



## Excerpt from: **The Best Beach Umbrellas, Chairs, and Accessories for Enjoying the Sun and Surf**

### **Beach carts**

A couple of years ago, my good friend Kirk and his wife, Pauline, amazed my wife and me when they showed up at the beach lugging what appeared to be a glorified laundry cart. The [Rio Brands Wonder Wheeler](#)—a 3-foot-tall upright wheeled basket with a big mesh bag—was stuffed to the gills with sand toys, towels, a bag of food, and an umbrella to keep their two young daughters out of the sun. It had four wheels, but the cart was actually made to be tilted like a luggage cart or dolly and hauled on the two skinny (but large-diameter) rear wheels. As a fellow beach-dwelling, gear-hauling parent of two youngsters, I was covetous.



### [Tommy Bahama All Terrain Beach Cart](#)

#### [Our pick](#)

A built-in cooler, extra wide wheels, and the ability to carry a bunch of stuff up and down stairs by one person makes this the best beach cart.

After spending a couple of years envious of Kirk's baseline Wonder Wheeler beach cart, taking time to check out the offerings at our local beachwear stores, and sandying plastic wheels for a week, we're recommending the [Tommy Bahama All Terrain Beach Cart](#). This souped-up Wonder Wheeler (made by Rio Brands) is a sturdy all-purpose sandcrawler that will haul a day's worth of food and gear to the beach and then lug it—along with maybe even a tired kid—back to the car at day's end. Now it's Kirk's turn to covet.



The cart design is superior to a wagon because it can be pulled up and down stairs by one person. Photo: Quinn Dixon

Unlike the basic Wonder Wheeler's stroller wheels, this sturdier Humvee of the beach cart world sports a pair of wide, oversized rear plastic tires that roll even better up and down stairs and over sand, a perfect holder for umbrellas or a couple of fishing rods, and a bitchin' removable cooler tote bag (this—and evidently better quality control—sets it apart from the [Ultra Wide Wheels Wonder Wheeler](#), which just has a tote) with enough room for a six-pack and lunch for Mom, Dad, and two kids.

It also features an extension bar that can hold three—maybe even four—chairs, and can double as a mount for a strap-bound surfboard. The cart also folds flat and pops open with ridiculous ease and is super easy to rinse out. For parents, fisherfolk, or anyone who wants or needs to lug a lot of stuff to the beach, it simply can't be beat.



The Tommy Bahama's wide wheels help it move easily through sand. Its extension bar lets you transport large items like a surfboard and beach chairs. Photo: Quinn Dixon

There are a few caveats though. If you get one of these, you should rinse it after each use because even though it's chromed and powdercoated on every surface, it's still made of steel, which means rust will eventually find a way in if you don't get the corrosive beach salt off. I'm also a little leery of the cooler's zipper, which seems cheaply made (it's not YKK) and will probably benefit from the occasional squirt of WD-40. You also need to check the locking front wheel nuts to make sure they're tight enough, as one of ours worked its way off. Like every other cart I could find, this one has no hand brake. If you need to haul your gear down long or steep hills, you might consider doing what my wife and I did before we found this cart and load your stuff into a hand-brake-equipped jogging stroller.

Other brands make various iterations of beach carts, but their products all fail to measure up in one way or another. The [Mac Sports All Terrain Collapsible Wagon](#) can't go down stairs without two people (or one strong one who can carry it). Just today, while bouncing my Wonder Wheeler down a flight of Folly Beach stairs, I watched a pair of dads struggling with their Mac Sports for exactly this reason. They were covetous, too. Mac Sports's [wheelbarrow type](#) cart is expensive (\$300 and up!), and the inflatable tires can be punctured. [Genji's pull-behind offering](#) gets mediocre Amazon reviews and has little built-in storage. And others just try to do too much, like the [Copa Cargo Table Cart](#), which has a built-in table but less-solid build quality. —CD