Off the Beaten Path

Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary, Texas/Louisiana

Remote Colorful Reefs and Majestic Marine Life

Outdoor Recreation in Federal Waters

Dive: Visitors will be awed by the diversity of marine life hidden under the waves far off the Texas and Louisiana coasts. Magnificent coral reefs present a colorful display atop underwater mountains rising from the depths of the Gulf of Mexico. The exceptional underwater visibility allows divers to experience spectacular sights throughout the water column: coral heads the size of cars, schools of fish, graceful eagle and manta rays, and even a chance to witness majestic whale sharks during summer visits to the area.

The banks of the sanctuary include over a dozen moored dive sites, with typical dive profiles of 70-130 feet. Situated 70-115 miles offshore, the sanctuary is only accessible by boat, so divers interested in visiting these hidden gems can book dive charters for a truly unique and authentic Gulf of Mexico experience. Charters depart from numerous Texas ports, including: Galveston, Freeport, Sabine Pass, and Surfside.

Fish: Several of the ports that offer dive trips are also home to commercial fishing charters for anglers wanting to fish the Flower Garden and Stetson Banks. Snappers, jacks, barracuda, and wahoo are just a few of the fish commonly caught by sportfishing enthusiasts.

Learn more about America’s lands and waters in the area: Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge, Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge, San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge, Texas State Parks along the Gulf Coast

Known For
- Colorful marine life that makes the reefs look like “Flower Gardens”
- Diving
- Fishing

Nearby Cities
- Galveston, Texas*
- Freeport, Texas*
- Houston, Texas (add 1 hour drive)
[*Length of boat ride ranges from 3-8 hours depending on sea conditions, departure port, dive site, and vessel speed]

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