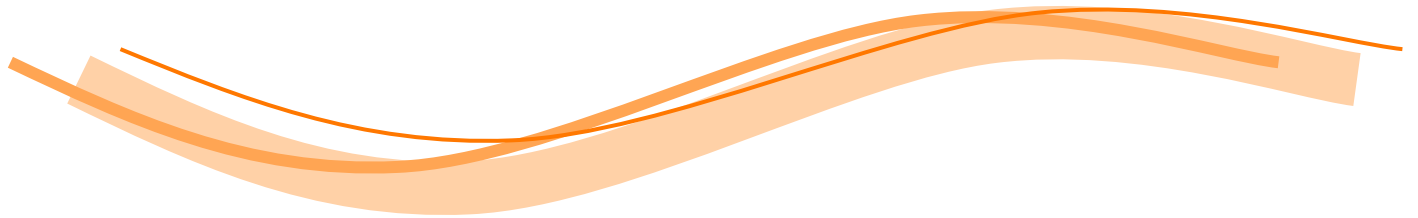




NORTH CAROLINA





NORTH CAROLINA	<p>North Carolina is a must on your list of “Places to Go”. This Southern U.S. state has beautiful Atlantic coastline and America’s #1 beach on Ocracoke Island. It’s also incredibly diverse - with mountain scenery, vibrant cities like Raleigh and Charlotte, and so much more.</p> <p>North Carolina’s hundreds of miles of barrier island beaches are perfect for sun, sand and surf. This stunningly beautiful area was recently showcased in the Richard Gere movie, “Nights in Rodanthe”.</p> <p>The gently rolling countryside of the Piedmont area offers great golf, fascinating wine tours and miles of hiking and biking trails. It’s also a sophisticated centre for upscale malls, New South cuisine and cool nightclubs.</p> <p>And the highest mountain peaks east of the Mississippi mean summers of hiking and white water rafting, a waterfall trail and amazing fall foliage.</p>
Location	<p>North Carolina is a state located on the Atlantic Seaboard in the southeastern United States. The state borders South Carolina and Georgia to the south, Tennessee to the west and Virginia to the north. North Carolina contains 100 counties and its capital is Raleigh.</p>
Geography	<p>North Carolina consists of three main geographic sections: the coastal plain, which occupies the eastern 45% of the state; the Piedmont region, which contains the middle 35%; and the Appalachian Mountains and foothills. The extreme eastern section of the state contains the Outer Banks, a string of sandy, narrow islands which form a barrier between the Atlantic Ocean and inland waterways. Mt. Mitchell at 6,684 ft (2,038 m) is the highest point in the state</p>
Name	<p>In 1650, colonists from the Virginia colony moved into the area of Albemarle Sound. By 1663, King Charles II of England granted a charter to establish a new colony on the North American continent which generally established its borders. He named it Carolina in honor of his father Charles I. By 1665, a second charter was issued to attempt to resolve territorial questions. In 1710, due to disputes over governance, the Carolina colony began to split into North Carolina and South Carolina.</p>
Population	<p>As of July 1, 2007, the population was estimated to be just over nine million (a 12% increase since April 1, 2000).</p>
Language	<p>English</p>
Currency	<p>The US Dollar. Currently one Canadian Dollar is 78 cents Canadian as at 25 October 2008</p>
Tipping	<p>As in Canada: 10-15% is the norm</p>
Government	<p>The governor, lieutenant governor, and eight elected executive department heads form the Council of State. Ten other executive department heads appointed by the governor form the North Carolina Cabinet. The state's current governor is Democrat Mike Easley. The North Carolina General Assembly, or Legislature, consists of two</p>

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	houses: a 50-member Senate and a 120-member House of Representatives
Documentation	Passports are now required for Canadian visitors arriving by air; currently Canadians only require photo ID if driving across the border, but a Passport is still strongly recommended and will become mandatory from June 2009
Time zone	Eastern Time Zone, as Toronto and Montreal
Health	Excellent services available but ensure that you have travelers health insurance as health costs in the US can be very high
Safety tips	Sensible travellers precautions should be adopted, but this destination is considered a safe region to visit.

CLIMATE	
General climate	North Carolina has a wide range of elevations, from sea level on the coast to almost 6,700 feet (2,042 m) in the mountains. The climate ranges widely from the coastal Tidewater and Piedmont to the western mountains. The coastal plains are strongly influenced by the Atlantic Ocean. Most of the state falls in the humid subtropical zone. More than 500 km from the coast, the western, mountainous part of the state has a humid continental climate.
Today's weather	Rain and 20 degrees Centigrade (25 October 2008)
Best time to visit	Summers are dependably hot, fall is wonderful in the mountains and winter is mostly mild on the coast; spring is pretty good too...!

GETTING AROUND	
Flying time	Daily flights to Charlotte & Raleigh by Air Canada and US Airways
Cities	<p>North Carolina has three major Metropolitan Combined Statistical Areas with populations of more than 1 million:</p> <p>The Metrolina: Charlotte-Gastonia-Salisbury, NC-SC - population 2,191,604</p> <p>The Triangle: Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill, NC- population of 1,635,974</p> <p>The Piedmont Triad: Greensboro--Winston-Salem--High Point, NC - population of 1,513,576</p> <p>Raleigh Raleigh is the state's Capitol and is undergoing a \$3 billion renaissance. Known as the Smithsonian of the South. 30 free attractions in the city including The North Carolina Museum of Art with one of the most distinguished collections of Old Masters in the South. The Museum will house the permanent Rodin collection of 23 works by sculptor Auguste Rodin, which includes casts of The Thinker and The Kiss.</p> <p>The museum will display the work in a new gallery, part of its \$75 million</p>

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	<p>expansion. This remarkable collection will make the Museum one of the world's top Rodin repositories.</p> <p>Fayetteville The largest North Carolina city located off I-95, (exits 40-65), Fayetteville is halfway between New York and Florida. Hundreds of festivals and special events throughout the year. The Fayetteville area population, including the two military bases, exceeds 300,000 people. Fayetteville is constantly cited as one of the country's best travel bargains. And thanks to nearby Fort Bragg and Pope Air Force Base, the area offers a wonderful diversity that is evident in its festivals, museums, dining, shopping and entertainment. Check out www.VisitFayettevilleNC.com</p>
Distances	Approximately a 12-hour drive to North Carolina from Toronto and Montreal.
Ferries	A 45-minute drive southeast from Wilmington on U.S. 17 South, with a left turn onto N.C. 87, takes you to the little town of Southport, the jumping-off point for the passenger ferry to Bald Head Island. (The terminal is at Indigo Plantation.) You must call ahead to book the ferry (tel. 910/457-5003). The day trip costs \$15 adults and \$10 children 3 to 12; children 2 and under ride free.
Trains	Amtrak operates The Palmetto with service from New York to Florence to Savannah Georgia, as well as Silver Star from New York to Florence to Tampa via Raleigh, Cary, Southern Pines and Hamlet N.C., and Silver Meteor from New York to Florence to Miami via Rocky Mount N.C and Fayetteville N.C.
Car Rental	The major car rental companies are represented in the major cities and airports of the state
Buses	Several cities are served by mass transit systems. The Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) operates historical trolleys, express shuttles and bus service serving Charlotte and its immediate suburbs. In 2007 it opened the LYNX light rail line connecting Charlotte with suburban Pineville. There are future plans to expand LYNX Light Rail as well as implementation of Commuter Rail and Streetcar. The Fayetteville Area System of Transit (FAST) serves the city with ten bus routes and two shuttle routes. Within Raleigh, the Capital Area Transit system operates 27 bus routes.
Passes	<p>Go Blue Ridge Card This is a new multi-attraction pass featuring one-price admission to more than 30 attractions. 2, 3 or 5 Day Pass starting from as low as \$27.19 per day includes: Prepaid admission to the most popular attractions, activities & tours, exclusive deals at local shops & restaurants & a free full-color, pocket-sized guidebook.</p>

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ACCOMMODATION	<p>All sorts of accommodations are available here – check out the prize accommodations featured later. Here are a couple of other recommendations</p> <p>One of the South's most famous grand resorts, The Grove Park Inn was built in 1913 overlooking the Asheville skyline and Blue Ridge Mountains. The 510-room Inn boasts a world-class Spa, championship golf and fine dining.</p> <p>The First Flight Retreat opened in July as the Outer Banks' first new oceanfront condominium in nearly 20 years with every condo having an ocean view. Each condo offers new, premium finishes, new furnishings, and the amenities of a first-class beach resort. First Flight Rentals offers 3 night, weekly and longer condo rentals, subject to minimum stay requirements.</p> <p>www.FirstFlightRentals.com</p>
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TARGET GROUPS	
Kids	<p>The North Carolina Zoo near Asheboro is the nation's largest walk-through, natural-habitat zoo</p> <p>Fascinate-U Children's Museum in Fayetteville features safe, interactive exhibits, static displays and classroom space. The hands on displays represent a mini-city where children can explore their world the way they know best - through creative role-playing, manipulation and interaction. They can operate a store, be on TV, dress as U.S. soldiers, and practice dentistry! Tel:910-829-9171</p>
Teens	<p>Lovevalley</p> <p>If you love westerns, this is the place for you. In 1948, Mayor Andy Barker decided to start his own town in Iredell County's Brushy Mountains. When you approach Lovevalley, you'll think you are entering an authentic old western town, complete with a dancehall and saloon, tack shop, general store and blacksmith. Cowboys and their horses roam the dirt streets. No vehicles are allowed, so saddle up and ride on in.</p> <p>Chimney Rock Offers Climbing</p> <p>Chimney Rock has teamed up with Fox Mountain Guides to allow visitors to scale the parks' rocks with ropes and harnesses. All guides are certified by the American Mountain Guides Association. For age six years old and up, no experience is necessary and all equipment is included. Try a 15-minute "taster," a two-hour clinic, a half- or whole-day adventure and experience the thrill of rock climbing on ancient cliff faces. www.chimneyrockpark.com</p>
Romance	<p>See "Nights in Rodanthe" and you will need no persuading that North Carolina is wonderful for romantics!</p>
Honeymoons & Weddings	<p>The perfect wedding or honeymoon memory is waiting for you on North Carolina's Coast. Choose from inns and resorts that are renowned for</p>

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	<p>their attention to wedding details, or select one of their unique locations for the most important day of your life. Here's two suggestions:</p> <p>The Carolina Inn has been working wedding magic for generations, helping brides and grooms fulfill their most cherished wedding dreams. Their magic begins with a setting of historic Southern charm: colonial architecture, immaculate lawns, and stately oaks and magnolias. Inside the Inn, the atmosphere of warmth and grace is accented by antiques and fresh flowers. They have intimate parlors with fireplaces, secluded garden courtyards, and expansive ballrooms. The Old Well Room, with its evocative 1920s décor, is especially popular for wedding events</p> <p>The White Doe Inn, Manteo - Escape to the Outer Banks for your dream wedding or honeymoon. The White Doe Inn is a historic Victorian home with seven diverse room selections, all richly appointed. Choose to have your ceremony on their beautifully landscaped grounds or inside the beautiful parlour. Dockside and seaside weddings are popular choices, too.</p>
<p>Self Drive Tours</p>	<p>“Cultural Corridors,” recorded drive tours of Winston-Salem and surrounding areas that are the next best thing to having a friend in the car. Taped recordings include Dare to Dream - African American heritage from 1766 to the present. Fingerprint Friendly - family-friendly attractions. The Reynolda Mile showcases the legacy of the area's founding families: the Reynolds, the Hanes and the Grays. The Great Wagon Road to Wachovia guides visitors through 250 years of history. Finally, The Wine Trails of the Yadkin Valley</p>
<p>Seniors</p>	<p>North Carolina is the Newest Long-Stay Destination for Snowbirds</p> <p>Historic Wilmington and North Carolina's Cape Fear Coast encompasses beautiful, uncrowded beaches, superb golf resorts where you can play 365 days of the year, a mild winter climate and dining, theatre and musical entertainment options. Wilmington is a picturesque riverfront town and home to the state's largest historic district, Battleship North Carolina, the annual North Carolina Azalea Festival, quaint shops and theatres. The city is also home to Screen Gems Studios, the largest full service motion picture facility in the US east of California. Another highlight of the area is North Carolina's southernmost cape island, Bald Head Island, a serene natural environment with 10,000 acres of nature reserves.</p> <p>Introduced two years ago by Merit Travel Group, one-month stays are available at the Sea Trail Golf Resort condo's, including return airfare, car rental for 30 days and 29 nights' accommodation in a 1-bedroom condo unit. Toronto-Raleigh is from CA\$1590 per person, and Montreal-Raleigh is from \$1540, double occupancy, plus taxes. Long-stays are from December 1, 2008 through to April 29, 2009. For</p>

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details, contact Merit Travel Group at 1-866-341-1777 or visit www.meritvacations.com

<p>UNIQUES</p>	<p>Drive the Trails of History - Over 750 miles of themed trails throughout greater Fayetteville are available exclusively on www.VisitFayettevilleNC.com Ten themed trails offer site descriptions, driving directions and pictures of each site to see. Trail themes include African American history, Scottish Heritage, Civil War History and more! Or users can customize a tour with Customizelt! an online customizable itinerary builder. Fayetteville’s CVB created 10 packaged self-driving trails allowing visitors to explore the area’s rich heritage. Themes include the Civil War, African-American Heritage, American Independence and Religious Freedom. Maps with detailed history, site descriptions and detailed site-to-site driving directions are available on the Cultural Heritage Trails section of CVB’s website. Visitors are able to download audio files.</p>
<p>Surprising</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charlotte is the 2nd largest banking city after New York – head office for Bank of America, as well as 26 Canadian companies have offices there • Nation’s first state-chartered university, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. <p>Whirligigs Located in Wilson County is an amazing collection of “Whirligigs” – large, wooden, wind-driven mechanical windmills – created by local folk artist Volis Simpson. The devices incorporate complex movement and sound and are an integral part of more than 30 works erected on Simpson’s property. His works have been exhibited in several museums, such as the North Carolina Museum of Art in Raleigh and the High Museum of Art in Atlanta. He has also been featured in several publications, including Sign and Symbol, People and Time.</p> <p>Mount Airy - Real-Life Mayberry Fans of the 1960s Andy Griffith Show get a taste of the life depicted in the popular television series when they visit Mount Airy in north-central North Carolina, Griffith’s hometown and the inspiration for the series. Visitors are welcome to take a ride in Barney’s squad car and cruise by Andy’s childhood home and down Main Street past Floyd’s Barbershop. The town has recently dedicated a bronze statue of Andy and TV son Opie, and there’s plenty more to see and do around this small town, from enjoying a pork chop sandwich at Snappy Lunch to taking in views off the Blue Ridge Parkway. www.visitmayberry.com</p>
<p>History</p>	<p>North Carolina was originally inhabited by many different native peoples, including those of the ancient Mississippian culture established</p>

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	<p>by 1000 A.D. in the Piedmont. Historically documented tribes included Cherokee, Tuscarora, Cheraw, Pamlico, Meherrin, Coree, Machapunga, Cape Fear Indians, Waxhaw, Saponi, Tutelo, Waccamaw, Coharie, and Catawba.</p> <p>North Carolina was one of the original Thirteen Colonies, originally known as Carolina. Joara, a native village near present-day Morganton, was the site in 1567 of Fort San Juan, the first Spanish colonial settlement in the interior of what became the United States. The state was also the home of the Roanoke Island colony, the first attempt by the English to establish a presence in the Americas.</p> <p>On May 20, 1861, North Carolina was the last of the Confederate states to secede from the Union. It was readmitted on July 4, 1868. The state was the location of the first successful controlled, powered and sustained heavier-than-air flight, by the Wright brothers, at Kill Devil Hills near Kitty Hawk in 1903. Today, it is a fast-growing state with an increasingly diverse economy and population. Recognizing eight Native American tribes, North Carolina has the largest population of American Indians of any state east of the Mississippi.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Salem is a restored 18th-century Moravian congregation town that depicts life in the original town of Salem, North Carolina. Founded in 1753, Salem was among the first towns in America to have a public water system, a fire department and a school for girls. • Man's first successful powered flight was made by Orville and Wilbur Wright on December 17, 1903, at Kill Devil Hills in Kitty Hawk. • One of America's most baffling mysteries occurred near what is now Manteo. In the 1580s, a group of colonists sponsored by Sir Walter Raleigh suddenly and mysteriously disappeared without a trace. Their whereabouts remain a mystery today. • New Bern is the second-oldest town in the state and was the first state capital. Royal Governor William Tryon made this seaport capital of the colony of North Carolina in 1770. After the Revolutionary War, New Bern became the capitol of the independent state of North Carolina.
Books	Frommer's USA and Frommer's The Carolinas and Georgia
1000 Places to see before you die	<p>The Cape Fear Coast – picturesque beach region</p> <p>Chapel Hill – the US's oldest state college</p> <p>Duke University – academia and culture</p> <p>Magnolia Grill – inspired cuisine in Durham</p> <p>North Carolina BBQ – restaurant and festival</p> <p>Nantahala National Forest – gorgeous gorges</p> <p>The Outer Banks – world's longest stretch of barrier islands</p> <p>Roanoke Island – the mysterious lost colony of Sir Walter Raleigh</p> <p>Pinehurst – the world's largest golf resort with 8 courses</p> <p>Pisgah National Forest – on the Blue Ridge Parkway</p> <p>Seagrove – pottery capital of the world</p>

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<p>Must Sees</p>	<p>Wilmington – Hollywood East meets Old World South</p> <p>Chapel Hill Chapel Hill is a small city that has managed to hold on to its village atmosphere in spite of the presence of a university that annually enrolls more than 25,000 students. Chapel Hill is the University of North Carolina and has been in existence since 1795, when it was the first state university in the USA. The 2,000-acre campus holds 125 buildings, ranging from Old East, the oldest state university building in the country (its cornerstone was laid in 1793), to the Morehead Planetarium, which was an astronaut-training center in the early days of the U.S. space program. Just before the Civil War erupted, the student body was the second largest in the country, after Yale's. Then the fighting started, and most of UNC's undergraduates and faculty left for the battlefield. The school closed down from 1868 to 1875. The university has consistently been a leader in American education and a center of liberal intellectualism in a generally conservative state. Chapel Hill has the highest concentrations of Ph.D.s in the United States. Schedule a visit here, ideally in spring, to see the dogwoods and crepe myrtle burst into bloom. At any time, you can wander past the stately pillared houses of Franklin Street and find an espresso outlet on virtually every street corner, just as you can in Seattle. It is estimated that the residents of Chapel Hill purchase more books per capita than anybody else in North Carolina. They also write them. Lee Smith, author of 11 novels about the South, lives in the area, as does Allan Gurganus, author of the prize-winning novel <i>Oldest Living Confederate Widow Tells All: A Novel</i>.</p>
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<p>SPORTS ACTIVITIES</p>	<p>The Charlotte Hornets of the National Basketball Association (NBA) began playing in the 1987–88 season. In 2006, the Carolina Hurricanes, a National Hockey League (NHL) franchise based in Raleigh, won the Stanley Cup. The Hurricanes, who call the RBC Center home, are the first professional sports team from North Carolina to win their sport's highest championship. The National Football League (NFL) is represented by the Carolina Panthers, who began play in 1995, and call Charlotte's Bank of America Stadium home.</p> <p>HOCKEY NIGHT IN RALEIGH You can get your hockey fix and watch your favourite NHL team play against the Hurricanes at the RBC Arena. Tickets start from \$25. For reservations, call 919-834-4000 Upcoming Dates: Nov 1 – Oilers vs the Hurricanes</p>
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	<p>Nov 2 – Maple Leafs vs the Hurricanes Nov 7 – Senators vs the Hurricanes Nov 18 – Canadiens vs the Hurricanes Dec 16 – Canadiens vs the Hurricanes Jan 15 – Maple Leafs vs the Hurricanes Mar 25 – Senators vs the Hurricanes</p>
<p>Golf</p>	<p>There are more than 600 golf courses in North Carolina!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pinehurst No. 2 has hosted two U.S. Men’s Opens; in 2014, the Open returns. • Pine Needles hosted three U.S. Women’s Opens, the last in 2007. • Putt-Putt miniature golf was founded in Fayetteville and is currently headquartered in Chapel Hill. • On the PGA Tour, the state hosts the Wachovia Championship in Charlotte and Wyndham Championship in Greensboro. • www.Golf.VisitNC.com The new site has a course finder, distinctive golf experiences and enhanced colourful maps to assist avid golf travelers in planning their trip to North Carolina. Highlights include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 440 public course listings • Special golf travel packages and offers from across the state • Mountain, Piedmont and Coast courses—searchable by region and rating • Resorts, spas and dining listings in proximity to courses • Golf destinations offering activities for the entire family • Girls’ Golf Getaways • Courses that have hosted national championships • Top-rated courses ranked by Golf Digest <p>Fayetteville www.GolfOnTheReady.com 800-577-3787 6 Fayetteville area courses and 7 hotels have enlisted in a new Golf – On the Ready campaign to offer some of the fastest tee times, best deals and easiest accommodations along I-95 and the East Coast. The Fayetteville Area Convention and Visitors Bureau has partnered with GolfSwitch to help plan golf vacations to the Fayetteville area with a custom golf reservation and package builder found online at www.GolfOnTheReady.com An average cost of \$150 per person for a two-night stay and three rounds, cart included. Golf course designers include: Davis Love III, Dan Maples, Ellis Maples, Stewart Gooden, and Willard Byrd. Golf courses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anderson Creek Golf Club, named North Carolina’s Best New Course in 2001, Anderson Creek is Davis Love III’s first signature course in his native North Carolina. • Bayonet at Puppy Creek Golf Club, is a Willard Byrd design sculpted through the rolling hills surrounding Puppy Creek. With five

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sets of tees, this championship course has been created for golfers of all skill levels. Has a 20-acre golf practice facility

- **Cypress Lakes Golf Course**, stretches from 5,800 to 7,000 yards and is an extremely fair course to play with no blind shots to the greens. Home course of Ray Floyd
- **Keith Hills County Club's** Creek and River Courses serves as the home venue for Campbell University and numerous amateur events. Its Creek Course designed by Ellis Maples has been rated as high as the state's seventh-best public golf course by North Carolina Magazine
- **King's Grant Country Club** many elevation changes and a strong emphasis on shot placement and accuracy.

Hotel partners: Baymont Inn and Suites, Doubletree Hotel, Hampton Inn Spring Lake, Holiday Inn Bordeaux, Holiday Inn Express & Suites Spring Lake, Red Roof Inn and Wingate Inn by Wyndam.

SAVE UP TO 60% AT NORTH CAROLINA'S PINEHURST RESORT

North Carolina's famed Pinehurst Resort has a special offer exclusive for Canadians this fall and winter. With savings of 30-60 percent off regular rates, golfers can take advantage of the Pinehurst Resort Canadian Special Offer! With warmer temperatures and exceptional golf on any one of their eight pristine world-class golf courses, Pinehurst indulges guests in pure luxury at its world-class spa.

Available November 30, 2008 through March 31, 2009, rates start at US\$175 per person per night based on double occupancy. The Pinehurst Resort Canadian Special package includes:

- * one round of golf per night stay
- * overnight accommodations in the Holly or Manor Inn
- * Carolina award-winning breakfast buffet

For information about the Canadian Special Offer at Pinehurst Resort or to make reservations, visit

http://www.pinehurst.com/canadian_special.asp or call 800.487.4653

Pinehurst will host the U.S. Amateur Championship in 2010 and the U.S. Open in 2014.

CANADIAN GOLF TOUR OPERATORS

- Merit Golf Vacations: Feature golf packages to Pinehurst and Charlotte for the 2008/09-season 1-800-268-5940 or www.meritgolfvacations.com
- Ultimate Golf Vacations: Feature golf packages to Pinehurst, Charlotte and Raleigh for the 2008/09-season 1-800-465-3034 or www.ultimategolf.ca
- Gryphon Golf: Feature golf packages to Pinehurst (Pinehurst Resort) 877-479-7466 or www.gryphongolf.com
- Vacances Summa: Feature golf packages to Pinehurst (Pinehurst Resort) www.vacancesumma.com

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Fishing	<p>The Gulf Stream makes its closest approach to land off the coast of North Carolina. This warm water current helps to make this one of the best fishing spots on the Atlantic Seaboard.</p> <p>Batson's Charter Boats, Carolina Beach (tel. 910/458-8671), departs from the Carolina Beach Municipal Marina, offering trolling and bottom-fishing charters. The charter boat can accommodate up to six fishers besides the crew. Prices are \$400 for 5 hours, \$630 for 8 hours, and \$840 for 10 hours; rates include rod, reel, and bait.</p>
Horse riding	<p>Latta Plantation Park in Huntersville (tel. 704/875-1391), 12 miles northeast of Charlotte city center is a favorite resting place for waterfowl and has some 2,500 acres devoted to nature. It also has stables where you can rent horses and ride along some 7 miles of trail.</p>
Hiking	<p>With more than 800 miles of trails, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park offers visitors of all fitness levels a chance to experience the great outdoors firsthand. Before setting out, make sure to check the weather forecast for the duration of your trip, be it a few hours or a few days. The following are a couple of the most popular trails that the park offers:</p> <p>The Indian Creek Falls Trail has an elevation gain of 100 feet and begins at Deep Creek Road near the Deep Creek Campground. The 1 1/2-mile flat trail leads to the 60-foot-high Indian Creek Falls. Physical level: moderate.</p> <p>The Laurel Falls Trail is the most popular waterfall trail in the park, with an elevation gain of 200 feet. You travel 1 1/4 miles to the falls from the Laurel Falls parking area, a few miles from the Sugarlands Visitor Center. It's paved and relatively flat. Physical level: easy.</p>
Cycling	<p>The cycling opportunities abound in this state and escalate from easy, level pedaling in the coastal region to the up-and-downs of the Piedmont region to the real challenges of the mountains in the western part of the state</p>
Windsurfing	<p>Learn to harness the power of the wind on Hatteras Island, with the adrenaline rush of kiteboarding, windsurfing or hang gliding off the east coast's largest sand dune.</p>
Scuba	<p>Scuba divers are increasingly drawn to the "Graveyard of the Atlantic" off the NC coast, where the remains of more than 2,000 ships have settled to the ocean floor over the centuries.</p>
Kayaking	<p>New U.S. National Whitewater Center 10 minutes from downtown Charlotte</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four manmade channels of class 3 and 4 whitewater rapids. • The water flow is controlled and is a great place for team building, whether you are a first-time or seasoned kayaker. • The facility also includes a world-class climbing center and several trails through the rolling hills. • The Charlotte center is used by both the Canadian and the US

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	Olympic kayak Teams as a training facility.
Car Racing	<p>NASCAR Racing claims its rowdy roots deep in the mountains of North Carolina – in whiskey country. Bootleggers souped up their cars to outrun the law on rugged back roads. As legend has it, the whiskey-runners eventually began to take notice of each other’s cars. Then, they started racing each other, and an American pastime was born. In 1947, the National Association of Stock Car Auto Racing (NASCAR) emerged. The first true NASCAR race was held in Charlotte, North Carolina, in summer 1949.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 80 percent of the NASCAR teams are located in the Charlotte region and many have shops that are open to visitors year-round. • Charlotte will also be home to the NASCAR Hall of Fame opening in 2010. <p>Full Throttle Fun Kit The Cabarrus County Convention & Visitors Bureau has a new cost-savings program to help combat the high price of gasoline. Included are a “Feel the Thrill” tour of Lowe’s Motor Speedway, lunch at the exclusive members-only Speedway Club overlooking the track, a premium gift bag at Sam Bass Gallery, maps to race shops and the Dale Trail, Dale Trail T-shirt, Concord Mills coupon book with meal voucher and more – all for \$59 each for adults and \$37 for children. The Full Throttle Fun Kit provides suggested itineraries that group activities by region to help families find their way around easily and take advantage of entertainment and dining opportunities.</p> <p>www.visitcabarrus.com</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richard Petty Driving Experience – dress in the driver’s jumpsuit and from the passenger’s seat you will drive 180 mph for 6 to 10 laps of the track • 5 Off 5 On – learn to change the racing car tires in seconds, just like being part of a NASCAR Pit Crew <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New four-lane zMax Dragway <p>ONTARIO NASCAR TOUR OPERATORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • McCoy Bus Services & Tours: Feature the May 2009 Coca-Cola 600 race 1- 866-384-0012 or www.gomccoy.com • Great Canadian Holidays: Feature the October 2009 Bank of America race 800-461-8687 or www.greatcanadianholidays.com • Muskoka Travel Service: 800-563-1885 Feature the May 2009 Coca-Cola 600 race and the October 2009 Bank of America Race • Have Bus Will Travel: Feature the May 2009 Coca-Cola 600 race 888-428-3287 or www.havebus.com

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	<p>MONTREAL NASCAR TOUR OPERATORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grand Prix Horizon: Feature the May 2009 Coca-Cola 600 race 877-729-4472 or www.gphorizon.com
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CULTURE	
Arts	<p>Classic plays are often performed by Theatre Charlotte, 501 Queens Rd. (tel. 704/376-3777; www.theatrecharlotte.org), usually Thursday to Sunday. The Blumenthal Performing Arts Center, 130 N. Tryon St. (tel. 704/372-1000; www.blumenthalcenter.org), is the newest facility to join the performance venues; it features three theaters for productions ranging from rock concerts to intimate stage events.</p>
Music	<p>The Charlotte Symphony Orchestra (tel. 704/972-2003; www.charlottesymphony.org) season runs from September to May; check local newspapers or call for performance dates. Opera Carolina (tel. 704/332-7177; www.operacarolina.org) presents performances from October to April, and the Charlotte Pops (tel. 704/332-0468; www.charlottesymphony.org) gives outdoor concerts (small fee) in Freedom Park on Sunday evenings in the summer.</p>
Films	<p>Wilmington – host to hundreds of productions including feature films, TV series, commercials and music videos – has even been nicknamed “Hollywood East.” The long-established tradition of filmmaking in North Carolina is largely attributable to the state’s geographic diversity and natural beauty, as well as its four-season climate. These same attributes attract more than 40 million travelers to the state each year, many who clamor for that behind-the-scenes perspective on past and present NC productions. Guides at Bob’s Marina in Lake Lure offer a pontoon boat tour of the Dirty Dancing location. And diehard film fans may be pleasantly surprised to learn that the exquisite scenery found in The Last of the Mohicans can be the backdrop for their next trip to North Carolina.</p> <p>With six production centers and more than one million square feet of soundstage space, North Carolina is the #3 state in the nation for filmmaking after California and New York. And since the days of silent films, an extensive infrastructure of qualified set builders, electricians and other filmmaking professionals has developed in North Carolina. Since 1980, more than 700 features have been shot on-location in North Carolina, including The Color Purple, Bull Durham, Nell, The Green Mile and Days of Thunder, Patch Adams, Forrest Gump and The Fugitive as well as television favorites like Matlock, Dawson’s Creek and One Tree Hill.</p> <p>Western North Carolina and the scenic vistas of the Blue Ridge Mountains have long been a favorite locale for movie producers and Hollywood elite – Dirty Dancing, Hannibal, Last of the Mohicans and</p>

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Forrest Gump were all filmed in the area.

The North Carolina Coast Sets The Stage for “Nights of Rodanthe”

The NC coast shines in “Nights of Rodanthe”; experience the ambiance of wild, unspoiled beauty and local charm along a two-day “Nights in Rodanthe” movie trail.

Take a lonely divorced mother from Rocky Mount, a spiritually damaged Raleigh doctor seeking redemption and put them alone in an Outer Banks inn during a powerful nor’easter. What have you got? A recipe for romance, and the basis for Nicolas Sparks’ “Nights In Rodanthe”, a best-selling novel and new movie starring Diane Lane and Richard Gere. While Lane and Gere take care of the acting in the film, the real star of the movie is North Carolina’s Outer Banks village of Rodanthe (pronounced roe-DANTH-e), where the novel was set and where much of the film was shot.

Rodanthe, an isolated wind-swept village perched on Hatteras Island, will captivate audiences with native wildlife, unspoiled beauty and local charm showcased in the film. The cottage-dotted streets, the village’s historic preservation and unmatched seaside beauty provides the romantic backdrop in the film and offers a preview of the story Rodanthe visitors experience.

Want to tour North Carolina’s coast? Here’s a two-day itinerary of Nights In Rodanthe location sites you can visit:

Day One

Start your movie trail in the town of Manteo, where scenes at the boat slips were shot downtown. Both Richard Gere and Diane Lane were spotted here often during filming, as both stayed at the Tranquil House Inn on Manteo’s waterfront. Treat yourself like a movie star by dining at the Inn’s restaurant, 1587, or explore the town’s rich history and boutique shopping.

From Manteo, cross the US Highway 64 Bridge and head south on NC Highway 12. You will immediately enter the Cape Hatteras National Seashore and be drawn in by the amazing wind-swept coastal scenery. You may want to consider stopping at the 156-foot-tall Bodie Island Lighthouse on your way.

About fifteen miles further, just before you get to Rodanthe, you will encounter a set of twists in the road. In the movie, on the ocean side of Highway 12, a scene was filmed with Diane Lane and a herd of ‘wild’ Outer Banks horses. While there are indeed wild ponies on the Outer Banks, the ones in the movie were imported. However, this particular stretch of beach is very real and very popular, thanks to its dynamic shore and natural beauty.

Continue south for a few miles, and those familiar with the film will

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immediately recognize the first structure on the left as you enter Rodanthe. This is a former vacation rental called the Serendipity, which stood in for the “Inn at Rodanthe” where Lane and Gere’s characters meet. Alas, the same dramatic proximity to the ocean that made Serendipity a movie star is also threatening its existence. You can no longer rent the house for your beach vacation, but for now, you can snap a picture of the house and the waves behind it.

After capturing photos at the Serendipity, head a little further down the road to the Chicamacomico Life-Saving Station. No filming was actually shot here, but the woman who will likely greet you at the Station, Linda Molloy, played the small but pivotal role of Jill Torrelson in the film. Linda will be happy to tell you about her experiences during the making of the film, and she might even show you the picture of her with Richard Gere in hospital scrubs!

Continue south on Highway 12 for two more film stops in Rodanthe: JoBob’s General Store, where exteriors of residents buying storm supplies were filmed, and the Hatteras Island Fishing Pier, which was the scene of the ‘We Survived The Hurricane’ party villagers throw themselves after the storm passes. The scene was shot with about 400 extras and most of the principal cast. The wind speed on the night of filming was between 25-30 miles per hour, and filming lasted until four in the morning. It was a night that won’t soon be forgotten by the locals here.

Further down Highway 12, enjoy a dinner at The Captain’s Table or Diamond Shoals restaurants located in the heart of Buxton Village, and as you decide where to stay for the night, check around with locals to see if Katy Mitchell, Jules Garrish or the band Coyote are playing music nearby. All appear in the Nights In Rodanthe movie, and all regularly perform on Hatteras or Ocracoke Islands.

Day Two

Begin your second day of the movie trail by driving on board the free Hatteras-Ocracoke Ferry, which departs every half-hour from May through October. Scenes with Richard Gere were filmed on this route, as Gere’s character Paul Flanner arrives on the island after driving from Raleigh.

After the 45-minute ferry ride, enjoy your 16-mile drive on Ocracoke Island. A few scenes for the movie were also shot in Ocracoke Village, so take to enjoy sights such as the Ocracoke Lighthouse, the Banker Pony Pens and Teach’s Hole Blackbeard Exhibit and Pirate Specialty Shop.

Then, it’s time to get on board another ferry for a 2-hour and 40 minute ride across Pamlico Sound to Cedar Island. Enjoy the views of Portsmouth Village, the pristine beaches at the end of the island and the

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	<p>various wildlife on the Sound. After you exit the ferry at Cedar Island, enjoy your drive through Beaufort, Morehead City and Jacksonville on your way to Wilmington.</p> <p>Once in Wilmington, visit the EUE Screen Gems Studio, located at 1223 North 23rd Street. Several of Rodanthe’s interior scenes were shot here, including a ‘dingy bar’ and hospital scenes. The creek and the woods behind the studio became the jungles of South America in the movie.</p> <p>If you’re here on the weekend, take a tour of the facility that has essentially become the headquarters of filmmaking in North Carolina. You’ll see the set of the television series One Tree Hill, which is filmed here, and discover how and why Wilmington became “Hollywood East” for movie producers and directors, including the ones that came all the way to the Outer Banks to make “Nights In Rodanthe”!</p> <p>Where To Eat: 1587 (Manteo) – dinner The Captain’s Table (Buxton) – lunch, dinner Diamond Shoals (Buxton) – breakfast, lunch, dinner</p> <p>For More Information: The Outer Banks Visitors Bureau www.outerbanks.org Wilmington/Cape Fear Coast CVB www.cape-fear.nc.us To view the Nights in Rodanthe movie trailer, visit http://nightsinrodanthe.warnerbros.com</p>
<p>Museums</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The North Carolina Transportation Museum, located at Historic Spencer Shops in Salisbury, is the South’s largest transportation museum, with exhibits of all means of transportation, from dugout canoes to massive steam locomotives. • New UNC Basketball Museum - Located on campus in Chapel Hill, the museum features a “Game Day” theme where visitors enter a theater for pre-game, then into the main museum space where they can visit interactive displays and view memorabilia and more than 450 artifacts from Carolina’s storied program. It’s free and is open Tuesday through Saturday. UNC will celebrate 100 years of basketball during the 2009-2010 season.
<p>Festivals</p>	<p>Christmas at Biltmore November 7, 2008 through January 4, 2009 Biltmore celebrates its annual Christmas at Biltmore, November 7, 2008 through January 4, 2009. In keeping with the traditions that began when George W. Vanderbilt first hospitably welcomed friends and family to Biltmore on Christmas Eve 1895, the estate’s celebration continues today with nearly 100 decorated Christmas trees, more than 1,000 wreaths and bows, 1,450 poinsettias, miles of evergreen garland and thousands of ornaments. Biltmore House’s holiday centerpiece, a 38-foot Fraser fir, will spend the holidays in the 72-foot high Banquet Hall, adorned with lights and surrounded by gifts. Holiday music from</p>

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ensembles completes the experience, filling the halls with Yuletide cheer.

This year's theme is "Christmas Traditions from Around the World," focusing on the countries George Vanderbilt visited in his lifetime, and on Vanderbilt family traditions.

During Candlelight Christmas Evenings, offered by reservation only, luminaries lead the way to the front door where guests enter a softly lit wonderland. Biltmore House appears much as it would have been at the turn of the 19th century—by fireplace and candlelight, a memorable experience filled with warm glow and holiday sparkle.

24TH ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF FLOWERS AT BILTMORE

Beginning of April to mid-May

During this time, the estate's seasonal glory is showcased with a stunning display of thousands of tulips in the Walled Garden, vibrant colors in the 20-acre azalea garden and cascades of native and exotic blooms in the natural gardens and walking trails. Biltmore's gardens, Olmsted's final and most grand project, are in their 118th year, continuing to mature and therefore becoming more beautiful every year. Festivities across the estate include music, tips from Biltmore gardeners, storytelling, cooking demonstrations, children's activities and craft demonstrations.

Last year's theme, "A Garden Party," was inspired by an elaborate 25th birthday celebration held for George and Edith Vanderbilt's only daughter, Cornelia, in an extravagant Oriental design.

Biltmore's Winery celebrates with live music, wine tastings, culinary demonstrations, and children's activities. Special events are planned for adults and kids at River Bend Farm and outdoor activities can be booked through the adjacent Outdoor Center. Whether strolling the gardens, touring Biltmore House, or embarking on estate activities, the celebration of spring is in the air. Outdoor activities include hiking, biking, rafting, kayaking, horseback riding, carriage rides and Segway tours and sporting clays program. Biltmore is also home to one of three Land Rover driving schools in North America.

Stay at The Grove Park Inn, with its two storey Grand Hall, stone fireplaces across the width of either end of the hall and windows overlooking a verandah set with rocking chairs overlooking the mountains and exquisite golf course. The spa is carved out of the mountains and is ranked among the very best in the world.

Explore the funky artist's town of Asheville and the eclectic shopping at Biltmore Village – unique jewellery, clothing, furniture and gifts.

Festival in the Park Sep 2009

Freedom Park in Charlotte hosts Festival in the Park, the area's largest

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	free celebration. Four days of live music, performing and visual arts make this a popular community event for all the family.
ATTRACTIONS	From mountains to coast, North Carolina features natural beauty, arts and adventure as well as golf and wineries. Sights range from the Blue Ridge Parkway to Civil War battlefields and historic lighthouses.
Beaches	<p>The Outer Banks of North Carolina is a dynamic chain of barrier islands home to 160 kilometers of stunning beaches and the tallest sand dune on the East Coast.</p> <p>Cape Hatteras Lighthouse is one of 10 lighthouses operating on North Carolina's coast and the tallest in America at 208 feet. The candy-cane-striped structure projects light more than 20 miles out over the once-precarious Diamond Shoals.</p> <p>The tallest natural sand dune on the East Coast is Jockey's Ridge at Nags Head, which stands 110-140 feet, depending on winds.</p> <p>Okracoke Island and Cape Hatteras have both been listed as one of America's Top 10 Beaches</p>
The Mountains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Blue Ridge Parkway, the most scenic U.S. byway, stretches 250 miles in North Carolina and will celebrate its 75th anniversary in 2010. The parkway offers campgrounds, picnic areas, lodges, restaurants and countless scenic overlooks while meandering through two national forests. • Mt. Mitchell, at 6,684 feet, is the highest mountain in the eastern United States. • North Carolina has more than 300 waterfalls, including the highest on the East Coast, Whitewater Falls, a 411-foot, two-tiered cascade. There are more than 250 waterfalls and 200 miles of mountain streams in Transylvania County alone. • Sliding Rock, in Transylvania County, is a popular natural water slide. Eleven thousand gallons of water per minute rush visitors down 67 feet of smooth stone, depositing them into a 7-foot-deep pool at the end of the ride.
Parks	<p>Great Smoky Mountains Celebrates 75 in 2009</p> <p>The Great Smoky Mountains National Park has unveiled an interactive website (www.greatsmokies75th.org) giving viewers a virtual tour of activities planned to celebrate the park's 75th anniversary in 2009. With 276,000 acres in North Carolina, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park is the largest protected land area east of the Rocky Mountains. This national treasure is home to variety of plant and animal life, recreational opportunities, hiking and cultural history. The park preserves historical structures of early European settlements. It is America's most-visited national park.</p>
Gardens	North Carolina Mansions, Gardens & Historic Sites with award-winning Toronto Horticulturalist Frank Kershaw

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Mary Morton Tours First Garden Itinerary 9 Day tour
Discover North Carolina's famous southern hospitality, architecture and diverse gardens. Canadian garden expert Frank Kershaw gives travelers and gardeners a personal tour with North Carolina Mansions, Gardens and Historic Sites from March 28-April 5, 2009.
This is the first garden tour of North Carolina created by a Canadian tour operator – Mary Morton Tours. Leave the snow behind and get a jump on spring as North Carolina's signature gardens are in full bloom one to two months before Canada's blossoms. Participants can take in the stunning beauty and sights, and let someone else do the driving. The trip's finale is the Wilmington Azalea Festival; where up to 12 private gardens with azaleas in full bloom are open for viewing. Southern belles greet visitors dressed in period costume, lovely antebellum skirts and parasols, while the downtown area has street fairs and entertainment.
Showcases more than 15 of North Carolina's most famous garden attractions and seasonal blossoms, including:

- **Chinqua-Penn Plantation** – featured on A&E's America's Castles, this is an architectural treasure. The 27-room English countryside mansion is filled with elaborate furnishings from 30 countries, surrounded by 22 acres of beautiful gardens and historic landscape.
- **Reynolda Gardens** – named after founder R.J. Reynolds of tobacco fame. Feel the grandeur of the estate and learn about the Reynolds family at the mansion and stroll the garden paths paralleling a stream.
- **Wing Haven** – Designed in the 1920s, the formal and naturalistic gardens were designed to attract various species of birds to this walled garden featuring pools, fountains and statuary.
- **N.C. Botanical Gardens** – this 10-acre garden features several exciting gardens including the Landingham Glen with seven acres of rhododendrons, azaleas and woodland wildflowers, the Harwood Garden with ornamental plantings, and the McMillan Greenhouses with tropical orchids and an outdoor bog garden complete with pitcher plants.
- **Tryon Palace and Gardens** – one of North Carolina's most famous historic sites and grand gardens. New Bern was the original state capital until 1794 and the palace was the residence of royal governors. It was totally restored in the 20th century, and reflects the design of a great English estate in the mid-18th century. Gardens feature ornate ironwork joining garden rooms and intricate outbuildings.

The North Carolina Mansions, Gardens and Historic Sites tour is priced at: \$2,995 per person (based on double occupancy) and includes: round trip airfare from Toronto to Charlotte, deluxe motor coach

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	<p>transportation, accommodations, breakfast & dinner daily including a dinner cruise and 3 lunches, admissions to all itinerary gardens & sights, taxes & gratuities, escorted by horticulturalist Frank Kershaw. For information and reservations, call Mary Morton Tours at 1-800-263-5398.</p> <p>The North Carolina Azalea Festival (www.ncazaleafestival.org), held in early April, is Wilmington's most-frequented event. City gardens burst into bloom, and the festivities include garden tours, beauty pageants, and a parade. The dogwoods get almost as much attention as the azaleas. Call tel. 910/794-4650 for more details.</p>
Wildlife	<p>The 152,000-acre Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge in northeast North Carolina is one of the last remaining strongholds for black bear on the East Coast and has successfully restored red wolves to the area through a captive breeding program. The refuge conducts Red Wolf Howling Safaris to listen to the “music” of the wolves. The only area in which the carnivorous Venus Flytrap lives indigenously is within a 100-mile radius of Wilmington.</p> <p>North Carolina is home to three aquariums – offering workshops, educational trips and displays of live marine life – located in Manteo, Kure Beach and Pine Knoll Shores.</p>
Estates	<p>America’s largest privately owned home, the Biltmore Estate is a 250-room estate on 8,000 acres. This National Historic Landmark is among the country’s most visited historic residences with shops, a four-star hotel, lush gardens, serene walking trails and an award-winning winery.</p>

OTHER ACTIVITIES	
Shopping	<p>Shopping is plentiful in the Charlotte area with large venues such as SouthPark mall, which features upscale shops like Neiman Marcus, Kate Spade, Cole Hann and Tiffanys.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shop til you drop at Concord Mills Mall, a massive outlet mall featuring more than 200 outlet stores. • Just outside of Charlotte is the town of Seagrove with more than 100 potters, where you can tour artist’s studios or “throw a pot” as a take-home souvenir. • Replacements – world’s largest collection of old and new dinnerware. Free tours. Watch crystal artisans at work as they repair old china and silver pieces. Can buy missing pieces of old china; visit their museum, housing priceless pieces and celebrity china sets. Allowed to bring your well-behaved pet dog.
Markets and Crafts	<p>MOUNTAIN CRAFTS</p> <p>Popular destinations include The Folk Arts Center, located just outside Asheville on the Blue Ridge Parkway. Home of the Southern Highland</p>

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	<p>Craft Guild, it features a wide variety of crafts and offers unique programs designed to bring artisan and patron together.</p> <p>The Qualla Arts & Crafts Mutual, located on the Cherokee Indian Reservation, is the result of the efforts of 60 Cherokee craftsmen who came together to organize a co-op in 1946 to help sell their handicrafts. Today, it offers works from 300 artists and is one of the nation's most respected sources of Native American crafts.</p> <p>The John C. Campbell Folk School, in Brasstown, was founded in 1919 on the model of Danish-style folk schools and continues the craft traditions developed by William Morris and John Ruskin in the mid-1800s. The Craft Shop offers the work of over 200 mountain craftspeople. The Folk School offers over 300 courses.</p> <p>Penland School of Crafts, one of the most respected craft schools in the country, offers intensive instruction in over a dozen different media, including book arts, glass, clay, metal, wood, photography and textiles. Visitors can view finished work and even tour the campus.</p> <p>The Appalachian Heritage Museum, in Blowing Rock, is a living museum where full-time docents demonstrate skills year round. It is located in the 1903 home of the founders of Appalachian State University.</p>
Nightlife	<p>Raleigh and Charlotte host the biggest variety of nightlife options, but there are plenty of other towns and cities in the state where you can find lively – and musical – venues for an evening on the town. The Berkeley Café in Raleigh is a blues bar with a back deck. In addition to blues, you're likely to hear everything from folk rock to R&B.</p>
Casinos	<p>Harrah's Cherokee Casino & Hotel: Offers 60,000 square feet of gaming area containing 2,400 video-based machines, a child-care facility and entertainment in a 1,500-seat theater. Address: 777 Casino Drive, US 19 & 441 Business, Cherokee, NC 28719 Website: www.harrahs.com/casinos/harrahs-chokeee/hotel-casino/property-home.shtml Toll Free : (800)427-7247</p>

CUISINE	
Food	<p>Along the coast, fresh seafood can be found on almost every menu. Pristine waters consistently yield high-quality seafood such as grouper, mahi-mahi, mackerel and shellfish. Chefs prepare it "Calabash style," named after the Brunswick County town that today has nearly 30</p>

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	<p>seafood restaurants within one square mile. Calabash seafood is lightly breaded with a seasoned cornmeal batter and served piled high with hushpuppies on the side.</p> <p>Hushpuppies also come with North Carolina barbecue – “BBQ.” While North Carolinians across the state can agree that BBQ is slow-roasted, hickory-smoked pork dressed in a vinegar-based sauce, a heated debate rages about the finer points of BBQ. Western North Carolina chefs say that barbecue includes only the pork shoulder and that there should be tomato in the sauce. But in Eastern North Carolina, cooks throw in the “whole hog” and the sauce is tomato-less.</p> <p>As a top producer of pork, it’s no surprise that North Carolina barbecue is second-to-none. North Carolina also grows more sweet potatoes than any other state,</p>
<p>Wine</p>	<p>North Carolina is home to nearly 80 wineries, a number that has more than tripled since 2001. The industry has two focuses – muscadine grapes and vinifera grapes. Scuppernong, a muscadine, was the first grape cultivated in the United States and is the official fruit of North Carolina. North Carolina’s Mothervine, a 400-year old Scuppernong vine, is the oldest known cultivated grapevine in the nation. www.visitncwine.com</p> <p>Yadkin Valley, North Carolina's first American Viticulture Area, is bordered to the west by the Blue Ridge Mountains and produces world-class wines.</p> <p>One of the earliest wineries in the United States is still operating today at Rose Hill in Duplin County. The Duplin Winery produces award-winning wines from native Muscadine grapes using a 200-year-old recipe.</p>
<p>Restaurants</p>	<p>Charlotte: LaVecchia's Seafood Grille - This family-owned and -operated business is celebrated locally as the best all-around restaurant and the best seafood dining room in greater Charlotte. It's an elegant setting with many works of art and sculpture. Dig into such delights as Maine lobster, aged beef, and both fresh- and saltwater fish, along with the finest assortment of shellfish in the area.</p>
<p>MORE INFO</p>	<p>Blue Ridge Parkway Destination Center, (near Asheville) This \$9.8 million facility opened in April 2008 with exhibits highlighting the natural and cultural diversity, traditions and recreational opportunities found on the Blue Ridge Parkway. The center has a 70-seat auditorium with an HD film, an I-Wall interactive map of the entire Parkway.</p>
<p>Brochures</p>	<p>1-800-VISIT NC for North Carolina Tourism (919) 968-2060 for the Chapel Hill 1-888-NC-CHARM for the Fayetteville 1-800-962-8519 for the Carolina Inn</p>

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Website	www.visitnc.com for North Carolina Tourism www.visitchapelhill.org for the Chapel Hill area www.carolinainn.com for the Carolina Inn www.visitfayettevillenc.com for the Fayetteville area
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CFRB HOTEL PRIZE PARTNER	Carolina Inn 211 Pittsboro Street, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 27516 Phone (919) 933-2001, Fax (919) 918-2795 Reservations (800) 962-8519, www.carolinainn.com
Location	Located in the heart of downtown Chapel Hill on the campus of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, The Carolina Inn combines the graciousness and sophistication of a historic, southern inn with the intimacy and privacy of a secluded retreat. Guests are within steps of downtown Chapel Hill and its shopping, art galleries, entertainment and the historic Franklin Street district. The Raleigh-Durham International Airport is located 20 minutes away.
Facilities	Few other hotels in North Carolina carry as many emotional and loyal associations as this one. Owned by the University of North Carolina, it occupies sprawling redbrick premises that date from 1924 and have been artfully upgraded many times since. Part of its appeal, and fascination, derives from its role as UNC's ambassador of goodwill to the world at large. Consequently, its public areas (an interconnected series of graciously appointed living rooms) reek of a kind of genteel Southern dignity. The fortunes and glamour of this hotel took a big upswing during the 1960s, when its importance as an embodiment of the university became more apparent. You never know who you might spot in the also-recommended hotel dining room: the social, financial, athletic, and academic connections of some of your fellow diners are often awe-inspiring.
Accommodation	Guest accommodations are tastefully and conservatively outfitted in 18th- and 19th-century themes, with flower-patterned upholsteries and a restrained and relatively formal dignity that evokes the decor of an upscale private home. Each room has a writing table, two phone lines, and a neatly kept bathroom with a tub/shower combination.
Activities	The Concierge staff will arrange for golf at nearby championship facilities, bicycling, hot air balloon rides, and excursions to museums, attractions and abundant nearby shopping. The proximity of the historic University campus offers guests the opportunity to walk or jog thru one of the nation's most beautiful and scenic college campus'. Inn guests have an opportunity to play golf at the Fazio designed UNC Finley Golf Club located on the University campus. Other area golf courses include Davis Love III's Preserve at Jordan Lake and Fred Couple's Chapel Ridge Golf Course. Tee times can be arranged thru the Concierge
Restaurants	Carolina Crossroads Restaurant and Bar: Under the direction of

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	<p>Executive Chef James Reale, The Carolina Inn offers one of North Carolina’s best restaurants with the award winning Carolina Crossroads. The restaurant offers intriguing southern style cuisine artfully paired with a contemporary American twist. From “Cast Iron Seared Day Boat Scallops and Duck Barbeque on Fall Succotash with Country Ham and Fig Onion Balsamic Syrup” to “Grilled Organic Pork Chop, Hoppin’ John, Wilted Greens and Sweet Onion Vinaigrette” Crossroads is culinary excellence typified. As one of only two Mobil Guide Four Star rated restaurants in the state of North Carolina – Crossroads offers guests a truly memorable dining experience</p>
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<p>AIRLINE PRIZE PARTNER</p>	<p>Air Canada</p>
<p>Flight details</p>	<p>When it comes to getting to North Carolina, Air Canada serves the most destinations in North Carolina with the only non-stop flights between Toronto and Raleigh-Durham and daily non-stop flights between Toronto and Charlotte. These flights connect to Air Canada’s vast network in Canada, including Montreal. For more information visit www.aircanada.com</p>

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