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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sensational Spring Escape to the Coast

Cool... Casual... Corpus Christi

CORPUS CHRISTI, TX - Head to the coast this spring and summer for a sensational escape to nearby Corpus Christi, Texas. This slice of paradise is now the largest coastal city in the state with plenty of activities to choose from.

Be sure to stop by the Texas Surf Museum in late summer to tour the *Texas Women. Texas Waves.* exhibit that will set the record straight about female surfers from the Lone Star State. Take a tour of the USS Lexington, the most famous Aircraft Carrier in US Naval History to see their new addition to their collection, the famed Blue Angel No. 1 Boeing F/A-18 Hornet aircraft. Enjoy the only MEGA Theater on board an aircraft carrier and fly an F/A-18 Hornet in their simulator.

Nature lovers must head to the South Texas Botanical Gardens & Nature Center to see their glorious Orchid House exhibit with over 2,000 orchids and the largest Plumeria Garden in the United States. Dance with the butterflies in their new Butterfly Conservatory, scheduled to open mid-summer and explore over 180 acres of natural wetland, wildlife and native habitats.

Visit the Texas State Aquarium for a free-flight performance featuring hawks, owls, falcons and other exotic small mammals at their new *Hawn Wild Flight Theater*. The Aquarium's newest exhibit, *Tortuga Cay* will serve as a sanctuary for rehabilitated, non-releasable sea turtles that allows guests to experience a special view from above and below the water of these endangered species. Don't miss the opportunity to shake fins with the Atlantic bottlenose dolphins, schedule a *Deckside Dolphin Encounter* or be *A Trainer for a Day*.

Soak up the sun and explore over 120 miles of the Padre Island National Seashore, the longest stretch of primitive undeveloped ocean beach in the nation. For those who delight in the discovery of a seashell of exquisite design or a peculiar piece of driftwood, there are miles of shoreline for beachcombing. Campers can wake up to the sights and sounds of water and island birds such as gulls, herons and ducks that live by the water's edge. If it's adventure and a chance to get away from it all that you seek, hike or drive a 4-wheel-drive vehicle along almost all of the long roadless Gulf beach.

Plan a trip around one of the exciting and fun-filled special events to taste the flavors of the Coastal Bend firsthand. Join the celebration of the Spaniards' discovery and naming of the Corpus Christi Bay at the 70th Annual Buccaneer Days. This initial three-day celebration that began in 1938 is now held in the later part of April consisting of 12 days. Home to the "Richest Little Rodeo in Texas", Buccaneer Days hosts well-recognized PRCA Cowboys every year as they compete for the biggest Rodeo purse in Texas. The rodeo consists of 16 events, as well as a Grand Entry, Mutton Bustin', Calf Scramble, Pony Express and Entertainment. Buccaneer Days also consists of an illuminated parade that draws some 150,000 spectators to downtown Corpus Christi and a spectacular fireworks display over the Corpus Christi Marina. There will be plenty of zesty Mexican food and native cuisine with arts and craft vendors along Shoreline Boulevard. The carnival provides several gut-wrenching rides and a Ferris Wheel with an unforgettable view of the Gulf

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of Mexico. Visitors always enjoy the BBQ Challenge as they sample the mouth watering flavors and cast their vote for the People's Choice Award at the festival. New this year, Buccaneer Days will host a Competencia Folklorica Del Mar Mexican Folklorico Competition at the historical Selena Auditorium.

A short stroll from Buccaneer Days along the picturesque Shoreline Boulevard, everyone can enjoy the four day spending spree at the Texas International Boat Show at the Corpus Christi Municipal Marina. In-water boats, onshore exhibits, million dollar coaches, RVs, a static aircraft display and an auto show featuring the very latest in today's cars and trucks will be on display.

In May Corpus Christi hosts two of the biggest outdoor sporting events drawing athletes to the Texas coast from around the world. The US Wind & Water Open features the National Championships & US title in wind & water extreme sports at McGee Beach. Windsurfing, kite boarding, skateboarding and wake boarding are just a few of the categories offered at this event. It's a sight to see- 9,000 runners lined up on the shores of North Padre Island at the annual Beach to Bay Marathon, a 26 point-to-point relay route divided into six legs that ends at Cole Park along Corpus Christi's scenic downtown. The race has grown in immense proportions since 1976, drawing 1,543 teams in 2007 and attracts participants from Kenya, England, Mexico and Canada.

The Corpus Christi Convention and Visitors Bureau's mission is "to drive overnight visitor\$ to the Corpus Christi Area". For more information about the Corpus Christi Convention and Visitors Bureau, visit www.corpuschristicvb.com or call (361) 881-1888 or 1-800-678-6232.

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