



Contact: Ryan Smith, (212) 724-7783, ryan@gilliesandzaiser.com

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Disconnect From Technology and Reconnect with Loved Ones on Bald Head Island, NC

North Carolina's only car-free island is a perfect place to unplug

Bald Head Island, NC (February 2020) – Today's kids don't know a world without smartphones or constant access to the internet, where social media isn't a preferred communication method and parents aren't constantly making rules about screentime. The average smartphone user touches their phone more than 2,500 times a day and according to a study by Expedia, the average vacationer spends nine hours of a week-long trip browsing social media. That's nine hours spent watching other people live their lives while being less physically present in yours.

While [Bald Head Island](#), a car-free island off the coast of North Carolina, has its fair share of Instagram-worthy shots and locations to create trending TikTok videos, its true appeal is as a destination where families can get away from the chaos of everyday life, disconnect to reconnect and enjoy nature over Netflix. From 14-miles of white sand beach wrapping three sides of the island and 10,000 acres of protected maritime forest, marsh and creek, to a thriving sea turtle protection program and the opportunity to use pedal power to get from Point A to Point B, there are numerous opportunities to create memories and engage with the loved ones in front of you versus the friends in your feed. Here are five experiences that you'll be tempted to post, but are worth putting down the phone or laptop and being present in the moment for:

- **Getting Sandy:** Sand and electronics are never a good combination, so it's the perfect excuse to leave the technology [at your rental home](#), grab a book and head down to one of Bald Head Island's beaches. South Beach features long stretches of pristine beach and calmer waters perfect for families, walkers and shell seekers; East Beach faces the open Atlantic and is perfect for surfing and boogie boarding while West Beach is perfect for long strolls and watching the ferry (the only way to get to the island) come and go.
- **Driving Hands-Free:** It's hard to ride a bike while looking at your phone, and after golf carts, the most popular form of transportation on Bald Head Island is the good old two-wheel bicycle. Grab

the family and take a bike ride under the tangled tree canopy of the maritime forest, or along the sand. Give the older kids some freedom and let them ride to the market for an ice cream cone without worrying about traffic.

Commented [LF1]: Maybe move this one up to the #2 spot?

- **Volunteering for Turtle Patrol:** Each year from approximately June to September, hundreds of turtles emerge from the Atlantic Ocean to lay their nests and later, thousands of baby hatchlings make their way back down the beach to the same waters. 2019 saw a record-breaking 170 loggerhead nests resulting in 9,579 hatchlings. Visitors can take part in the [Bald Head Island Conservancy](#)'s Sea Turtle Protection Program by joining educators and naturalists as they patrol the beach for nesting turtles or watch over nests as they prepare to hatch.
- **Howling at the Moon:** A Bald Head Island tradition since January 2011, the Maritime Market hosts the island's largest family-friendly beach party each month when the full moon rises out of the Atlantic Ocean. The "Howl" party (as it's called by the locals) brings hundreds of people to on East Beach and when the moon rises, attendees break into a collective "howl." The Maritime Market brings huge pots of soup and participants are encouraged to bring a dish to share around the bonfire.
- **Climbing to the Top:** 108 steps might not sound like a lot, but trust us when we say you'll want to use both hands to hold the railing while climbing to the top of [Old Baldy](#), the oldest lighthouse in North Carolina. Those that accomplish the climb are rewarded with breathtaking views of the island, Atlantic Ocean and Cape Fear Estuary. Since 1817, Old Baldy has marked the mouth of the Cape Fear River guiding ships through the river's channels and sandbars, and while officially relieved of its lighthouse duties in 1935, it still continues to be the most iconic spot on the island.

Bald Head Island is a boat-accessed community located two miles off the coast of Southport, NC. Transportation on the island is restricted to golf carts, bicycles and pedestrian traffic. Of the island's 12,000 acres, 10,000 acres of beaches, salt marsh and maritime forest are protected and will remain undeveloped. Old Baldy, the most famous manmade structure on the island, and one of the first things visitors notice when they arrive on Bald Head Island, was built in 1817 and is one of the few lighthouses where visitors may climb all the way to the top. Those who ascend the 108 steps to the lantern room are rewarded with epic views of the marsh, forest, beach and mouth of the Cape Fear River. To learn more about the island, visit www.BaldHeadIsland.com.

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Gillies and Zaiser
212.724.7783
media@gilliesandzaiser.com
www.gilliesandzaiser.com

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