

Grand Strand Coastline Driving Tour

A GUIDE TO DRIVING ALONG SOUTH CAROLINA'S NORTHERN COASTLINE

Starting at the North Carolina state line and heading as far south as Georgetown, the [Myrtle Beach](#) area features an array of pursuits for those looking to get a bit off the beaten track. It gets off to a big start in Little River...

Little River

Located just south of the state line off bustling US 17, [Little River](#) is a unique combination of business entertainment with commercial shrimp and fishing boats docked right next to popular [casino boats](#).

Visitors can head to the docks early to see the various boats depart in the morning mist in search of the day's lucky catch. Or even venture out to sea in search of Lady Luck on the casino boats.

Some of those winnings might be used to buy some fresh fish seafood right off the boat, or maybe a more extensive meal at the award-winning [Parson's Table](#) back on US 17. The main dining room of this historic eatery was the original Little River Methodist Church built in 1855 and features stunning stained-glass windows.

La Belle Amie Vineyard

Continuing south on 17, locals and visitors in-the-know love to head just a bit inland on US 90 to [La Belle Amie Vineyard](#). Located on a former tobacco farm that's been in the Bellamy family since the 1800s, La Belle Amie is reached by traveling a road leading past vineyards, a tobacco barn and a duck pond.

Translated as "beautiful friend," the appealing grounds feature a friendly gift shop and tasting room with an array of wines to suit any taste. The vineyard also features many special events around which to plan a visit.

Cherry Grove Beach

Cherry Grove Beach is the next stop, and historic [Cherry Grove Pier](#) is the place locals love to head. Originally built in the 1950s, the pier has been owned by the Prince family since 1965. It has welcomed lots of lucky fisherman (including several records) and weathered many unlucky hurricanes—Hurricane Floyd in 1999 actually led to pier remodeling and lengthening.

The pier provides a full-service tackle, bait, and gift shop, so those who don't bring their own fishing gear can rent it here. Tasty platters, burgers, and sandwiches are often enjoyed outside or in at the Boardwalk Beach Café, while pier lovers who choose to spend the night will find overnight possibilities at the colorful [Prince Resort at The Cherry Grove Pier](#).

North Myrtle Beach

Continuing right down the beach on famed Ocean Boulevard, North Myrtle Beach is the “Birthplace of the Shag.” Dancers and those who just like to listen to beach music head to [Fat Harold’s Beach Club](#), where there always seems to be music, dancing lessons or a special event.

[Ducks Beach Club](#), coined the “Place Where Dancers Meet,” is another shag Mecca located across the street. And nearby [Ocean Drive Beach & Golf Resort](#) features the Shagger’s Hall of Fame, which offer lots of great pictures and information about inductees dating back to 1983.

Myrtle Beach proper

Myrtle Beach proper is next, with time out on busy 17 Business mixed with driving along the ocean on Ocean Boulevard.

If it’s time to stop driving for the night, it’s hard to beat [The Caravelle Resort](#). This classic beach resort originally opened in 1960 and boasts many of the area’s firsts, such as the Grand Strand’s first indoor pool. The resort’s recent \$8 million renovation made it a better-than-ever base for exploring Ocean Boulevard and more.

Hungry? Grab breakfast, lunch or dinner with locals and veteran visitors at the oceanfront [Sea Captain’s House](#). Now a popular restaurant, the building was originally a beach cottage built in 1930. The tasty “Crab Cakes Benedict” for breakfast is legendary, as is the “She Crab Soup” as a starter for lunch or dinner.

For a more casual meal a bit further south on Ocean Boulevard, check out Peaches Corner where they’ve been serving hot dogs and cold beers since the early-1940s. No visit to this historic part of Myrtle Beach is complete without some serious souvenir shopping at the sprawling [Gay Dolphin Gift Cove](#).

Next, head to nearby Jack Thompson Studios on Broadway to have a look at some great old photography of the Grand Strand. If Jack is there, a history lesson will accompany the black-and-white images.

Those who haven’t eaten yet should head a couple of doors down to Mrs. Fish where fresh local seafood is always on the menu.

Myrtle Beach State Park

[Myrtle Beach State Park](#) is the next great place to head for a peaceful beach setting. The park features a number of varied activities, ranger programs and unique accommodations options including cabins and apartments just 200 yards from the beach! Just south, Surfside Beach's Surfside Pier features pier fishing and a great little seafood restaurant called [Nibils](#).



Murrells Inlet

The short drive from 17 to Murrells Inlet is well worth the diversion. Known as the “Seafood Capital of South Carolina,” Murrells Inlet has long been *the* spot to head for fresh seafood and great views. Stroll along the [Marsh Walk](#) to look at various menus. [Captain Dave's Dockside Restaurant](#) is one among many great choices.

Nearby, and also right on the water, [Captain Dick's](#) is the place to go for practically any on-water activity from boat rentals to fishing and much more. If the timing is right, spend the night at the quaint Brookwood Inn.

Back out on 17, the Crab Cake Lady provides the ultimate Murrells Inlet souvenirs—crab! Enjoy signature crab cakes, Creek Rolls with fresh Murrells Inlet shrimp, Devil Crab, Crab Cake Casserole, Queen Egg Rolls made of shrimp and crab, and both blue crab and stone crab claws. They'll even pack purchases with ice for travel!

Huntington Beach State Park and Brookgreen Gardens

Two more great stops come a bit further south: [Huntington Beach State Park](#) and [Brookgreen Gardens](#). Along with nature trails and camping, Huntington Beach State Park features Atalaya, the fascinating Moorish-style winter



home of Anna Hyatt and Archer Huntington.



Across 17, Brookgreen Gardens is a can't-miss National Historic Landmark with sprawling display gardens and the world's most extensive collection of figurative sculptures. Many people do not even know there's a world-class zoo on the grounds too.

St. Helena Island native Ronald Daise is a great person to speak to about Gullah culture. If he's not there, the next best thing is to buy his book, [Gullah Branches, West African Roots](#).

Litchfield and Pawleys Island

Litchfield and Pawleys Island are next on the map with the classic [Hammock Shops Village](#) being the first stop for most drivers.

As the “Home of the Original Pawleys Island Rope Hammock,” you can find more than 20 shops, including the Original Hammock Shop, the demonstration Hammock Weavers Pavilion and much more.



Pawleys Island proper

Over on quiet Pawleys Island proper, the place to go for another meal or the night is [Sea View Inn](#). Built in 1937, this charming inn features just 20 rooms in the main house and adjacent cottage. There are no TVs or telephones—just a great beach, rocking chairs, and three bountiful meals served each day. Those not staying at the Sea View should still be able to get a table with 24 hours advance notice. While on the island, look for informational signs marking the various “Historic Homes of Pawleys Island.”

Georgetown

Back on the mainland and 17, it’s a quiet ten-mile drive through the woods to the charming waterfront town of Georgetown. Locals here like to first send visitors to the [Visitors Center](#) and Georgetown Maritime Museum, which is located on Front Street in the mid-1800s Harper Building. The staff there will recommend historic options within walking distance, like the [Kaminski House Museum](#), the [Rice Museum](#) and the [Georgetown County Museum](#) in the old Masonic Lodge.

There are many excellent “insider” tours available in Georgetown. [Swamp Fox Tours](#) and Remember When Tours both offer a nice overview of the historic district by vehicle, and [Miss Nell’s Tours](#) with Nell Cribb is perfect by foot. Further afield, locals love to send history lovers back in time on a cruise with [Cap’n Rod’s Lowcountry Plantation Tours](#).

Georgetown’s Front Street and Harborwalk along the Sampit River also reveal several excellent places to eat and sleep. The [River Room](#) offers great food and views at lunch and dinner, while [Harbor House Bed & Breakfast](#) does the same each night and morning.

Crossing over the Sampit River, 17 continues down to Charleston and more insider adventures. The stops start quickly, with the entrance to don’t-miss [Hampton Plantation State Historic Site](#) just after the bridge.