

CHEERS WISCONSIN | TENNESSEE'S A TEN | ON STAGES NEAR YOU

GROUP

THE

TRAVEL LEADER

Untethered
IN ALBUQUERQUE



NORTH CAROLINA



BY JILL GLEESON

With its spectacular range of topographical and cultural diversity, North Carolina is especially well-suited for group travel. And at no time is that rich medley of diversions showcased better than during one of North Carolina's remarkable festivals, which enable those with limited time to experience some of the state's finest offerings in one or two memorable days.

Groups can spend a few gorgeous summer afternoons listening to the melodic, mournful sound of bagpipes drifting up one of the Blue Ridge Mountains' loveliest peaks or sample some of the world's best seafood while watching fireworks burst over the shoreline. They can tour North Carolina's grandest home at the most wonderful time of the year, chow down on famous barbecue found nowhere else and even learn to fly stunt kites in the hometown of the man who created them.

No matter which of the Tarheel State's justifiably iconic festivals groups visit, they're sure to leave with memories of their adventures that will urge them back again and again.



1 **Wilmington's Waterfront Festival**
Wilmington, North Carolina

July 1-2

Wilmington's Waterfront Festival is a celebration of the city's rich maritime history and culture. The festival features a variety of activities, including live music, dance performances, and food vendors. The festival is held on the waterfront, providing a scenic backdrop for the event.

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Wilmington, North Carolina



Courtesy NC Seafood Festival

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NORTH CAROLINA SEAFOOD FESTIVAL

OCTOBER 4-6

According to Stephanie McIntyre, executive director of the North Carolina Seafood Festival, groups will be welcomed with open arms at the Morehead City celebration.

“We look at it like when that bus comes we are flinging open the back door to the Crystal Coast and saying, ‘Come on in!’” she said. “We’ll have 200 vendors from all over the country selling arts and crafts and food. But obviously, taking the main stage is North Carolina seafood.”

In addition to noshing on oysters, shrimp and other goodies just scooped from the sea, groups can hop aboard amusement park rides and check out entertainment on three stages. Demonstrations from local chefs, a cooking competition and even a fireworks show over the water McIntyre swears is the East Coast’s best are also part of the event. McIntyre guarantees seeing lots of “heart smiles” at the event, which was canceled last year because of damage from Hurricane Florence. “If you’re happy when you’re eating,” she said, “you’re definitely going to be grinning at this festival.”

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