

# The Charlotte Observer

TRAVEL

## Discover the Carolinas green scene: Top retreats and activities for eco-conscious travelers



The Wild Dunes Resort in Isle of Palms, SC is an amazing green getaway.

The Carolinas offer an array of eco-friendly destinations that not only showcase the natural beauty of the region but also promote sustainability and conservation. Whether you're hiking through coastal reserves or savoring sustainably sourced seafood, these experiences promise to leave a positive impact on both travelers and the environment.

Here's a guide to some of the best green hidden gems across North and South Carolina.

### 3. CRYSTAL COAST

North Carolina's Crystal Coast, with 85 miles of unspoiled beaches, is perfect for eco-conscious visitors. [Inn on Turner](#), a Green Travel Certified inn, has incredible locally sourced meals and organic amenities, while [Beaufort Hotel](#) makes headway in sustainability with their LEED certification, electric vehicle chargers and biodegradable amenities.

When it comes to dining, the region's "Dock-to-Dish" philosophy means seafood is sustainably sourced from local fishermen, guaranteeing freshness while supporting marine life. Restaurants like [Amos Mosquito's](#) in Atlantic Beach also showcase local, eco-friendly ingredients, allowing visitors to savor every bit of the coast's flavors in the best way possible.

### 4. MARSHALLBERG FARM

For another unique adventure in Crystal Coast, visit [Marshallberg Farm](#), a sustainable, family-operated aquaculture farm. Marshallberg uses a state-of-the-art recirculating aquaculture system (RAS) to raise sturgeon, producing premium Osetra caviar while conserving water and reducing waste.

This process filters millions of gallons daily to ensure the highest water quality for sturgeon health and quality caviar. Travelers can tour the farm, taste fresh caviar and enjoy perfectly paired vodka and champagne. Marshallberg Caviar is also available at local spots in Crystal Coast like [Prime Bistro](#) and [34 Degrees North](#), if you're wanting to try a taste of eco-friendly luxury.

## 5. RACHEL CARSON RESERVE

Accessible only by boat, the [Rachel Carson Reserve](#) is a protected coastal habitat supporting over 200 bird species and wild horses, managed by the N.C. Coastal Reserve & National Estuarine Research Reserve.

Guests can explore this complex ecosystem through hiking and wildlife observation, all while contributing to the reserve's mission of promoting healthy coastal waters. The reserve is a gem for nature lovers looking to engage in eco-tourism, spend time outside and support the preservation of North Carolina's coastal beauty.

## 6. CAPE LOOKOUT NATIONAL SEASHORE

For an unforgettable night under the stars, visit North Carolina's [Cape Lookout National Seashore](#), designated as an International Dark Sky Park. The remote location offers unparalleled stargazing opportunities and even has dedicated stargazing cruises where you can get a tour of night sky led by an expert. Don't miss out on this special chance to see celestial wonders.

Cape Lookout is the first Atlantic coastal Dark Sky Park, making it a destination unlike any other for astronomy enthusiasts and nature lovers.