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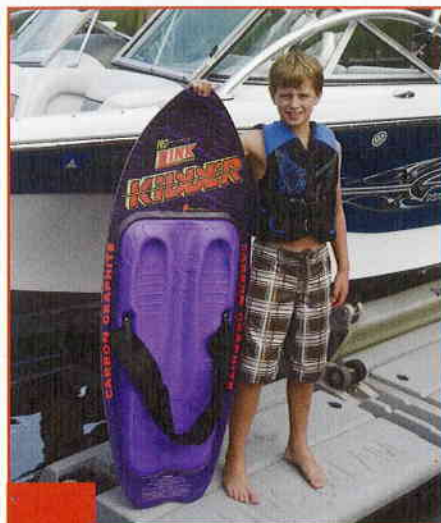
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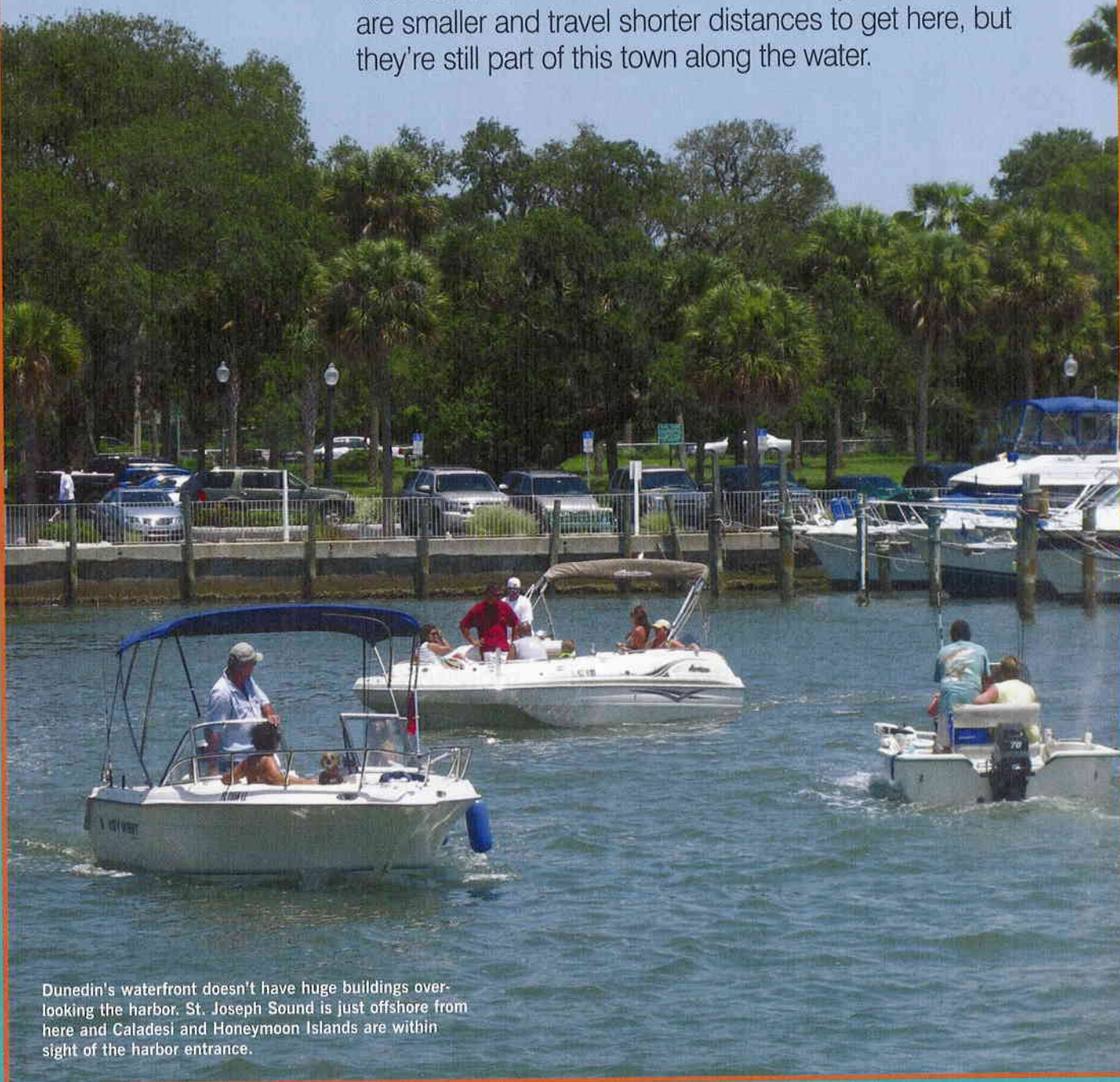
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Cover Photo: BoatU.S. Trailing Club Member Jim Crawford at the helm of his Sea Ray 180 Sport while passing the Legacy on Lanier Golf Course on Lake Lanier, Georgia. Photograph is courtesy of Judy Crawford of [www.CrawfordAerialPhotography.com](http://www.CrawfordAerialPhotography.com)

**Trailerling Goes To...**

# Dunedin, Florida

Boats have always been a part of this town along the water. Centuries ago, schooners from across the ocean were common in Dunedin's harbor. Today, the boats are smaller and travel shorter distances to get here, but they're still part of this town along the water.



Dunedin's waterfront doesn't have huge buildings overlooking the harbor. St. Joseph Sound is just offshore from here and Caladesi and Honeymoon Islands are within sight of the harbor entrance.

The first thing you'll notice about Dunedin, Florida is Main Street. It's lined with more than 100 privately owned shops and stretches a few blocks to the city marina on the waters of St. Joseph Sound on the Gulf Coast. The second thing you'll notice are all the boat trailers on the roads (Main Street included) leading to the water. In fact, Dunedin is one of the few waterfront communities with an unobstructed view of the four-mile coastline. No huge condos block the view from Main Street.

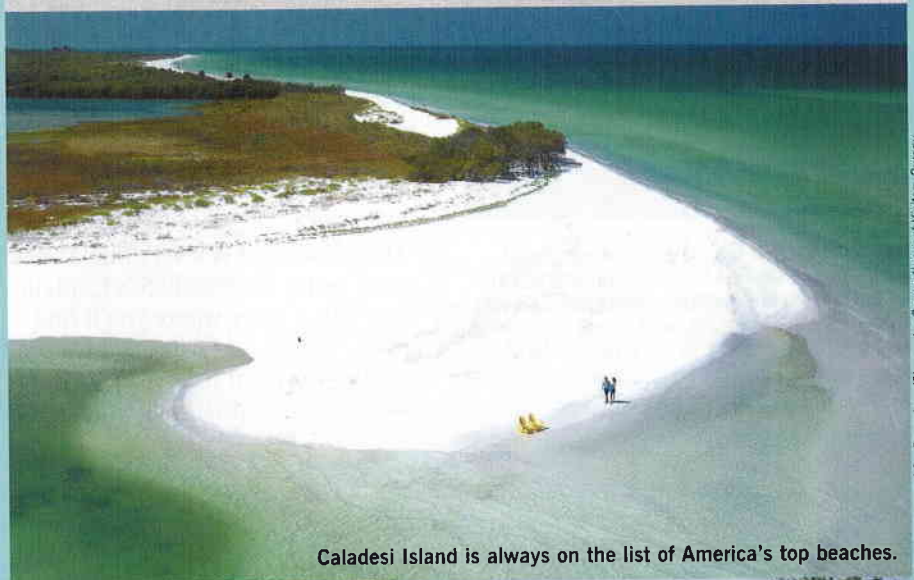
This is a destination for boaters with families just as it's a destination for anglers looking for a redfish, snook, tarpon or trout. You'll notice one other thing too: Many of the trailers are from out of state. It can be crowded on weekends as parking around the marina is limited (there are about 30 available spaces on site). Dunedin Marina has a single-lane boat ramp, with a \$5 launch fee for residents and \$15 for non-residents payable at the harbormaster's office above a popular fish market.

"Dunedin is family-oriented," observes "Captain Lee" Eckler of TowBoatU.S. Tarpon Springs about this city of 37,000 residents. "Main Street is quaint, the restaurants are many as are the little shops, and all of this is just a few miles away by boat to beaches that have the feel of the Caribbean."

From the boat ramp, it's a short trip to the open water. You'll pass fishermen trying their luck on the pier just to starboard and then St. Joseph Sound opens before you. Just offshore is a pair of islands: Honeymoon Island and Caladesi Island. Honeymoon Island linked to the mainland by the 2.5-mile Dunedin Causeway, is a state park with picnic facilities, miles of sandy shell-filled beaches and, usually, a dolphin or two passing by offshore. It's the most visited state park in Florida with more than 1.2 million annual beachgoers; it got its name when developer Clinton Washburn built more than 50 cottages in 1938 for newlyweds.



Dunedin's Main Street has no chain stores, lots of parking and is considered by residents and tourists to be the "center" of town.



Caladesi Island is always on the list of America's top beaches.



The Dunedin Marina Boat Ramp has a single lane and costs \$5 for residents and \$15 for visitors.

Photo courtesy of St. Petersburg/Clearwater Convention and Visitors Bureau



(Top) This family is returning to Dunedin on St. Joseph Sound. (Above) Dolphins are common visitors to Dunedin area waters. (Next page) Once you've launched from the boat ramp, it's a quick trip through the marina to the entrance to St. Joseph Sound.

A ferry leaves from Honeymoon Island for the other island, Caladesi, which is also a state park. Caladesi Island has been named as having the best beach in America by the hands-down expert on all things sandy, Dr. Beach ([www.drbeach.org](http://www.drbeach.org)), also known as Dr. Stephen Leatherman, a beach erosion expert who travels the world studying the effects of storms on coastlines, when not ranking beaches. Boaters can anchor offshore and wade onto both islands but beaching the boat isn't allowed. However, there's a state-owned marina with 108 slips (\$20/night-\$5/to dock). These islands are on the Gulf of Mexico so anchoring offshore is best done along the St. Joseph Sound side unless the winds are minimal on the Gulf side.

Caladesi has three miles of beaches and was once part of nearby Honeymoon Island until a 1921 hurricane created the appropriately-named inlet between the two, Hurricane Pass.

"Hurricane Pass is a very big fishing area," notes TowboatU.S.'s Captain Lee. "It's a place where you'll find snook, redfish and trout and it's pretty popular for night fishing. A lot of boaters will try their luck in Hurricane

Pass before heading out into the Gulf during daylight hours."

Anglers spend a lot of time in Hurricane Pass and there's an unspoken rule about staying away from the route commonly taken by the ferry every hour or so between the two islands. There are a number of man-made reefs offshore, the largest being the St. Petersburg Beach reef in 35 feet of water about 10 miles south of Dunedin. This reef is considered the prime location for fishing as it is made of parts of an old causeway that was dropped into the water, followed by a 200-foot barge and then, if that isn't enough, 10 U.S. Army tanks. The fish are attracted to the many hiding places along this artificial reef. Some boats aren't there for fishing. Divers anchor near Dunedin Reef just beyond Hurricane Pass to photograph fish. Others explore some of the wrecks offshore.

Captain Lee has a favorite place for boating when he's got a free day: Three Rooker Island. "It's an outstanding destination about four miles from Honeymoon Island," he says. "It's a place where boaters will gather to party or fish and it's a great place to just sit on the beach." Captain Lee notes a lot of trailer boaters will "double anchor" along the east side of Three Rooker with an anchor off the bow facing the Gulf and a second anchor off the stern facing the beach.

"But remember," he warns, "this is shallow water and tidal. I have many ungrounding calls from boats along Caladesi, Honeymoon and Three Rooker Islands. If you're new to the area, buy a laminated chart and study the depths."

St. Joseph Sound is part of the Intracoastal Waterway along Florida's western shoreline. And because the water is shallow, newcomers are advised to stay inside the channel. The ICW, by the way, runs along barrier islands north from Tarpon Springs to St. Petersburg at the mouth of Tampa Bay in the south. As a result, it's a good place for boat watching

## Did You Know?

Frozen orange juice concentrate originated in Dunedin. The "pram" sailboat was also first built here. The late TV pitchman Billy Mays was based in Dunedin.



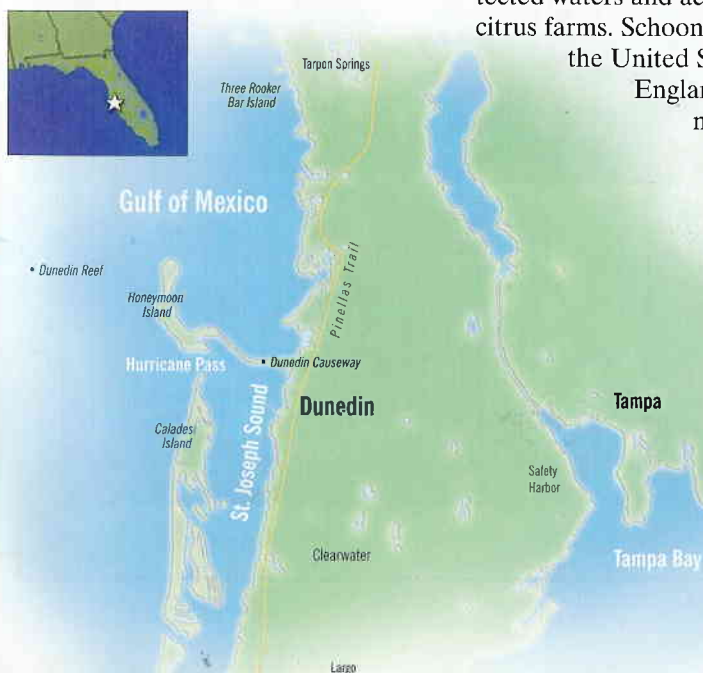


as vessels make the trip from the ICW origin along the Texas Coast to Key West.

### When Not on the Water

Getting your boat and trailer to the water is going to require a crossing of the Pinellas Trail, a 34-mile bike/rollerblading/walking trail that runs from Tarpon Springs at the northern edge of Pinellas County to St. Petersburg at the southern end of the county. Built on an old CSX railroad track, the trail is used by millions of people every year.

Boaters coming to Dunedin in March and April can spend an afternoon at Dunedin Stadium where the Toronto Blue Jays hold spring training. The stadium has been called one of the top five facilities of Major League Baseball for watching spring training.



Dunedin's Main Street is closed off a number of times every year for art fairs, music and wine events (Wines The Blues Festival in November, [www.dunedinwinestheblues.info/](http://www.dunedinwinestheblues.info/)) as well as a Mardi Gras celebration in February that attracts 25,000 revelers. During the summer, there's a huge farmers' market, called the Green Market by the locals, in Pioneer Park on Main Street every Saturday.

There are bike shops for taking a spin on the nearby Pinellas Trail for a few hours. Visitors approaching from the south along Highway 19 will know as soon as they've entered the city limits: A Scotsman stands by a sign saying "Welcome to Dunedin." With a Scottish heritage as a backdrop, Dunedin became one of the largest seaports in Florida because of its protected waters and access to cotton and citrus farms. Schooners from all over the United States, Greece, England, and Scotland made regular stops in this waterfront town.

The schooners are gone, but Dunedin continues to be a stop for travelers seeking supplies, including freshly caught Gulf shrimp, and something more—sunshine, clear water and a small-town spirit in a city that's huge on charm.

### Honeymoon Island State Park

[www.floridastateparks.org/honeymoonisland/](http://www.floridastateparks.org/honeymoonisland/)

### Caladesi Island State Park

[www..floridastateparks.org/caladesiIsland](http://www.floridastateparks.org/caladesiIsland)

### Dunedin Merchants

[www.delightfuldunedin.com](http://www.delightfuldunedin.com)

### Pinellas Trail

[www.pinellastrails.org](http://www.pinellastrails.org)

### TowBoatU.S. Tarpon Springs

727-347-3532

### BoatU.S. Cooperating Marinas

- Clearwater Municipal Marina  
727-462-6954 (\$0.10/ gal fuel discount)
- Turtle Cove Marina Tarpon Springs  
727-934-2202 (\$0.10/gal fuel discount)
- The Landings at Tarpon Springs  
727-937-1100 (\$0.10/gal fuel discount)
- Belle Harbour Marina, Tarpon Springs  
727-943-8489 (15% discount on repairs)
- Anclote Harbors, Tarpon Springs,  
727-934-9737 (\$0.10/gal fuel discount)
- American Boat Works, Tarpon Springs  
727-942-4152 (10% discount labor up to \$200-5% parts)

**West Marine**, 41286 US Highway 19 N,  
Tarpon Springs 727-939-1754