



**STAY ORIGINAL**

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**Carolina Beach**, ranked No. 2 in *USA Today's* 10Best Readers' Choice "Best North Carolina Beaches," offers visitors something original to explore around every colorful corner. Experience a classic beach boardwalk, a scenic state park, eclectic murals, one-of-a-kind events, world-class fishing, miles of beautiful coastline - and all kinds of people united by their love of good times. Laid-back Carolina Beach is just a 30-minute drive from Wilmington, named a *Good Housekeeping* 2026 Travel Awards winner in part thanks to the vibe of nearby Carolina Beach

### **WHAT'S NEW AT CAROLINA BEACH**

#### **Elevated Coastal Stays**

Carolina Beach's lodging scene continues to evolve with refreshed properties and new developments on the horizon. Golden Sands Beach Resort recently completed a full renovation and officially joined Hilton's Tapestry Collection, bringing elevated design and modern amenities to an oceanfront favorite. The recently rebuilt Oceaneer Hotel (formerly Oceaneer Motel) also debuted new modern furnishings and amenities, offering a sustainable, fully ADA-compliant stay with a limited number of pet-friendly rooms available upon request.

#### **Art in Full Color**

Public art remains a defining feature of Carolina Beach, with new installations expanding the town's creative footprint. Mural No. 21, depicting native birds of Carolina and Kure Beaches, will be installed in March at the Katie B. Hines Center, with artist Susan Nuttall collaborating alongside two local high school interns. The mural is part of an ongoing project bringing public art to locations across Carolina Beach, which visitors can explore on self-guided tours or guided walks with Tasting History Tours and Wilmington Walking Tours.

#### **Iconic Music Milestones**

The Carolina Beach Music Festival celebrates its 40th anniversary with a special look back at four decades of beach music and shag culture on the island. The festival takes place Saturday, June 6, featuring top bands from the beach music circuit performing right on the sand for a quintessential Carolina Beach experience. Debuting this year, the Fall Carolina Beach MusicFest will be held in October with a reggae-themed lineup.

#### **Expanding Cultural Storytelling**

WilmingtonColor Tours will debut new immersive experiences this spring with the launch of its Coastal Carolina NColor Beach History Capsule Series. The expanded offerings include a new Seabreeze-Carolina Beach presentation (offered select dates by advance reservation), highlighting the often-overlooked Black history of North Carolina's coast.

### **SAMPLE STORYLINES**

#### **Kid-Friendly**

Carolina Beach is the ultimate all-ages-welcome destination. Families return year after year thanks to kid-friendly finds like the classic Carolina Beach Boardwalk, surfing and stand-up paddleboard (SUP) lessons and seasonal events such as free outdoor movies and fireworks shows. Water tours and cruises bring young minds' history and science lessons to life - they'll love learning about legendary pirates on a Pirate Adventure Cruise with Island Cruises and searching for fossils on a charter to Shark Tooth Island with a local outfitter. Surf Up's Mini Golf & Tiki Bar is perfect for both adults and families looking for a little competition. For kid-friendly fun inside, Shipwreck Neon Mini Golf offers two nine-hole indoor courses with vibrant colors and obstacles, while iEscape Rooms puts the whole family to the test with escape scenarios that change with the seasons. Even hard-to-impress tweens and teens will request a repeat visit.



**Website:** [VisitCarolinaBeachNC.com](http://VisitCarolinaBeachNC.com) | **Facebook:** [@CarolinaBeachNC](https://www.facebook.com/CarolinaBeachNC) | **X/Instagram:** [@CarolinaBeachNC](https://www.instagram.com/CarolinaBeachNC)

**Pinterest:** [@carolinabeachnc](https://www.pinterest.com/carolinabeachnc) | **YouTube:** [@visitcarolinabeachnc](https://www.youtube.com/visitcarolinabeachnc)

## Outdoor and Eco-Adventures

Try kayaking, SUP, surf fishing or catching waves atop a surfboard. Tony Silvagni Surf School, whose namesake owner ranks among the top surfers in the world for professional longboarding on the World Surf League (WSL) Tour, offers rentals and lessons for all your watersport needs, as well as beach cruise bike rentals for adventures on land. Marvel at the natural wonders of Carolina Beach State Park, home to 13 habitats across 761 acres. While exploring the park, you'll find the Sugarloaf Trail's 50-foot sand dune and the Flytrap Trail's indigenous carnivorous plants. See more of the native species at the bog garden behind the visitor's center.

## Foodie Fare

Dining at Carolina Beach goes beyond typical beach fare, and our foodie scene is getting national recognition: Islands.com recognized Carolina Beach as a best beach town for mouth-watering seafood. Soul Flavor Kitchen & Bar brings to life the flavors of the South. Salt Fish Restaurant serves Caribbean-influenced dishes made with fresh, local ingredients. Nollie's Taco Joint serves fresh Mexican flavors inspired by the restaurant's laid-back skater vibe. The Tropical offers sweet and savory bites overlooking the Carolina Beach Boardwalk. On the sweet side, Carolina Beach's award-winning Britt's Donut Shop is a time-honored tradition, with Wake N Bake Donuts putting a creative twist on the classic creation and Beach Break Donuts offering thousands of made-to-order options. Tap Tea Bar features "special-tea" drinks, as well as build-your-own-boba creations. At Proximity, several popular favorites opened in 2025, including Riko's Pizza, Boombalatti's Carolina Beach, K38 Baja Grill and Drift Coffee, with additional openings slated for 2026. Nearby, construction is underway at Seabreeze Village, a new shopping center that will introduce additional restaurant and retail options near the historic Seabreeze community. Sample island cuisine and cocktails by booking a seasonal Tasting History Tour.

## Affordable Escape

At Carolina Beach, you don't need a big budget to have a great time. Stroll along the shoreline to watch the sunrise, or explore scenic trails at Carolina Beach State Park, where forests, swamps and rare Venus flytraps await. Kayaks and paddleboards from local outfitters make it easy to glide through the surrounding waterways, where visitors may spot turtles, fish and herons. For fun on land, play pickleball at Mike Chappell Park, wander around the freshwater lake at Carolina Beach Lake Park or take a self-guided mural tour around town. The Carolina Beach Boardwalk, filled with quaint shops and

eateries, has wooden swings that are perfect for ocean-gazing while enjoying ice cream, homemade fudge or an afternoon iced coffee. Free seasonal events - from MuralFest and Movies at the Lake to summer fireworks and concerts and the Island of Lights Holiday Flotilla - make every visit feel vibrant and memorable.

## Vintage Experiences for New Generations

With more than a century of history, Carolina Beach invites visitors to explore its coastal heritage through experiences that feel both timeless and exciting. Several present-day attractions offer visitors a nod to the past, from the Carolina Beach Music Festival to retro beach motels with modern amenities. Visitors can also explore local history on foot with Wilmington Walking Tours, tracing murals and colorful local spots that reflect the island's surf, shag and community traditions. Named one of the best boardwalks in the country by *Fodor's Travel* and *USA Today* 10Best, the Carolina Beach Boardwalk offers a step back in time with bustling crowds, unique shops and the iconic Britt's Donuts. Join a seasonal guided tour from the Federal Point Historic Preservation Society to hear stories from the Boardwalk's heyday.

## Pet-Friendly

With several pet-friendly inns and vacation rentals, Carolina Beach makes bringing along your four-legged friend easy. From April 1 to Sept. 30, leashed dogs are allowed on the beach daily before 9 a.m. and after 5 p.m. During the off-season (Oct. 1 to March 31), leashed dogs are allowed on the beach at any time. Freeman Park allows dogs off-leash anytime throughout the off-season (October through March). Carolina Beach State Park offers a dog-friendly camping area with miles of hiking trails to traverse with your pooch. Unwind with your pup at Good Hops Brewing, a dog-friendly and family-owned brewery.

## Year-Round Fishing Adventures

Carolina Beach is home to some of the best fishing in the area. Whether you're a novice fisherman or seasoned angler, you can experience offshore fishing on a fishing charter expedition, compete in a fishing tournament or cast a line into the surf. The recently renovated Carolina Beach Fishing Center and Marina is home to one of the state's largest selections of recreational fishing fleets. Stop by Island Tackle & Hardware for all your fishing needs, along with tips from knowledgeable staff on what's biting and where. Prime inshore fishing runs from July through December, especially during the cooler fall months when the bite is strongest, while offshore fishing is at its peak from April through September.

