



# the DockLife

The Isle of Palms Neighborhood

By Christi Elflein | Photography by Woody Huband



**I** sle of Palms isn't your average neighborhood. From the car window you see only a fraction of the picture. "We have two streets running by our house," homeowner Amy Anderson says. There's a paved street in the front, and a water street in the back - and the activity along the water street is what makes the neighborhood unique.

Isle of Palms was established in the late 1950s, and has developed in phases over the last 60 years. It is located in Jacksonville on the west bank of the Intracoastal Waterway where it meets Beach Boulevard. The community's location inspired the early developers to build canals running parallel to the streets so many homeowners could be connected to the Intracoastal. The result is a little slice of Venice in Jacksonville.





Build your dock with the future in mind, just in case you upgrade your boat to a bigger size.



A popular addition to your dock would be an outdoor kitchen and dining area.



Carter Barksdale, holding up a mullet fish he caught in his crab trap attached to the dock.

The canals running behind the homes are alive with neighborhood activity – you might see young boys exploring in small motorboats, their sisters in paddleboats, and adults dock hopping during happy hour. Each home has a dock, which is part of the backyard fun. Gourmet summer kitchens are fired up for dinner. Crab traps lie underneath the docks. Kayaks and blow up toys await the attention of the children. And then, of course, there are bigger toys – motorboats, jet skis and sailboats.

Anderson enjoys just sitting on her dock. “I love watching people as they go by,” she says. “You should see what people catch!”

Fishing is a popular sport in the neighborhood. “We mostly fish in the ICW and sometimes go to the jetties,” says homeowner Ronnie Leinwohl. A favorite neighborhood event is the kid’s annual fishing tournament.

The residents of Isle of Palms take the dock life seriously – and enjoy every minute of it.

If you are one of the thousands of First Coast residents that live on water, it may be time to build a dock and get out there and enjoy the water. We consulted local dock builder, Chuck Tower, vice president and principal owner of Coleman Construction Group, to tell us what you need to consider when building a dock.

**Time:** It takes three to four months to build a dock from concept to completion. “It’s a process,” Tower says, and, “you have to be patient.” When building a dock often state and federal agencies are involved in the permitting process.

**Size:** Tower advises, “You don’t want to build your dock twice. Consider what size boat you plan to have in the future, not what you have now.”

**Maintenance:** “Everything over water requires maintenance,” Towers says. Using the right materials can save time and money in the future. For example, you could choose to construct a galvanized roof rather than a shingled roof to avoid condensation problems. Composite style decking is another low maintenance material.

**Budget:** “A simple, small dock on a canal could be as low as \$5,000,” Tower says. More ornate docks can cost more than \$200,000. Electrical issues can also add to the bottom line. The longer the dock and the longer the distance between the dock and the house, the more expensive it will be to get power to the dock. A high gauged wire that needs to travel a long distance can cost up to \$30,000.

**Choose the Right Contractor:** “Be sure to hire a licensed and insured contractor,” Tower says. Experienced contractors will use the right materials.

More information about the Coleman Construction Group can be found at [colemanconstructiongroup.com](http://colemanconstructiongroup.com).