



- *World's Top 30 Island Beaches by Conde Nast Traveler magazine 2007*
- *Top 20 fishing destination by Field and Stream magazine*
- *Ranked #3 destination for 2007 Texas non-residents and #5 for overall Texas visitors*
- *Best Restored Beach Award 2009*

RELOCATION BROCHURE

South Padre Island, Texas

South Padre Island, a city with style—a folksy, warm, inviting style that welcomes visitors from all walks of life, is located on the tip of Texas just 25 miles north of the Mexican border and is THE premier resort in Texas.

This 34 mile long stretch of white sand is bordered to the east by the Gulf of Mexico and to the west by the Laguna Madre bay. The conveniences and attractions of a modern resort coupled with miles of pristine island terrain is what draws thousands of visitors to the area each year, and has brought many back.

South Padre Island's sole industry is tourism and recreation related support businesses. As a result of hosting an estimated 4 million annual visitors, the Island is successfully supporting major hotels, many wonderful restaurants, a wide variety of entertainment options and a diverse group of retail shops.

A healthy economy, great people, and loads of fun activities for the whole family to enjoy are just some of the many reasons to move your family and business to South Padre Island. After a trip to the Island, you will want to join the local businesses and families who already call the area home.

The City of South Padre Island's size fosters cooperation among residents and business leaders. Many local organizations cooperate to help newcomers. The Chamber of Commerce, for example, listens to local entrepreneurs' needs and allows business leaders to network. The Chamber offers members the opportunities to serve on action committees thereby contributing to the community. Other resources for new residents and businesses include the Economic Development Corporation and the South Padre Island Convention and Visitors Bureau.

We hope the enclosed information will help you become better acquainted with South Padre Island, whether you are planning to start a business or looking for a place to relocate your family.

For more information, call the South Padre Island Chamber of Commerce at (956) 761-4412. www.spichamber.com

Additional Information

For more information on relocating to South Padre Island, contact the Economic Development Corporation (EDC)

Phone: 956-243-8416

Fax: 956-761-4523

Email: spiedc@aol.com

Website: www.southpadreislandedc.com

South Padre Island Chamber of Commerce

600 Padre Blvd.

Phone: 956-761-4412

Fax: 956-761-2739

E-mail: info@spichamber.com

Copyright 2010 SPI Chamber of Commerce

Rev. 1, 2/23/10

Newsletter

The South Padre Island Chamber of Commerce Business News

is published monthly in the Coastal Current and on the Chamber website, spotlighting our business members and activities. The *Business News* carries informative articles pertinent to the business environment and updates on area happenings. The Chamber strives to keep our members up-to-date on City government meetings, Convention and Visitor Bureau events as well as community happenings through our daily e-mail/fax updates.

Each week our office receives hundreds of inquiries from locals and visitors alike and we are always proud to give out member referrals. We are open to any ideas or suggestions that will help to promote our business members. In fact, members are asked to fill out a Membership Survey to give us a better idea of how they view their experience with the Chamber thereby assisting us in improving our services.

We hope this gives you a better understanding of what the South Padre Island Chamber of Commerce is doing in the business community. Of course, any association is only as strong as its membership. We offer many benefits however; it is up to each individual to take advantage of those benefits. We urge you to get involved and take an active role in your Chamber. You will not only reap benefits for yourself, but you will be helping your community as well.

South Padre Island, Texas

The South Padre Island Chamber of Commerce welcomes you to our beautiful Island. We hope this brochure will help you make a smooth transition as you become part of our community. Feel free to call us at 956-761-4412 with any questions.

Numbers You Should Know

Emergency Ambulance, fire police, sheriff (Non Emergency)	911 956-761-5454
Coast Guard	956-364-7400
Chamber of Commerce	956-761-4412
Cameron County Parks	956-761-5494
City Hall	956-761-6456
Convention & Visitors Bureau	956-761-6433
Convention Center	956-761-3000
Economic Development Corporation	956-243-8416
U.S. Post Office	956-761-4252
Poison Control	1-800-764-7661
Texas Department of Parks and Wildlife	1-800-792-1112
Weather Forecast	956-546-5377

**** South Padre Island/Port Isabel phone books are available at the Visitors Center—600 Padre Blvd.**

Important Numbers

Emergency Contact Numbers

1-800-OKPADRE or (956) 761-5454 SPI Emergency Management

American Red Cross Brownsville 956-541-5206

American Red Cross Harlingen 956-423-0523

American Red Cross 1-800-785-7851

Salvation Army Harlingen 956-423-2454

Radio

1260AM—South Padre Island

National Weather Sites

The Weather Channel—www.weather.com

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration— www.noaa.gov

Newspapers

Port Isabel/South Padre Island Press 956-943-5545

South Padre Parade 956-943-5545

Coastal Current Weekly 956-761-9341

Valley Morning Star (Harlingen) 956-430-6600

Brownsville Herald 956-542-4301

Alcoholics Anonymous

410 Padre Blvd., Suite 1

South Padre Island, Tx

956-447-4636 or 877-404-4636

The Ladies Kingfish Tournament brings in over 250 anglers from around Texas, the United States and places beyond. In addition to the anglers, their families, friends and fishing sport fans attend this event, bringing tourists and business to the area.

The Chamber of Commerce publishes *The Guide to South Padre Island* annually. This guide is mailed out in response to all inquiries that come into the SPI Visitors Center as well as the Chamber office. In addition to everyday inquires, the Visitors Center does a quarterly shipping around the country to designated drop points. The Guide is distributed at all tradeshow attended around the country by the Convention Center, and is used by the SPI Economic Development Corporation when dealing with potential new businesses and is mailed out to requests for relocation information. Additionally, a large number of hotels, condos, real estate companies, etc., use the Guide as part of their marketing package. The Chamber website, www.spichamber.com contains valuable up-to-date information for visitors as well as members. Potential visitors to the area have the opportunity to view *The Guide To South Padre Island* on-line in 3D format and are able to view member listings through easily accessible categories. The Chamber website is visited by thousands of potential visitors and provides vital information to assist them in their travel plans. A wonderful photo gallery gives viewers a taste of what to expect on their visit. Information for our members such as Chamber activities and meeting calendars are available as well as current and archived issues of the South Padre Island Chamber Business Newsletter. Through the Chamber website, the Chamber is working for its members 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

Monthly **All-Member Meetings** are an important event where business owners and managers come together to keep informed on activities and happenings that affect their business as well as meet and greet new members.

Committees

The Island Enhancement Committee

identifies ways in which the Chamber can contribute to the improved appearance of the Island and provide members various opportunities to reduce, reuse and recycle thereby encouraging a deeper level of environmental responsibility. This includes the organization and successful execution of projects submitted to and approved by the Chamber Board of Directors. Every effort is given to work in harmony with existing entities whose focus is similar to that of this committee.

The Islanders

are the ambassadors of the Chamber. The committee is responsible for ribbon cuttings and mixers for new Chamber members. These events provide businesses the opportunity to bring the community into their business as well as network with other business owners and managers. They also partner with United Blood Servicers to conduct annual blood drives. As part of their Program of Work, each new member of the Chamber receives a personal visit by an Islander. The Islanders also provide valuable assistance as volunteers at Chamber events.

Leadership Laguna Madre

is a program of the Laguna Madre Education Foundation which was created by the South Padre Island Chamber of Commerce. It is a nine-month long program, teaching participants about major community issues and ways to find solutions to existing problems. During the course of the program, participants make important contacts with community leaders in areas such as government, industry, education, health and commerce. Since the first class in 1996 over 200 people from the area have participated in this exciting and informative program.

Chamber Sponsored Events

The South Padre Island Chamber of Commerce also holds its annual Gala fundraising event featuring an evening of dining, dancing and both live and silent auctions that benefit the South Padre Island Chamber of Commerce and the Laguna Madre Education Foundation.

Medical Services

Clinics

Island Chiropractic & Acupuncture Clinic

3311 Padre Blvd., Suite B

South Padre Island, Tx

956-761-6006

Padre Island Health Specialists

3401 Padre Blvd. Suite B

South Padre Island, Tx

956-772-1911

PI Medical Clinic

1200 Hwy. 100

Port Isabel, Tx

956-943-6675

Port Isabel Health Clinic

202 2nd Street

Port Isabel, Tx

956-943-4166

Dental Facilities

Emma Gavito, D.D. S.

4912 Padre Blvd.

South Padre Island, Tx

956-761-1012

Port Isabel Dental Associates

314 E. Queen Isabella Blvd.

Port Isabel, Tx

956-943-4166

Hospitals/Pharmacy

Harlingen Medical Center

5501 South Expressway 77

Harlingen, Tx

956-365-1000

Valley Baptist Medical Center

1040 W. Jefferson

Brownsville, Tx

956-544-1400

Valley Baptist Medical Center

2101 Pease St.

Harlingen, Tx

956-389-1100

Valley Regional Medical Center

100 AE. Alton Gloor

Brownsville, Tx

956-350-7000

Pharmacies

CVS Pharmacy

1500 Padre Blvd.

South Padre Island

956-761-3491

Walgreens

1673 Hwy. 100

Port Isabel

956-943-3754

Wal-Mart Pharmacy

Highway 100 and Highway 48

Port Isabel

956-943-1387

Committees

Chamber of Commerce Committees

The South Padre Island Chamber of Commerce has six very important action committees whose purpose is to promote a healthy business environment on the Island:

The Governmental Affairs Committee

monitors local, state and federal legislative issues of concern to our Chamber membership and our community. Committee members attend informational meetings with various government representatives and issue related associations, respond to legislative communications and make recommendations to the Board of Directors as needed. This committee also conducts a candidate debate for City government candidates each year.

The Business Services Committee

is the educational training arm of the Chamber. The committee works closely with UTB/TSC at Brownsville and UT Pan Am at Edinburg to bring timely and effective classes to the business community, such as customer service, small business tax workshops, marketing and hurricane preparedness. Outside certified instructors are also recruited to conduct classes that are required by city ordinance such as food safety, and they also coordinate accounting and TABC required classes. The committee is also responsible for recruiting speakers and coordinating Quarterly Public Affairs luncheons that address issues that affect Island businesses.

The Education Committee

is made up of local business owners and school district representatives. The committee works closely with the school district to identify and develop curriculum to benefit both the students and local employers. Committee members also keep abreast of school finance issues including but not limited to school property taxes. The committee also organizes an annual new teacher welcome luncheon and teacher appreciation event.

Membership

with South Padre Island Chamber of Commerce

Whether you are relocating to the Island as a business owner or a resident, the Chamber is an excellent way to get involved and meet your neighbors. Membership in the Chamber provides you the avenue you need to stay abreast of things happening in the community, all the way from legislative issues that effect us, both as businesses and as individual property owners, to networking opportunities such as Quarterly Public Affairs Luncheons, mixers and ribbon cuttings. Included in your packet are a membership application and a brief list of Chamber benefits for our business members, but you do not have to be a business owner to join the Chamber. Associate memberships are available and provide you a wonderful avenue to meet new people and take part in those volunteer activities you have always wanted to participate in. We have also enclosed a copy of the 2010 Guide to South Padre Island, which is an 84-page full-color book. The guide is produced by the Chamber and will provide you a wealth of information about our beautiful Island.

What are the benefits of being a member of the Chamber of Commerce?

The South Padre Island Chamber of Commerce is organized to advance the quality of life and economy of the Island so that all areas of the business community and its residents may prosper. Emphasis is given to participation in the formation of City strategies, education and development of the workforce, coordination and support of City tourism efforts and the establishment of partnerships with the communities of the Laguna Madre Area and the Rio Grande Valley.

Although the Chamber enjoys a cooperative working relationship with the City of South Padre Island, the Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Economic Development Corporation, the Chamber is an autonomous organization, meaning it is not under the authority of any of these entities nor does it receive any operational funding from tax dollars. The Chamber is funded entirely through membership dues as well as events and activities included in our annual Program of Work. Being a member driven entity allows our organization to maintain an independent voice.

Automobile Registration

The first thing that is required in the State of Texas is liability insurance. Secondly, you must obtain a safety inspection of your vehicle. Call the Chamber of Commerce for locations. You will need proof of insurance to obtain the inspection.

Once you have proof of insurance and an inspection sticker on your automobile, you can register your vehicle at the Tax Assessor—Collector Office at the Cameron County Building, 505 Hwy. 100, Port Isabel. Office hours are Monday—Friday from 8:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m.—4:30 p.m. For additional information you can call them at—956-943-8101.

You can renew your Driver's License, change your address and register your vehicle with just a few clicks on www.txdps.state.tx.us. If you prefer to handle these issues in person, Texas DPS branches are located in Brownsville and Harlingen. Their office hours are Monday—Friday, 8:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.

Texas DPS Office

2901 Paredes Line Rd.

Brownsville, Tx

956-983-1920

Texas DPS Office

1630 N. 77 Sunshine Strip

Harlingen, Tx

956-440-6725

Wednesday hrs. 8:00 a.m.—7:00 p.m.

Voter Registration

For Voter Registration, please contact the Chamber of Commerce Office at 956-761-4412 or call 956-761-6456 for additional information.

U.S. Internal Revenue Service Office

2701 S. Sunshine Strip

Harlingen, Tx 78550

956-365-5185

Places of Worship

Bethel Baptist Church

Bilingual, Multicultural, Shell Harbor Shopping Center

Hwy. 100, Port Isabel

956-943-2484 ~ 956-943-2955 ~ 956-233-4833

Calvary Lighthouse

101 E. Harrison, Port Isabel

956-943-4963

Chapel By the Sea

Interdenominational

Isla Blanca Park, South Padre Island

956-761-5636

Christ's Harbor Church

1441 Santa Isabel Blvd., Laguna Vista

956-943-5595

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

1730 State Hwy. 100, Port Isabel

956-943-2054

First Baptist Church

124 E. Washington , Port Isabel

956-943-5017

First United Methodist Church

101 W. Adams, Port Isabel

956-943-2485

Retirement

Retiring to South Padre Island

South Padre Island is one of the most popular Winter Texan destinations. South Padre Island hosts many activities and attractions for our Winter Texans to enjoy as well as our local residents.

South Padre Island has been designated as a Certified Retirement Community. Currently only 6 states have created programs for Certified Retirement Communities. Texas has 22 Certified Communities. To become certified, communities must complete an application that covers a wide range of topics. It includes demographics, tax structure, housing availability, safety, employment, availability of health care services, public transportation and a number of other topics.

The mild climate also attracts retirees to settle on South Padre Island. Golfing, fishing, boating, and birding are just a few of the outdoor activities that can be enjoyed year round.

Call the Chamber for a listing of Real Estate companies or property management business's who can assist you in finding your next home.

Community Services

Post Office

The post office on South Padre Island is located at:

4705 Padre Blvd.

South Padre Island, Tx 78597

956-761-4252 or 1-800-275-8777

Library

5800 Padre Blvd.

South Padre Island, Tx 78597

956-772-9127

Utilities

Electrical service can be obtained from several suppliers
(www.powertochoose.org).

The Laguna Madre Water District manages water and sewer. 956-943-2626.

Telecommunication service is available through AT&T. Business—1-800-499-7928 Home—1-800-288-2020.

Trash and Garbage Pickup service is provided by Allied Waste Disposal. 1-800-423-7316.

Recycling

Recycling center is located at: 108 W. Retama. You may drop off recyclables on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month between 8:00 a.m.—12 p.m.

Places of Worship cont.

Fishers of Men Lutheran Church

603 S. Tarvana St., Port Isabel

956-943-2005

Island Baptist Church

107 W. Mesquite, South Padre Island

956-761-5029

Lighthouse Assembly of God

Port Rd. and Hwy. 100, Port Isabel

956-943-5372

Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church

705 S. Longoria, Port Isabel

956-943-1297

Port Isabel Church of Christ

310 S. Tarnava St., Port Isabel

956-943-1844

Shoova Israel

106 W. Oleander, South Padre Island

956-455-4917

St. Andrew Episcopal Church

1022 N. Yturria St. , Port Isabel

956-943-1962

Service/Social/Volunteer Organizations

American Legion Post 498

956-943-3666

Boys' & Girls' Club of Laguna Madre

956-943-6310

Club Padre

956-761-2572

Elks Lodge 1032

956-542-0864 or 956-542-3545

El Paseo Arts Foundation

956-943-2004

International Idiots Club, Inc.

956-761-3600

Laguna Madre Art League

956-943-1153

Laguna Madre Humane Society

956-943-5647

Rotary Club

956-943-7611

Sandcastle Days, Inc.

www.sandcastledays.com

Sea Turtle, Inc.

956-761-1720

South Padre Island Birding & Nature Center

956-243-8179

South Padre Island Community Foundation

956-761-7051

South Padre Island Convention and Visitors Bureau

956-761-6433

Demographics cont.

Taxing Entities

2009 Rates

Cents per \$100

Point Isabel Independent School District	1.061634
Cameron County	.353191
City Of South Padre Island	.245610
South Texas ISD	.049200
Texas Southmost College	.161089
Laguna Madre Water District	.080820
Total:	1.951544

For additional information regarding the City of South Padre Island's Sales and Use Tax, Hotel/Motel/Condo Occupancy Tax and Mixed Beverage Tax, visit the City's website: www.townspi.com or contact the SPI Chamber of Commerce.

Labor

Low wage costs and high productivity levels characterize the Rio Grande Valley labor force. The local labor force is drawn from the Laguna Madre Area and the surrounding communities of Brownsville, Los Fresnos and Harlingen. According to the Texas Workforce Commission, the unemployment rate for Cameron County in December 2009 was 8.3% and the unemployment rate for 2008 on South Padre Island is 3.1%. The current year estimated per capita income is \$38,509 compared to an estimate of \$25,495 for the United States as a whole.

Demographics cont.

The age of the population was as follows:

- under 18 - 12.9%
- 18 to 24 - 6.2%
- 25 to 44 - 28.2%
- 45 to 64 - 34.2%
- 65 or older - 18.4%

The median income for a household in South Padre Island was \$45,417.

Education

School age children on South Padre Island attend Point Isabel Independent School District. There is a bus service from the island.

- Children go to Garriga Elementary School (Grades K-2),
- Derry Elementary School (Grades 3-5),
- Port Isabel Junior High School (Grades 6-8) and
- Port Isabel High School (Grades 9-12).

- Derry Elementary—956-943-0070
- Garriga Elementary—956-943-0080
- Port Isabel Junior High—956-943-0060
- Port Isabel High School—956-943-0030
- Administration Office—956-943-0000

The Island is within a 90-minute drive of two four-year universities, (University of Texas at Brownsville and University of Texas Pan American at Edinburg), a technical and vocational training program, a university preparatory program and the Marine Military Academy.

Service/Social/Volunteer Organizations

S.P.I.R.I.T (South Padre Island Residents Involved Together)

956-761-7528

Surfrider Foundation

956-761-4400

UTPA Coastal Studies Lab

956-761-2644

City Government

The City Council is the governing body for the City of South Padre Island; therefore, it must bear the initial responsibility for the integrity of governance. The board is responsible for its own development (both as a body and as individuals), its responsibilities, its own discipline, and its own performance. The development of this policy is designed to ensure effective and efficient governance.

The City Council meets on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall. These are public meetings, and the public is encouraged to attend. Agendas are posted at City Hall and on the web site at www.townspi.com

Additional information about the City can be found on the web site including elected officials, City personnel, emergency preparedness, ordinances and available jobs, or you may call—956-761-6456.

City Committees

The City is assisted by a number of committees and boards whose members are appointed by the City Council. These Committees and Boards are:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Board of Adjustments and Appeals | Beach and Dune Task Force |
| Development Plan and Review Board | Planning and Zoning |
| Economic Development Board | Keep SPI Beautiful |
| Historical Preservation Committee | Bay Area Task Force |
| Convention and Visitors Bureau | Form Based Code Commission |
| Padre Blvd. Implementation Committee | Special Events Committee |

Emergency Preparedness

Living on South Padre Island is normally peaceful. However, from time to time, there may be emergency situations that require your attention. Should an emergency arise, the Mayor of South Padre Island will make periodic announcements, through the various media avenues (ex: television, radio, e-mail broadcasts) to advise you as to what actions you should take.

Hurricanes

Hurricanes are among the greatest threats Island residents face. Residents of South Padre Island are encouraged to take all necessary steps to prepare for a hurricane. Please review the valuable information provided at www.spiemergency.com.

Island Reentry Stickers

If you live, work, and/or own property on South Padre Island, you will need a vehicle identification sticker to be able to return to the Island in the event the Island is evacuated as a result of an emergency. Bring the following items to the City's Fire Department to obtain a vehicle identification sticker: Note: Vehicle Identification Stickers will not be issued during an emergency.

Resident: Proof of residency if Drivers License does not show a physical Island address. A utility bill or copy of rental lease is acceptable.

1. Drivers License
2. License plate number, make, model and color of each vehicle.

Only two (2) stickers are provided per family.

Business:

1. The business owner or manager needs to provide the name of each employee, a copy of their driver's license, and the license plate number, make, model and color of employee's vehicle.

Only four (4) stickers are provided per business.

If you have any questions, call the Fire Department 956-761-5454.

Demographics

General Information

South Padre Island is located in Cameron County. The 2000 census lists the official population as 2,422 permanent residents. However, the estimated number of inhabitants in 2008 was 5,900. Many Winter Texans or part-time residents claim South Padre as home for large portions of the year. South Padre Island is also a popular destination for Mexican nationals and Spring Break Activities.

Geography

South Padre is located at Latitude 26.103.N and Longitude - 97.164W. This is approximately the same latitude as Miami, Florida. The City's total area is about 1,200 acres. The Island is approximately 1/2 mile wide from beach to bay. The Island is bordered by the Gulf of Mexico and the Laguna Madre Bay. The Laguna Madre Bay is one of only three (3) hyper-saline bays in the world. The only saltier body of water in the United States is the Great Salt Lake. This unique bay is home to diverse species and a nursery to fish. It is estimated that 30% of the Gulf's fish are spawned in the bay. This body of water is also home to young sea turtles, dolphins, endangered brown pelicans, and much more.

Population

The South Padre Island census of 2000 lists 2,422 residents, 1,211 households, and 662 families and 4,685 housing units. Of the 1,211 households, 15.4% had children in the residence, 47.2% were married couples, 4.2% had a female head of household with no husband, and 45.3% were non-families. 35.8% of households were made up of individuals, and 7.8% had someone living alone over the age of 65. The average household size was 2 people, and the average family size was 2.54.