



BALD HEAD ISLAND, NORTH CAROLINA FACT SHEET

AN ISLAND OVERVIEW

- Located two nautical miles off the coast of southeastern North Carolina, Bald Head Island is a resort and residential community accessible only by passenger ferry or private boat.
- There are no cars allowed on Bald Head Island, with the exception of public safety and service vehicles. On-island transportation is limited to electric carts, bicycles and pedestrian traffic.
- The entire island complex consists of 12,000 acres, featuring 14 miles of beaches, tidal creeks and an ancient maritime forest.
- Bald Head Island is the southernmost barrier island in N.C., located where the mouth of the Cape Fear River meets the Atlantic Ocean. The eastern tip of the island forms the Cape Fear Point.
- Bald Head Island features 1,120 private residences and is home to approximately 220 year-round residents.
- The most visible landmark on the island is Old Baldy, a lighthouse commissioned by Thomas Jefferson and completed in 1817. Old Baldy is North Carolina's oldest lighthouse and is open daily (seasonally).
- Bald Head Island is open to the public and accessible by private boat or by a 20-minute passenger ferry ride from Deep Point Marina, located at 1301 Ferry Road in Southport. Ferries run hourly from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., with extended hours in season.

ISLAND OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNMENT

- Bald Head Island was purchased in 1983 by Bald Head Island Limited, a company owned by the George P. Mitchell family. Bald Head Island Limited oversees real estate development and sales, as well as resort and island operations.
- The developers' philosophy of sensitive land planning ensures that all new development respects the natural surroundings. Neighborhoods are designed to accommodate homes, people and nature, not parking lots and cars.
- The Village of Bald Head Island is a chartered municipality governed by an elected Village council and mayor. A Village Manager and support staff work out of the Village Hall located across from Old Baldy Lighthouse.

PRESERVATION EFFORTS

- Of Bald Head Island's 12,000 acres, 10,000 acres are protected and will remain undeveloped — 2,000 acres are set aside for development.
- Bald Head Island boasts a maritime forest that is among the largest and most prized examples of its kind on the East Coast. Here, the island is dense with live oaks, dogwoods, sabal palms, cedars, yaupons, wax myrtles and junipers.
- Bald Head Island is one of the East Coast's most important nesting grounds for loggerhead turtles. The Bald Head Island Conservancy is a nonprofit group that monitors loggerhead nesting on the island and works to protect this endangered species.
- The Bald Head Island Conservancy opened the Barrier Island Study Center in spring of 2012, the first in the world to examine real-time conservation efforts for barrier islands.

ISLAND HISTORY

- Bald Head Island got its name from early river pilots' reference to its "bald" headland that is devoid of vegetation. Pilots would look for this high dune headland on the island's southwest point as a landmark leading to the mouth of the Cape Fear River.
- The Cape Fear Light, a second lighthouse for Bald Head Island completed in 1903, was torn down in 1958. The lighthouse foundation remains and is a popular tourist destination.
- In close proximity to the Cape Fear Light foundation is Captain Charlies' Station, three homes originally constructed in 1903 to house the Cape Fear Lighthouse keepers and their families. The three homes have been restored and are now available as rental cottages.
- Several infamous pirates, such as Stede Bonnet and Edward Teach (commonly known as Blackbeard), used Bald Head Island as a hideout and combat base in the 1700s.

RECREATION AND ACTIVITIES

- The oceanfront Shoals Club, located near Cape Fear Point at the southeast corner of the Island, features a spacious clubhouse, expansive decks, pools, a fitness room and easy beach access.
- Bald Head Island Club's newly renovated 18-hole golf course traverses freshwater lagoons, a maritime forest and dunes overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. Designed by George Cobb, the course was updated by Time Cate in 2010.
- *Links Magazine* named the Bald Head Island Club golf course as the 2nd best course renovation of 2012, just behind Pinehurst No. 2.
- Additional outdoors activities of interest on Bald Head Island include crabbing, canoeing, fishing, kayaking, standup paddleboarding, surfing, sailing, tennis, cycling, nature walks, ghost walks and historic tours.
- The waters surrounding Bald Head Island offer a variety of options for anglers. Offshore, visitors can fish for tuna, wahoo, billfish, tarpon and king mackerel, while inshore fishermen may hook red drum, pompano, bluefish, flounder and speckled trout.
- The Bald Head Island Marina offers easy access to the Intracoastal Waterway and ocean access via a deep-water shipping channel with federally maintained navigational aids.

DINING AND SHOPPING

- There are numerous dining options on the Island; MoJo's on the Harbor, a casual, open-air pavilion overlooking the marina; the Bald Head Island Club Dining Room, offering fine dining for members and guests; the Pelicatessen, a casual eatery located by the Bald Head Island Club pool; the Shoals Club, offering fine dining as well as an open-air snack and beverage bar called the Sandbar Grille (open seasonally); and the Maritime Market Cafe, offering breakfast, lunch and dinner options.
- Anchoring the Shops on Maritime Way, the 14,000-square-foot Maritime Market is a full-service grocery store offering a large selection of fresh fruits, vegetables, meats and seafood, as well as beer, wine, freshly baked breads, canned goods and gourmet items.
- Additional shopping options on the island includes shops specializing in men and women's apparel, outdoor gear, bikes, toys, home goods, jewelry, furniture and gifts.



BALD HEAD ISLAND, NORTH CAROLINA STORY IDEAS

Experience an Island Like No Other

Visiting Bald Head Island is a unique North Carolina experience. Here are just a few of the reasons why:

- *Arrive by Boat:* No bridge connects Bald Head Island to the mainland. The island is accessed by passenger ferry or private boat, making the journey an important part of the experience.
- *No Cars Allowed:* There are no cars allowed on Bald Head Island. Instead, residents and visitors get around via electric golf carts, bicycles or their own two feet. This means significantly reduced emissions, narrower roads and more green space in addition to a truly interactive island experience.
- *Green By Design:* Bald Head Island has been sensitively, thoughtfully developed—of its 12,000 total acres, 10,000 are beach, marsh and maritime forest preserves and will never be developed. 14 miles of pristine beaches wrap the island's shores.
- *Play Outdoors:* The island's diverse environments offer visitors the opportunity to engage in all manner of outdoor activities, including kayaking, fishing, crabbing, surfing, sailing, hiking, standup paddleboarding, kite surfing, and bird watching, to name a few.
- *Explore History:* Bald Head Island's rich maritime history is fun and easy to explore. The island is the site of NC's oldest lighthouse, Old Baldy (circa 1817), which was commissioned by Thomas Jefferson. It is the former site of US Lifesaving Service and US Coast Guard Stations, and in the 1700s was a popular hideout for pirates.

Walk on the Wild Side

Opportunities abound for experiencing the "wilder" side of the island. Check out the Bald Head Island Conservancy for up-close and personal nature experiences, including the always popular Loggerhead Turtle Walk. Turtle Walks take place every night during the summer and early fall and offer families the opportunity to observe Loggerhead turtles coming ashore to nest, or the miracle of tiny hatchlings emerging from their nests. The more adventurous at heart can ride along with the Conservancy on their Wildlife Patrols, where participants can get the rare opportunity to see alligators in their natural habitat, along with other nocturnal wildlife like red fox, deer, and bats. For those interested in exploring the island's history, the Sail Shop's spooky night time Ghost Walk explores the fascinating legends and lore of the island and meets up with some famous ghosts (including Theodosia Burr) along the way.

Play One of North Carolina's Most Unusual Golf Courses

The golf course at the Bald Head Island Club, which recently underwent a \$4.5 million renovation by award-winning architect Tim Cate, is one of the most unusual in North Carolina. Originally designed by George Cobb in 1973, the 18-hole course is more than just a challenging, scenic place to play golf; it's a lesson in Bald Head Island history and topography. It winds its way over dunes, around lagoons, along the ocean and through the maritime forest, allowing players to take in all the environments in one round. The course is so undisturbed, it's not uncommon to see herons, egrets, fox and alligators in their natural habitat while teeing off.

Situated in the shadow of Old Baldy Lighthouse and on the former location of Fort Holmes, an important Confederate Civil War camp on Bald Head Island, the golf course also schools players on the island's history. During the renovation process, skeletons were found on the course dating back to this era, perhaps those of Confederate soldiers or laborers stationed on the island in the mid-1800s. A plaque now commemorates this spot on the course.

See a Star-Spangled Festival

Bald Head Island's July 4th Golf Cart Parade is among the most whimsical and quirky traditions in the state. Each year nearly 100 decorated golf carts – the preferred mode of on-island transport – compete for a coveted slot among the best in show. We're not just talking a few streamers and balloons. Folks go all out, transforming these carts completely with papier mache, lights and miles of fabric and glue. The parade has seen carts transformed into alligators, pirate ships, blowfish, even a miniature version of Old Baldy, the island's lighthouse. Following the parade, visitors and residents can watch the fireworks from Southport—home of the official North Carolina Fourth of July Festival—from the water aboard one of the ferries.

Small Island, Large Global Impact

Eighty-five percent of the East and Gulf coasts depend on barrier islands to buffer the mainland from the waves and winds of storms. These vital ecosystems have already begun to weaken, break up and disappear--a process that is irreversible. Enter the Bald Head Island Conservancy's state-of-the-art Barrier Island Study Center, the first community-based barrier island research and education facility in the nation. The Center, which opened in Spring 2012, will help facilitate an understanding of these fragile ecosystems and serve as a resource for coastal communities needing to be proactive in the way they live and thrive on the coast. The Bald Head Island Conservancy, a non-profit organization whose mission is barrier island conservation, preservation and education, did not receive any federal or state funds to build or run the center – this grass roots project was completely funded by the community. Learn more about the Barrier Island Study Center at www.barrierislandstudycenter.org.

Additional information can be accessed at Bald Head Island Limited's website, www.baldheadisland.com.

If you are interested in pursuing a story on Bald Head Island, contact Lauren Frye of Bald Head Island Limited at 910-256-9742 or lfrye@bhisland.com