



## **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 private boat or ferry.
- There are no cars allowed on Bald Head Island. 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 1,114 private residences and is home to approximately 220 year-round residents.
- 288,267 ferry passengers traveled roundtrip to Bald Head Island in 2009.
- Just offshore are the “Frying Pan Shoals” that extend 20 miles from the cape point, the site of hundreds of shipwrecks in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.
- 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. Visitors are welcome to traverse the 108 steps to reach Old Baldy’s pinnacle, which provides visitors panoramic, 360-degree views of the entire island.

### **GETTING HERE**

- Three airports service the surrounding area. Wilmington International Airport is a 45-minute drive north; Myrtle Beach International Airport is a 60-minute drive south. Both service major carriers. Brunswick County Airport is five miles from Southport and services small planes with a 4,000-foot hard surface landing field.
- Via Highway 17, Southport is 30 miles south of Wilmington, N.C. and 60 miles north of Myrtle Beach, S.C. From points west, Interstate 40 and Highway 74/76 link the region directly to I-95.
- 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.
- Bordering the island to the north, protected salt marsh and tidal creeks are ideal for fishing, canoeing and kayaking.
- 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.
- Recently, the Bald Head Island Conservancy announced the launch of the Barrier Island Study Center, 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 Charles' 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 20,000 square foot cedar-sided clubhouse, expansive decks, pools, fitness room, private parking and umbrella, chair and towel-service for adjacent beaches. The Shoals Club recreation department coordinates organized activities for kids, teenagers and the entire family. Programs include scavenger hunts, ice cream socials, beach Olympics, sand sculpting contests and holiday carnivals and activities.
- Dining at the Shoals Club includes a 105-seat second floor dining room featuring New American Cuisine and specializing in seafood. The Sandbar Grille is an open-air venue that serves appetizers, sandwiches, salads and burgers.
- Bald Head Island Club's 18-hole, 6,855 yard championship golf course traverses freshwater lagoons, a maritime forest and dunes overlooking the Atlantic Ocean.
- Considered to be one of the finest in the Carolinas, the Bald Head Island Club course received a 4.5-star rating from *Golf Digest*, putting it in the top 20 percent in difficulty.
- *Travel + Leisure* recently ranked Bald Head Island 26<sup>th</sup> in its 100 Top Golf Communities list for two years in a row. *Golf Digest* listed the course as one of the top 10 in the Myrtle Beach area, and the course was also ranked 45<sup>th</sup> out of 500 by *North Carolina Magazine*.
- The Bald Head Island Club also offers a Pro Shop, driving range, fitness room, swimming pool, four hard-surface tennis courts, croquet greensward and a variety of dining options.
- Additional outdoors activities of interest on Bald Head Island include crabbing, canoeing, fishing, kayaking, surfing, tennis, running, cycling, nature 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.
- Bald Head Island Limited resort guests may enjoy full access to the Bald Head Island Club and Shoals Club by purchasing temporary memberships.

## **VACATIONS & VISITORS**

- In 2009, more than 100,000 vacationers spent time on Bald Head Island.
- Bald Head Island offers visitors a variety of accommodations, including private home rentals in all the island's environments.
- Bald Head Island Limited's rental program features nearly 100 homes, cottages and condominiums, available in all island environments.
- Common amenities for rental homes include one or more electric carts, fully-equipped kitchens, washer/dryer, VCR or DVD, steam iron, vacuum, cable TV, linens, etc.
- Vacationers of Bald Head Island Limited may purchase temporary membership in the Bald Head Island Club and the Shoals Club.
- Bald Head Island Limited offers a variety of vacation packages (please see the *Armchair Guide* section of *Haven* for details) and seasonal specials, such as golf packages, holiday packages, couple's retreat and weekday specials.

## **DINING AND SHOPPING**

- There are numerous dining options on the Island; Eb & Flo's Steambar, a casual, open-air pavilion overlooking the marina; The River Pilot Cafe, a casual restaurant just steps from the ferry landing (open seasonally); the Bald Head Island Club Dining Room, offering fine dining for members and guests; and the Shoals Club, offering fine dining as well as an open-air snack and beverage bar called the Sandbar Grille (open seasonally).
- 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. The market also offers on-site wine tastings and includes a café, Ice Cream Shoppe, deli, and butcher shop.
- Other island shops include Riverside Adventure Company, a retail clothier, gift shop, bicycle and cart rental store located in Harbour Village near the ferry landing; Maritime Passage, a women's clothing and accessories shop located beside the Maritime Market grocery store; Canopy Outfitters, offering an extensive selection of resort wear for the entire family, located in Crew's Quarters along Maritime Way; The Woods Gallery, a fine art gallery featuring paintings, sculptures and jewelry by local, regional and international artists; the Bald Head Island Club Pro Shop, offering a variety of golf, tennis and resort wear and gear; Island Hardware, a 5,000-square-foot hardware store with a full range of home improvement, garden and recreational supplies located along Maritime Way; the Dockmaster Convenience Store, a harbourside shop offering marine supplies, fuel and snacks; the Silver Peddler, a jewelry, housewares and gift shop located beside the Maritime Market grocery store; the Smith Island Museum gift shop located adjacent to Old Baldy Lighthouse; and Turtle Central, a gift shop located on the Bald Head Island Conservancy Campus on the eastern end of the Island.
- Centrally located in the maritime forest, Merchant's Row is a retail, office and storage center that houses a variety of independently owned and operated businesses offering a range of construction and home-related goods and services, including framing, electrical, plumbing, painting, tile, cabinetry, home maintenance, renovations and remodeling, and golf cart sales and servicing.

## **REAL ESTATE**

- Bald Head Island Limited owns and operates The Island Agency, the oldest, largest and most successful real estate agency representing homes and homesites on Bald Head Island and its mainland sister community, Indigo Plantation and Marina in Southport.
- In the last 4 years, The Island Agency, Bald Head Island Limited's affiliated real estate sales company, has generated nearly \$200 million in real estate sales transactions. The average home sold by The Island Agency in 2009 closed for \$943,325.
- Property owners on Bald Head Island come from more than 40 states.

**YACHT CLUB**

- The 10-acre harbour of Bald Head Island Marina is home-port to the Bald Head Island Yacht Club, which offers members a full complement of boating amenities.
- Bald Head Island Club Yacht Club members enjoy access to a bathhouse with restrooms, showers and laundry, and exclusive use of a boat slip, a privilege that can be passed down to future generations.
- Bald Head Island Club Yacht Club members may also purchase memberships in the Bald Had Island Club and oceanfront Shoals Club.
- Membership dues cover the cost of water, electricity and pump-out facilities, as well as reserves for dock replacement and dredging.

**BOATING AMENITIES**

- The Bald Head Island Marina's dockmaster and staff can assist visitors with small boat and fishing equipment rentals, fishing charters and canoe or kayak excursions
- Boat slips range from 30 to 100 feet with transient dockage for yachts to 115' on T-heads.
- 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.
- The prime fishing grounds of Frying Pan Shoals are 25 miles offshore and the Gulf Stream is within 50 miles.
- The Marina features a lighted entrance channel, 30, 50 and 100-amp electric hookups and gas and diesel fuel via high-flow pumps.
- Boat slips are also available at Indigo Plantation Marina and Deep Point Marina on the Southport mainland.
- Slips in all three marinas are available for rent on a daily, monthly or annual basis.

Additional information can be accessed at the island's website, [www.baldheadisland.com](http://www.baldheadisland.com).

*If you are interested in pursuing a story on Bald Head Island, contact Lauren Frye at 910-256-9742 or [lfrye@bhisland.com](mailto:lfrye@bhisland.com)*