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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ECP NAMED ONE OF THE NATION'S BEST RESORT AIRPORTS FOR SECOND STRAIGHT YEAR

Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport finishes second in the USA TODAY 10Best Readers' Choice Awards

PANAMA CITY, Fla. (October 14, 2026) — Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport (ECP) has climbed to second place among the nation's Best Resort Airports in the 2026 USA TODAY 10Best Readers' Choice Awards, improving on its fourth-place finish last year.

It is the second consecutive year ECP has landed among the country's ten best resort airports, moving up the ranks following a fourth-place finish in 2025. Airports across the country compete in the category, from long-established resort gateways to major metropolitan hubs. ECP, which opened in 2010, is among the youngest on the list.

The USA TODAY 10Best Readers' Choice Awards recognize the best of the best across travel and lifestyle categories. Nominees are selected by a panel of experts and reviewed by USA TODAY 10Best editors, and winners are decided entirely by public vote.

"We measure ourselves by a simple question: Is the trip better this year than it was last year?" said Will Cramer, Chair of the Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport Board of Directors.

"Recognition like this tells us the answer is yes, and it's also the reason we keep going — more gates, shorter lines at security, a book to read while you wait, live music on a Saturday morning. Thank you to everyone who voted."

Voters recognized what regular ECP passengers experience on every trip. The Airport sits less than 30 minutes from white sand beaches and warm Gulf waters, with easy access to Panama City, Panama City Beach, South Walton, Destin, Seaside and Fort Walton Beach. Daily and seasonal

nonstop service from American Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Southwest Airlines and United Airlines means a vacation starts the moment passengers step off the aircraft.

The recognition arrives during the busiest and most ambitious stretch in the Airport's history. ECP welcomed a record 1,937,224 passengers in 2025, a 3.1 percent increase over the prior year. In January, the Airport broke ground on an 80,000-square-foot North Terminal Expansion adding three gates, four baggage claim carousels, additional concessions and seating, and a relocated and expanded TSA checkpoint. In May, ECP received an \$8 million federal Airport Terminal Program grant supporting that work.

Alongside the construction, the Airport has invested in the details that set the tone for a beach vacation: the FlyBrary, a free take-a-book, leave-a-book library inside the Terminal created with the Northwest Regional Library System; the Wheels Up Summer Music Series, bringing live local music to departing travelers; and sponsorship of the 30A Songwriters Festival.

"Recognition like this is earned in a thousand small moments a day that nobody writes a press release about," said Parker W. McClellan, Jr., A.A.E., Executive Director of Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport. "A clean gate area, a short security line, someone who knows the way to the rental cars. I'm proud of every person who wears an ECP badge, and I'm grateful to the travelers who noticed."

Work on the North Terminal Expansion continues, with the added gates and expanded checkpoint designed to keep pace with the Region's growth.

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About Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport

[Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport \(ECP\)](#) is located less than 30 minutes from Panama City Beach, Panama City, and the beaches of South Walton. Today, with service from American Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Southwest Airlines, and United Airlines, ECP provides daily and seasonal nonstop flights to Atlanta (ATL), Austin (AUS), Baltimore (BWI), Boston (BOS), Charlotte (CLT), Chicago (MDW/ORD), Columbus (CMH), Dallas (DAL/DFW), Denver (DEN), Houston (HOU/IAH), Kansas City (MCI), Nashville (BNA), New York City (LGA), St. Louis (STL), Washington DC (DCA), and one-stop service to worldwide destinations. ECP provides Northwest Florida communities with first-class facilities and was strategically developed for major economic development opportunities. Named a "Best Resort Airport" two years in a row by USA TODAY, ECP is the gateway for visitors seeking Northwest Florida's famous beaches.