

## **DESTIN, FLORIDA**

Destin, Florida in Okaloosa County is ranked three among the nation's hottest small cities by Inc. Magazine, consistently voted #1 in the South and was voted a Top Family Destination for nine consecutive years by Southern Living magazine and six years by parent Magazine.

Destin is blessed with a wealth of natural beauty, friendly and caring neighbors, minimal crime, progressive schools and more public parks per capita than perhaps any other municipality in the State of Florida. These resources quickly propelled Destin to gain a national reputation as a wonderful place to live, work, vacation and to raise families.

Destin boasts the largest charter fishing fleet in the State of Florida, with a reputation as "The World's Luckiest Fishing Village." In addition to fishing, Destin offers sugar white beaches, emerald green water, golf, shopping, world-class restaurants, and more.

### **TRAVEL**

Destin is situated in Florida's Panhandle, along the Emerald Coast, approximately eight miles east of Ft. Walton Beach, 50 miles east of Pensacola, and 50 miles west of Panama City.

The area is serviced by two airports: The Okaloosa Regional Airport, which is five miles north of Ft. Walton Beach, and the Destin-Ft. Walton Beach Airport, located within Destin's city limits. Newly renovated, the Okaloosa Regional Airport provides commercial air transportation to the Gulf Coast through six major carriers:

- American Eagle (800) 433-7300
- ASA/Delta Connection (800) 221-1212
- Continental Express Jet (800) 523-3273
- Delta (800) 221-1212
- Gulfstream International (800) 525-0280
- Northwest Airlines (800)225-2525

The Destin-Ft. Walton Beach Airport is owned and operated by Okaloosa County. It has no control tower, no landing fees and lights are available from dusk to dawn. Its fixed base operator is Miracle Strip Aviation, Inc., providing a complete range of aviation-related services. Miracle Strip Aviation, Inc. may be reached at (850) 837-6135.

Two air charter services are available at the Destin-Ft. Walton Beach Airport:

- Destin Air Charters (850) 586-0501
- Wings Air (877) 754-7825

Approximate Mileage to the Destin Area:

| City            | Miles |
|-----------------|-------|
| Atlanta, GA     | 368   |
| Baton Rouge, LA | 302   |
| Biloxi, MS      | 175   |
| Birmingham, AL  | 265   |
| Chattanooga, TN | 410   |
| Chicago, IL     | 927   |
| Cincinnati, OH  | 731   |
| Dallas, TX      | 623   |
| Houston, TX     | 610   |
| Jackson, MS     | 285   |
| Kansas City, KS | 966   |
| Knoxville, TN   | 494   |
| Little Rock, AR | 651   |
| Louisville, KY  | 628   |
| Memphis, TN     | 507   |
| Miami, FL       | 651   |
| Mobile, AL      | 100   |
| Montgomery, AL  | 172   |
| Nashville, TN   | 453   |
| New Orleans, LA | 248   |
| Orlando, FL     | 422   |
| St. Louis, MO   | 801   |

For more information, please visit [www.OkaloosaCountyAirports.com](http://www.OkaloosaCountyAirports.com).

## **FISHING, BOATING AND WATER SPORTS**

Destin's beaches are called Florida's Emerald Coast because of their beautiful emerald green, crystal-clear waters. Whether taking a relaxing stroll along the beach or getting a birds-eye view from a parasailing adventure, you will marvel at the areas natural beauty.

Visitors and locals alike find the beaches, with the unique bright white sand, to be some of the finest in the world. Unlike other resort areas, Destin's beaches contain very little coarse coral and shell, keeping the sand the consistency of powdered sugar.

The crystal clear water also provides excellent opportunity for diving and snorkeling adventures. Destin is one of the few places in Florida where you can still snorkel right off the beach without a boat. The Destin jetties and Crystal Beach pier pilings are superb snorkeling locations for beginners and pros. Numerous natural and artificial reefs, located throughout the Destin area, are ideal for spearfishing, shelling, catching lobsters, or just sightseeing.

Deep-sea bottom fishing is open for the specialties of Destin's fleet. Red snapper, grouper, triggerfish scamp and amberjack are all caught using this method. In addition, charter boats also troll near the coast, finding cobia, black fin tuna, king mackerel, bluefish, barracuda and spanish mackerel. Far offshore, trollers can find white and blue marlin, wahoo, and sailfish. Over 100 charter and party boats call Destin home, and range in size from six passenger capacity to ones that can handle more than 100 anglers. Price for the charters may vary by boat, and include bait and tackle. Meals can also be arranged with the boat captain.

Sightseeing By Boat – Whether a sunset cruise...a glass bottom boat or a high-speed racer, Destin offers visitors an exciting experience on our beautiful waterways. The entire family will enjoy seeing dolphins swimming in the wake of your sightseeing excursion.

### **AREA ATTRACTIONS**

Every type of relaxing activity is available in Destin, from gently strolling through a scenic state park to whipping around in a go-cart, whisking down a giant waterslide, playing miniature golf, or watching the dolphin shows. Take a beach break and have all the fun possible at varied attractions fun enough for all ages.

Whether a sunset cruise, a glass bottom boat, or a high-speed racer, Destin offers visitors an exciting experience sightseeing by boat along our beautiful waterways. The entire family will enjoy finding dolphins frolicking in the wake of a sightseeing excursion.

#### Places to Visit:

- Air Force Armament Museum
- Big Kahuna's
- Blackwater Canoe Rental
- Destin History and Fishing Museum
- Gulfarium
- Gulf World Marine Park
- The Track
- Henderson Beach State Park
- Clement E. Taylor City Park
- James Lee Park
- Grayton Beach State park
- Eden State Gardens and Mansion
- Blackwater River State Park

### **ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT**

Sit back, relax, and take in a concert or performance in Destin's multi-cultural atmosphere. Music, art, and theater in and around the Destin area ranges from relaxing outdoor concerts and enjoyable community shows to touring Broadway productions in the state-of-the-art facilities.

Art is abundant in Destin galleries, enticing visitors with reminders of our beautiful beaches. World-renown artists' work is displayed here as well, including one of the largest Wyland Whaling Walls and two of Wyland's Paradise Galleries.

## **SHOPPING**

While our beautiful beaches and great fishing keep visitors and locals busy outdoors, another great attraction in the Destin area is the shopping experience.

From elegant shopping centers, including the Market Shops in Sandestin, the Village of Baytowne Wharf, and Grand Boulevard, to some of the finest specialty shops around, the Destin area offers everyone an opportunity to browse the afternoon away. These shops provide lots of shade and entertainment away from the summertime sun, as well as seasonal events and shows.

Shop and enjoy the town square of Destin Commons, a unique shopping and dining lifestyle center, which includes a 14-screen stadium seating movie theater, interactive pop fountains, and live entertainment. Destin Commons will take your shopping experience to a whole new level.

In Spring 2007, Grand Boulevard will celebrate the grand opening of a major portion of its town center offering many high-end retail specialty stores and fine and casual dining options.

## **GOLF**

Play some of the finest golf courses in the country, designed for large greens, narrow fairways, hills, valleys and marshland, set among natural landscapes of blue water and white sand. A long list of distinguished golf architects have set the course for a challenging and pleasant day of golf. An abundance of courses are conveniently accessed right in the heart of Destin and many area resorts offer golf packages. Shop in the areas finest golf shops for all your golf fees.

## **DINING**

Dining reigns supreme in the many area restaurants of Destin. Offerings include exquisite seafood dishes created with a local flair, while others feature dishes of great cultural diversity. Take in panoramic views of the great cultural diversity. Anything from casual setting just right for a fish sandwich to a formal evening dining experience may be found here. Several restaurants even offer a "toes in the sand" dining experience, and others feature dinner and dancing aboard luxurious cruise ships.

There definitely is plenty to enjoy in Destin!