



Travel Partner News- Holiday (November and December)2014

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1. Room Occupancy Tax Collections

New Hanover County gross ROT collections (1st 3%) June '14 up 8.42%, in July '14 up 6.63%, in August up 20.86% as compared to the same month of the prior year. Fiscal year-to-date, July 2014–August 2014, New Hanover County gross ROT collections (1st 3%) are up 13.29% and calendar year-to-date are up 11.19%.

2. Holiday Special Offers, Rates & Travel Packages

The CVB continues to seek information on holiday special offers, special rates and travel packages for promotion in e-specials and on websites. The offers submitted will be promoted by the CVB online during and leading up to the holiday season. Send your holiday special offers to Caitlin Mulholland at marketingassist@wilmingtonandbeaches.com by November 10th.

3. Holiday Seasonal Website Pages

On November 3, the holiday seasonal landing pages went live on all four destination websites. These holiday pages will provide information on everything that visitors can see and do in the area to encourage November and December travel. Special events, special offers and recent news will all be highlighted.

4. Social Moments

Social moments albums were recently launched on Carolina, Kure and Wrightsville Beach's websites. These albums host a collection of pictures harvested from Facebook, Twitter and Instagram that visitors are sharing at each destination in real time. The albums can be viewed at the links below:

<http://www.visitcarolinabeachnc.com/social-moments>

<http://www.visitkurebeachnc.com/social-moments#social>

<http://www.visitwrightsvillebeachnc.com/social-moments#social>

5. Wilmington and Beaches App

A new Wilmington and Beaches App will soon be available for download for both Apple and Android devices. The App will allow visitors to easily access information on Wilmington and our beaches, including lodging options, things to do, events, special offers and more.

6. “N.C. Division of Tourism” Transitions to Economic Development Partnership of N.C.

After nearly two years of anticipation, the NC Division of Tourism has transitioned to the new Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina. The new offices are located at 15000 Weston Parkway, Cary, N.C. 27513. While location and emails have changed, according to officials with the new Partnership, the plan is to continue to provide a research-based, award-winning tourism marketing program focused on co-op advertising and generating downstream traffic to partner websites. N.C. Welcome Centers, Visitors Services and Inquiry/Call Center will remain on the public/state government side. Information on the state’s tourism marketing plan and activities will continue to be available at www.nccommerce.com/tourism and www.partners.visitnc.com

7. Wilmington, NC Voted As America’s Best Riverfront + Toolkit for Local Businesses to Promote Accolade

Thanks to all who voted, Wilmington, N.C. is America’s Best Riverfront! On October 22, the Wilmington and Beaches Convention and Visitors Bureau [CVB] joined with the City of Wilmington and New Hanover County along its award-winning riverfront to announce that Wilmington, North Carolina was voted as America’s Best Riverfront in the 10Best Readers’ Choice travel award contest sponsored by USA TODAY. Wilmington’s new #1 ranking among USA TODAY’s 10Best - Best American Riverfronts tops a growing list of accolades bestowed upon the destination in recent months. For the full press release about this prestigious 10Best Readers’ Choice travel award, click here: www.wilmingtonandbeaches.com/news-articles/press-releases/wilmington-n.c.-is-americas-best-riverfront-according-to-usa-today-10best-r/ An online toolkit will soon be available on WilmingtonandBeaches.com for local businesses to promote Wilmington being named America’s Best Riverfront in USA Today’s 10Best Readers’ Choice Awards. The toolkit will include downloadable posters and graphics available for printing or for online use. The toolkit will be located on the hometown tourist page- <http://www.wilmingtonandbeaches.com/hometown>.

8. CVB to host a Tourism Lunch & Learn social media presentation

On Tuesday November 18th, the CVB will offer a free Lunch & Learn social media program with special guest Rebecca McCormick, a multi-platform travel journalist/author/blogger and social media influencer. To learn more about Rebecca, visit her website at www.rebeccamccormick.me Topics include: *Listening 101: How to tune in to what's being said about you and how to respond effectively using social media. & *How to use a sundae for social media content marketing all week long. The Lunch & Learn event will begin with a box lunch (provided by the CVB) at 12:00 noon at the New Hanover County Executive Development Center (1241 Military Cutoff, Wilmington), followed by the program which will last until 1:30 p.m. Space will be limited so please RSVP no later than November 12, 2014 to Jeanette Foster, Office Manager via email at jfoster@wilmingtonandbeaches.com or via phone 910-341-4030, ext. 111.

9. Blockade Runner Resort Receives NCTIA Award For Tourism Contributions

The Blockade Runner Resort has been honored by the North Carolina Travel Industry Association (NCTIA) with the organization’s 2014 Tourism Excellence Award for a Business. The annual award, given by NCTIA, recognizes outstanding contributions made by a business to the state’s tourism industry. New Hanover County TDA President/CEO Kim Hufham presented Blockade Runner Resort Managing Partner Mary Baggett Martin with the award at the 2014 N. C. Tourism Leadership Conference Awards Ceremony on October 9th at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Winston-Salem. For more details, click here: <http://www.wilmingtonandbeaches.com/news-articles/press-releases/blockade-runner-resort-recvies-nctia-award-for-tourism-contributions/>

10. What’s New in 2015

Each year the CVB’s PR department develops a What’s New media tip sheet to generate story ideas. Please let the CVB know about new attractions, upcoming exhibits, recent/future renovations to attractions/hotels/golf courses, major milestones/anniversaries, and first time events in 2015. Please provide as many details as possible, along with contact information and send your What’s New submissions to Connie Nelson, Communications/PR Director, via Email at cvbpr@wilmingtonandbeaches.com or fax 341-4029 (Attn: Connie) no later than the deadline of Wednesday, November 12, 2014.

11. Holiday and Winter Events

The Wilmington and Beaches CVB needs your holiday and winter event information as soon as possible! Public events that meet the CVB’s guidelines will be included on the CVB’s online calendar of events, as well as on the VisitNC.com calendar. These calendars are used by visitors and the media. We will also use this information to update our holiday event brochure. Please enter your event information directly through the Industry Partner portal on the website (if you don’t remember your login information please contact us). Or, you may email or fax event name, date(s), time, location of event, brief description, and contact information (phone number, website) to Karla Thompson, Systems Technology Administrator via email: systems@wilmingtonandbeaches.com or fax to 910-341-4029. Please don’t miss out on this opportunity for free event publicity!

12. STS Top 20 Event Nominations

Nomination forms for the Southeastern Tourism Society’s Top 20 Events for July, August and September 2015 must be received by STS no later than January 9, 2015. To nominate your event for STS Top 20 consideration, event organizers need to print out and complete the online questionnaire (www.southeasttourism.org/upload_images/file/top20forms.pdf) and mail 2 copies, along with supporting materials, and a \$20 processing fee to be received by STS by their firm deadline Jan. 9, 2015. Instructions and new address are on the Nomination form. Please also send a copy to Michelle Starling, Communications Assistant, at Fax: 910-341-4029 or via email: communications@wilmingtonandbeaches.com

13. Small Cruise Ships to Visit Wrightsville Beach

American Cruise Lines will dock three ships at the Bridge Tender Marina in Wrightsville Beach this fall, weather permitting. The *Independence* with 100 passengers will arrive on November 12th, 2014, the *American Glory* with 50 passengers will arrive on November 13th, 2014 and the *American Star* with 100 passengers will arrive on November 19th, 2014. Each cruise line has pre-arranged shore excursions for its passengers, who will also have free time to shop, dine, and explore the destination. The CVB's services department will provide visitor information. Cruise schedules are subject to change without notice.

14. Sales Manager to Attend TEAMS

Sales manager, Bree Nidds, is partnering with the North Carolina Sports Association and will be attending the TEAMS tradeshow for the first time on November 11-14, 2014 in Las Vegas, NV. She will have the opportunity to meet with approximately 200 sports rights holders in attendance. For more information, you may contact Bree Nidds by phone at 910-332-8755 or email her at bnidds@wilmingtonandbeaches.com.

15. Association Executives of North Carolina Luncheon

Sales staff will attend the AENC luncheon this November 14, 2014 in Raleigh, N.C. This luncheon attracts approximately 200 people in the association market. For more information, you may contact Mikie Wall by phone at 910-332-8747 or email her at mwall@wilmingtonandbeaches.com.

16. Meeting Planners International

Sales staff will be attending this meeting on November 20-21, 2014 in Pinehurst, N.C. This meeting attracts approximately 150 people in the corporate and association markets. For more information, you may contact John Sneed by phone at 910-332-8757 or email him at jsneed@wilmingtonandbeaches.com.

17. Association Executives of North Carolina Trade Show

Sales staff along with some of our Industry Partners will be attending this tradeshow on December 11, 2014. This tradeshow attracts approximately 350 people from the association market. For more information, you may contact Mikie Wall by phone at 910-332-8747 or email her at mwall@wilmingtonandbeaches.com.

18. Wilmington Convention Center Calendar

Event Name	Date
Wilmington 2014 Real Estate Summit & Awards	November 18
Wilma Expo	December 6
Aniwave	December 7
Good Friends Luncheon	December 9
GWBJ Power Breakfast Series	December 10

Is there something you'd like to see covered here? Let us know; please send your questions and comments to communications@wilmingtonandbeaches.com. Should you have difficulty with the Newsletter, contact Michelle Starling at 910-332-8758, or at communications@wilmingtonandbeaches.com.

Wilmington, N.C., Historic River District & Island Beaches (Wilmington, Carolina Beach, Kure Beach, Wrightsville Beach)