

CREATIVE  
DIGITAL  
AGENCY

  
Benicia  
A GREAT DAY BY THE BAY



# Campaign Overview

With the onset of COVID-19 last year, the waterfront city of Benicia, California needed to totally reconceive its tourism marketing strategy for the summer and holiday season.

Historically, Benicia has been popular with visitors because of its public events, shopping, and indoor dining -- attractions which were problematic during the pandemic.





*Health & Wellness*



*Romance by the Bay*



*Step Back In Time*



*Art & Inspiration*

# Objective

CDA had to essentially scrap the original summer plan for the year and start over, looking at industry data and refocusing on the attractions audiences were crying out for: local day trips, outdoor leisure activities, and safe ways to relax and rejuvenate.

Above all, an escape from 2020!

# Strategy

The takeaway?

We need to be adaptable.

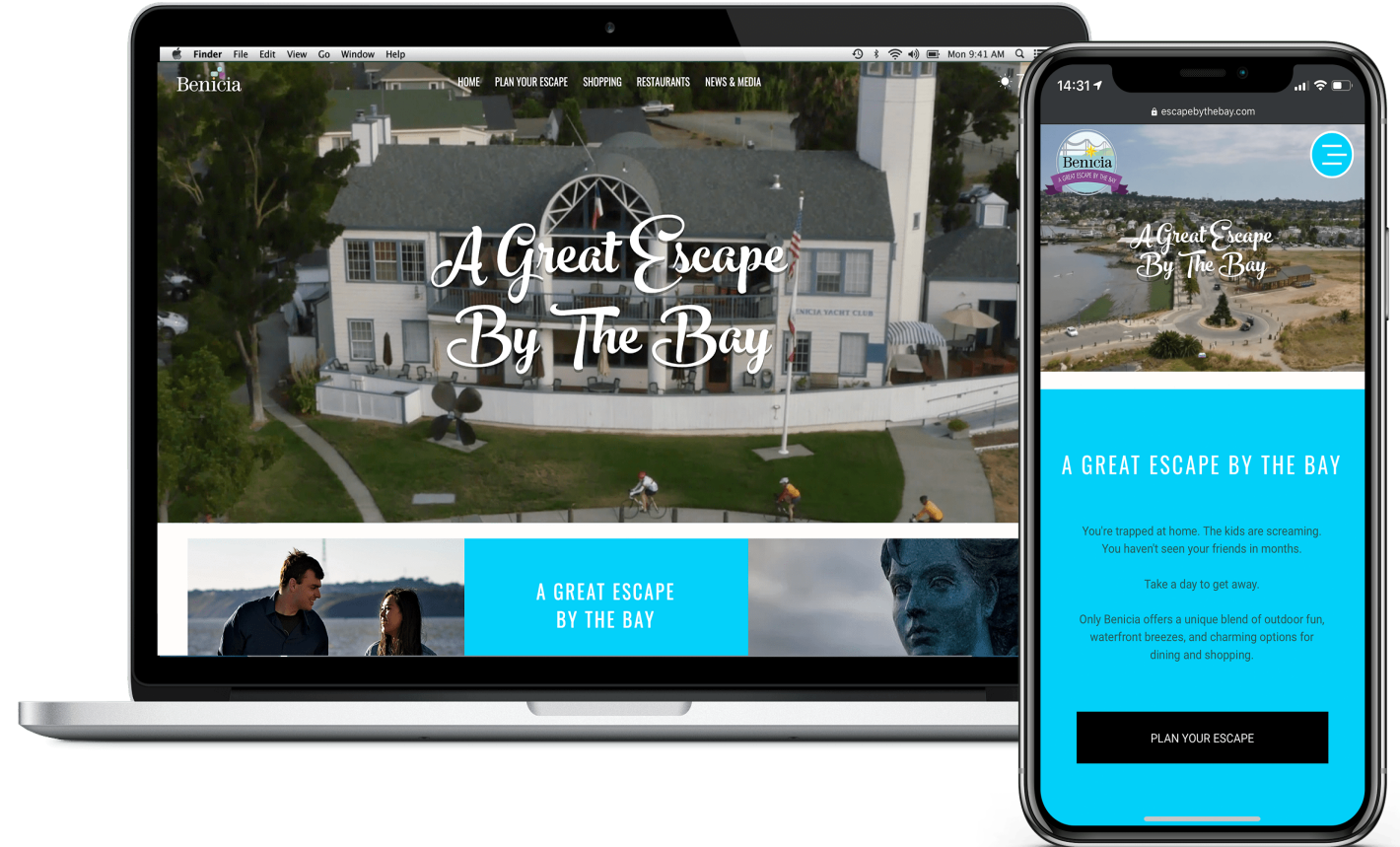
CDA worked with the city to launch Benicia's "A Great Escape By the Bay" campaign, which emphasized a variety of day trip itineraries that promoted mental and physical health while incorporating safe shopping & dining agendas to continue driving revenue for small, locally-owned businesses.



# What Was Involved

The campaign required a rapid turnaround to launch across multiple channels:

- A new website, [www.EscapeByTheBay.com](http://www.EscapeByTheBay.com)
- Media relations and PR, bringing travel writers/bloggers and local social media into the city to enjoy the different day trips offered.
- Multi-channel paid media, encompassing local TV, email, billboards, digital media, and print advertising in Diablo magazine
- Multimedia production, including content for TV, print, and web showcasing a safe COVID-19 visitor experience



# Results

The campaign drove a huge upswing in earned media coverage, especially for a year when large public events were canceled.

Benicia was covered by *Visit California*, the *SF Chronicle*, *Mercury News*, and was even featured on *Live With Kelly and Ryan*.

**“Star Wars: The Mandalorian” gets Benicia...**

**THINGS TO DO RESTAURANTS, FOOD AND DRINK**

**“Star Wars: The Mandalorian” gets Benicia bakery’s bread treatment**

A clever doughy “Star Wars” homage has gone viral at Benicia’s One House Bakery, where Baby Doughs, a Pinhead and the Pin-dough-orian await visitors. (One House Bakery)

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**DIABLO CITIES & TOWNS / Benicia**

## Benicia

Connected to a vibrant past

**W**alking down Benicia’s First Street, with its stately cast-iron building and numerous antique shops, one can feel the city’s connection to its vibrant past. It’s no wonder this waterfront community celebrates its history: Benicia boasts a fascinating backstory. The city was settled before California’s Gold Rush, when journalist Robert Semple and businessman Thomas Larkin purchased five square miles of land from General Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo. The town was named Benicia in honor of Benito Vallejo’s wife, Juana. It was founded in 1847. Benicia operated three times during the 19th century. It was considered the “gateway” across the bay, which turned it into a small town. It was founded in January 1847 when Semple and Larkin’s assing through joined at a ferry-bridge. Semple’s discovery, Gold Rush, and the State’s visitors arsenal of the next the military would be the region’s largest employer. Oddly, in the 1960s, the Benicia Arsenal would also house camels, when the military toyed with using them as pack animals. Benicia was named California’s capital in 1852, and the city erected a capitol building. The state government didn’t stay long, however, within 15 months, the capital was moved to Sacramento. The city thrived in the late 19th century. It was a hub for shipbuilders, including the prolific Matthew Turner, who established a shipyard in the city in 1862. When the transcontinental railroad came to town, the world’s largest ferry was constructed to carry trains across the strait. Tanneries were another popular business. By the early 20th century, Benicia was producing one-third of all the leather made in California. During World War II, Benicia saw another economic boom, but the city fell into a decline afterward—especially following the arsenal’s closure in the 1960s. Civic leaders would later repurpose the old military buildings, turning them into an industrial park that now houses small businesses and artists’ studios, as well as the Benicia Historical Museum. Other remnants of the past remain, including several 19th-century houses. And the Benicia-Martinez Bridge, which was completed in 1962, links the city to the East Bay, making it easy for visitors to enjoy Benicia’s history, waterfront, and thriving arts, retail, and dining scenes.

- \$10** Amount Robert Semple and Thomas Larkin paid General Vallejo for the parcel of land on which Benicia was founded
- 35** Camels inhabiting warehouses at the Benicia Arsenal in 1963
- 154** Ships the master shipbuilder Matthew Turner built in Benicia
- 1** Spotlight in Benicia circa 1930
- 300** Businesses and artists’ studios currently housed in the former Benicia Arsenal

**BAY AREA DAY TRIP IDEAS: DAY TRIP TO BENICIA, CA**

... food to go? Check. Beautiful scenery? Check. The most relaxing day I’ve had in months? Check. Benicia’s charming, small-town feel offers an easy way to escape the hustle and bustle of city life and relax in the afternoon – especially in 2020, when every day feels more stressful than the one before it!

... undiscovered jewel of the Bay Area, Benicia is one of the safest cities in California, and it’s central enough to make for an easy day trip no matter if you’re in South Bay or Sacramento. Looking for a Bay Area day trip? ... reading for some of my favorite spots that you do not want to miss in Benicia.