



North Carolina's Small Wonder

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Kure Beach, North Carolina's small wonder, offers a naturally beautiful setting in a peaceful, small-town atmosphere. The coastal community lets visitors reconnect while they enjoy nature unspoiled and nearby signature state attractions, including Fort Fisher State Historic Site and the North Carolina Aquarium at Fort Fisher. Visitors can escape the busy pace of life and embrace the curiosity and innocence of childhood in this pure and natural playground. The area is known for having great weather and fairly mild temperatures year-round. Kure Beach is also located within an easy 30-minute drive from Wilmington, which was voted as America's Best Riverfront and is home to more than 200 restaurants, shops and attractions in the downtown area alone.

WHAT'S NEW AT KURE BEACH

Lorikeets Return

Fins and feathers will once again flock together when Lorikeet Landing, an interactive, live-animal exhibit featuring tropical birds, returns to the North Carolina Aquarium at Fort Fisher this spring.

Step Back in Time

A new exhibit for the visitor center and more interpretive waysides are underway at Fort Fisher State Historic Site. These additions are intended to better tell the story of Fort Fisher, the site of the largest amphibious battle of the Civil War. The 32-pounder "Rifled & Banded" cannon in Shepherd's Battery - a restored gun emplacement - was also completely refurbished in the fall of 2016.

Fort Fisher State Recreation Area

Fort Fisher State Recreation Area will be updated in 2017. The modernized exhibit room will feature information about the surrounding ecosystem and educate visitors about rip tides and marine debris. New informational displays about the beach, ocean, maritime forest, salt marsh and more will be added, along with an activity table and a saltwater aquarium. The picnic area will also be enhanced with large sun shades, and the bath house will be updated to accommodate more guests.

Updated Military Housing

Kure Beach's Fort Fisher Air Force Recreation Area is home to vacation units, multiple camping sites and RV areas reserved exclusively for military personnel, veterans or anyone with a current Department of Defense identification card. Recently updated units range from one-bedroom to four-bedrooms and are equipped with linens, towels and basic kitchenware; some even include a washer and dryer.

SAMPLE STORYLINES

Kid-Friendly

Few things are as rewarding as a successful family vacation – especially when the kids are kept engaged and entertained with minimal effort. Kure Beach is one of those magical places where kids can be kids without overwhelming crowds and commercialism. Thanks to kid-friendly finds like an award-winning aquarium and oceanfront park, to a disc golf course and historic fishing pier, to a military history museum and state historic site, families keep coming back year after year.



Website: VisitKureBeachNC.com | **Facebook:** facebook.com/KureBeachNC | **Twitter/Instagram:** @KureBeachNC

Pinterest: pinterest.com/kurebeachnc | **YouTube:** youtube.com/user/visitkurebeachnc

Landmark Attractions

Located at the southern tip of Kure Beach, Fort Fisher is home to two of North Carolina's landmark attractions, the North Carolina Aquarium at Fort Fisher – named a top aquarium in the U.S. by Trip Advisor multiple times – and Fort Fisher State Historic Site and Museum – the second most visited tourist attraction in North Carolina. The North Carolina Aquarium at Fort Fisher has more than 2,500 animal residents. Other highlights include Luna, the Aquarium's beloved albino alligator; and Adventure Reef, an outdoor interactive play area for kids. Located at the south end of Kure Beach, Fort Fisher was a Confederate fort during the Civil War.

Eco-Tourism

Fort Fisher State Recreation Area is known for its six-mile stretch of undeveloped beach where visitors can enjoy swimming, sun bathing, fishing, shelling and birding. Fort Fisher is home to 16 threatened and endangered species at different times of the year, including Loggerhead sea turtles in the warmer months and hawks, warblers and peregrine falcons in the fall. Visitors flock to the area in the fall as the Loggerhead sea turtle nests scattered along the shoreline began to hatch. Located near the coast of Fort Fisher, Kure Beach's coquina rock formation is host to a very rare and distinctive mossy hard rock outcropping. Only visible during low tide, the rock is cemented together by seashells and coral with an estimated origin ranging from 12,000 to 80,000 years ago.

History

Located at the south end of Kure Beach is Fort Fisher, a Confederate fort during the Civil War that protected the vital trading routes of the port of Wilmington and was the site of the largest land-sea battle of the Civil War. Approximately ten percent of the fort still stands today. Attend historical reenactments and tour the grounds at Fort Fisher State Historic Site and Museum.

Shipwrecks at the Shore

Kure Beach is making a name for itself for being home to hundreds of fascinating sites that can be seen far below the surface. Visitors are drawn to this small wonder by the opportunity to dive in waters where a host of historic shipwrecks can be explored and fascinating prehistoric fossils can be found on the ocean's natural ledges. Visitors can dive at the same site dozens of times and still walk away from each dive with a unique underwater experience that features aquatic life, historic artifacts and much more. The North Carolina Underwater Archeology Branch, located at Fort Fisher State Historic Site at Kure Beach, is responsible for everything found in North Carolina waters.

Fishing

Whether you're a fan of pier fishing, surf fishing or offshore fishing, the waters surrounding Kure Beach are home to some of the best offshore and inshore fishing in North Carolina. For those anglers looking for some competition, Kure Beach hosts numerous tournaments throughout the year like the annual Pleasure Island Surf Fishing Challenge in October.

Pet-Friendly

Bring your four-legged friend with you during your next trip to Kure Beach. During the off-season (Oct. 1 through March 31), leashed dogs are allowed on the beach. Dogs are allowed on leash year round at the Fort Fisher State Park. The area also offers several pet-friendly accommodations.

Vintage Experiences for New Generations

The past and present collide happily at Kure Beach. From Fort Fisher State Historic Site, to the Kure Beach Fishing Pier, to beach motels with modern amenities, several present-day attractions offer visitors a nod to the past. This coastal community is ideal for groups like multi-generational travelers – there's plenty to keep young kids entertained while still offering a peaceful retreat for parents and grandparents alike.

Travel Without Kids

From young professionals to empty nesters, and everyone in between, fall is a perfect time to take a beach vacation. With kids back in school, visitors traveling without kids can enjoy less crowds, mild temperatures and more affordable lodging rates in the off-season.

Ocean Front Park

Ocean Front Park is Kure Beach's largest public green space. Located in the heart of Kure Beach's quaint business district near the town's iconic fishing pier, the park features a boardwalk, a playground for small children, swings, rain gardens, oceanfront benches and public restrooms. One of the biggest attractions at the park is an open-air pavilion with a stage area used for concerts, weddings and educational events. The park hosts special events throughout the year like the Boogie in the Park free concert series, Turtle Talks and storytelling.

Baby Boomer Travel

Adults aged 50+ are seeking getaways that provide an escape from their normal, everyday priorities as a way to relax and connect with family and passions, and there's no better place to do just that than at Kure Beach. This coastal community is well known for its natural and beautiful scenery and small town atmosphere. From bird watching to searching for seashells to dining at one of the local restaurants, there are plenty of ways to unplug. Kure Beach is also full of activities for visitors to follow their passions, including food, history and the great outdoors.

Military Travel

Kure Beach is less than two hours away from North Carolina's two largest military bases: Fort Bragg and Camp Lejeune. Military history and influence in Kure Beach is tangible everywhere you turn from Fort Fisher State Historic Site and Fort Fisher Air Force Recreation Area to the North Carolina Military History Museum. Thanks to military-friendly lodging options and activities, military travelers and their loved ones can unwind and relax together in a small town atmosphere during the fall with fewer crowds, off-season lodging rates and mild temperatures.