

Pirates and Lighthouses

The Outer Banks, forming a necklace of barrier islands along North Carolina's northern coast, yields a rich maritime heritage and beckons visitors to enjoy its historic lighthouses, charming fishing villages, abundant seafood and sunny shores.

5-Day Itinerary

Day 1

Tour the northern Outer Banks

Day 2

Fort Raleigh to Manteo

Day 3

Cape Hatteras to Cape Lookout to Beaufort

Day 4

From New Bern to the Crystal Coast

Day 5

Cape Lookout



Enjoy all the area has to offer by mixing and matching events to your particular interest. Time indicators are recommendations only. Feel free to spend as much or as little time as your schedule allows. Be sure to check days and hours of operation for each venue.

Day One

Northern Outer Banks:

Arrive at the **Currituck Beach Light** in Corolla Village. Built in 1875, this red brick lighthouse stands 158 feet tall and was the last major brick lighthouse built on the Outer Banks. It still serves as a navigational aid today. Climb the lighthouse and browse the museum shop.

Time: 45 minutes

Across from the Currituck Beach Light, visit **The Whalehead Club** at

Currituck Heritage Park. Overlooking the windswept wetlands of the Currituck Sound, this hunting lodge is the largest of all the Outer Banks hunting lodges. Today the home, which represents one of the finest examples of art nouveau architecture in the state, has been restored to a museum.

Time: 1 hour

Travel south to the **Wright Brothers National Memorial**, located in the heart of Kill Devil Hills, and see the granite pylon standing tribute to Orville and Wilbur Wright. This is the site of the world's first powered flight by the Wright brothers on December 17, 1903.

Time: 1½-2 hours

Next, make the five-mile jaunt to **Jockey's Ridge State Park** to see the East Coast's tallest sand dune and one of the most phenomenal natural attractions on the Outer Banks. Pack a picnic. Pets on leashes are welcome. Adventurous visitors can take hang gliding lessons. For a soaring sensation with your feet on the ground, bring a kite!

Day Two

Fort Raleigh:

Today's Outer Banks journey will take you back in time to the late 1500s. You'll start at the beginning of English settlements in North America at the **Fort Raleigh National Historic Site**. The on-site visitors' center offers a brief introductory video to the site; a 400-year-old Elizabethan room from Heronden Hall in Kent, England and a gallery displaying artifacts collected from the site. Fort Raleigh is also home to the **Freedman's Colony**, a community for runaway slaves established in 1862. A monument tells the story of this colony and its plight. Call ahead for a tour with a National Park Ranger (see contact information below).

Time: 1 hour

Conveniently located next door to the Fort Raleigh National Historic Site, **The Elizabethan Gardens** commemorates the efforts of the residents of the Sir Walter Raleigh colony to establish the first English settlement. These magnificent botanical gardens offer an exquisite and aromatic environment year-round.

Time: 1 hour

Manteo:

Arrive at the downtown Manteo waterfront to see **Roanoke Marshes Light**. The replica of the 1850s light that once stood guard over nearby Croatan Sound offers visitors a unique glimpse into the maritime history of the island, as well as a peek at the lives of light keepers who once lived at the station. The **North Carolina Maritime Museum on Roanoke Island**, also known as the George Washington Creef Boat Shop, is located on the Manteo waterfront. Inside the shop you will find a number of crafts that represent this region's maritime history, including an 1883 original Creef shad boat, a variety of sailing skiffs and a Davis Runabout speedboat.

Time: 3 hours

Find yourself at **Roanoke Island Festival Park**, one of the largest attractions on the Outer Banks. Explore the evolution of Roanoke Island and the Outer Banks from the late 16th century to the early 1900s through living-history interpretations, exhibits, films, visual and performing arts programs. The site is home to the **Elizabeth II**, a vessel that represents the sailing ship that carried the Sir Walter Raleigh's colonists across the Atlantic in 1585. Stop at **The Christmas Shop** and **The Island Gallery**. Open since 1967, this original Outer Banks ornament shop is a perfect excuse for celebrating Santa year-round.

Time: 3 hours**Day Three****Cape Hatteras to Cape Lookout:**

Today will be filled with sunshine and discovery as you travel through the Cape Hatteras National Seashore on your way to the Cape Lookout National Seashore. Head for the **Cape Hatteras National Seashore**. Stop at the **Bodie Island Lighthouse** and Keepers' Quarters. Built in 1872, this black and white banded 156-foot structure is one of four lighthouses standing along the Outer Banks. The original Fresnel lens is still in use today. Visit the **Chicamacomico Life Saving Station**. View the historic building and boathouse that housed the service that was the predecessor to the United States Coast Guard.

Time: 1½-2 hours

Arrive at the **Cape Hatteras Lighthouse**, the tallest brick beacon in the United States. With its black-and-white stripes, it stands 208 feet tall. Learn about its marvelous history, which includes a half-mile move away from the ocean in 2000.

Time: 30 minutes

Grab a snack to carry along on the next part of your journey and then head to the **Hatteras-Ocracoke Ferry Terminal**. Before boarding the ferry to your next destination, wander through the **Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum** to see some intriguing shipwreck artifacts, beach discoveries and locally carved model ships.

Time: 30 minutes

Board the ferry for a ride to historic **Ocracoke Island**; you're now being served by the second largest ferry system in the nation, carrying passengers along North Carolina waterways since 1920.

Time: 45 minutes

In Ocracoke, stop at the **Ocracoke Lighthouse**, nestled in this quaint fishing village along Silver Lake. Built in 1823, this whitewashed tower is the oldest operating lighthouse on the North Carolina coast and the second oldest in the nation. It was the beneficiary of the first Fresnel lenses.

Time: 30 minutes

Catch the **Cedar Island Ferry** at the ferry terminal on the southernmost point of the island. Reservations are recommended (see contact information below) and you're on your way to the Crystal Coast.

Time: 2¼ hours

Beaufort:

Arrive at the beautiful **Crystal Coast**, the Cape Lookout region of the southern Outer Banks. You are now on the mainland, and your drive is through great expanses of salt marsh, farmland and fishing villages to historic **Beaufort** (pronounced "Bow-Fert"). Along the way, notice the waterfowl art, decoy carving and boat building. The cultural heritage of the Down East region is on every front porch. Enjoy your evening in Beaufort at one of the many hotels and restaurants.

Day Four

Beaufort:

Today your journey takes you from the Age of Exploration through the Age of Piracy, into Colonial history and through the Civil War. To begin, take the two-block walk to the **North Carolina Maritime Museum**. Self-guided or interpreted tours include exhibits of traditional boatbuilding and use. The collection includes artifacts of *Queen Anne's Revenge*, the flagship of Blackbeard the pirate, that was discovered in Beaufort Inlet in 1996. Blackbeard (Edward Teach) plundered many a ship and was eventually beheaded by a British naval captain in 1718, in a slough off of the island. He had just returned to pirating after a hiatus during which he had wed his 14th wife and taken up residence in North Carolina for several months.

Most artifacts are now in the conservation process. Those ready for exhibition are on display. Continue across the street to the museum's Watercraft Center, a living exhibit of boatbuilding in progress.

Time: 1 hour

Wander through historic Beaufort. See restored buildings like the schoolmaster Samuel Leffers' cottage, the Old Jail, the Apothecary Shop or the 1796 Courthouse. Enjoy souvenir shopping at the MD King Art Gallery and the Old Beaufort Gift Shop, both located on the historic site.

Time: 1 hour

Drive over to **Morehead City**, just a bridge-length away. Here you will visit the **History Place** where the local heritage is reflected, from Native Americans through World War II.

Time: 1 hour

On to **Fort Macon State Park**, a Civil War fort that serves as a reminder of the importance of the waterways to the history of this coastal area. Ranger programs can be arranged if you have a group. A gift shop and museum are on site.

Time: 1 hour

Prepare yourself for a wonderful dinner at **Clawson's 1905 Restaurant** in downtown Beaufort. Clawson's was the town's first bakery and grocery store, and the restaurant serves a memorable seafood bisque. After dinner enjoy entertainment at the **Crystal Coast Jamboree** in downtown Morehead City or enjoy a Ghost Walk and learn about some hardy spirits – like sea captains, pirates and Civil War spies – who just can't get enough of historic Beaufort.

Day Five

Cape Lookout:

Today, your journey is by boat to the Cape Lookout lighthouse to see the **Shackleford Banks wild horses**, the only inhabitants of this pristine place. The horses are only 10-13 hands high – shorter than many ponies – but they are descended from domestic horses from Spain. They have been here for hundreds of years.

Arrive at the **Core Sound Waterfowl Museum** (located beside the Cape Lookout National Seashore Visitor Center). The museum houses a collection of valued decoys, island heritage, culture and industry displays and a gift shop.

Time: 30 minutes

Walk to the **Cape Lookout National Seashore Visitor Center** for a discussion of lighthouse history (to schedule a visit, see contact information below).

Head to **Core Sound Decoy Carvers Guild** where you'll meet carvers, see prized waterfowl carvings and decoys, visit the gift shop and enjoy stories and carving demonstrations. Carvers will explain how they learned their art and why it was so important in this island community. To be safe, call before you go (see contact information below).

Time: 1 hour

For more information:

Outer Banks Visitor Bureau
www.outerbanks.org

Crystal Coast
www.sunnync.com

For a tour of the Fort Raleigh Freedman's Colony led by a National Park Ranger, call (252) 473-5772

For reservations on the Cedar Island Ferry, call 1-800-345-1665

For a discussion of lighthouse history at the Cape Lookout National Seashore, call (252) 728-2250

For information about the Core Sound Decoy Carvers Guild, call (252) 838-8818