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November 2025



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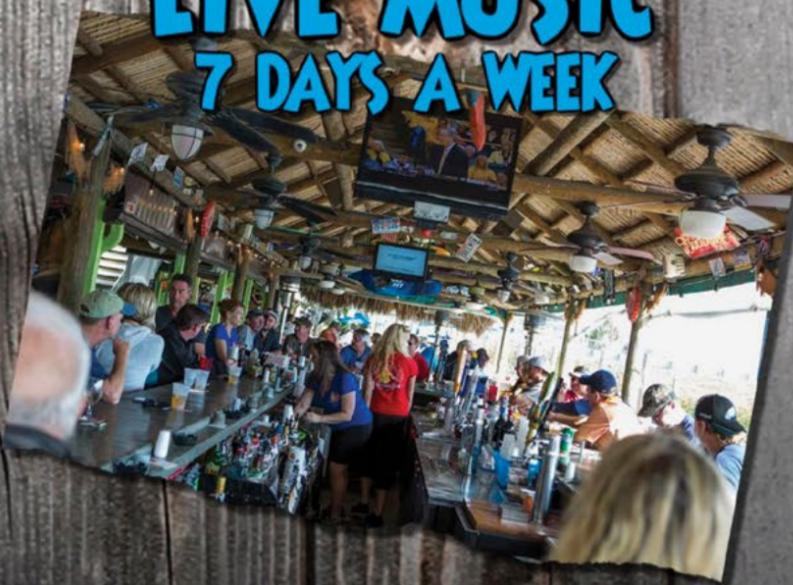
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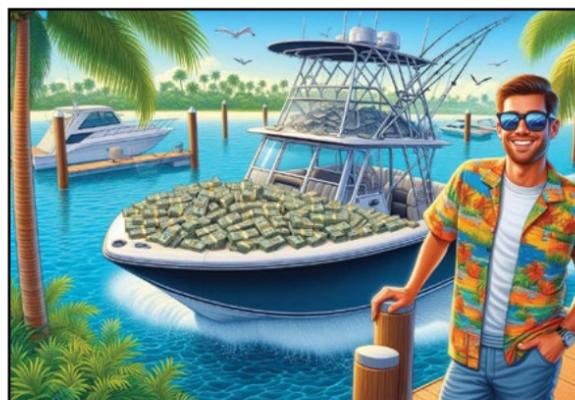
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## IF I ONLY HAD A BOAT

Lots of you readers out there already have boats. This column is not for you, although you might still learn a little or get a chuckle out of it. This column is intended for those of you out there who are absolutely certain that everything will fall right into place and your life will be complete, if you only had a boat.

The idea of a boat is just so damn romantic. They give you access to the open seas where you can break the bonds of your work-a-day life and really find true freedom, right?? There are so many different types of boats that there is something for everybody, from the smallest dingy to the largest megayacht.



The reality of the boating experience can be pretty close to the heaven described above, or it can come very near to experiencing the fiery pits of hell. It's really up to you to determine which way your boating experience goes.

The whole experience starts with the choice of the boat. Pick something appropriate for what you want to do and where you want to go. If you have never ever operated or maintained a boat, start small. Small boats are fairly simple, they are easy to get unstuck (if you happen to forget about the tide) and generally, they are cheaper to fix when you do mess up. I have seen far too many people buy a big complicated boat (because they can) and wind up having a hellish time because they exceeded their skill level. New boats can be quite expensive these days, but you do get a dealer who should stand behind them and help with some of the troubles. If a new boat is your choice, look for an established dealer who has been in business for years. Dealers who survived the 2007/2008 economic crash probably offer good service and aren't going anywhere. If you are going for a used boat, make sure that the major systems are in good order. Get a mechanic to check the compression of the motor and find out the hours, when possible. Most marine motors are capable of running way more hours than you might think, I have almost never seen a worn out boat motor, it is corrosion and improper maintenance and misuse that kills them. Don't worry so much about the little stuff like horn, lights, pumps, etc. They are important for safety, but they are generally easy and cheap to fix.

The most important thing to realize is that, while they may seem to have similarities, a boat is absolutely nothing like your car. Boats are produced by hundreds of relatively small manufacturers, not a handful of mega corporations with billion dollar-automated factories. Boats are much more hand crafted than cars and quality of wiring and other critical systems varies widely between builders. Unlike cars, boats also sit for weeks or months at a time during off-season periods. This is a phenomena that I don't really understand in Florida, but despite year round beautiful weather, many of our friends who came here from the North have retained old habits and they only use their boats during spring and summer. Batteries, fuel systems and electronics, like to be used regularly, when they sit, the gremlins creep in. I can't believe how many of our storage customers show up in April after not seeing their boats for 4 to 6 months and just don't understand why they won't start.

Last, but certainly not least, don't be afraid to admit what you don't know. In our rental fleet, we have very few problems with novice boaters who admit their lack of knowledge and ask for instruction. The boaters who have issues are the ones who think that they know everything and are unwilling to listen and ask questions. A USCG Auxiliary or Power Squadron class is a good place to start and these classes teach you the basics of navigation and safe boating, but they are not really able to offer hands on instruction on the water. There are many qualified boat Captains who will be glad to go out on your boat and teach you the basics of boating in our area. Don't be afraid to call them.

Boats can be a lot of fun, but the best advise that I ever saw about having fun on a boat was to go on somebody else's. If you heed this advise, you are almost certain to have a good time, but don't forget, your buddy's boat runs on gas, not thanks, chip in if you want to ever be asked back.

*Merle & Flip*



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**ON THE COVER:**

Misty Wells with her personal best Redfish caught on a recent trip on one of West Florida's beautiful inshore flats! Catch her article on page 14 and congrats on a fantastic milstone catch!

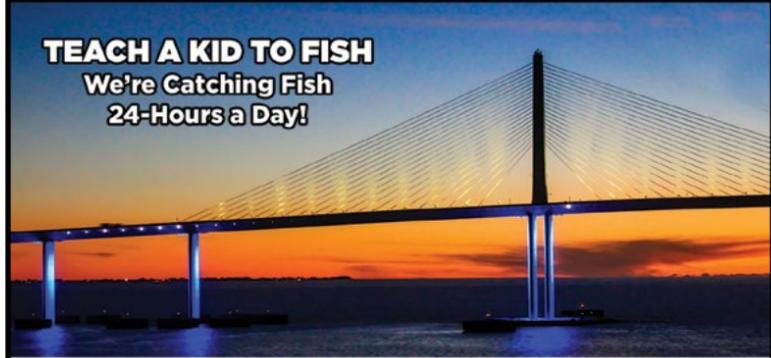


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# THE BIG MACK ATTACK!

by Captain George Hastick

A lot of anglers would agree that Spanish Mackerel do not get the recognition or attention they deserve and November can be a great month to target these toothy gamefish as the water temperatures drop into the magical mid-70s. This is when everything seems to put the feed bags on, right before the cold snaps start shutting many of the fish down.

tournaments that happen at this time of year and in the spring when we have the same water temps. One of my favorites and most sought-after Kingfish tournament would have to be the Old Salt King of the Beach Tournament.



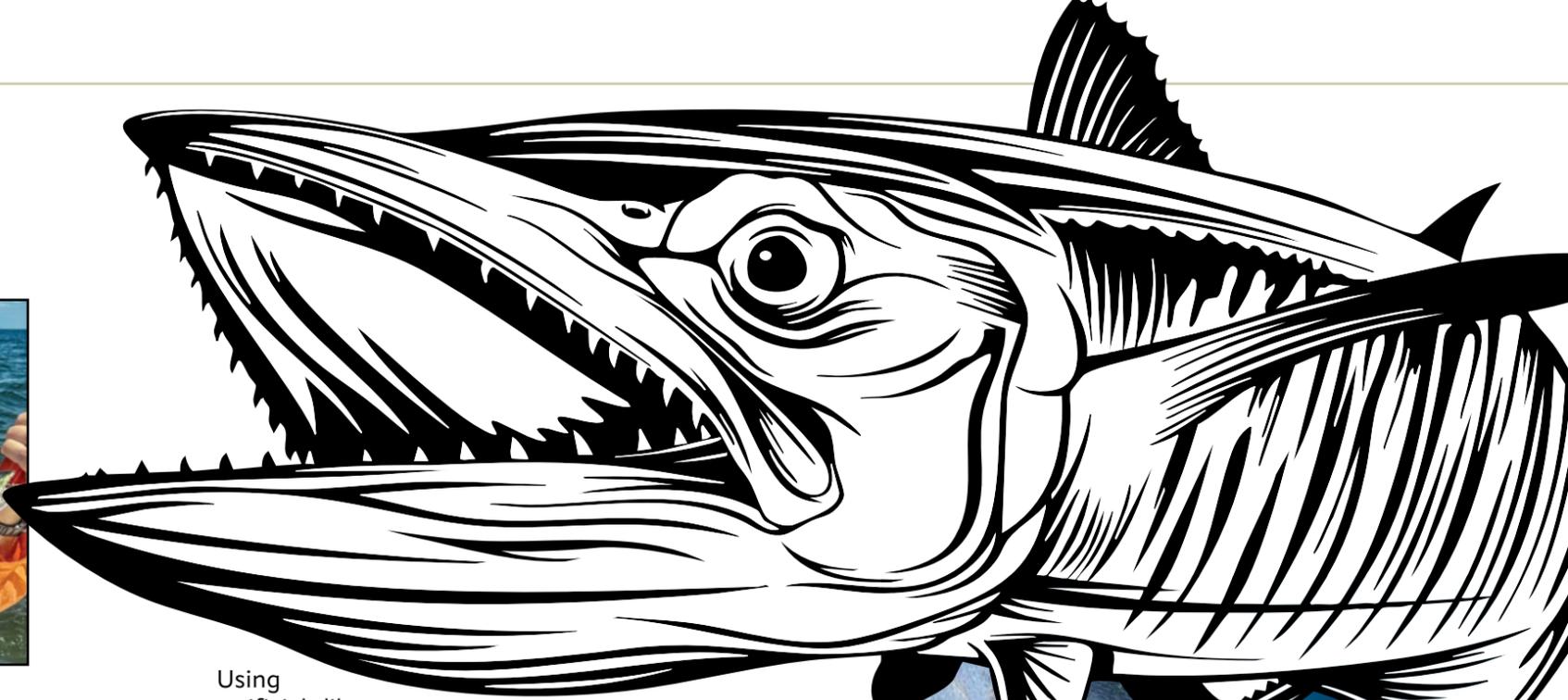
This is where the Spanish Mackerel can be forgotten but they are a fun adversary on light tackle. They are a drag screaming, speeding missile of a fish, with

explosive top water strikes! Many times, you can locate them because of their topwater explosions while feeding on bait balls. Look for the birds to be working these same schools of baitfish which should make it easier to spot from a long distance. This tactic of going from bait school to bait school is called running and gunning. As you get closer you might even see some mackerel free jumping out of the water as they attack these baitfish.

The baitfish typically are Threadfin, Scaled Sardines or Glass Minnows. When they all start feeding it will look like whitewater erupting. Do not run right up to it on the big motor, because this will usually push them down, sometimes the frenzy is on fire to where they don't care.

Snook, Trout and Redfish on the flats along with the migratory species like Kingfish, Spanish Mackerel and Cobia in the bay, and out off the beaches of Pinellas County are all options this month.

Inshore Redfish will become a primary target along with Speckled Trout and with the water temperatures dropping, King Mackerel will show up along with more Spanish Mackerel. Both will inhabit nearshore, beaches, bridges, reefs and wrecks, inside the bay and offshore. The Kingfish does draw a lot of attention, especially with the high dollar Kingfish



Using artificials like a 1/2 - 3/4 ounce Gold or Silver Spoons with a 6-8" piece of #3 or #4 wire and a black swivel will help avoid cut offs. High quality swivels will help stop line twist. Be sure to use a black swivel and not a gold or silver swivel. Shiny swivels become targets that the mackerel will bite off.



Another fun way to fish for Mackerel is to use live Scaled Sardines and setup next to bridges like the Gandy or the Skyway, the range or channel markers holding bait, grass flat drop offs and right off the beaches just outside the swim buoys. There you can put out a chum block or two, which will bring the mackerel to you. At the same time, you can cut pieces of bait fish into the water to sweeten the attraction while throwing live chummers in the water for some great action.

A 1/0 hook on 6-8" of wire with a swivel and a live Scaled Sardine is all you need to enjoy the mackerel action, so what are you waiting for? 🎣



Captain George Hastick of "Fish Hunter Fishing Charters" in St. Petersburg has been fishing the waters of Tampa for over 35 years. From novice to professional; Captain George will make you feel as if you have been fishing buddies for years. Contact him at 727-525-1005, [www.FishTampa.com](http://www.FishTampa.com) or email [CaptGeorge@TampaBay.rr.com](mailto:CaptGeorge@TampaBay.rr.com).

## A CHANGE OF PACE

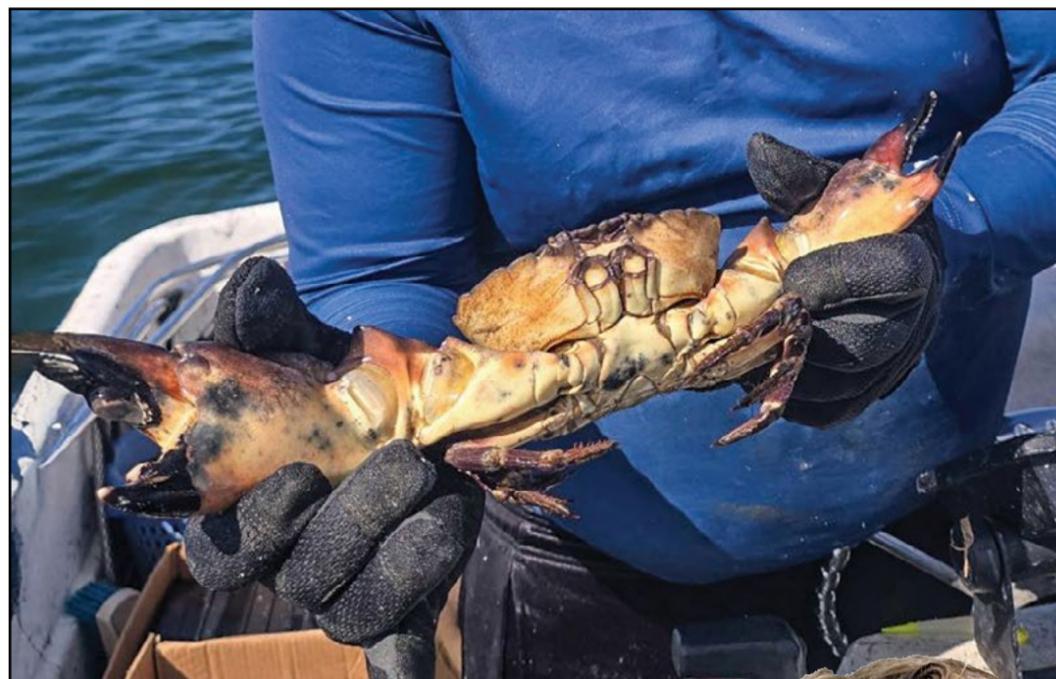
by Captain Justin Searcy

Running across the flat at sunrise or cruising along Anclote when the water's slick and the air's cool, those first casts of the day feel different. Slower. More deliberate.

When November hits the Gulf Coast, everything changes pace. The mornings turn crisp, the water clears, and the chaos of summer gives way to calm.

The flats that were once murky with grass and runoff now settle into a rhythm only locals truly appreciate. For me, it's one of the best times of year to be on the water. The fish know it too. Redfish start pushing tight along the mangroves, snook slip into the backcountry, and the trout move over that classic mixed bottom, sand, shell, and healthy grass. The bait's still around, but not everywhere and the size can fluctuate.

This is when patience, observation and the ability to adapt make all the difference. A freelined pinfish or a soft plastic worked low and slow. Move quiet and let the tide do the work.



When I'm not fishing, I run an insurance agency that helps people across the country. It's a different kind of guiding, but the principle is the same: take care of people, take care of what you have, and things grow stronger. The Gulf works the same way. When you give to it, it gives back tenfold.



These days, I look at conservation the same way I look at fishing and it's about paying attention. Clean water, healthy seagrass, and responsible boating aren't luxuries; they're the foundation

of our lifestyle. Every year, I see a little more traffic, a little more wear on the flats, and a little less patience on the water.

Every tide, every front, every calm morning teaches you something new if you're paying attention. And when you've spent

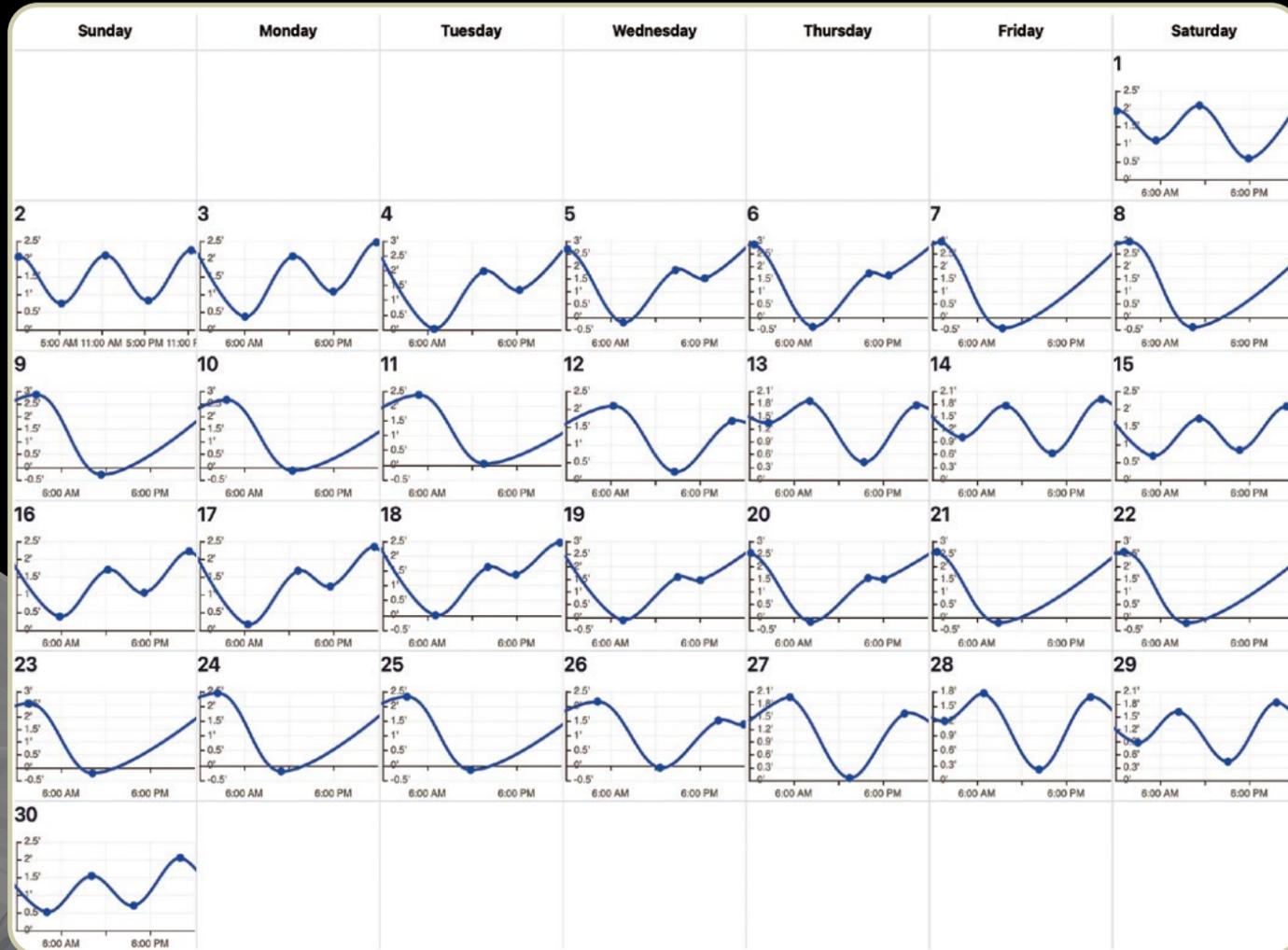
enough time on the water, gratitude stops being just a word and starts becoming a way of life.

Whether I'm helping a client plan their future or watching a Redfish tail in the shallows, the lesson is the same; take care of what's in front of you because the Gulf has taken care of us for generations. It's our turn to return the favor.

Supporting local conservation projects, giving back to your community, or teaching the next generation to care about the water, it all matters. 📌

Captain Justin Searcy





Conversions are based off of the St. Petersburg Pier. They are published strictly for reference and are not designed for navigational aid. Onshore-Offshore assumes no responsibility for their accuracy.

### Conversions for Clearwater Beach Area

High	Low	Location
-0:02	-0:10	Dunedin, St. Joseph Sound
-0:05	-0:15	Anclote Key, South End
+0:42	+0:42	Tarpon Springs, Anclote River
-0:07	-0:03	North Anclote Key
+0:41	+0:39	Old Port Tampa
+0:33	+0:53	Gulf Harbors
+0:42	+1:05	Hwy 19 Bridge, Pithlachascotee River
+0:50	+1:35	New Port Richey, Pithlachascotee River
+0:36	+0:43	Hudson, Hudson Creek

### Conversions for St. Marks River Area

High	Low	Location
+0:23	+1:18	Everglades City
-1:17	-1:03	Cape Romano
-1:04	-1:08	Marco Island
-1:59	-2:04	Naples
-0:46	-0:09	Indian Bay
-0:59	-0:42	Bayport
-0:25	+0:23	Withlacoochee River

### Conversions for Tampa Bay Area

High	Low	Location
+0:49	+0:58	Gandy Bridge
+1:38	+1:55	Courtney Campbell Cswy.
+1:38	+1:55	Safety Harbor
+0:20	+0:22	Ballast Point
+0:07	+0:26	Hillsborough Bay
+0:21	+0:29	McKay Bay Entrance
+0:41	+0:39	Old Port Tampa
-2:27	-2:24	Egmont Key
-2:53	-2:46	Anna Maria, Bradenton Bch
-2:10	-2:19	Anna Maria, City Pier
-1:24	-0:55	Bradenton, Manatee River
-0:30	+0:14	Redfish Pt., Manatee River
-2:22	-1:58	Mullet Key Channel, Skyway
+0:08	+0:17	Shell Point
-0:22	-0:29	Point Pinellas
-1:34	-1:30	Pass-a-Grille Beach
-1:32	-1:05	Gulfport
-1:18	-0:44	St. Pete Beach Causeway
-2:14	-2:04	John's Pass
-1:40	-1:18	Madeira Beach Causeway
-2:00	-1:25	Cortez, Sarasota Bay
-1:38	-0:58	Sarasota Bay
-2:02	-1:38	Venice Inlet
-0:57	-0:40	Englewood, Lemon Bay
-1:27	-0:59	Placida, Gasparilla Sound
+1:38	+1:56	El Jobean, Myakka River
+1:52	+2:30	Shell Point, Peace River
+1:06	+1:27	Punta Gorda, Charlotte Hbr.
-1:12	-1:56	Boca Grande, Charlotte Hbr.
-0:19	+0:26	Pineland, Pine Island
+0:43	+1:28	Matlacha Pass
-0:55	-1:14	Redfish Pass, Captiva Is.
-0:46	-0:20	Captiva, Pine Island Sound
-2:20	-2:28	Captiva, Gulf Side
-0:25	+0:16	Galt Isle, Pine Island Sound
-0:30	-0:44	St. James City, Pine Island
+2:08	+2:44	Fort Myers
+1:15	+2:02	Cape Coral Bridge
+1:08	+1:40	Iona Shores
+0:51	+0:42	Indian Rocks Beach, ICW

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## FWCFR FLORIDA WEST COAST FISHING REPORT

HOST: Capt. Sergio Atanes • CO-HOST: Capt. George Hastick

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**7:00 PM - 8:00 PM**

# CHASING A ST. PETE SLAM

by Misty Wells

Fall is a great time to set your sights on chasing that "Inshore Slam" and targeting a diverse range of species. In our area of St. Pete/Clearwater, we consider an "Inshore Slam" to consist of Snook, Redfish and Trout; to land all these in one day is quite an accomplishment.



This month, I teamed up with Captain Chris Wiggins, Brian Lowack, CEO of VSPC and Bryan Griffin, CEO of Visit Florida to film an episode for "Let's Take it Outside" hoping to feature our own St. Pete Slam on film. Of course, the likelihood of catching all three of these species depends on quite a few factors and at times you might have to fish for each species with different techniques. Regardless, Fall fishing in Florida is fantastic as the weather starts to turn nice and the temperatures cool off a bit and our trip was no different.

Anytime before you decide to go fishing it's a good idea to look at the tides, check the weather, the winds and to create your plans of action and time of day you are going to launch. An incoming or rising tide can be one of the best fish-

ing tide times to start your day, you want to try and be in your first location before the optimum time, so don't sleep in. A lot of new anglers will ask "why is an incoming tidewater better?" Incoming waters that enter the bay from the ocean can have a lower temperature, better water clarity and a good food source so the fish are much hungrier and more active during this time than slack tide.

We all met at the boat ramp at 6:30am to get a head start on the day, with high hopes; Captain Chris mentioned the bite had been really good the past few days. One of the great things about living in Pinellas County is that on almost any given day, it is going to be a great day to go fishing. St. Pete is nicknamed "The Sunshine City" as it boasts an average of 361 sunny days annually and the city currently holds a Guinness World Record for 786 consecutive days of sunshine. It was a little windy that morning, but again a great thing about fishing in Tampa Bay is there are many places where you can fish out of the wind and be "on the fish".

First off, we hit the "Bait Man", a floating paradise of freshly caught bait anchored just off the shore. "Why waste fishing time catching bait, when you can pull up by a few net fulls and be fishing in minutes", said Captain Chris. Now that we had fresh bait, it was time to get them on the other end of our hooks and start fishing. Our first stop was on the West side of



the causeway next to some oyster beds where Chris said he had had some luck the other day. Brian L. and Bryan G. were at the front of the boat and had the perfect cast right on the edge of the oyster beds. I grabbed a bait and casted up towards the front and "bam", I got hit and was able to get a good hookset. I knew right away it was a big fish as he was taking drag and putting up a good fight. And once I got a glimpse of the Redfish, I was excited cause I knew if I landed it, it would be my personal best in that species, so the pressure was on. I had to tighten the drag just a bit because fishing on those oyster beds you don't want to give them a chance to break you off. I was over the moon when we got him in the net and measured him. At 35-inches, it was definitely my personal best Redfish and I even landed this months "cover model" while filming for TV; an extra bonus!

After that 'big' catch we decided to move to another spot to work on landing some more Redfish. We went further towards the Gulf on the backside of an island where we were out of the wind and fishing some potholes that hold fish. Instantly we were all hooked up with Reds. At the time we were



using two types of methods of fishing: two of us were on bobbers with live bait and two of us were freelining with live bait; it was all working. Brian L. landed a Redfish and two Trout at that spot, so we were getting close to landing our St. Pete Slam. Bryan G. and I were doing well catching quite a few Redfish, all nice sizes and Brian L. landed a unique Red with lots of spots. It is pretty cool to understand why Redfish have spots on the tail; it is a predatory advantage. Black spots on the tail are believed to act as a decoy, confusing predators into attacking the tail instead of the head, which gives the fish a better chance to escape. Fish with multiple spots can make a predator even more confused about the fishes true head and body orientation.



Our next target was Snook as we really wanted to round out our Slam before the end of the day. We made a move to target some local docks in the area. Based on conditions, sometimes that is the best

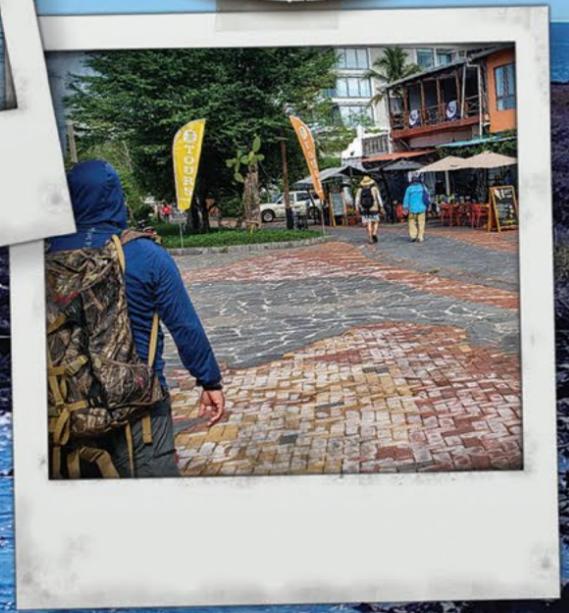
place to land fish as Snook are ambush predators, they lie in wait under docks, in mangroves, and on the edges where the current is flowing to surprise their targets. Snook have a prominent lateral line which allows them to be very sensitive to vibration; they are very sensitive to water temperatures as well. Snook hit hard and fight harder than almost any other inshore fish and are smarter than most. Once hooked they will take you into the mangroves, under roots, around the piers, under the dock and do everything they can to break you off. Needless to say, we lost quite a few Snook that day, casting out a lot of baits. Towards the end of the day and on the "5-minute warning" Brian L. pulled off a miracle, he landed the first Snook of the day and it was a good one! So I am proud to say that we got our "St. Pete Slam" and had a great day out on the water. When people ask about the fishing here in the St. Pete/Clearwa-

ter area, I think Brian L. said it best with this quote, "The diverse St. Pete-Clearwater estuary includes endless mangroves, remote islands, flats, piers and bridges creating a fisherman's paradise with year-round opportunities to target your bucket list species. Whether it's your own boat, private charter, party boat, kayak or paddleboard, once you land your catch there is endless places to pull your boat up and have someone grill up your fish, grab a local craft beer and enjoy our award-winning white sand beaches".

It was a great day out on the water as always with Captain Chris Wiggins, he never disappoints, and I want to thank both Brian Lowack and Bryan Griffin for joining me on an episode of "Let's Take it Outside". If you want to view this episode and others tune in on Discovery Channel every Sunday or go to Discovery GO on demand to watch. ☑

**Misty Wells Producer & Host of Award Winning "Let's Take It Outside" TV show airing to 220 million on Discovery & Discovery GO & Plus & 17 other networks. Bass Pro-Outdoor Pro & Outdoor & Outdoor, Travel Writer. Founder of "A Reel Future" non-profit devoted to teaching the passion of fishing & conservation to foster children, over 4,000 children & counting. Watch at [www.mistywells.com](http://www.mistywells.com).**

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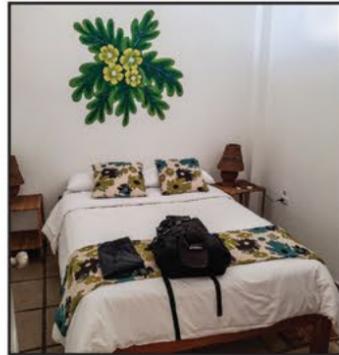


# THE Galápagos Islands

AN EXOTIC FISHING EXPEDITION

by Brad Kenyon

**M**y first trip to the Galápagos Islands to fish for Marlin was so awesome that a second trip was in order! After telling quite a few friends about the first trip, a group wanted to join me for the second trip, so we had both an Alaskan group and a Florida group of friends meet up there. We had two Brads, two Steves, Jack, Heath, Bobby, Dave and Scott. Needless to say, everyone was excited about the trip and all the anglers were well seasoned & ready to go!



We were lucky to have charter captains from both Alaska and Florida on board. Jack Vasilaros, a Florida native, has specialized in Marlin over the years and he brought a collection of special lures that proved to be very effective. His

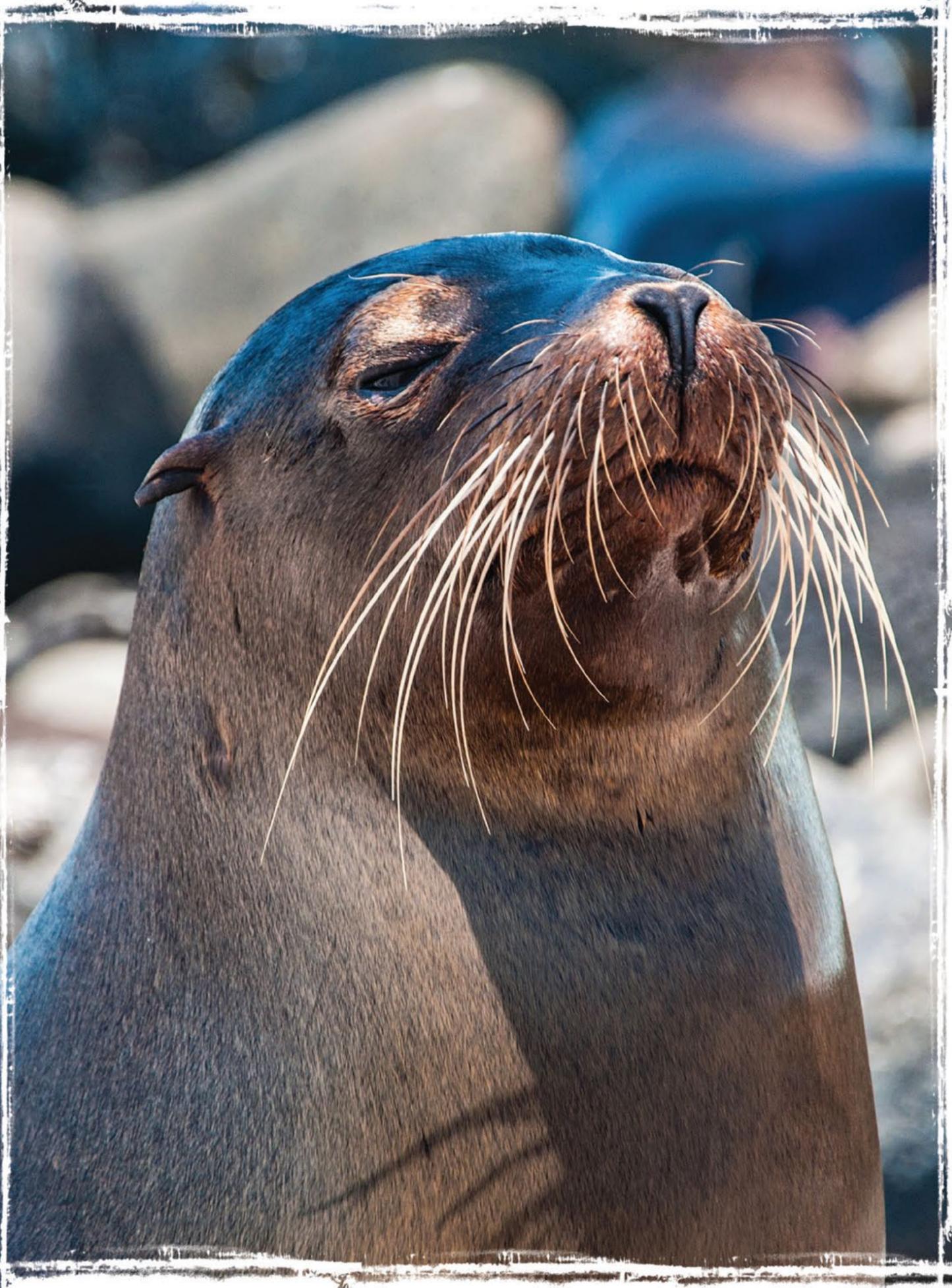
lures and talents were the only way we were able to land our biggest fish of the trip, a 650 pound Marlin! Captain Steve and Captain Bobby operate "Saltwater Safari" out of Seward, Alaska so they had valuable knowledge, as well. Seward is a great trip destination for large Halibut, Rockfish and Salmon, so both of those captains also knew how to catch big fish.



We arrived in Guayaquil in the afternoon and were escorted by the police to the Hilton. Crime has recently been bad in the area as the influx of emigrants from the surrounding countries pass through on their way to the US for a new life. After a quick snooze and

breakfast, we were back at the airport to head towards San Cristabel, Galápagos Island.





The Galápagos Islands are a volcanic archipelago in the Pacific Ocean. It's considered one of the world's foremost destinations for wildlife-viewing. Fishing is surprisingly downplayed. A province of Ecuador, the islands are about 600 miles off its coast. The isolated terrain there is home to very diverse plant and animal species, many of those found nowhere else in the world. Charles Darwin visited in 1835, and his observation of Galápagos' species later inspired his theory of evolution based on discovering animals that look like others but are specially adapted to the con-



ditions on the Galápagos. San Christabel is a nice little town with a population of 6000. It is filled with restaurants, tour operators and shops. The Galápagos Island are also widely known as the enchanted islands.

Enough of the short history lesson, as we definitely came for the fishing. Our primary target was Marlin, and we succeeded. We caught many and



all were released to fight another day. To make sure of this, a park official was on the boat to be absolutely certain that we did not kill any Marlin. We also caught some nice Mahi and a variety of reef dwelling fish, making for delicious fresh meals on the daily!

Our group fished two boats operated by Sport-fishing Galapagos. They are operated by Marco Gutierrez and I must admit, Marco and his team have a comprehensive network of providers on San Cristobal that can accommodate all your fishing, touring, lodging, and dining needs. Your guide for the fishing adventure is none other than Boston legend, Pete Santini. Pete is the most experienced and entertaining fishing guide that you will find in San Cristobal. You are guaranteed to have a great time and you're guaranteed to catch plenty of fish while out on the water with his crew.



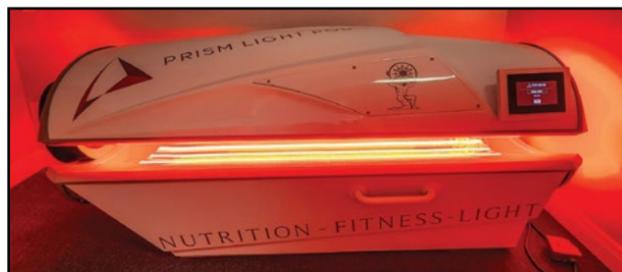
Marco and Pete did a wonderful job entertaining us; the boats were clean and reliable. The tackle is nice, and the crew are well trained. This is one place where you can go and catch multiple Marlin every day. I did not count the number of fish we caught but I can confidently say that no one felt like they did not catch enough.

If great fishing, fun, food and the "island life" is in your requirements for a vacation, the Galápagos Islands should definitely be on your bucket list of places to visit! ▣

- Brad Kenyon

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# TALES FROM THE OLD GUY

by David Mallory



Sometimes when you go "fishing" you may be surprised by what you are "catching"! One Friday in 1959 my dad said we were going fishing at Long Point. We got up early on a Saturday morning and drove down through Charlotte, VT and on to Long Point. We had gone out Friday night to get night crawlers and after work had seined some minnows.

We rented our boat and loaded everything in before we set off rowing. We fished along the way catching a few small mouth bass and perch. Dad hooked onto a large northern pike, which he released after we got him to the boat, since we didn't eat fish. Because we had the anchor up already, we rowed over to the mouth of Little Otter Creek. We did a slow troll up the creek and caught a few small bass and north-erns. We stopped at a bend in the river and continued fishing. After about a half hour, I saw something swimming in the water toward us. I pointed it out to Dad and he said it was a big water snake. We watched it swim toward the boat and it just kept coming right at us. When it got to the boat, it tried to climb in! We didn't want any part of that. We both started hitting it with our poles and finally it got the idea that it wasn't welcomed in the boat. Neither of us had ever seen that happen before, and haven't ever seen it since!!!!

We thought that we would move over to Lewis Creek after that crisis; so we ate our usual Bologna Sandwiches for lunch and rowed over to the end up where we wanted to fish. We cast our lines out and Dad had a bite on a night crawler. After a short fight, he pulled in a Bowfin; a prehistoric looking fish with a mouthful of mean teeth. We also threw him back in the water!

Dad had another big bite on a night crawler. He used 10 pound test line on the pole and could not move whatever he had hooked. We pulled up the anchor and tried to move the fish, but it was staying on the bottom. After fighting it for ten to fifteen minutes, it started coming up to the boat. The river at that point is muddy and about eight feet deep. As Dad gained line we both were leaning over to see what appeared out of the muddy water. I had the gaff and the net ready as we waited. What appeared was a huge snapping turtle! Like the bowfin, this turtle is a fossil from many years ago. This one was quite unhappy and his snapping mechanism was working quite well! We decided it weighed about 50 pounds and we didn't want him in the boat. We heard they were good to eat, but there was no way to get him in the boat or get him home. We cut the line and watched him swim away. The hooks rust out rather quickly so we knew he would live.

At that point, we thought we couldn't stand much more excitement, so we rowed back to the dock, unloaded the boat and drove home. We seldom went hunting or fishing without a story to tell! 📌

- David Mallory



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The month of November can be very productive for those of us looking to bend a rod on the West coast of Florida!

Be sure to look for migrating fish in creeks, channels, rivers, and marina basins. Try medium live shrimp or artificial baits like the Saltwater Assassin Paddletail with a ¼-ounce jighead. Cast them along channel drop-offs and cuts.

The best fishing will be from 8:00am until dark; negative tides make it easier to find species sheltering in deeper water for safety and warmth.

## ABOUT THE CAPTAIN

Captain Sergio Atanes fishes the Florida waters, specializing in and around the West Coast of Florida and Tampa Bay. His show, Fishing Adventures Florida, is about two captains sharing their knowledge and experience of the local waters...encouraging others to share in their love of what the outdoors has to offer. Their goal is to educate, entertain and share the experience of fishing opportunities in the area.

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Plaquemines Parish is Louisiana's southernmost parish where the Great Mississippi River meets the Gulf of Mexico. Plaquemines is the final stretch on the long winding course of the mighty Mississippi. This parish creates a corridor surrounding the river as it flows to the Gulf of Mexico. "Down the road" or as many of the locals call it "DTR", is the perfect balance between urban and rural lifestyles. It's 1-hour location from the Greater New Orleans Metro area enables tourists to experience one of America's most colorful and unique cities either going into the parish or on the way out.

The people of Plaquemines Parish are rich in culture and pride. The ancestry of its peoples are mainly Louisiana French, West African, Spanish and Native American in origin. Cajuns make up a significant portion of South Louisiana. Cajuns came primarily from the rural areas of Western France and Nova Scotia, and with them they brought a style of cooking that has



Now let's talk about location and where to stay once you have decided on your fishing adventure! A hidden gem within the heart of the parish is the resort style lodge and airport called **The Lematidora Inn (Airport Identifier LS84)**.

Catering to those who are all things fishing, boating, aviation, and outdoors, this Inn offers simple comfort, angling amenities, and a relaxed atmosphere. I stumbled upon this little getaway a few years ago and was impressed by its central location and all it has to offer.

Let's explore some of the provisions and conveniences. The Inn features double rooms, interior/interior queen rooms, a Captain's Suite and a Commander's Suite. This is very important for those who have a large fishing group and want to share costs, at the same time enjoying each other's close company. For the family, Lematidora also offers cabins with a king bed, kitchenette, kids room and bathroom. Each room in the main house has a mini refrigerator, microwave, and DirectTV. A fully equipped and commercial-sized community-style self-service kitchen is also at your disposal to cook your own meals and store food for your stay. Buffet style seating at the bar or private dining tables line the kitchen.

Feeling the need to lounge? The downstairs level has a living room area complete with recliners, 77" Smart TV, coin operated pool table, dart board and various board games. There are also snack and drink vending ma-

chines, an ATM and a change machine. For those that are feeling the bar vibe, you can BYOB and settle down at the bar adjacent to the kitchen. Complimentary wi-fi access is available throughout the Inn and a must for posting those fishing pics at the end of the day! There is a 24-hour coin-operated laundry room for those who prefer to wash clothes before packing them up. To clean your harvest there is an outdoor fish cleaning station and an outdoor fridge/freezer to store the days catch. You can also wash your boat in this area.



A commercial style ice machine is right outside the front door of the inn to load up all your coolers and your boats cold storage box. This is a huge savings in and of itself as bags of ice are a hot commodity it seems these days. Another cost-cutting advantage here is complimentary vehicle, boat (large and small), and airplane parking. Yes, airplane

parking! You see the **Lematidora Inn** is a unique one of a kind (in the parish) fly in hotel. Private/general aviation pilots can taxi their aircraft up to the flight line just outside the hotel where passengers can disembark and walk inside.

One of the best features by far is the 20,000 gallon salt water pool. This is a welcome indulgence after a long hot day of fishing, hunting, hiking, birding or anything else you choose to do outdoors. The outdoor grill is perfect for oysters by the pool and the pool deck boasts pool side lounge chairs, bar tops and family sized dining tables.

There are several restaurants, a grocery store, hardware store, tackle shops, boating and marina options within a 5 to 30 minute drive to and from the Inn. And the Lagniappe, as they say? Private walking access to the Mississippi River and the breathtaking sites along its banks for hiking, bird watching and wildlife photography.

Plaquemines Parish in South Louisiana is a Sportsman's Paradise. From everything outdoors, the food, down to the accommodations, the saying holds true, life is better "down the road", aka; DTR! 🍷



made Louisiana famous, but that we will explore shortly. With its abundance of waterways, fishing & hunting grounds, trapping and birdwatching (over 470 different species of birds) it has been called a "Sportsman's Paradise" with some of the best commercial and general sportsman fishing areas in the world! Just as exciting are the offshore trips that bring in Tuna, Billfish, Sheepshead, Swordfish, Amberjacks, Grouper, Snapper, Cobia, Wahoo, Triggerfish, Tripletail and Mahi.

Many travel from far and abroad to delight in catching bull reds on fly tackle, as well. With over 7,700 miles of coastal shoreline, Louisiana hosts many of the best saltwater flyfishing destinations in the world. Some choose to just do sightseeing tours and get up close to an array of wildlife in our bayous.





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# WINTER FISHING NEGATIVE TIDES

by Captain Sergio Atanes

**N**egative tides predominantly occur during the winter months, typically around the new and full moons, resulting in exceptionally low water levels—these are often indicated as minus tides on tide charts. Such tides represent instances when the low tide is significantly lower than usual. Negative tides pose challenges for boaters. On Florida's Gulf Coast, a combination of strong northerly winds and high-pressure systems following a cold front can further drive water away from the shore, exacerbating these effects.

### Lessons from Negative Tides

During lower, clearer winter tides, hidden features like cuts, oyster bars, rocky bottoms, and deep-water grass flats are revealed.

### Advantages of Negative Tides

Negative tides concentrate fish in certain areas such as depressions and cuts on the flats, deep mangrove cuts and old concrete blocks and debris used by the homeowner



as their own mini reef under their boat dock. There are a few reasons why the fish concentrate here.

For one, they don't have anywhere else to go! Often, the flats where these fish hold most of the year will be dried up, only to be enjoyed by the wading birds. I've caught many Snook and Redfish out of

a depression on a flat that was almost completely dry.

### Fishing Negative Tides

When fishing negative tides, identifying the target species for the day determines where to fish. Trout can be found around potholes on flats, while Redfish or Snook may be located near docks.

Exposed rock piles, seawalls, and rocky shorelines absorb heat as the sun rises, increasing water temperatures by up to 3 degrees. This temperature change can be beneficial for species such as Sheepshead, Redfish, and Trout, particularly on colder days.

### Fishing Strategy & Gear

Arrive at least an hour before the negative tide and position your boat within casting distance of the hole or if fishing a cut make sure you are set up to be able to move from the shallowest to deepest part of cut as the tide drops allowing you to cover more area.

Tackle is dependent on the species, location and whether you are using live bait or artificial bait.

Shrimp for me is best used when fishing around docks and deep drops around edges of channels. This is where I find numbers of Redfish, Sheepshead and Flounder most of the time.

If using artificial baits, I lean towards fishing shallow waters potholes and edges of creeks for Speckled Trout; the most common species in winter months and I believe winter is one of the best times to fish with artificial baits.

Specialty Jigs like the Fishin' Assassin with flashing mylar tape adds a little flare and might sound like a gimmick, but it does work on a consistent basis over regular jigheads in clear water.



NED Jigs are used in conjunction with small soft baits and are a killer when fishing the shallow mangroves during a falling tide offering a gentle presentation that mimics a small baitfish or a small shrimp.

Floats are another great tool for fishing in the winter, especially the weighted type, such as the 4-Horsemen. They are an excellent float for windy days and the noise they produce drives Trout crazy. A trick I have been doing for over 30 years during the winter months is attach a 2/0 J-Hook to the swivel at the bottom of the float. The Trout seem to also hit the float as a topwater plug. This gives you a possibility of hooking two fish at a time.



Now the rods, reels, line and leaders are dependent on whether you are using live bait or artificial baits. Here is my breakdown on my favorite setups.

For live bait, I use a Blackfin 7-foot Medium action 8 to 20 pound class rod. For artificial bait, I use a 7.6 foot Medium action, fast taper rod in the 8 to 17-pound class.

For reels, I use a 3000 for live bait and a 2500 for artificial bait use loaded with FINS Braid in 15-pound test for live bait and for artificial bait, I use 10-pound test. Pair all with Lee Fisher Fluorocarbon Leader with length of leader starting at 36 inches. Use 25-pound test for live bait and 15-pound test for artificial baits. For knots, use a Surgeon's Knot for line to leader. Leader to hook, use the Improved Clinch Knot.

The end results in some nice fish caught. ▣

**Captain Sergio Atanes is the host of Fishing Adventures Florida and Captain Sergio Fishing Chronicles on YouTube, Waypoint TV, Carbon TV, Outdoor Action TV and Angling TV. For info call 813-973-7132 or email: atanes@msn.com.**



Soft baits such as a Saltwater Assassin on a jighead work well; the weight of jig depends on depth of water, wind conditions and whether you are fishing on edges of the drop or over grass beds. My go-to weight is 1/8-ounce for cuts along the edges of the flats, 1/4-ounce when fishing deep potholes like some of the bomb holes around Ft. DeSoto Park.





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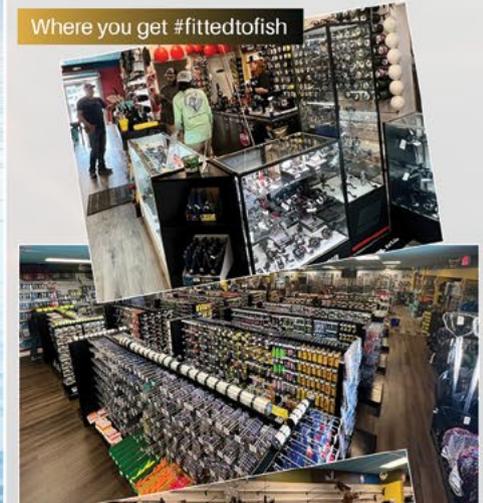
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