



**THE BEACHES OF CHARLOTTE HARBOR & THE GULF ISLANDS
OFFER UNCROWDED, UNSPOILED SHORELINES**

CHARLOTTE HARBOR & THE GULF ISLANDS, Fla. – The unspoiled and uncrowded beaches of Charlotte Harbor & the Gulf Islands on Florida’s Southwest Coast are all about color, nature and privacy. Relatively undeveloped, the area beaches are something of a rarity for South Florida. Four barrier islands, two state parks and miles of beaches offer access to delightfully deserted stretches of sand, sun and surf.

The beaches of Charlotte Harbor hold a cache of natural treasures. A cornucopia of multihued shells polished to gleaming smoothness by gentle Gulf waves, diverse species of shorebirds, schools of dolphins, slow-moving sea turtles, and dunes flush with sea oats put on a show every day.

One of the best things about Charlotte Harbor & the Gulf Islands is that visitors have not just one beach from which to choose to while away a day, a weekend, or even longer, but several coastal settings that appeal to every pursuit and temperament.

While all of Charlotte Harbor & the Gulf Islands beaches welcome everyone, here are some recommendations in several favorite categories:

Romantic Beach – Englewood Beach on Manasota Key

Enjoy dinner at one of the many restaurants nearby, and then watch the sun melt away into the Gulf of Mexico for a romantic evening. Daytime brings sandier pursuits as the wide shorelines of **Englewood Beach** are perfect for building sandcastles, bird watching, or simply strolling hand-in-hand along the Gulf. For the sporting-type, adjoining Chadwick Park offers volleyball and basketball courts, and plenty of fishing opportunities including seasonal catches of snook and tarpon.

Family Beach - Port Charlotte Beach

Port Charlotte Beach Park boasts harbor-side fun. Families and athletes love its heated swimming pool, basketball, tennis, beach volleyball, bocce, horseshoe courts and playground. There are picnic shelters, a fishing pier, as well as access ramps for boating, canoeing and kayaking. For those who want to take life in the slow lane or watch a spectacular sunset, the beach has plenty of space for lounge chairs and beach blankets.

Shelling Beach – Stump Pass Beach

When the tide rolls away from Stump Pass Beach State Park on Manasota Key, there remains mixed in among the untold number of shells a plethora of fossilized shark's teeth, attesting to the fact that the Gulf of Mexico is as ancient and mysterious as ever. Like Englewood Beach, Stump Pass Beach has plenty of wide open coastlines, not to mention nature trails for wildlife viewing and native plants such as indigo berry and bay cedar.

Island Beach – Don Pedro State Park

Accessible only by boat, Don Pedro Island, one of Charlotte Harbor's barrier islands, is the ultimate Florida escape. Nature reigns here, where sightings of West Indian manatees, bald eagles, and gopher tortoises moseying among the sand, sky, and water are not uncommon. Although far removed from civilization, Don Pedro Island State Park still boasts modern-day amenities including restrooms, outdoor showers, picnic pavilions, and barbecue grills.

Whether it's a romantic getaway, a girlfriends' weekend or a family reunion, a fishing vacation or a family vacation, there are lodgings to suit every taste and budget. Charlotte Harbor & the Gulf Islands' accommodations range from hotels and motels to rental homes and condominiums. For diverse and well appointed appeal select from the canal-front Tropical Paradise Bed & Breakfast or the full-service experience of Palm Island Resort to luxury offerings of Island House Inn at The Boca Grande Resort and Harbor Pointe Condominium Resort of Port Charlotte County.

CONTACTS: Jennifer Huber
Tourism Public Relations Manager
Charlotte Harbor Visitor & Convention Bureau
(941) 743-1900
Jennifer.Huber@CharlotteFL.com

Mary Jane Kolassa / Cindy Dobyms
Above Water Public Relations & Marketing
(407) 463-0040 / (239) 596-9149
MKolassa@AboveWater.com / CDobyms@AboveWater.com

Charlotte Harbor Visitor & Convention Bureau
18500 Murdock Circle, Suite B104, Port Charlotte, FL 33948
941-743-1900, FAX: 941-764-4932
www.CharlotteHarborTravel.com