



## THE HARBOR

**Tita: ‘I Love The Free Life’**

Tita, who has made her home in The Harbor for more than a decade, says she’s happy with the freedom it affords her.

NOVEMBER 16, 2015 • By Jessica Terrell  

Nothing makes Tita happier than the ocean, the wild and rocky shoreline that forms the front yard of her home in The Harbor.

“It’s like waking up and this is my swimming pool,” she says, pointing in front of her tent to the small stretch of sandy beach and the pounding surf just beyond.

She was one of the first to call The Harbor home, she proudly says.

It was a different place when she arrived a decade ago.

Those first years were the fun years, when The Harbor was home to only a dozen or so people and the whole place felt like it was hers to explore alone — a personal playground filled with sinkholes and ravines to discover, spooky sections of the bush where friends saw ghosts and mysteries lay around every bend.



Cory Lum/Civil Beat

*Tita makes a living in part by making crafts from recycled materials found around The Harbor.*



Life in the Harbor has gotten harder in recent years. It's too crowded now, she says.

"I'm not saying that I wish everybody was gone or anything like that," she says.

She wouldn't begrudge anyone a place to live. It's just that the place is different with so many neighbors.

Tita agreed a few years ago to watch out for the area along the beach as a section captain for The Harbor's de facto leader, Twinkle Borge. These days, though, she's starting to think that she might need to take a break from trying to provide security in the area.

It's a big responsibility, and she can't handle sitting in her tent listening to neighbors fighting and know that she really can't do anything to stop them. It also feels hypocritical, when she and her boyfriend have problems of their own.

"It makes me feel belittled of myself, because I am supposed to be the one that is trying to maintain things; but it's hard," Tita says. "And it's sad to say that the person who is being beat up is yelling 'help, help' and you can't do nothing. It hurts."



*Tita's home sits on the edge of the rocky coastline bordering The Harbor.*

Still, she loves her home. Her little fenced yard with an ocean view, and a tent where she can fall asleep each night to the sound of the waves breaking against the rocks.

She's proud to be one of the few people in The Harbor who lives there because she wants to. Because she loves free living. Not having to answer to anyone. Being able to wake up each day and make of it what she will.

Nothing can last forever though, she says. If people were evicted from The Harbor, maybe she would pitch a tent in her mother's yard.

Most likely, she would just bide her time until she could try to come back home.

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