

Plein Air Painters...



COURTESY OF GULF COUNTY TDC

Florida's Forgotten Coast on Canvas!

Nationally acclaimed artists gather on Florida's Forgotten Coast, the noteworthy stretch between Mexico Beach and Alligator Point, to participate in the 4th Annual Plein Air Invitational, [May 7-17, 2009](#). Painters will set up their easels and pull out their brushes to document the landscape and culture of this last vestige of authentic "Old Florida".

Plein Air (pronounced pleyn air) comes from the French term "en plein air," meaning "in the open air." It is a style of creating art in the moment outside, primarily (but not necessarily) from nature. Although this type of art is often thought of as landscape painting, many other subjects can be depicted, including still life, figures, portraits and architecture. A true plein air painting is done on location, capturing the atmosphere and establishing a sense of place. Many artists agree this is the true test of skill, as it requires complete confidence in placement of color and brushwork in a short amount of time. The work is valued for its sense of spontaneity and for the skill artists develop at quickly and deftly capturing the essence of light or shadow on a subject. Plein air art is not created in a deliberate or planned manner, it is fresh and uncontrived, created from life as it happens.

The "great paint-out" is a 10-day event coordinated by Florida's Forgotten Coast Cultural Coalition, the non-profit organization established to produce regional multi-community cultural events that improve the quality of life for the coastal area. The communities of Mexico Beach, WindMark Beach, Port St. Joe, Cape San Blas, Indian Pass, Apalachicola, Eastpoint, St. George Island, Carrabelle, Summer Camp and Alligator Point have joined forces to

produce the most impressive art event seen along the coast.

The artists, who hail from as far away as Maine and Oregon, will join those from as close by as St. Augustine and Tarpon Springs to paint the unspoiled beaches, the vast marshlands, the wide river, and the historic streets of waterfront towns.

In its history, the event has produced over 900 highly valued paintings that feature scenes such as the fishing pier in Mexico Beach, Port St. Joe's marina and parks, Cape San Blas' majestic dunes, the creeks and palms of Indian Pass, the Cape St. George Lighthouse and Apalachicola's scenic fishing fleet and historic homes.

The public is invited, encouraged even, to locate, stop and watch the painters throughout the event. A series of exhibits, demonstrations, presentations, luncheons, cocktail parties, a Student Art Day and a "Quick-draw" will be detailed in the event program, offering visitors and locals an opportunity to meet the artists and experience the plein air process. To view the entire schedule of events visit the evolving website, www.pleinairfl.com, or contact **800-378-8419**. Receive a copy of the Gulf County visitor's guide and more information by logging onto www.visitgulf.com, or contact **800-482-4853 (GULF)**.