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MYRTLE BEACH AREA IN SOUTH CAROLINA ANNOUNCES NEW DEVELOPMENTS FOR 2017 AND BEYOND

Includes Growth at Iconic Boardwalk, New Warehouse District at Broadway at the Beach

MYRTLE BEACH, S.C. February 2, 2017 – Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, continues to rank as one of America's favorite beach and family destinations, being named the no. 2 "Best Beach in America" by the *Travel Channel* and one of "America's Favorite Beach Towns" by *Travel + Leisure*. A flurry of recent tourism growth, combined with the area's special blend of southern hospitality and distinct affordability, makes it no wonder Myrtle Beach was included in *Expedia Viewfinder's* "17 Places You Must Visit in 2017." The following is the latest information on new tourism developments in the region, listed alphabetically by category.

ACTIVITIES & ATTRACTIONS

Broadway at the Beach Warehouse District and Facelift

The Broadway at the Beach entertainment and attraction complex in Myrtle Beach is undergoing major changes as it enters its 21st year in Myrtle Beach. The former Celebrity Square district is being transformed into a historic-looking warehouse district. Hard Rock Café relocated from the well-known pyramid building, and in its place will sit a new, 40,000-square-foot Dave and Busters unlike any other – in a warehouse that gives a nod to the old and a wink to the future. All buildings in the district will be refaced with brick eaves. Completion is expected by the start of the summer 2017 season. For more information, visit www.broadwayatthebeach.com.

Brookgreen Gardens Indoor Gallery and American West Exhibit

The Naomi and Stanley Bleifield Gallery at Brookgreen Gardens opened to the public in January 2017. Located near the Mary Alice and Bennett Brown Sculpture Court, the gallery is open daily and showcases the work of historic and contemporary sculptors whose subjects are taken from the natural world. The most prominent sculptures are those by Stanley Bleifield, Sandy Scott, Walter Matia, Dan Ostermiller, Grainger McCoy and Brookgreen founder Anna Hyatt Huntington. Brookgreen Gardens contains the most comprehensive collection of American figurative sculpture in the country. In addition, a

new art exhibit titled *"Life in the American West"* opened on January 28, 2017. The exhibit showcases sculpture, paintings, prints and drawings on loan from contemporary artists, collectors and galleries, plus historic works from the Brookgreen collection. It will be on display daily through April 16, 2017. For more information, visit www.brookgreen.org.

Children's Museum and Chapin Memorial Library

A new children's museum and library is coming to Ninth Avenue North and Nance Plaza in downtown Myrtle Beach. This is part of a large redevelopment plan that will change the future look of downtown Myrtle Beach. The plan will relocate the Chapin Memorial Library from its current location along with a branch of the Children's Museum of South Carolina, which plans to merge with Edventure Children's Museum based in Columbia, SC this year. The children's museum will be designed to accommodate families with special needs. Construction is planned to cost \$13 million and a completion timeline has not been set. For more information on the children's museum, visit www.cmsckids.org. For more information on the library, visit www.chapinlibrary.org.

Myrtle Beach Boardwalk Extension and Development Complex

Construction has begun on a new 50,000-square-foot development building along the Myrtle Beach Boardwalk at 14th Avenue North. The large complex will bring several new restaurants, retail and a live music venue to the beautiful oceanfront Boardwalk area of Myrtle Beach. It's being built on land next to Banditos, a popular Mexican restaurant, which is temporarily closed until construction is completed in 2018. In addition, the Boardwalk will be extended another block on the north to connect to a new Hilton hotel property. An oceanfront park will be built as part of the project. A completion date has yet to be determined, although construction has begun.

Ocean Boulevard Facelift and Mixed-Use Building

Changes are coming to the 14th Avenue South area of Ocean Boulevard in Myrtle Beach. The former Cabana Inn has been demolished and plans are in the works for a mixed-use retail and commercial building. The 32,000-square-foot, four-story building will be similar to Myrtle Beach's Market Common development, with retail and commercial on the ground floors and visitor accommodations on the upper floors. The building will have a bright, multicolored façade with balconies. A completion date has not been set.

Ripley's Aquarium New Experience

Ripley's Aquarium in Myrtle Beach opened the only indoor glass bottom boat adventure in North America. Guests can step into a 16-foot-long boat, with only three inches of glass separating them from the sharp-toothed predators of the Dangerous Reef tank. Lead by the Adventure Crew, guests will learn about the animals within the aquarium and what it takes to maintain the facility. The boat holds 10 people per tour and launches every 20 minutes. For your information, visit www.ripleyaquariums.com/myrtlebeach/experiences/glass-bottom-boat-adventure.

Shark Wake Park at the North Myrtle Beach Sports Complex

South Carolina's first continuous wakeboarding park opened recently at the North Myrtle Beach Sports Complex. Opened by Greg Norman Jr., the son of golf legend, Greg Norman, the park pulls riders by a high-tech pulley system instead of a boat. The pulley picks up ropes from the starting dock and pulls riders in a circle around the lake. There are ramps and rails on the sides of the lake to try tricks. Beginners are welcome; visitors need to be at least 10 years old to ride. The complex also includes a Go Ape! Treetop Adventures, Dog Park and other sports facilities. For more information, visit <http://sharkwakepark.com> or <http://nmbpark.com>.

Southern Living Store at The Market Common

The country's first Southern Living store opened November 2016 at the Market Common district in Myrtle Beach. The 5,000-square-foot shop features a "Celebrate the South" retail theme, including products in fashion, food, home, decoration, garden and travel. The shop also plans for food tasting events and recipe tips. For more information, visit <http://www.marketcommonmb.com/listing/southern-living>.

AVIATION

Allegiant Offers Nonstop Service from Cleveland

Allegiant Airlines is offering new nonstop flights to Myrtle Beach from Cleveland Hopkins International Airport. Flights will begin April 13, 2017. For the latest on flight schedules and pricing, visit www.allegiantair.com.

Spirit Offers Nonstop Service from Hartford

Spirit Airlines is offering new nonstop flights to Myrtle Beach from Hartford's Bradley International Airport in Connecticut. Flights will be four times weekly and will launch on April 27, 2017. For more information, visit www.spirit.com.

Myrtle Beach International Airport Opens Autism Friendly Space

Myrtle Beach International Airport has become the second airport in the country to help families with autistic children by providing a quiet space to decompress after a flight. The room is in the baggage claim area and includes pillowed and cushioned cubicles and seats marked with the words "Quiet Room" on its glass-paneled door. The airport partnered with the local-based Champion Autism Network to make this effort a reality. For more information, visit www.flymyrtlebeach.com or <https://www.facebook.com/ChampionAutismNetwork>.

CULINARY

American Tap House

American Tap House opened in the fall of 2016 at Broadway at the Beach. A chef-driven American gastro pub, the restaurant has more than 40 craft beers on tap inside a rustic

and open dining space. The venue also has regular live entertainment. For more information, visit <http://americantaphouse.com>.

Costa Coastal Kitchen and Bar

The newly opened Costa Coastal Kitchen and Bar specializes in coastal Italian and locally sourced ingredients. The restaurant is in Murrells Inlet, the seafood capital of South Carolina, and is connected to the Inlet Sports Lodge boutique hotel. This is the second restaurant for executive chef and owner Jimmy Pronesti who also owns Caffè Piccolo in Pawley's Island. For more information, visit <http://costamyrtlebeach.com>.

Heidi's Corner at Grande Dunes

Heidi Vukov, the owner of the popular Croissants Bistro & Bakery, is bringing an energy-efficient restaurant complex to the Grande Dunes of Myrtle Beach. Expected to open in May 2017, *Heidi's Corner* will house a second Croissants location, complete with its award-winning bakery and serve breakfast, brunch and lunch. Coffee beans will be roasted on site, providing guests with the freshest coffee available on the Grand Strand. Additionally, a new concept seafood restaurant, ***Hook & Barrel***, featuring sustainable, fresh seafood, is set to open in here as well. Open for dinner and Sunday Brunch, Hook & Barrel will feature a wine room available for private dining and an interactive bar area, as well as indoor and outdoor seating. For more information, visit www.heidiscornersc.com or www.croissants.net.

International Culinary Institute opens with Restaurant and Bakery

A new 30,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art International Culinary Institute opened November 2016 at the Market Common community in Myrtle Beach. As part of Horry Georgetown Technical College, the \$15 million center includes a 100-seat open kitchen concept restaurant with a local focus, bringing in seasonal products from local farms and fisherman while adding international flair. A bakery run by the students has also opened. The facility has a nutrition lab, production and training kitchens, outdoor barbeque kitchen, greenhouse, wine cellar, chef's table, and amphitheater, which will provide a staging area for guest chefs to teach and offer cooking classes to the general public. For more information, visit http://www.hgtec.edu/academics/academic_departments/culinary_institute/.

Paula Deen's Family Kitchen

A Paula Deen Family Kitchen restaurant is planned at Broadway at the Beach on the former site of Carlos and Charlie's. It will be two stories and 21,000 square feet with glass entryways. The project is valued at \$3.9 million and comes after the recent opening of a Paula Deen store, also located at Broadway at the Beach. It is expected to open in 2017.

RipTydz Oceanfront Grille & Rooftop Bar

Construction has begun on the newest restaurant along the Myrtle Beach Boardwalk, at 12th Avenue North. RipTydz Oceanfront Grille & Rooftop Bar plans to open in May 2017

as a premier dining attraction, with a restaurant, beach bar and night club offering stunning ocean views. The 17,000-square-foot building will have 500 seats serving fresh local cuisine, including seafood and steaks. For more information, visit www.riptydz.com.

Wahlburgers at Broadway at the Beach

Wahlburgers recently opened its first South Carolina eatery December 2016 at Broadway at the Beach. Founded by celebrity brothers Mark, Paul and Donnie Wahlberg, the eatery is a fast-casual concept, specializing in burgers with made-from-scratch ingredients. The Myrtle Beach location occupies a more than 5,000-square-foot space. For more information, visit www.wahlmyrtlebeach.com.

EVENTS

Carolina Country Music Festival New Artists

The Carolina Country Music Fest (CCMF) will return for its third consecutive year to Myrtle Beach from June 8-11, 2017. The festival features more than 30 of the industry's biggest stars, including headliners Kenny Chesney, Jason Aldean, Big & Rich, and South Carolina native Darius Rucker, along with Big & Rich, Jana Kramer, Billy Currington, Lee Brice, Chris Young and Dee Jay Silver, among many others. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit www.carolinacountrymusicfest.com.

Inaugural Food Truck Festival

A new festival is coming to the boardwalk area of downtown Myrtle Beach at Burroughs and Chapin Pavilion Place on April 1, 2017. The inaugural food truck festival will showcase the local food truck scene as well as providing a selection of craft beer and wine options, live entertainment, arts and crafts, kid's activities and various other vendors. For more information, visit www.myrtlebeachboardwalk.com.

LODGING

Buchanan Hotels

Virginia-based Buchanan Motels will bring two new high-rise hotels to central Myrtle Beach. Both are currently unnamed. The first will be located at 6th Avenue North and Ocean Boulevard and will be 237,000 square feet, with 19 floors and 240 rooms. It will include a water park that can be enclosed in winter. Estimated completion is Spring 2018. The second will be located at 17th Avenue North in Myrtle Beach with 22 floors and 228 rooms. The hotel will sit across the street from an indoor water park and parking garage. Construction is expected to be complete in 2017.

DoubleTree Resort by Hilton

The 30-acre oceanfront Springmaid Beach Resort, located on the south end of Ocean Boulevard in Myrtle Beach, has been transformed into a DoubleTree Resort by Hilton. Major renovations began in 2015 and will be finalized in 2017. The resort has a new 20,000-square-foot main building, with a registration and lobby area; ocean view

restaurant with outdoor seating; lobby bar; "grab & go" snack area; and outdoor entertainment courtyard. In addition, a complete makeover of all 452-guest rooms was completed in the Live Oak and Palmetto towers. All guest rooms feature an ocean view, private balcony, 40-inch HD TVs and a resort-themed design palette. The three-story conference center was also outfitted with new decor, wall treatments, carpet, and paint, and features versatile function space, with floor-to-ceiling windows on each floor with sweeping ocean views and access to oceanfront, covered balconies. The property also includes a mini golf course, two restaurants, camping facility and pier. While the resort sustained some damage to the pier area during Hurricane Matthew, all repairs will be completed in 2017. For more information, visit <http://doubletree3.hilton.com/en/hotels/south-carolina/doubletree-resort-by-hilton-myrtle-beach-oceanfront-MYRDTDT/index.html>.

Marriott Resort & Spa at Grande Dunes Renovation

The Myrtle Beach Marriott Resort & Spa is undergoing a multi-million-dollar renovation of its tower to provide guests with a more modern and comfortable guest room experience. Renovations will be completed by mid-March 2017 and will include completely renovated guest rooms, suites, bathrooms and corridors; brand new furniture and interior design elements; and upgraded 49-inch TVs. Bedding will also be upgraded from doubles to queens and from Kings to California Kings. The overall design will be a modern take on oceanfront ambiance. For more information, visit www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/myrgd-myrtle-beach-marriott-resort-and-spa-at-grande-dunes/.

Residence Inn Marriott

The City of Myrtle Beach recently approved the development of a Residence Inn Marriott on 26th Avenue South Ocean Boulevard. The 305,964-square-foot hotel will be 17 stories high and include its own parking structure and pool. A completion date has not yet been set.

The Myrtle Beach area, popularly known as the Grand Strand, stretches from Little River to Pawleys Island, comprising 12 distinct cities along the South Carolina coast. Home to 60 miles of sandy beaches, an assortment of entertainment and family attractions, Southern hospitality and world-class golf, the Myrtle Beach area presents the quintessential vacation experience.

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