



## **Fort De Soto Park Named Nation's Best Family Beach**

*Parents magazine puts it at top of annual list; NBC's Today to feature tomorrow*

St. Pete/Clearwater, FL (June 7, 2011) – St. Pete/Clearwater's Fort De Soto Park was named America's best family beach by the editors of *Parents*, the nation's top selling parenting and family lifestyle magazine, with a paid circulation of more than 2 million readers and a total readership of 15 million.

Following similar top rankings from Dr. Beach (2005) and TripAdvisor (2008 and 2009), the expansive county park (pictured) at the southern tip of St. Petersburg took top honors on the magazine's 2011 list of the '10 Best Beaches for Families' that hit newsstands last week.

To tout the rankings, *Parents* editor-in-chief Dana Points will appear on NBC's *TODAY with Kathie Lee and Hoda* tomorrow morning to formally announce the results.



According to the publication, *Parents* reviewed 'water-quality reports, closings and advisories for more than 1,000 U.S. beaches,' eliminating those with regular issues or where the water was not tested. Restrooms, calm surf, lifeguards and a variety of extras helped shape the final list of 10.

In its [recap of Fort De Soto](#), the magazine doted on the natural sandbar off the coast, which acts as a lagoon-like pool for younger swimmers. Water quality also scored off the charts, boasting a spotless record following more than 100 tests in 2009 and 2010.

Fort De Soto averages more than 2.7 million visitors annually---a number which could rise following the *Parents* announcement and the release of Visit St. Pete/Clearwater's dynamic new television commercials, which began airing yesterday.

The two emotionally-charged spots were filmed at locations from St. Pete Beach to Clearwater Beach, utilizing a local set of cast and crew members.

The ads---titled '[Promises](#)' and '[Play](#)'---possess a highly-produced cinematic quality, presenting a collection of footage rivaling that often seen on the silver screen.

With an emphasis on families and couples, the commercials dovetail VSPC's recent launch of a multi-medium campaign aimed at driving visitation from the in-state market.

Both the TV spots and the '[100 Days of Summer](#)' campaign will be heavily promoted in the Tampa Bay and Orlando markets.

*Visit St. Pete/Clearwater is the destination marketing organization for Pinellas County, Florida.*

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