh lies the Port Aransas Nature Preserve at Charlie's Pasture. Covering more than 1,200 acres, the Nature Preserve offers paths, benches, picnic tables, a pavilion and even guided nature walks. Plans include connecting the walking paths from Leonabelle Turnbull to the Nature Preserve.



CHAPEL ON THE DUNES



BUILD A BOAT



FIRE IT! CERAMICS



SAIL THE SEVEN SEAS LIKE A PIRATE



BEACHES

**Are you ready
to make Port
Aransas your
next destination?**

5

This tiny chapel was built upon the dunes of Port Aransas in the late 1930s. Poet laureate Aline B. Carter wanted to share the gospel with the children of Port Aransas and built the chapel for them. She would regularly teach the children Sunday school and serve cake and ice cream after her Sunday school lessons as a special treat. In the late 1970s, artist John Patrick Cobb

painted murals inside the chapel, depicting the bible from creation to revelation. The artwork is stunning in its muted lines and colors. Though it raised local controversy by some folks who believed the chapel should have remained white on the inside, the murals stand today. You must see them; they're an absolute masterpiece.

4

You can build a boat in a few days. Farley Boat Works is a working museum with a mission to teach the art of wooden boat making. In 1915, two brothers established Farley and Son Boat Builders to build a boat that could handle the rough coastal waters and meet the needs of the local fisherman. From 1915 until 1973, the Farley family designed and built boats for the local community

and soon became a local boat legend. Today you can visit the working museum to learn about wood boat making, the same way the Farley brothers built their famous boats. For those wanting to get their hands dirty, you can build your very own 14-foot Farley skiff boat in just two days. The museum also offers workshops over the summer to learn wooden boat building skills.

3

No trip to Port Aransas is complete without taking the entire family to Fire It! Ceramics. Pick your blank piece of pottery from their extensive collection, select your colors, grab a handful of paintbrushes and begin painting your masterpiece. It's a great way to

commemorate your Port Aransas trip while putting your personal touch on each piece. For those needing some liquid inspiration, Fire It! Ceramics offers a selection of adult beverages to help get your creative juices flowing.

2

You can't come to Port Aransas and not take your family on the Red Dragon Pirate Cruise. The cruise lasts about an hour and a half and is chock-full of entertainment, laughs, treasure hunts, sword fights and more. Every crew member on the ship does a great job playing their role as the boat cruises along the Lydia Ann Channel past the historic Lydia Ann Lighthouse. Guests wanting to enjoy the cruise but not be

in the middle of all the action will enjoy the adults-only section at the bow of the ship, providing a bird's eye view of all the fun. The Red Dragon also offers (off-season only) adult-only sunset cruises, more akin to a booze cruise. The full bar is open both during the family-friendly and adults-only sunset cruises, so be sure to grab a pirate-themed libation while sailing the seas.

1

Port Aransas is home to 6.3 miles of beaches along Mustang Beach. What is so fantastic about Port Aransas beaches? You can drive on them and camp on them! That's right; drive and camp on the beach. Imagine packing up your vehicle full of the kids, sunscreen, beach toys, coolers, beach chairs and beach towels, and getting

to drive your car to the exact spot you want to spend your day on the beach. It's a game-changer. And those who really want a unique camping experience can bring their RV onto the beach to camp. Beach access does require a pass but is easily obtainable in town and covers parking on the beach between mile markers 0 to 62.

THESE

TOP

**THINGS ARE THE
BEST STARTING
POINT FOR YOU.**