

Wrightsville Beach, named one of the Best Beach Towns in the South 2025 by *Southern Living*, is known for its crystal blue waters and active island lifestyle. In this vibrant community where quality and wellness converge, experience world-class watersports, abundant family-friendly outdoor activities, boutique shopping, miles of pristine beach and exceptional farm- and sea-to-table dining. Visitors can unwind year-round in accommodations including full-service resorts, select-service hotels and vacation rentals. This walkable beach town invites you to expect more from your beach experience and find ultimate relaxation. Wrightsville Beach is just a 20-minute drive from Wilmington, named a *Good Housekeeping* 2026 Travel Awards winner in part thanks to the vibe of nearby Wrightsville Beach.

WHAT'S NEW AT WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH

Elevated Coastal Stays

Wrightsville Beach continues to enhance the guest experience with thoughtful additions and award-winning accommodations. Lumina on Wrightsville Beach, a Holiday Inn Resort, recently introduced on-site MOKE rentals, making it even easier for guests to explore the island in laid-back coastal style. Nearby, Trailborn Surf & Sound earned national recognition as one of *Condé Nast Traveler's* 2025 Readers' Choice "Top 24 Hotels in the South." The boutique hotel blends surf-inspired design with modern comforts and features its on-site restaurant, La Duna Paradiso, serving coastal Italian cuisine in a relaxed setting

New Cruises and Tours

Soundside Adventures is introducing new offerings like Bella's Brunch Sail, a relaxed morning cruise featuring fresh espresso, mimosas, juices and pastries paired with scenic coastal views. For pet lovers, Palm Tree Island Puppy Cruises invite guests to bring their four-legged companions aboard the Carolina Runner on select Sundays for a low-tide cruise complete with pup cups. Adding a cultural layer to the destination, WilmingtonNCcolor Tours will debut a Beach History Capsule Series in spring 2026, featuring immersive storytelling experiences of Wrightsville Beach's north end, historically known as Shell Island.

SAMPLE STORYLINES

Premier Watersports Destination

Wrightsville Beach is known as a premier watersport destination. Dubbed as a "Pioneer in East Coast" surfing and the birthplace of surfing in North Carolina, competitors travel to the area for events like the Carolina Pro-Am, a SUP surf contest and race. Learn to surf at Blockade Runner Sailing Center, one of only five ASA-certified sailing schools in the state, or let an experienced captain sail you along the local waterways. Wrightsville Beach is also home to unique snorkeling and SCUBA diving adventures for all experience levels. Dive straight into the past on a group diving charter to uncover giant Megalodon teeth in higher concentrations than most other places around the world. Swim alongside rainbow-colored marine life while exploring some of North Carolina's most famous dive spots, underwater ledges and shipwrecks

Wellness Meets Relaxation

Wrightsville Beach is one of the few North Carolina beach destinations with convenient access to celebrated dining, upscale shopping and outdoor activities. Experience world-class watersports like surfing, SUP, sailing and kayaking along the sound or ocean with Soundside Adventures. Take a walk on The Loop or cycle down the River to the Sea Bikeway. Meditate among blooming native flowers in Harbor Way Gardens or unwind with yoga on the Crystal Pier, where classes occur seasonally. Just across the bridge in Wilmington, soak up the holistic benefits of time spent in a salt cave, then reward yourself with boutique shopping or refresh and recharge with services at Alchemy Massage & Wellness Spa followed by a sunset cruise.

Island Nightlife

Wrightsville Beach offers a welcoming social community and vibrant nightlife scene all year long. The energy of the day's activities continues into the night with options from live music to local bars, serene lounges and waterfront drinks. Grab a beverage at King Neptune's Pirate Lounge or Jimmy's, or try craft beers at Flying Machine Oyster Bar and Poe's Tavern. Oceanic Restaurant hosts live music on the Crystal Pier from April to September, while The Palm Room offers year-round



performances. Bluewater Waterfront Grill features scenic views and Sunday concerts. Watch the sunset with a drink at Dockside, Fish House Grill or The Bridge Tender. For rare beers, fine wine and cigars, visit Lighthouse Beer & Wine and relax in the dog-friendly beer garden.

Holidays

For over 40 years, more than 50,000 people have flocked to the beach over Thanksgiving weekend for the North Carolina Holiday Flotilla and Day in the Park at Wrightsville Beach. The highlight of the weekend-long celebration is the nighttime Holiday Boat Parade when the Intracoastal Waterway is transformed into a dazzling display of decorated yachts and boats. More holiday events take place in nearby Wilmington, including the spectacular Enchanted Airlie that features more than a million twinkling lights from late November through late December.

Restaurants and Cuisine

From waterfront restaurants offering award-winning cuisine to farm-to-table kitchens with seasonal menus and locally grown ingredients, there is something to satisfy every appetite at Wrightsville Beach. Featuring southern-inspired and locally sourced dishes, South Beach Grill is known for its rotating chalkboard menu and chef-driven creative cuisine. Shark Bar & Kitchen's coastal casual environment and new sushi concept highlight local seafood, and King Neptune, Wrightsville Beach's oldest restaurant featuring recent renovations, is an Ocean-Friendly Establishment that serves southern favorites and classic seafood entrees. Reserve a catered seafood boil dinner experience on a private island through Epic Excursions for an unforgettable meal. Visitors staying in a vacation rental and preparing a homemade meal may want to check out Motts Channel Seafood, which has some of the freshest seafood around. Many of Wrightsville Beach's restaurants also feature locally and sustainably harvested seafood, prioritizing fresh, responsibly sourced ingredients. The annual Taste of Wrightsville Beach event showcases the area's top restaurants, cuisine and noted chefs each fall.

Multi-Generational Family Travel

Featured by *Travel + Leisure* as one of the "Best Spring Break Destinations in the U.S.," many families return to spend time at Wrightsville Beach year after year, generation after generation. With year-round outdoor activities, special events, coastal cuisine, shopping and the beach and Intracoastal Waterway, it's the perfect place to plan a family reunion or vacation. With a variety of beach homes and cottages for rent, the whole family can stay in one place.

Solo Explorations

Wrightsville Beach is the ultimate destination for those seeking an elevated solo experience with an abundance of watersports, dining options, wellness activities and comfortable

accommodations. Customize a coastal itinerary tailored to your interests, whether those include taking a private surf or sailing lesson and cycling solo down the River to Sea Bikeway or sampling coastal cuisine and unwinding in a nearby salt cave spa. Wrightsville Beach provides plenty to explore on an independent island escape.

Restore the Coast

Give back to the coast during a getaway to Wrightsville Beach. Learn about protecting endangered sea turtles with the Wrightsville Beach Sea Turtle Project, which hosts seasonal Tuesday evening Turtle Talks. Paddlers can support the North Carolina Coastal Federation's "We the Water" paddling initiative, which empowers coastal visitors to help protect and restore our water quality and natural habitats. Birders can learn about beach-nesting birds during seasonal, weekly tours with Audubon North Carolina.

Girlfriends' Getaway

Grab your gal pals and take a trip to this vibrant island community where quality and wellness converge. Book an appointment at a spa, surf or SUP the waterways or take a yoga class on the Crystal Pier overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. Refuel with a coffee, smoothie or acai bowl from a local island spot. Visit one of the island's chic boutiques or indulge in a sea-to-table feast that will fuel you up for a night out on the town listening to live music.

Romantic Getaway

Wrightsville Beach offers all the right romantic elements for couples - resort accommodations, memorable activities and delicious dining. The Wrightsville Beach Mailbox is a must for poets. Classic romantics can seek out spectacular sunrise and sunset views. Locations from TV shows and movies filmed at Wrightsville Beach, including "Dawson's Creek," "One Tree Hill" and "The Choice," are perfect destinations for movie buffs. Outdoorsy couples can bond over activities like kayaking and sailing, while foodies can enjoy romantic meals at casual beachfront cafes, high-end restaurants and more.

Affordable Escape

Known as North Carolina's most accessible beach, Wrightsville Beach is the ideal destination for an affordable coastal escape. Start the day with a sunrise stroll to the Wrightsville Beach Mailbox, then step back in time at the Wrightsville Beach Museum to discover the island's history. The Loop invites a scenic walk or bike ride along the Intracoastal Waterway and salt marshes, while Wrightsville Beach Park offers courts, fields and free fitness equipment for active fun. Spend some time by the water taking a stroll along the Crystal Pier, fishing from Johnnie Mercers Fishing Pier or renting a kayak from one of the island's affordable outfitters and paddle to Masonboro Island Reserve. Free seasonal events - from live music on Crystal Pier and Movies in the Park to the festive NC Holiday Flotilla - make every visit memorable.

