

FAMILY FUN

A Swashbuckling Vacation Offers Varied Adventures

(NAPSA)—You don't have to be a pirate to steal away to one of the nation's most beautiful destinations, but knowing more about pirates could increase your appreciation of all this location has to offer.

North Carolina's Crystal Coast is known for its many charms, but lovers of pirate lore and fans of the soon-to-be-released "Pirates of the Caribbean 4" may be pleased to learn that in the 1700s it once played host to Blackbeard and his swashbuckling crew.

The family-friendly destination is also the final resting place for the Queen Anne's Revenge. From exploring Blackbeard's ship and visiting Blackbeard's Hammock House, to searching for hidden treasure at the haunted Fort Macon, bustling buccaneers can embark on a journey that retraces the famous pirate's nefarious ways.

Treasure abounds at the Beaufort Historic Site, North Carolina's third-oldest town and past stomping grounds of Blackbeard, with double-decker bus tours of the old jail, courthouse, apothecary and Old Burying Ground.

Horse lovers may appreciate a visit to Shackleford Banks. For more than 300 years, wild mustangs have roamed the unscathed shoreline after swimming ashore when a Spanish pirate ship exploring the New World met a tragic fate off North Carolina's shores. The wild horses have frolicked on the pristine deserted beaches and foraged for food with not a saddle or fence in sight.



His Ship Has Come In: North Carolina's beautiful Crystal Coast once played host to the famous pirate Blackbeard and his swashbuckling crew.

Brave buckoes can board a kayak tour exploring the world of eco-diversity and thriving history of this pirate-drenched destination. They experience the area by drifting on a guided tour through waters previously navigated by infamous buccaneers.

Dangling like a delicate string of pearls off the coast of North Carolina, this favored Atlantic beach destination of generations represents one of the only remaining natural barrier island systems in the world.

Noted as the "Graveyard of the Atlantic," it is considered the No. 1 dive location in the U.S. With more than 2,000 shipwrecks lining the ocean floor, the coast provides underwater history and an abundance of marine life beauty in warm, clear Gulf Stream waters. Popular diving spots include a 300-year-old wreck and a German U-boat sunk by local forces in WW II.

The area also provides visitors a chance to dine on "fresh-from-the-docks" seafood caught the same day in clean coastal waters. For more information, visit www.crystalcoastnc.org.