



The Concierge Guide

3 DAYS IN PORT ARANSAS

A simple, unhurried plan for your first trip to the island — plenty of beach, a little exploring, and zero stress. This is the version we'd hand a friend who texted, "We're headed to Port A for the first time. What do we actually do?"

A FIRST-TIMER'S ITINERARY · RTDC VACATION RENTALS

BEFORE YOU DIVE IN

Port A rewards a loose plan. Keep your mornings slow, your afternoons sandy, and leave room to do nothing at all. Here's how we'd shape three days — adjust freely. The island isn't going anywhere, and neither is your pool.

DAY
1

LAND, STOCK UP, HIT THE SAND

SETTLE IN · FIRST TOES IN THE GULF

ARRIVAL



Come over the water

Roll in on the free ferry from Aransas Pass — it runs around the clock and the ride is half the fun — or take the causeway from the south. Drop your bags, throw open the doors, and let the island slow you down.

MIDDAY



Stock the house, grab your wheels

With a full kitchen and a pool, a grocery run beats eating out every meal. Pick up a beach parking permit so you can drive right onto the sand, and rent a golf cart — it's how the island gets around, and the kids will campaign for it anyway.

AFTERNOON



First beach

You're three blocks from the Gulf, so the first beach trip is easy: load the chairs, drive onto the sand, and stake your spot. Swim, dig in, do nothing. Come back to rinse off and regroup whenever you like.

EVENING



Keep it easy

Don't overthink night one. Fire up the grill or grab takeout and eat by the pool while the sky turns pink. When you're ready to plan dinners out, our [restaurant guide](#) sorts the island by the night you're having.

DAY
2

THE FULL PORT A DAY

BEACH · WATER · GOLDEN HOUR

MORNING



Coffee, then a slow beach walk

Grab coffee and a box of donuts and head back to the sand early, before the heat. Low tide is prime time for shelling — the kids will fill a bucket and you'll get a quiet, glassy stretch of Gulf to yourselves.

MIDDAY



Get out on the water

This is the day to leave the sand. Take a dolphin-watch cruise from the harbor — they're easy, short, and a near-guaranteed hit with kids — or book a bay fishing trip if someone in the group has been eyeing the rods. Ask us and we'll line up the right captain.

AFTERNOON



Pick your pace

Choose your speed: Mustang Island State Park for wilder, emptier sand, the birding boardwalks for a shaded detour, or straight back to the pool with no agenda. There's no wrong answer here.

EVENING



Sunset, then a real dinner

Take the cart to the jetty for sunset and a good chance of dolphins rolling past, then go out for a proper meal. Waterfront tables fill fast at golden hour, so head out a little early — the [restaurant guide](#) has the spots worth timing.

DAY
3

ONE MORE ADVENTURE, THEN SLOW

A LITTLE MAGIC BEFORE THE FERRY HOME

MORNING



Slip away to San Jose Island

For the trip everyone remembers, catch the seasonal jetty boat over to San Jose Island — an undeveloped barrier island with miles of empty sand and the best shelling around. If the water's rough, trade it for the Marine Science visitor center and the birding centers. We'll help you time the boat.

MIDDAY



Last swim, last scoop

Squeeze in one more swim and a final sandcastle, then cruise downtown for souvenirs and ice cream. Let the kids burn the last of their energy before the drive home.



DEPARTURE



Pack slow, look back once

No need to rush the goodbye. Rinse the sand, load the cart, and take one last look at the Gulf on your way to the ferry. Most first-timers leave already planning the next trip — and when you do, book it straight with us.

YOUR ISLAND HOME BASE

TWO HOUSES, ONE EASY WALK TO THE GULF

Three blocks from the beach, private dipping pools (option to heat), and room for the whole group. Take one for the family — or both for the full crew.

CHILLIN' THE MOST

MARGARITAVILLE-THEMED

Easygoing island vibes with a private dipping pool and space to spread out — built for the family that wants the beach close and the day unhurried.

4 bed · 3.5 bath · sleeps 12 · private dipping pool · heat optional

CUBAN BREEZE

CUBAN-THEMED

A warm, colorful retreat with a larger outdoor space and dipping pool — the one to book when the gatherings spill outside late into the evening.

4 bed · 3.5 bath · sleeps 12 · private dipping pool · heat optional

SEE BOTH HOUSES

FIRST-TIMER NOTES

A FEW THINGS WORTH KNOWING

- **THE FERRY CAN BACK UP**

It's free and runs all day, but summer weekends bring a wait. Cross early or late, or take the causeway when the line looks long.

- **GOLF CARTS ARE THE MOVE**

Carts are street-legal here and the easiest way around town. They book out in peak season, so reserve early.

- **PACK SHADE AND SUNSCREEN**

The Gulf sun is no joke. Bring an umbrella or pop-up and reef-friendly sunscreen — there's not much natural shade on the sand.

- **YOU NEED A BEACH PERMIT**

An annual parking permit lets you drive and park right on the sand. Grab one on day one — we'll point you to where.

- **RESPECT THE FLAGS**

Check the beach flags and watch for rip currents before you swim. When in doubt, keep little ones close to shore.

- **KEEP THE BEACH CLEAN**

Pack out what you pack in. Clean sand is the whole reason we're all here — and it keeps the island ours.

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Schedules, hours and beach conditions change with the season and the weather. Tours, the jetty boat, and the ferry are operated by third parties — please confirm current times, and check posted beach and surf advisories before you go.