

# Alys Beach

## Florida



Location: Walton County, Florida  
Type: Resort Village  
Year Design: 2003  
Status: Under construction  
Size: 158 Acres  
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In the tradition of nearby Seaside and Rosemary Beach, Alys Beach will be a model resort town--a place where the best concepts in town planning are applied to create an ideal urban experience in harmony with nature. The 158-acre site, which occupies the last piece of beachfront property on the Florida Panhandle, slopes slightly to the south, offering exceptionally long views to the water from many points inland. Approximately 20 acres of jurisdictional wetlands lie to the north. Within this configuration, the urban-to-rural transect distributes the denser, more urban concentrations near the beach and CR 30A (which crosses the southern half of the site) and the sparser, more rural elements toward the wetlands.



Seeking to achieve an overall feeling of calm and simplicity for the town, the design team turned to a number of sources for inspiration. A trip to Bermuda led to the discovery of the perfect architectural style for the project. The simple volumes of whitewashed masonry and stucco typical of the style possess an uncomplicated, organic beauty. Buildings are grouped into small compounds and unified by perimeter walls, which are higher and more formal in the urban zones, lower and more rustic in the rural areas. The Bermuda style is combined with a patio house type that originated in Antigua and a courtyard building type that came from California.



All streets lead to the beach, with views of the water kept clear for as great a distance as possible. The main street leads to a waterfront plaza, which will serve as the primary gathering place in the community. As an urban center unlike any other in the region, the plaza will be a truly unique feature for Alys Beach. Its wide wooden steps leading down to the beach will provide an ideal spot for enjoying the sunset over the Gulf. Three-story, mixed-use buildings will line the plaza, featuring arcades and cafes at ground level and apartments above. The northern edge will be framed by an open air auditorium and the distinctive silhouette of a flatiron building with a viewing deck.



The town will also employ the best available urban design and architecture techniques to create harmonious relationship between humans and the environment. Combined with the pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use plan, these techniques will make Alys Beach a leader in ecologically sound living in Florida.