Corpus Christi, Texas, is a seaport located at the mouth of the Nueces River on the west end of Corpus Christi Bay. The first successful European settlement was established by Colonel Henry Lawrence Kinney in 1839. By the mid-1840s the growing town assumed the name Corpus Christi. The name traces back to the bay’s discovery on the Roman Catholic Feast Day of Corpus Christi in 1519 by Spanish explorer Alonzo Alvarez de Pineda.

Corpus Christi is served by two health systems, Christus Spohn Health System and Corpus Christi Medical Center, which have almost 1,600 acute-care beds. In addition, there is a dedicated pediatric hospital. The area is also served by two long-term acute care facilities.

The Texas State Aquarium is located on Corpus Christi Beach and promotes environmental conservation and rehabilitation of the wildlife of the Gulf of Mexico. Amusement parks include Funtrackers Amusement Park and Hurricane Alley Waterpark.

Professional sports teams in Corpus Christi include the Corpus Christi Hooks (baseball), Corpus Christi Icerays (ice hockey), Corpus Christi Dustdevils (professional women’s basketball), Corpus Christi Icerays (ice hockey), and Corpus Christi Mermaids (women’s football).

EDUCATION

Corpus Christi Independent School District is the largest public school district in the region and educates over 39,000 students in 37 elementary schools, 11 middle schools, 7 high schools, and 4 special schools. Other districts in the city include Flour Bluff, Calallen, Tuloso-Midway, and West Oso. Together, these five districts have an enrollment of approximately 53,000 students.

Higher education is available at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi which offers bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degree programs. The Texas A&M Health Science Center Coastal Bend Health Education Center offers educational opportunities to physicians, pharmacists, and other health care professionals. Del Mar College has two campuses and two education centers and offers associate’s degrees and certificates. South Texas Vo-Tech provides technical and vocational training in selected fields.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Corpus Christi has 196 parks with amenities that include tennis centers, sports fields, a skate park, full-service municipal golf courses, recreation centers, senior centers, beaches, gyms, and indoor and outdoor pools. Corpus Christi has repeatedly been ranked as the “Birdiest City” in a national competition. Popular bird watching locations are Blucher Park, Hans & Pat Suter Wildlife Refuge, Oso Bay Park, and Hazel Bazemore Park.

One of four beaches in Corpus Christi, Padre Island National Seashore separates the Gulf of Mexico from the Laguna Madre. Park activities include picnicking, fishing, hiking, extreme biking, camping, and windsurfing. The park is a safe nesting ground for the Kemp’s ridley sea turtle, a haven for 380 bird species, and protects 70 miles of coastline, dunes, prairies, and wind tidal flats. The South Texas Botanical Gardens & Nature Center showcases colorful, exotic floral exhibits blended with vast conserved areas of native habitat and natural wetlands.

The River Rock area near the hospital was built in the 1990s in contemporary ranch and two-story styles. New contemporary styled two-story homes have been built in Wood Estates near the River Hills Country Club.

City Population 312,195
Metropolitan Statistical Area Population 437,109
Per Capita Personal Income, Corpus Christi, TX (MSA) $40,796

Photograph courtesy of the Corpus Christi Convention and Visitors Bureau.