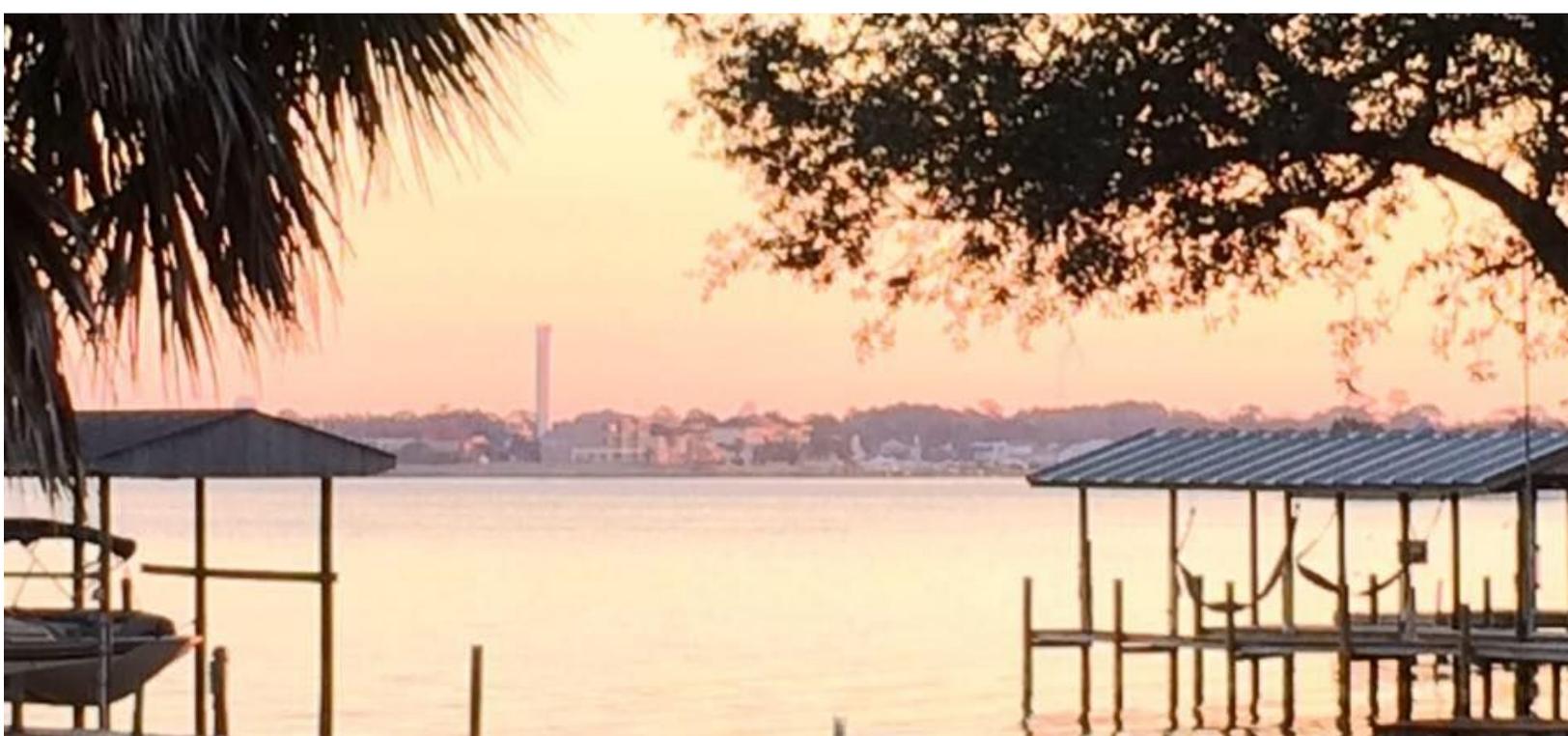


Fort Walton Beach, FL

Down on the Bayou Favorites

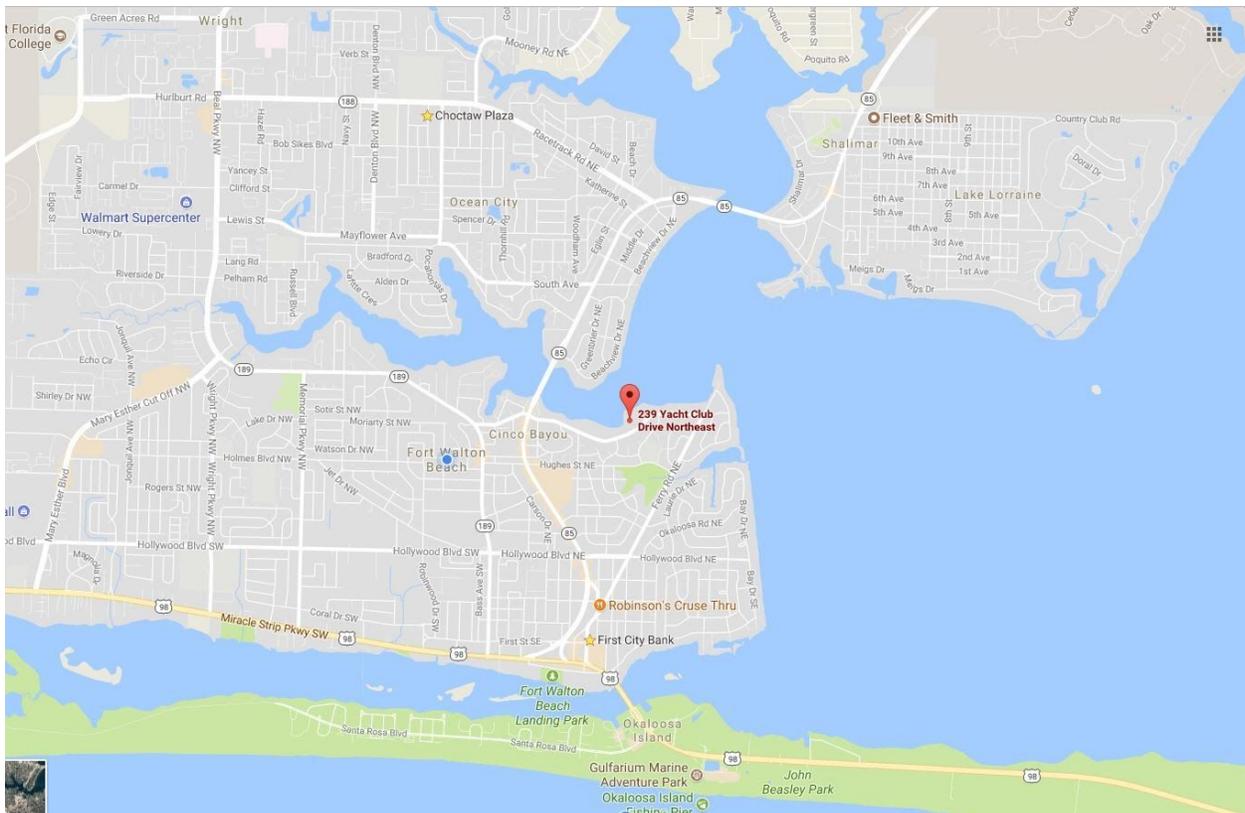


Welcome to Fort Walton Beach! Yacht Club Dr, Ferry Park & Elliott Point Neighborhoods

Yacht Club Drive is well known for its large houses and protected waterfront. However, what is little known about Yacht Club Dr is how accessible all of the best amenities of Fort Walton are to the street. Nearly all of the best restaurants, private clubs, night-life, grocery stores, shops, and other necessities can be accessed via a boat, golf cart, or bike from this location and all on back roads to make going home for the weekend truly feel like a peaceful vacation.

In this booklet, we want to present you with some of the owner's and our favorite hotspots around the neighborhood as well as give you useful information about Fort Walton Beach.

Where are we?



This is where Yacht Club Dr is located! Tucked up on the edge of a cove on Cinco (5 mile) Bayou, the house is a short drive to the beach, or you can set out in your boat to explore the many finger bayou's, the natural islands of the Santa Rosa Sound, Gulf of Mexico to fish, Crab Island Sandbar at the foot of the Destin Bridge, or one of the many waterfront restaurants in Fort Walton, Niceville, Destin, or Sandestin.

Cinco Bayou, Choctawhatchee Bay and the Santa Rosa Sound make a peninsula out of the original area of Fort Walton Beach. This is called Elliott Pointe. The neighborhood in Elliott Pointe that is East of Eglin Parkway and North of Hollywood Blvd is called Ferry Park. Within Ferry Park is an outstanding, regional shopping center at Uptown Station along with one of Fort Walton's top parks, Ferry Park, and the private Fort Walton Beach Yacht Club at the northern end of Ferry Rd. South of Hollywood is the Elliott Pointe neighborhood, and it contains Downtown, the Publix shopping center, and the Fort

Walton Beach Landing where many festivals, outdoor concerts, artwalks, and other events happen. All of this is easily accessible via a golf cart, bike, or car.

Where to eat and drink?

This list is by no means comprehensive but, instead, represents a few of the favorites that we have close to your new home. Fort Walton is full of great local eats and a few upscale, local restaurants. The flavors of the area are widely mixed due to the influence from around the world brought here by two of our nation's leading air force bases: (Hurlburt Field-headquarters for Special Operations and Eglin Air Force Base-the largest land and sea base in the free world and home of the F-15 and F-35 fighter jets). We also tried to emphasize the accessibility of these places by claiming as Boat or Golf Cart friendly.



Ali's Bistro

Ali's Bistro, located Downtown, has some of the best traditional Italian food in the area, along with fresh seafood, perfectly cooked steaks, and brick oven baked gourmet pizzas.

We enjoy Ali's for date nights, nice lunches, and glasses of wine following events/festivals downtown at the Fort Walton Beach Landing. Boat and Golf

Cart friendly.

Bay Cafe

For over 30 years, Bay Cafe French Restaurant has delighted Fort Walton Beach with an authentic European fare. Known for its quaint atmosphere, the neighborhood bistro is nestled away on a quiet peninsula-like corner, near historic downtown Fort Walton Beach and Brooks Bridge. Bay Cafe adds unique charm with an outdoor patio that offers panoramic views of the beautiful water. Boat and Golf Cart friendly.





Clemenza's

Located in Uptown Station, Clemenza's has fabulous Italian and steak dishes along with brick oven pizza's. However, our favorite time to come here is for their European Sunday brunch featuring crepes, prosciutto & melon, and unbelievable specials. Don't forget to try their espresso cookies to wake you up! Golf Cart friendly.

Original Crab Shack

The Original Crab Shack is great for a casual seafood lunch or dinner. It is located on the Santa Rosa Sound and has a wonderful, shaded deck that receives the refreshing sea breezes in the summertime along with incredible sunset views.

Their Blackened Redfish Entrees are consistently delicious preparations of a local fish that is numerous amongst the flats of our bay and bayous. Boat friendly.



Beach Bar & Dining

casual beach and tiki bar down on their private beach. The restaurant specializes in simple, fresh, handmade food served with elegant style. They present an extensive menu of steaks, seafood, fresh Italian dishes, homemade pizzas, appetizers, salads and desserts. Boat and Golf Cart friendly.

Giovanni's

Giovanni's One89 Bistro is on the water Downtown and features both elegant dining along with a



The Gulf

Located on Okaloosa Island facing the Santa Rosa Sound, The Gulf is the place to pull your boat up to the beach with your friends and hop off for a cocktail or some chill time with your friends and family. The Gulf is an excellent place to relax and lounge, and their food is always fresh and local and great for something casual or light. If you want a finer or more diverse options ferry across the Sound on your boat to the Bay Cafe or to the Landing at Fort Walton Beach to access all of Downtown. Boat friendly.



Fort Walton Yacht Club

FWYC is located at the entrance to Cinco Bayou straddling Choctawhatchee Bay and the Bayou entrance. There is no better place in the area to watch sunrises or sunsets. There is a wealth of boating related activities throughout the year with them hosting national and international regattas, teaching youth sailing, and the various inter-club regatta series that are always going on. FWYC is also home to Sailing Hall of Fame Member, Randy Smyth, a two time Olympic Silver Medalist with over 60 World and National Sailing Championship titles. Randy is a regular at the club and can always be found helping and encouraging people to sail with a special interest in the youth. The Yacht Club also has a variety of dining options including a great Sunday brunch, phenomenal pizzas, and classy Friday night dinners. Boat and Golf Cart friendly.



The Boardroom

The Boardroom is a wonderful, small and clean pub that is Downtown and is connected to Liquid Surf Shop. The pub features a wide array of craft beers along with a great pub food selection including healthy options. Their breakfasts bowls with queso on the weekends are mouth-watering. Boat and Golf Cart friendly.

Green Door

The Green Door is a fun, small, local music venue. Located in Downtown



they have an excellent array of local and traveling artists that come through the venue and make it a fun night out. Boat and Golf Cart friendly.



AJ's On the Bayou

Located on Cinco Bayou, this is a good spot to grab a cocktail and watch the sunset or come over for one of their great Prime Rib nights. AJ's also has constant live music on the weekends and holds fireworks shows for special holidays. This is a great spot for a paddle board destination or a stop off on a bayou cruise. Boat and paddleboard friendly.

Other Notable Restaurants

Mary's Kitchen-located in Uptown Station, this restaurant has good, deep South cooking. There is a fantastic lunch special each day and don't forget to try one of their pies. Golf Cart friendly.

Thai Ramen-located in Uptown Station, Thaiger is a really good Thai Restaurant. Most people go for takeout, but they have a nice and quiet dining area as well. Golf Cart friendly.

Buffalo's Reef-located across from Uptown Station, this is a good local wings and beer joint for a casual dinner or ball game.

SOI Bistro-located on Hwy 98 West of Downtown, this sushi restaurant can stand up to any big city joint with its modern style, fresh fish, and fun roll creations. We only wish it was more accessible by golf carts or boats!

Maas Coffee Shop-there is a Starbucks in Uptown Station. However, if you want a cool and authentic coffee shop who roasts their own beans and carries a variety of international whole beans to sell by the pound, then this is the spot to go! Located in Downtown. Boat and Golf Cart Friendly

Burrito Del Sol-located in Downtown, this is a Cali-Mexican joint featuring hip versions of tacos and burritos. The line is super long at lunch, which is why we like it for a casual dinner. Golf Cart friendly.

Props Brewery-located in the Publix Shopping Center Downtown, this local brewer has expanded and now distributes beer all over the Southeast... We are very proud of them! They have great pub food and of course an incredible selection of beers. Golf Cart friendly,

Robinson's Cruise Thru-located close to downtown, this is a Cali-Mexican casual restaurant with great fresh tacos, and an incredible selection of craft beers that you can buy "cruising thru" in your golf cart or other. They sell the draught beer in pints, quarts, and gallon jugs to-go. Golf cart friendly.

Old Bay Steamer-located on Okaloosa Island. this jazzy, nice-casual focuses on incredible steamed seafood. However, go upstairs for a more festive flair and glasses of wine.

High Tide Oyster Bar-located on Okaloosa Island, no coastal town is quite right without their favorite, old oyster, fried food and beer joint. The High Tide has been around forever, and somehow continues to stand after years of hurricanes, floods and other. Can dock at Adventure Marina to walk.

The Boardwalk-located on Okaloosa Island, the Boardwalk contains an array of good restaurants with incredible Gulf views. All of the restuarants are pretty good, but the people watching is probably the best asset here. Make sure to go watch the bi-annual beach volleyball tournaments happening in the Fall & Spring each year to see hundreds of volleyball teams compete.

We tried to emphasize the local flavor with these suggestions, but located around this neighborhood are the many well known chains as well (McAlisters, Tijuana Flats, Zaxby's, Subway, Starbucks, Five Guys, Jimmy John's, Longhorns, among others).

What to do?

Fort Walton Yacht Club

Join the group with a passion for the water. The Yacht Club features regattas year round, and there are always people looking for crew. If you don't want to sail, but want somewhere to socialize, then there is also an array of parties and events that happen here as well. The bay side of the Fort Walton Yacht Club is a massive sandbar that is quickly becoming the local's hotspot alternative to hang out with their boats on the weekend versus the craziness of Crab Island.

Ferry Park

This is one of the best, if not THE best, park in the area. Located a block over from Yacht Club Dr, this park features tennis courts, basketball courts, disc golf, a 1 mile paved walking/running fitness trail, ball fields, and children's playgrounds.

Fort Walton Golf Club

The Fort Walton Golf Club is a well-maintained municipal course that is a great value for the cost. There are a large amount of championship golf courses in the area, but if you just want to get away to practice your game for a bit, then this is the spot.

Shalimar Pointe Tennis Club

The avid and professional tennis players in the area enjoy this club for its clay courts that are easier on the knees. There is also a golf course and driving range here as well.

Okaloosa Island Beaches

One of the best things that the locals like about Fort Walton is that it is a "real" town without a lot of the tourist hassle. However, the largest and best beaches on the coast are just across the Brooks Bridge on Okaloosa Island! The big beach hangouts are Beasley Park and The Boardwalk, but if you, instead, take a right onto Santa Rosa Blvd, there are seven different beach accesses that are a lot more peaceful (especially access number 6). Access number 7 is usually the best for surfers, and we do get decent surf in the Fall, Winter, and Spring.

Crab Island

Crab Island used to be a little island and then sandbar on which to fish. However, in today's world, it has become very commercialized with food barges, bands, floating playgrounds and an array of other activities and boat hawkers. It is great for lounging, strolling in the water, and people watching.

Santa Rosa Sound Islands

If you are looking for tranquility, then take your boat down the Santa Rosa Sound to the natural islands and find yourself a private beach. These islands in the early morning and at sunset are playgrounds for birds (including a lot of Bald Eagles), dolphins, and great inshore fishing.

Downtown Fort Walton Beach & The FWB Landing Park

This chic, little downtown packs a lot of fun into a small area. The downtown merchants and city do a great job of having activities happening all the time (concerts in the park, movies in the park, beer festivals, pirate festivals, and a myriad of cultural and other food festivals). The downtown has a good array of restaurants and nightlife and some fun, eclectic shops as well.

Destin Harbor

The Destin Harbor has reinvented itself as its own destination. This is a great boat ride destination, and you can choose to pull up to the beach to socialize and watch the boats go by or go dock at AJ's and wander around through the shops and restaurants on the harbor. If you have a cabin cruiser, then this is also a great weekend getaway by boat. Further out is Baytowne at Sandestin, but it is also a fun weekend boat ride or overnight.

What to do with kids?

All of the destinations above have great activities for kids. However, there are a few more that are more specifically geared toward children.

The Gulfarium

Located on Okaloosa Island, the Gulfarium precedes Sea World in opening and has awesome dolphin, sea lion, and other deep sea shows along with petting areas and up close encounter options! This is a great afternoon, but check the dolphin show times because there are only about 3 per day.

The Emerald Coast Science Center

The Science Center has a new location on Memorial Dr in Fort Walton, and they do events both for kids and adults, but they always have something fun going on and great exhibits if you just need a place to go let the kids run and have some hands on activities.

Bounce Party Play Zone

This is an entire space devoted to bouncey houses that is located in the Santa Rosa Mall. Do you have a rainy day and need to wear out some kids... this is the spot.

Gulf Breeze Zoo

The zoo is located about 30-45 minutes West of Fort Walton, but it is a great zoo for kids with petting options, lots of room to run, and a real train safari!

Emerald Coast Zoo

This zoo is located in Crestview. The zoo is smaller than the Gulf Breeze Zoo, but the animals are a little closer and the zoo keepers sometimes allow you to interact with the animals to help stimulate their environment.

Goofy Golf

This place is classic. Built in the 1950's, it has never changed. It is a wonderful place for kids and a great date night as well.

Other Notable Places

Surge Trampoline Park- this sounds pretty dangerous to me, but the kids love it and guess that they have it figured out. Santa Rosa Mall

Santa Rosa Mall-the new developments in Destin made the mall lose a lot of its former traffic glory. However, there are some great staples such as JCPenny, Sears, and Dillards along with the other chains such as Victoria Secret, Regal Cinema, Hot Topic, Journey, and others. They have a great selection of kid friendly activities, some of which have already been noted. Located in Mary Esther

White Sands Bowling Alley-quarter bowling on Tuesday nights is a great date night

Adventure Island-located on Okaloosa Island, this place packs in an arcade, mini-golf and high ropes course all into one!

Armament Museum-check out a vast collection of planes and weapons used throughout the United States Air Force's history and the Doolittle Raiders memorial exhibit!

Relax and Enjoy!

