



**Save the  
Date!**

**May 16-18,  
2023**

**Sheraton  
Panama  
City  
Beach  
Golf &  
Spa  
Resort**

**More Details on  
the FREA website  
coming soon!**



Sheraton Panama City Beach Resort Renovation Complete, Again.

\$20 Million Dollar Renovation Destroyed by Hurricane Michael in less than 12 Hours.

In the beginning of 2017, Sheraton began the costly and time-consuming process of renovating the Sheraton Panama City Beach Golf & Spa Resort. Within 3 months of completion, Hurricane Michael roared ashore and destroyed almost everything in its path. The rebuilding began, again. Completed in January of 2020, the Sheraton reopened and re-hired 100’s of employees. In March of 2020 along came COVID. The Sheraton again shut down, laying off almost everyone they had just hired. Fast-forward to spring of 2022 and once again the Sheraton has re-hired employees and is up and running.

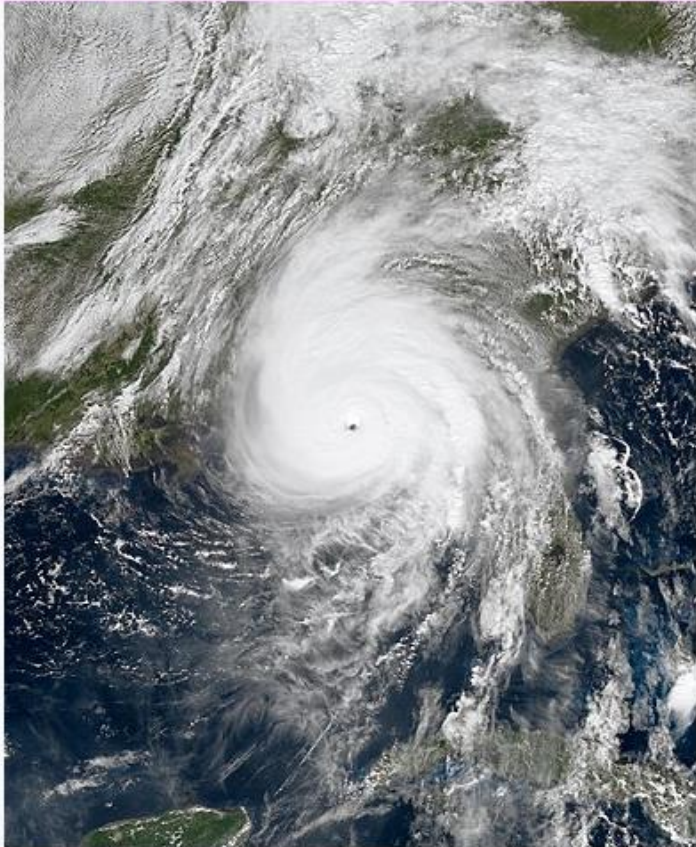
**Save the Date!** FREA is going to help the resort, and its employees, recover by holding our 2023 and 2024 Conventions in this beautiful and new (twice now) location!

We hope you will save the date and join us. It will be a different style Convention, constructed to allow you to enjoy the resort, and the area. Both during the Convention and by scheduling up to 3 days before, or after, or both!

**FREA 2023 Convention  
May 16-18, 2023**

Hurricane Michael

Category 5 major hurricane (SSHWS/NWS)



Hurricane Michael at peak intensity shortly before landfall on the [Florida Panhandle](#) on October 10

Formed	October 7, 2018
Dissipated	October 16, 2018 ( <a href="#">Extratropical</a> after October 11)
Highest winds	1-minute sustained: 160 mph (260 km/h)
Lowest pressure	919 mbar (hPa); 27.14 inHg
Fatalities	31 direct, 43 indirect
Damage	\$25.5 billion (2018 USD)



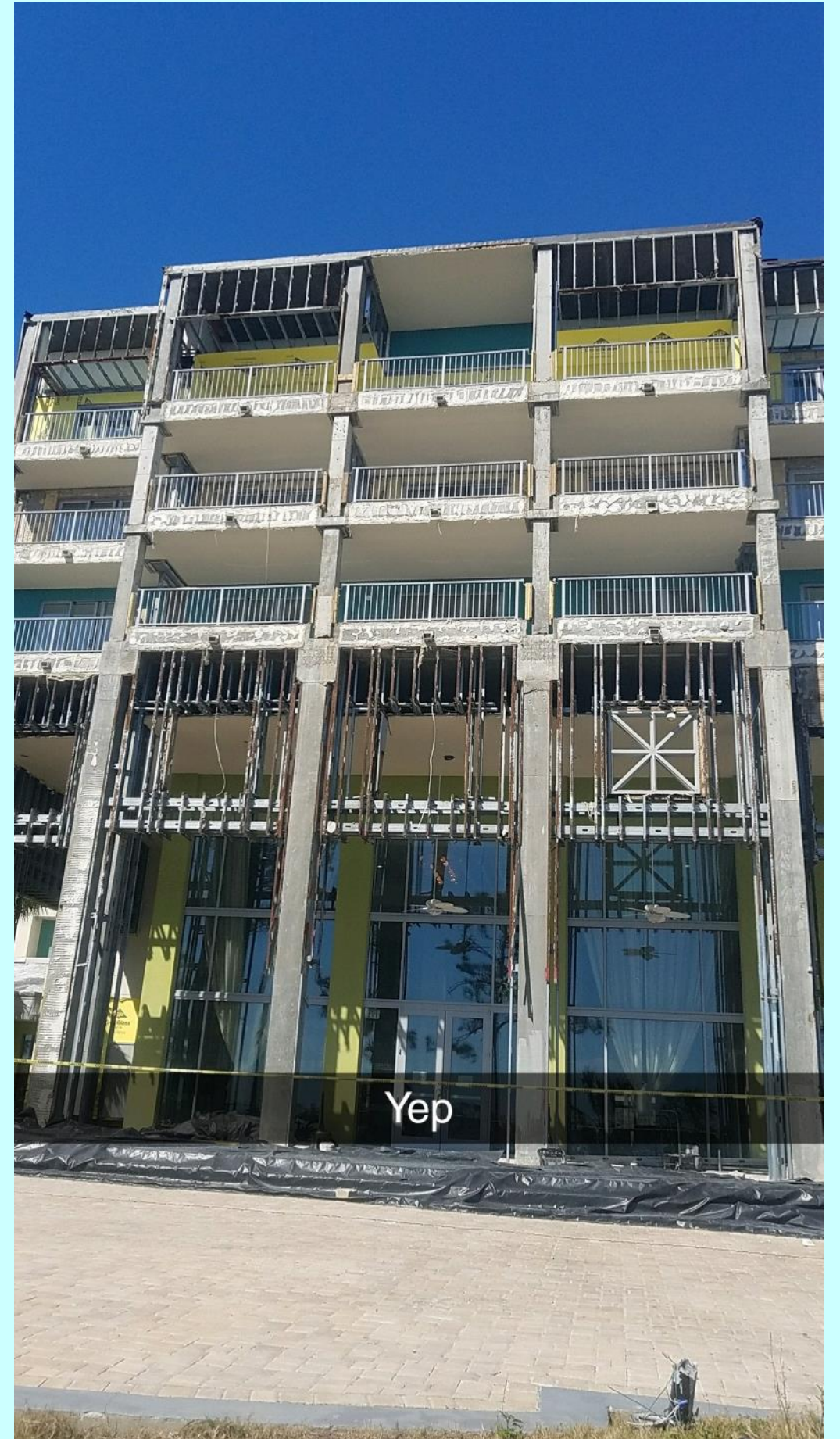




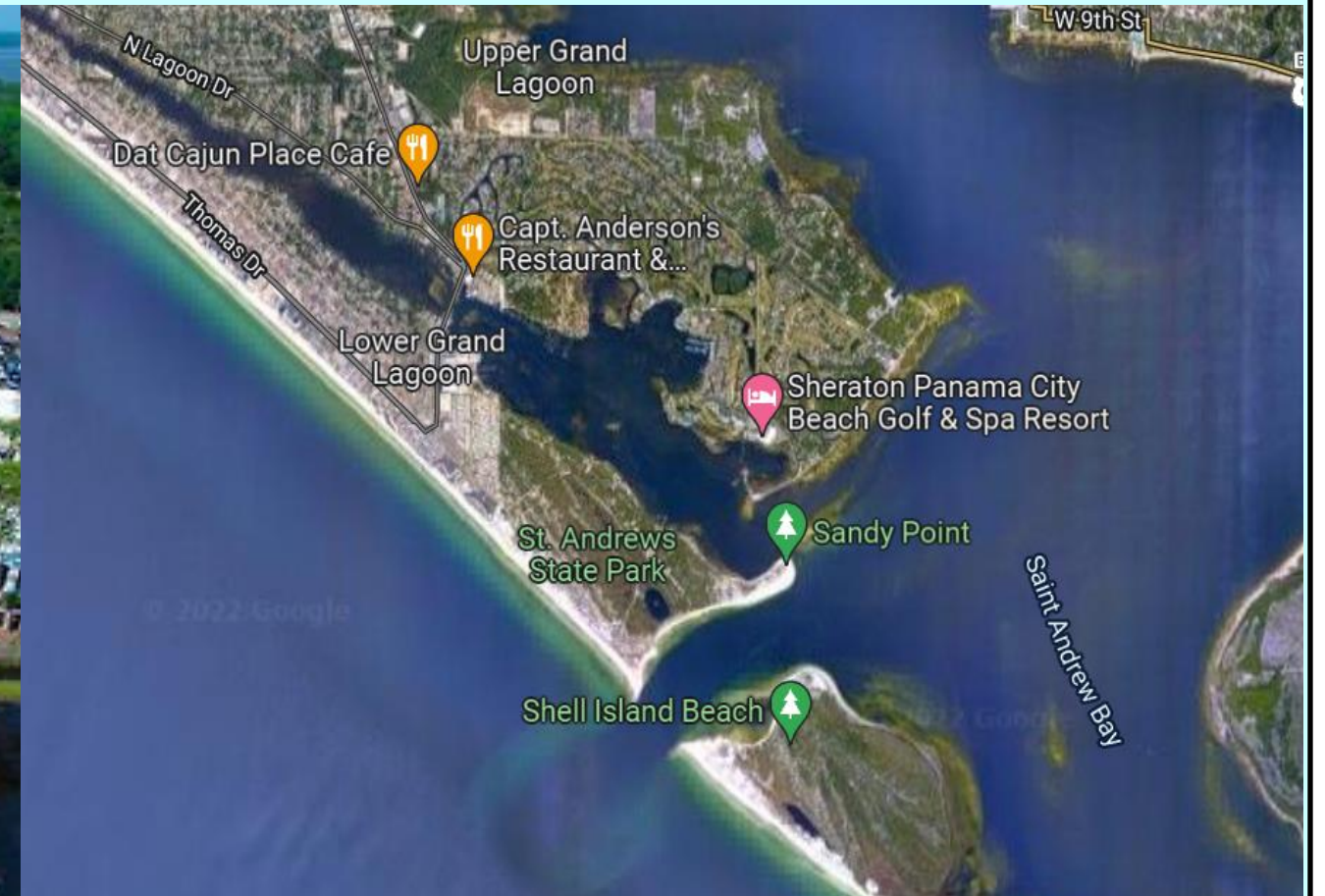




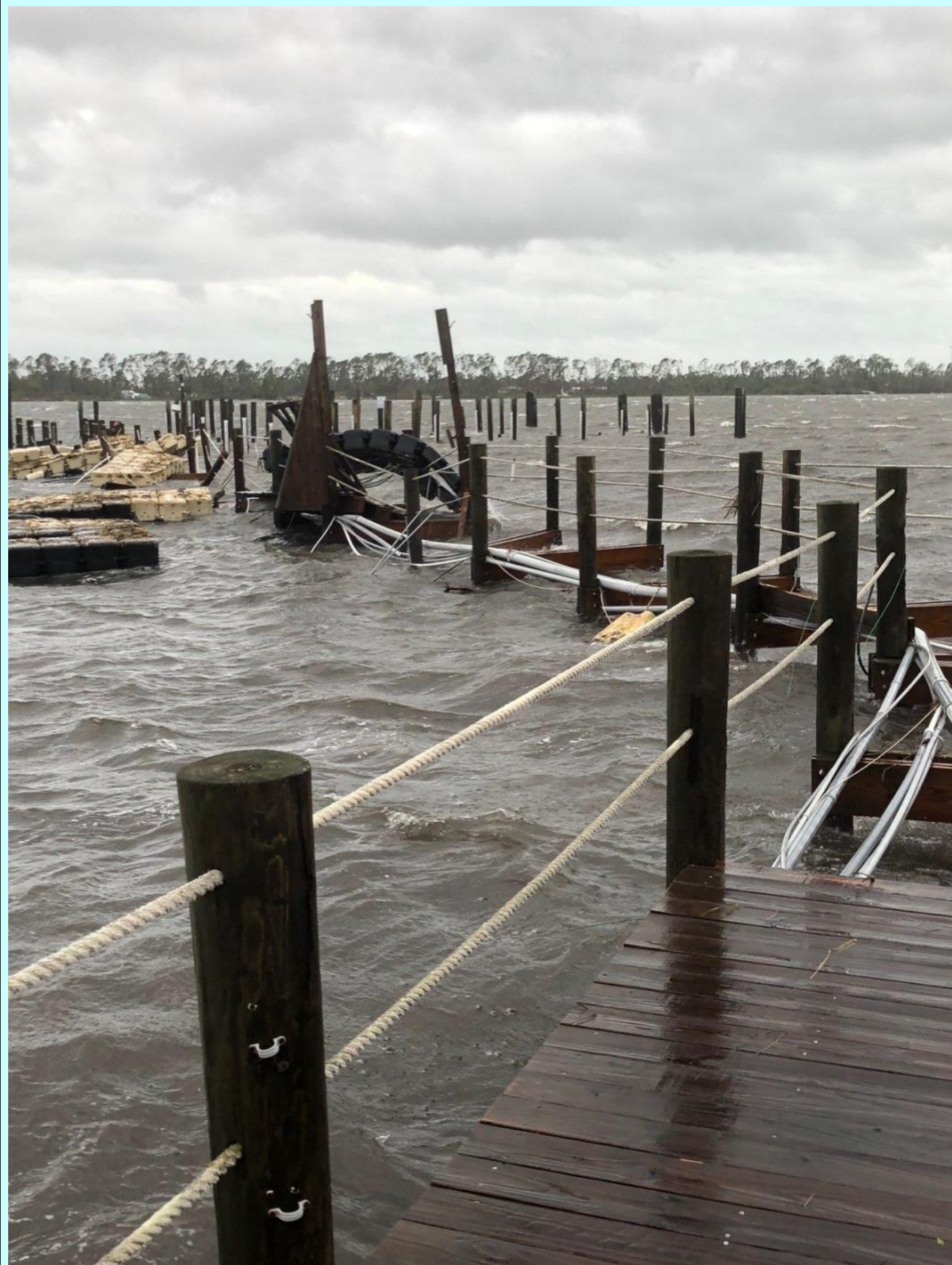




















## Bay Point Golf Club

Home to the only Nicklaus Design Course in NW Florida, Bay Point Golf Club is the perfect place to hit the links when visiting our Panama City Beach Resort. Whether you are a pro-golfer or beginning golf enthusiast, we cater to guests of all skill levels and interests.

### Getting Here

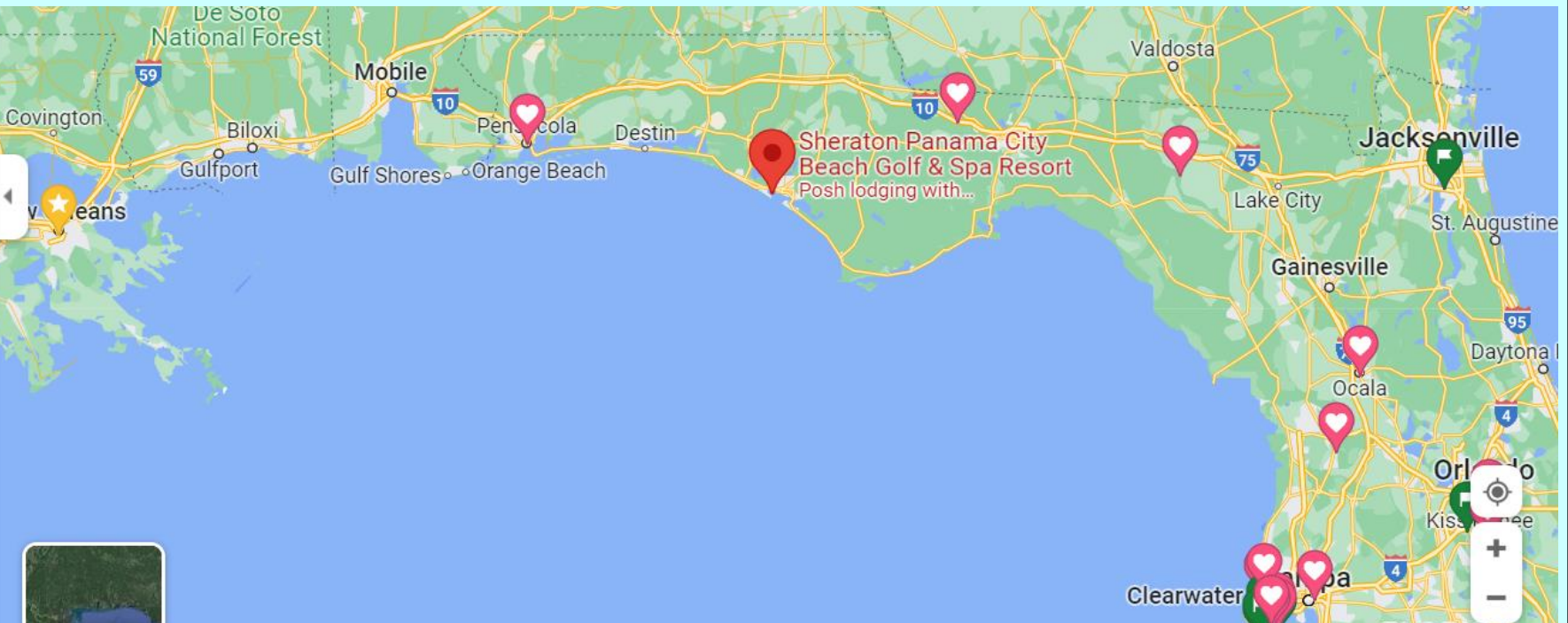
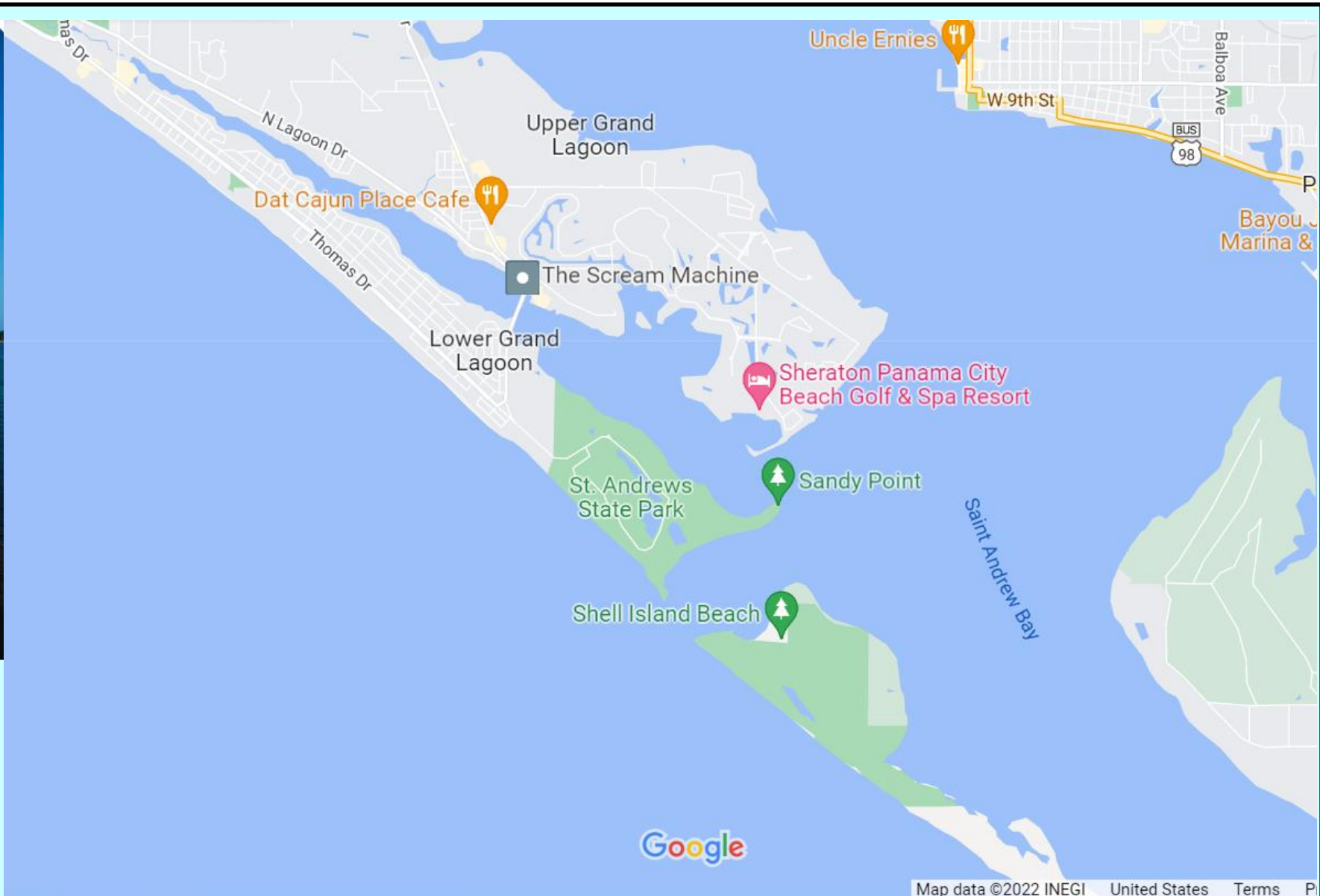
Sheraton Panama City Beach Golf & Spa Resort

4114 Jan Cooley Drive, Panama City Beach, Florida, USA, 32408

Tel [+1 850-236-6000](tel:+18502366000)

Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport

Other Transportation













# Sheraton Panama City Beach back and better

The biggest resort in Panama City Beach, Fla., is fully back online, 18 months after being closed by one of the most powerful U.S. hurricanes ever. The Sheraton Panama City Beach Golf & Spa Resort finished the last leg of its comeback in February, when it reopened its boardwalk, beach and satellite bar, which jut into the city's Grand Lagoon and were highly exposed to the storm.

In October 2018, Hurricane Michael made landfall about 20 miles to the east of Panama City Beach, with maximum sustained winds of 160 mph that shredded the seaside community of Mexico Beach.

At the 360-room Sheraton, the roofs on all three of the main buildings were torn off or damaged enough to allow water to ruin the hotel's interior. It was all the more painful because the resort had completed a two-year, \$30 million renovation a year earlier. Recovery has come in phases, with different parts of the resort opening over the past year.

In a community full of beachfront condos, the Sheraton is a full-service resort that is not on the beach. It sits at the entrance to the Grand Lagoon, across the water from a barrier island that includes St. Andrews State Park. In addition to 200 rooms in three buildings arranged around two swimming pools, the resort has another 160 rooms in six Golf Villa buildings sprinkled around an 18-hole Nicklaus Design golf course, the only one in the Florida Panhandle.

There is a golf clubhouse with its own casual restaurant, Bar 72, and five nearby clay tennis courts, which were resurfaced and refenced after the storm. Amenities also include a 12,000-square-foot spa and a 30,000-square-foot convention and ballroom space, with an extensive sheltered patio with water views for outdoor events.

Rates for a weeknight in early April are \$489 a night plus a \$30 daily resort fee.

I spent two days as a guest of the resort in early February. The panoramic views of the lagoon from my fifth-floor balcony were a highlight of my stay. From my perch I could spot lots of birds and jumping fish as herons standing on one leg hunted and the fish tried to escape. Early mornings brought spectacular sunrises, followed by a smattering of powerboats slowly proceeding toward the open ocean. Sunsets were equally impressive, as the pelicans returned home to their roosts.

I did not get a chance to try the spa or go golfing, but the tennis instruction was first-rate and the resort has regular classes during the week. Now that the boardwalk has reopened, watersports rentals are available again, including kayaks, paddleboards and water scooters.

For a nongolfer, another intriguing option I'd like to try is footgolf, a fairly recent invention in which a soccer ball and larger holes are used instead of the traditional clubs and dimpled balls. The golf course is set aside for regular golf in the morning but yields to footgolf in the afternoon...

...Of the food and beverage outlets on the property, my favorite was Flip Flops, an outdoor bar created in 2014 from space that once enclosed an indoor pool. Like much of the resort, Flip Flops has marvelous views of the lagoon. A large hot tub is scheduled to be added this month just outside Flip Flops next to one of the swimming pools.

Venturing west into Panama City Beach, one finds diminishing signs of damage from the hurricane. The prime destination is the shopping and entertainment zone around Pier Park, which includes 124 stores, an IMAX theater, a laser tag center and a 200-foot-tall Ferris wheel. The municipal pier extends 1,500 feet into the Gulf of Mexico. (There is a \$3 fee to use it; \$6 if you want to fish.)

However, venturing east from Panama City is another story. The eye of the hurricane passed over Tyndall Air Force Base and Mexico Beach, and for every structure that has been rebuilt better than new there's another still in ruins. Thousands of large trees were snapped in two, giving the area a haunted look. Fortunately, the Emerald Coast region's tourism engine is Panama City Beach, and the recovery there is all but done.

## TRAVEL WEEKLY THE

Mar 20, 2020

By [Tom Stieghorst](#)



Sunset from one of the pools at the Sheraton Panama City Beach Golf & Spa Resort.  
Photo Credit: Tom Stieghorst



The resort's boardwalk juts out into the city's Grand Lagoon. Photo Credit: Tom Stieghorst