

PUNTA GORDA  
**THE BEST**  
SMALL CITY IN FLORIDA

DID YOU  
KNOW...

- Location: Punta Gorda is one mile from Interstate 75 and situated on beautiful Charlotte Harbor.
- Access: The city airport means convenient arrivals and departures for commercial, charter and private air travelers. Come by air, land, or sea.
- Features: Over 70 miles of navigable canals flow seaward to white-sand barrier islands and the Gulf of Mexico. Around town, shady sidewalks, trails and marked routes invite shopping, exploring, walking and biking.
- Fishing: It's world class. Folks fish Punta Gorda the way they like it: blue-water sport, back bay drifting, marsh and mangrove, or surf and sand.



**P**unta Gorda is the rarest of places—a gem at the edge of Florida's Gulf Coast, a treasure that charms and delights. Florida's best small city marries the allure of a world-class resort with the pleasures of a hometown welcome. National travel and lifestyle editors tout its premier sports and recreation, blue-ribbon arts and culture, and its variety of casual

and fine dining. If you haven't yet enjoyed the pleasures of Punta Gorda, think of big fishing and snug village shopping. Imagine a community for life and a unique weekend holiday. Historic Punta Gorda is safe, clean, and accessible. Folks never tire of its sunsets (no two are alike!) and celebrations. First-time or returning, visiting or staying, those who discover Punta Gorda find it for life.

*"Come for the weekend  
Stay for life."*

**PUNTA GORDA**  
*It's Happening On The Harbor*

City of Punta Gorda  
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EXPERIENCE

# THE BEST



SAILING YACHTING MARINA BOATING



MARINA  
*of* THE YEAR  
*Marina Dock Age Magazine*

TOP 10  
PLACES TO SAIL  
*Sail Magazine*

#15 BEST  
YACHTING TOWN  
*Yachting Magazine*

Sail Magazine's recent review of Punta Gorda's front door describes Charlotte Harbor as a "Thin-Water Paradise." That's how sailors identify friendly waters perfect for small and medium-size cruisers, yachts and charter boats. Punta Gorda has deep water access, too. National and regional fishing tournaments draw world-class anglers. At the waterfront, Fishermen's

Village harbors boardwalk shops, casual and fine dining, and resort accommodations. Marina Dock Age Magazine evaluated the bustling village's full-service docks and shops, rating it "Marina of the Year." Captains and crews rave about its protected harbor and chandlery services for just about every boating need. Whether arriving by kayak or yacht, maritime visitors find Punta Gorda's snug harbor is an island of enchantment.

EXPERIENCE

# THE BEST

# BICYCLE COMMUNITY

*of* **THE YEAR** *Florida Bicycle Association*

## THIRD BEST

*GOLF DIGEST*  
PLACE TO LIVE & PLAY GOLF

ACTIVE LIFESTYLE BICYCLING GOLFING



**W**hether pedaling around town with the city's free bike-loaner program, taking a stroll, golfing, tennis, mini-marathons, regattas or races – if it's outdoors, Punta Gorda does it with style. Florida's best small city is a bike-friendly, safe-walking community. Its network of pedestrian sidewalks links historic neighborhoods and parks, connecting strollers and joggers to downtown

attractions and a vibrant city center. Eighteen miles of groomed paths and pet-friendly walking trails are professionally marked and maintained, winning the city Florida Bicycle Association's Community of the Year award. Lifestyle columnists and sports writers – ranging from Golf Digest, Sail, and Money Magazine to Forbes and Rand McNally – keep Punta Gorda at the top of their national "Best of" lists year after year.

# LOCAL FARMER'S MARKET SAFEST SMALL CITY

EXPERIENCE

# THE BEST

FARMER'S MARKET SAFEST CITY



**M**uch more than fruit and vegetables, the bounty of Southwest Florida is stacked high at Punta Gorda's famous Farmer's Market. The region's year-round abundance of local fresh-from-the-farm staples is a feast for the eyes and a delicious invitation. Exotics from around the world appear next to bushels of local delicacies. Organic and hydroponic growers offer niche and specialty crops.

Whether it's carrots or carob you're seeking, grab a roomy tote and shop alongside chefs, cooks, restaurateurs, and neighbors. Don't overlook orange-blossom honey, winter tomatoes, juicy mangoes, plump avocados, live herbs, fresh spices, flowering orchids and bouquets of aromatic flowers – and that's the short list!



NUMBER ONE LOCATION FOR  
**TARPON FISHING**  
 IN THE WORLD  
*Tarpon Magazine*



**PLACE TO CATCH**  
 MONSTER TARPON  
*FlyFishingFrenzy.com*

EXPERIENCE

**THE** FISHING SPOT  
 IN THE WORLD  
*Sport Fishing Magazine*  
**BEST**

WILDLIFE ESTUARY FISHING

**LARGEST**  
 WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT  
 IN THE STATE

**2<sup>nd</sup> LARGEST ESTUARY**  
 IN THE STATE

**F**lorida's southwestern estuaries, mangrove wetlands, historic rivers, and productive uplands comprise one of the largest ecosystems of its kind in North America. Punta Gorda takes immense pride in its ecological riches. Inland, its green-tree canopy shades city streets and residential districts. Surrounding the city, maritime and coastal habitats support over 600 species of birds, fish, and marine wildlife. Punta Gorda's ecosystem is

managed in partnership with state and federal scientists to accommodate a wide range of active and passive uses. Accessible parks and preserves, boat launches, and picnic areas invite family excursions. Fish for the 40-inch snook; catch-and-release the silver king tarpon. Stalk flocks of roseate spoonbills with binoculars; capture pods of dolphin on video. The region's unique environment sustains Florida's best small city.



Photo: Cynthia Zemen

EXPERIENCE

# THE BEST

CHARLOTTE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA  
*SE Tourism Society*  
WINE & JAZZ FEST

ARTS CULINARY DESTINATION FESTIVALS



**W**hen it comes to culture, Punta Gorda thinks big. Its attractive, full-service cultural and convention center is accessible by land and by sea. The acclaimed Charlotte Symphony Orchestra is no stranger to standing ovations. Innovative artists' galleries are tucked throughout the city. Jazz festivals, wine and cuisine affairs, and open-air art shows enliven the community throughout the year.

Spontaneous jams at the city's palm-lined, harbor-front park have been known to serenade the sunset. The community pickup string-and-wind band makes regular, impromptu appearances and welcomes backup musicians to join the sessions. Whether staged indoors or tented on the green, when there's a school reunion, family wedding, or major trade show on the calendar, Punta Gorda offers the perfect venue.