

Travel Across NC for Fun and Adventure this Summer

From a thrilling new roller coaster to a new passenger ferry route, summer kicks off across North Carolina with fresh experiences and old favorites. Weekend events, summer-long festivals and come-when-you-please options lead travelers to remarkable destinations for relaxing vacations and weekend getaways.

"Summer ignites our sense of adventure," said Wit Tuttle, executive director of Visit North Carolina. "It stirs our desire to reconnect with people and travel to places that inspire us to live in the moment. If you've always wanted to hang glide or catch a foul ball or hike a new trail, follow the impulse and check a first off your wish list in North Carolina."

Start with the ideas below to find firsts and other inspirations for summer travel. And remember to refresh your knowledge of how to stay safe exploring the terrain from waterfalls to beaches.

Feel the Summer Music Vibe As North Carolina celebrates 2019 as the Year of Music, connect with a tuneful heritage that embraces the spectrum of genres past and present.

- Put your fingers to the frets at the Earl Scruggs Center in Shelby, where a star-spangled summer offers free admission for active-duty military and their families from Memorial Day to Labor Day. earlscruggscenter.org
- Dance barefoot in the sand at the Carolina Beach Music Festival, which brings fans together for the 34th time. www.pleasurelandnc.org
- Unpack a picnic under the stars and enjoy a star-studded lineup at the Brevard Music Center's Summer Festival. Led by Artistic Director Keith Lockhart, the 80-performance program runs through mid-August with classical superstars and rising talent sharing the stage in a stunning setting. www.brevardmusic.org
- For more tunes and talent through summer and beyond, check out the N.C. Arts Council's Come Hear NC website. www.ncarts.org/comehearnctags/come-hear-nc
- Immerse Yourself in Tradition and Culture** If you like fast cars, experience racing at Charlotte Motor Speedway in Concord with the annual running of the Coca-Cola 600 Memorial Day weekend. The pre-race Salute to the Troops pays tribute to all five branches of the U.S. armed forces. Take an additional day to visit the nearby Mustang Owner's Museum, which opened this spring and displays Mustangs from all 55 years of production. www.mustangownersmuseum.com
- To find extra sparkle, check out the NC Gold Festival and celebrate America's first gold rush. The June 1 event at Old Fort features gold

and gem panning, games, and live music and storytelling.

- www.officialnorthcarolinagoldfestival.com
- The Asheville Art Museum reopens this summer in a transformed space that honors its landmark building while welcoming the future with new light-bathed galleries, theater space, and a rooftop sculpture terrace and café. www.ashevilleart.org
- Celebrate the return of the Ava Gardner Festival in her hometown of Smithfield. The event will feature free movies, heritage tours and the new "Ava: My Real Story" exhibit, a look at the actress's personal side known to close friends and family. www.johnstoncountync.org/ava-gardner-festival
- Experience the first flight at the enhanced visitor center at the Wright Brothers National Memorial in Kitty Hawk. New interactive exhibits reflect the journey and achievement of first flight alongside a life-size replica of the 1903 Wright Flyer. www.nps.gov/wrbr
- Catch a Game in a New or Classic Ballpark** Catch a ballgame at one of 11 Minor League ballparks. Intimate venues, catchy promotions, lovable mascots, unique food and beverages, and affordable prices mean the minors serve up major fun. www.visitnc.com/story/rujx/fun-food-fandom-minor-league-baseball
- The season adds two new ballparks to the landscape. In Fayetteville, Segra Stadium downtown becomes the home of the Woodpeckers (www.milb.com/fayetteville), a Class A affiliate of the Houston Astros.
- In High Point, the Rockers (www.highpointrockers.com) play at BB&T Point. The new team is a member of the independent Atlantic League of Professional Baseball, which has pioneered rules to speed up play.
- Experience Summer Thrills** Roller-coaster junkies and thrill-seekers add Carowinds as a must-visit this summer to board a double-launch coaster called Copperhead Strike. It anchors a new Blue Ridge Mountains-themed area inspired by Western North Carolina's landscapes and lore. www.carowinds.com
- Experience an elevator inside a 315-foot granite peak at Chimney Rock Park, lifting riders for a sweeping view of Hickory Nut Gorge and Lake Lure. www.chimneyrockpark.com
- If animal encounters are more your speed, be dazzled by the colorful Lorikeet Landing Exhibit at the N.C. Aquarium Fort

Fisher (www.ncaquariums.com). Or immerse yourself in Expedition AFRICA: A Virtual Reality Experience at the North Carolina Zoo in Asheboro (www.nczoo.org), where you can come nose to nose with elephants, rhinos and giraffes on the plains of Africa. Venture to Plymouth on the banks of the Roanoke River for the fifth anniversary of the NC Black Bear Festival. www.ncbearfest.com

• Try a new route to Ocracoke aboard the N.C. Ferry System's 98-seat Ocracoke Express Passenger Ferry (www.ncdot.gov/travel-maps/ferry-tickets-services/Pages/passenger-ferry.aspx). The reservable service takes passengers from Hatteras to Ocracoke's Silver Lake Harbor. Visitors can explore the 4-square-mile village on foot, rent bicycles or golf carts, or board a free shuttle. Ocracoke, the southernmost stretch of the Cape Hatteras National Seashore, is known for its beach, which has topped Dr. Beach's annual list (drbeach.org), and as Blackbeard's last hangout.

For more ideas to fill your summer, find inspiration and trip-planning information on VisitNC.com. To keep the moments coming, follow Visit NC on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

About Visit North Carolina Visit North Carolina is part of the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina. Established in 2014, the EDPNC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation that oversees the state's efforts in business and job recruitment and retention, international trade, and tourism, film and sports development. The mission of Visit North Carolina is to unify and lead the state in developing North Carolina as a major destination for leisure travel, group tours, meetings and conventions, sports events and film production. For more information on planning a trip to North Carolina, go to VisitNC.com.

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Following 35 Boating Fatalities in 2018, Wildlife Commission Urges Safety

In response to a stark increase in boating-related fatalities in 2018, the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission urges all North Carolinians to practice safe habits while on the water this summer. A total of 35 people lost their lives due to boating accidents last year, the highest number of vessel-related fatalities since 1990. Twenty-nine of the victims were not wearing a life vest.

"Life jackets should be put on before you enter the boat," said Maj. Ben Meyer. "Accidents happen fast and there may not be time, even for the strongest swimmers, to put one on in the event of an emergency. Wearing a life jacket can mean the difference between a tragedy and a fun day on the water."

It is important to wear a Coast Guard-approved Personal Flotation Device (PFD) or life jacket at all times when boating or on a personal watercraft. A properly fitted life jacket is snug, yet comfortable, and will not move above the chin or ears when lifted at the shoulders. More information on life jacket safety can be found at ncwildlife.org/preserveyourlife.

With warmer weather on the horizon and boating season ramping up, the Commission offers these tips to help boaters remain safe on the water:

Appoint a designated driver for the boat. Driving a boat under the influence of alcohol is illegal. Alcohol makes it difficult to drive safely, see objects in the water and ensure the safety of those on board.

Assign an adult "Water Watcher" to actively supervise the children in or around the water at all times. A Water Watcher's role is to focus on watching the water without the distractions of activities, such as socializing, texting, fishing, drinking and reading. Young children and people who are not strong swimmers should always be kept within arm's reach.

Only swim in designated swimming areas. Swimming in open water can lead to increased risk as you are less visible to boaters. Avoid diving in areas that are unfamiliar as there may be hidden boulders, stumps and pilings.

Throw, don't go. Be prepared to throw a flotation device or use a pole or tree branch to reach someone struggling in the water. Never jump in to save someone, because you could be pulled under, too.

Attend a Boater Safety Course. Any person born on or after Jan. 1, 1988 must complete a National Association of State Boating Law Administrators-approved boating education course before operating a vessel propelled by a motor of 10 horsepower or greater. A variety of options, including in-class and online, are available.

Following these safety tips can help ensure that you and your friends and family remain safe on the water this summer.

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Mr. Steven Daniel Coley

Mr. Steven Daniel Coley, 35, passed away at his home in Ocean Side, New York on Friday, May 24, 2019.

Born on August 16, 1983, he is survived by his wife Kristi Schaefer and his three children, Kayla, Luke and Gracie; his parents Charles and Nancy Coley of Polkton, NC and Sheri and Michael Edwards of Chesterfield, SC; and his siblings Heather and Jessi Edwards of Chesterfield and Shelby Coley of Hampton, VA.

Of all the things that Steven enjoyed in his life, what he loved most was hanging out with his family and friends. He had a happiness, a sense of humor, that was infectious. People couldn't help but enjoy being in his company, and he always loved having good company around.

Please join us on Saturday, June 1, 2019 at 4:00 p.m. for a memorial service in honor of Steven, a final gathering of good company to say farewell. The service will be held at Oakdale Baptist Church.

Four Anson Graduates Earn Scholarships

Kamryn Flake, Savannah Houser, Kara Grace Morgan and Zachary Sikes have earned \$500 scholarships from WoodmenLife Chapter 4. All four are 2019 graduates of the Anson County School System.

Kamryn of Peachland will attend Cabarrus College of Health Sciences with a major in Occupational Therapy. Savannah of Wadesboro will attend the University of North Carolina-Charlotte with a major in Nursing. Kara Grace of Wadesboro will attend the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill with a major in Biology Pre-Med. Zachary of Lilesville will attend the University of North Carolina-Charlotte with a major in Engineering.

A spokesperson for WoodmenLife said, "Along with the scholarships, we heartily congratulate them and wish for all graduates happiness and success in their chosen fields of further study and career paths."

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