

The Crystal Coast, North Carolina



The Must-Do Adventure: You could spend your days basking in the Southern charm in nearby Beaufort. But indulge your inner child instead and check out [Hot Wax Surf Camp](#), to work on your technique in private or group settings. Shower off and head to Taylor's Creek, where you can catch exotic wild horses running freely across the glassy waters, before packing up and drive to Cape Lookout, where you can climb 207 steps (about 12 stories) to the top of the famed [Diamond Lady](#) lighthouse.

Where to Stay: With 85 miles of gleaming Atlantic beaches, North Carolina's Crystal Coast is one of the Carolinas' best spots for vacationing. Bring your dog and post up at the [Atlantis Lodge](#) — a pet-friendly inn that offers suites complete with efficiency kitchens, dining, living, and sleeping areas. And Pine Knolls, the community in which it's located, has been lauded as one of the the most ecologically sensitive towns, since the area was designed with minimal disturbance to the native maritime forest. Nearby adventurous rendezvous include kayaking through the Croatan National Forest, deep-diving the "graveyard of the Atlantic," and angling-in record setting marlin.

The Local Eatery: Pine Knolls' [Blue Moon Bistro](#) is everything an eco-lover could want, showing care to its environment by carefully handling waste disposal and using local, sustainable ingredients whenever possible. The fresh, farm-to-table cuisine has a rotating menu that both carnivores and vegetarians can get excited about.