

SOUTH TAMPA NEIGHBORHOOD GUIDE

Davis Islands

A local's guide to the two islands at the mouth of the Hillsborough River

ZIP 33606 · TAMPA GENERAL AT THE NORTH END · SOUTH TAMPA

Davis Islands, or just "DI" to anyone who lives in Tampa, didn't exist 100 years ago. In the 1920s, developer D.P. Davis built it up from two small keys using fill dredged from the bay. What came out of it is one of Tampa's most recognizable neighborhoods: Mediterranean Revival homes, canals, palm-lined boulevards and a view of the downtown skyline from almost everywhere.

It feels like a small town. People walk, bike or take the golf cart to dinner on East Davis Boulevard and see the same faces at the coffee bar every morning. But you're one bridge from downtown, Channelside and Hyde Park.

Some of the original 1920s homes are still standing, but not many. I've helped buyers purchase one of the survivors, and I've found homes here that were never on the market. On DI, the public listings are only part of the story.

At a Glance

LOCATION	**33606, mouth of the Hillsborough River**
MEDIAN SINGLE-FAMILY	**About $2.1M**
MEDIAN PRICE / SQ FT	**About $600**
ELEMENTARY	**Gorrie Elementary**
MIDDLE SCHOOL	**Wilson Middle**
HIGH SCHOOL	**H.B. Plant High**
HOSPITAL	**Tampa General, on the island**
GETTING AROUND	**Walk · bike · golf cart**
NEARBY	**Hyde Park · Harbour Island · Downtown**

Prices: Stellar MLS, single-family closed sales, last 12 months, fall 2026. Confirm school zoning by address.

Two, Not One

2

ISLANDS, SEPARATED BY A CANAL

It's Davis Islands, plural. A lot of people say "Davis Island," and even the 1933 yacht club went singular.

There used to be three islands, until the Peter O. Knight Airport runway filled in the gap between two of them.

Homes on Davis Islands

The median sale is about $2.1 million, but the average runs closer to $2.6 million. That gap is the waterfront. Elevation, flood history, lot and age matter as much as square footage here.

- Original 1920s Mediterranean Revival
- Bayfront & Channelfront Estates
- Interior Streets
- New Custom Construction
- Condos & Townhomes

THE STORY OF DI

A Hundred Years in the Making

Davis Islands was a 1920s land-boom gamble that outlived its developer. A lot of what makes it special today, from the hospital to the airport to the yacht club, goes back to those first years.

1920s Developer D.P. Davis builds up two small natural keys, Little Grassy Key and Big Grassy Key, with fill dredged from Hillsborough Bay.

1924 The first lots go on sale on October 4. All 300 sell in about three hours, for $1.68 million.

1925 The first Mediterranean Revival homes rise along Columbia Drive and the boulevards, including La Torretta, designed by architect Martin L. Hampton.

1926 The Florida boom collapses. Davis sells his stake to Boston's Stone & Webster, which takes over the project. That October, he dies at sea.

1927 Tampa Municipal Hospital opens at the north end. Today it's Tampa General, and the original building is still inside it.

1930s Peter O. Knight Airport is built at the south tip, with a seaplane basin. Filling a canal for the runway joins two of the three islands.

1933 The Davis Island Yacht Club is founded. It still calls itself "the Sailingest Club in the South."

1989 The island's Mediterranean Revival buildings are listed together on the National Register of Historic Places.

Today Historian Rodney Kite-Powell estimates 20 to 40 of the original 100 or so homes have been torn down. The survivors are rare.



"I've been inside these homes. A few years ago I helped my buyers purchase La Torretta, a mid-1920s original on Columbia Drive. Houses like that come with history you can't build new."

KELLY BURCHILL



ISLAND LANDMARKS

Tampa General Hospital
NORTH END

A major teaching hospital, on the island since 1927. Many residents walk or bike to work.

Peter O. Knight Airport
SOUTH TIP

A general aviation airport for private pilots, at the tip of the island with water views.

Davis Island Yacht Club
SINCE 1933

Sailing, regattas and a big part of island social life. 1315 Severn Ave.

Marjorie Park & Yacht Basin
THE VILLAGE

A city marina and park a block from Davis Blvd, named for Davis's wife, Marjorie.

Palace of Florence & Palmerin Hotel
LOCAL LANDMARKS

Two 1920s Mediterranean Revival buildings on Davis Blvd, both city landmarks on the National Register.

Tennis, Pool & Trail
PUBLIC RECREATION

The Sandra Freedman Tennis Complex, the landmark Roy Jenkins Pool and the waterfront Davis Islands Trail.

LOCAL FAVORITES

Living on DI

My picks for dinner, coffee and getting outside. Most of what you need is a walk or a bike ride away.







DINING & COFFEE

Thai Island

MY DINNER PICK

A Davis Islands staple on the main strip. Small, casual, with a dog-friendly patio.

210 E Davis Blvd

DI Coffee Bar

COFFEE OR WINE

Where I go to work for an hour. Coffee or wine, depending on the mood.

214 E Davis Blvd

WATER & OUTDOORS

Marjorie Park

THE WALK

Walk along the water by the yacht basin, a block from the village. D.P. Davis named it for his wife.

115 Columbia Dr

Davis Islands Dog Beach

BRING THE DOG

An off-leash beach at the south end of the island, near the airport.

South end of Davis Islands

GETTING AROUND

A Golf Cart Community

On DI, the golf cart is the second car. You'll see them everywhere: heading to dinner on Davis Blvd, the yacht club, the dog beach or school pickup. Street-legal carts can generally use roads posted 35 mph or less, but check current City of Tampa rules and your HOA or condo association before you buy one.

Before You Fall in Love With a House Here

Much of DI sits in FEMA flood zone AE and evacuation zone A, and flood zones and evacuation zones are two different things. Look at elevation, flood history and insurance on day one. There's one way on and off the island, and TGH traffic backs up at shift changes. None of that stops people from wanting to live here. It just means you should buy with your eyes open. My flood zone vs. evacuation zone guide explains the difference.

Thinking About Davis Islands?

I'm a third-generation South Tampa native. I know DI street by street, and I know which owners might sell before they do. Let's talk about what's available, and what isn't listed yet.

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