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Subject: Adventures: Asheville, Greenville, Beaufort, Biking, Georgetown, Durham, Newberry

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Below: Set apart, that's entertainment, glorious fruit, beautiful Bs, take a ride, just peachy, life: phase 2.

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Carolina Adventure: Hunting Island, SC

Beautiful Beacon

Hunting Island State Park | Beaufort, SC

Why do people connect with lighthouses so fiercely? There are blogs and websites devoted to aficionados who can't explain their own love for these monoliths that warn sailors of the perils of the shore. For this adventure, you'll combine the lighthouse experience with a magnificent state park, located just 16 miles from Beaufort, one of the South's favorite historic towns.

Hunting Island State Park surrounds Hunting Island Lighthouse, originally built in 1859 and the only lighthouse in South Carolina which is open to the public. You may want to climb those 167 steps

when you first arrive, to get a great, bird's eye view of the rest of the island, plus the Atlantic Ocean and surrounding marshes. The first structure was destroyed by the Confederates during the Civil War, preventing the North from benefitting from its presence. In 1875, it was rebuilt and remained in service until 1933, although beach erosion required its removal more than a mile inland in 1889.

Start here, but plan to spend several hours enjoying the surrounding park, one of the most beautiful and popular in South Carolina. (More than one million visitors find it each year.) Make a checklist before you go. The tree graveyard on the beach is fascinating, and if you are very lucky, you might see dolphins wriggling up the beach to grab a fish. You probably won't see an endangered loggerhead turtle lumbering through the sand, but know that these creatures have found a safe haven here. There are alligators, pelicans, bald eagles, heron, egrets, and all sorts of sea creatures. It is natural, and that's why you want to visit and tread lightly.

WOW Factor: So many different environments can be found here.

The Lagoon is perfect for fishing and nature immersion, meaning you will see wildlife. Two movies, *Forest Gump* and *G.I. Jane*, were partially filmed here. The Hunting Island marsh boardwalk is a great path for families to easily explore. The beaches are beautiful and there are showers and dressing rooms, a campground, rental beach cabins, a fishing pier and a boat landing.

Hint: The Nature Center is helpful and the Visitor Center is your information resource. On your way, stop at the Shrimp Shack and pick up their famous shrimp burgers, or pack a cooler from a local market. Between March and November, experts will conduct tours through the park – a great way to get your bearings and their tips.

www.huntingisland.com

Where in the World Are You?

That's Entertainment

World-class, top-drawer entertainment, in a refurbished opera house that puts you within kissing distance of the stage (more or less). After the show, enjoy great restaurants, inviting pubs and a very walkable downtown. Stay another day and fall in love. *Where are you?*

Photo courtesy of SCPRT

Carolina Home Grown

Nature's Playground

Hello Tony,

We're just back from the cooling mountains of North Carolina where we (with dog, Ginger) biked mountain and river trails non-stop. For us, with family and friends, summer escapes mean heading up thru Clemson to the Blue Ridge Mountains, for the Brevard breweries and over to the spectacular auction weekend at Penland School of Arts ... to drink in the creativity that seems to connect at higher altitudes.

Many from your area visit for golf, tennis, mountain biking, or water sports. Beach reads offer brain candy for easy afternoons on our wide, sandy, waterfront playgrounds.

Come experience the best of life— jobs, low taxes and real estate bonanzas driving your search for a new or second home. Click to: [Retirement Living & Real Estate Tips](#).

Use the 320+ pages at CarolinaLiving.com to create your own Carolina stories and memories!

[Leyla & Patrick Mason](#)

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Fabulous Figs

When it comes to home-grown fruit, nothing could be easier than figs. Cultivated for thousands of years, figs can remain fruitful for many generations. There are about 470 varieties of common figs (*Ficus carica*)—the ones we grow in the southeast.

Groveswood Gallery

When you visit Asheville, make time for Groveswood Gallery, where you'll discover traditional and contemporary crafts, handmade by American artisans. That's enough, but there's more, including Groveswood Studios (with nine working artists), the North Carolina Homespun Museum, Estes-Winn Antique Care Museum, and when hunger strikes, the Golden Fleece Slow Earth Kitchen (Greek and Mediterranean).

Find Groveswood Gallery in the former weaving and woodworking complex of Biltmore Industries, adjacent to The Omni Grove Park Inn. Before you go, learn about the [history](#) of homespun fabrics, patronage by George and Edith Vanderbilt, the move toward automated textiles, and the rebirth into a family owned, lovely and very popular attraction.

www.groveswood.com

More about [Asheville](#).

Photo: Sculpture by David Sheldon

Where should you retire?

Short answer? It depends. We've interviewed hundreds of recent retirees – some seeking urban walkability, and others wanting rural solitude. In the past, many followed their children, but now, savvy retirees consider finding a new hometown that makes them happy, and offers enough amenities to keep the family happy when they visit.

Take your time. Make a list of must-haves and wishes. Szechuan restaurant? Lifelong learning? Boating? Community gardens. College campus? Great shopping. Entertainment. And so much more.

Two of the most commonly available and highly recommended figs for us are 'Brown Turkey' and 'Celeste.' 'Brown Turkey' produces purplish brown figs that occur over several months. It's winter hardy to 10 degrees F. 'Celeste' bears smaller, violet-brown skinned fruit. The tree itself is more winter hardy than 'Brown Turkey,' capable of surviving temperatures as low as 0 degrees F. Both varieties

produce excellent fruits that can be eaten fresh; however, 'Celeste' figs have more culinary versatility: the fruit can be dried or processed in preserves, glazed tortes, and compote.

A few other popular cultivars include Alma, Hunt, Conadria, Champagne (yellow), LSU Gold, Hardy Chicago, Kadota, and O'Rourke.

Figs are not like those "no pain-no gain plants." In fact, it seems unfair to expend so little effort to reap so many tasty rewards. Because they demand so little from their caregivers, you should plant one or two in your garden, although only one is necessary since figs produce only female flowers and set fruit without cross-pollination. In fact, expect two crops from *F. carica*: a spring breba crop borne on last year's wood and a midsummer crop produced on current season's shoots.

Figs prefer a well-drained, full sun location. Depending on the variety, some are more cold hardy than others. For protection from winter winds and cold temperatures, marginally cold-hardy figs should be planted on the south-facing side of your home close to a heat-absorbing brick or stone wall. Figs have the potential for reaching heights of 15 to 30 feet or more, but they can easily be maintained at 6 feet, which keeps the fruit within reach. Use as a shade tree, espalier, large shrub, summertime screen, or in a container. They sucker quite easily, so you should pay attention to controlling or at least accommodating their rampant spread.

Visit your favorite garden center or nursery now when the figs are fruiting. Let your palette decide which variety deserves to be in your landscape.

Learn more about Carolina gardening from Dr. Polomski's new book, [Carolinas Month by Month Gardening](#).

Available wherever books are sold.

Photos: Dr. Robert Polomski

Biking trails, both states.

Start your own search through CarolinaLiving.com and complete our [lifestyle survey](#).

The New Guide is here!

Updated town information, six fun new Carolina Adventures, and one heck of a good-looking feature showcasing gardens. Order yours today. [Click here](#) for the official hold-in-your-hand Guide to Carolina lifestyle fun and adventure trips, plus real estate tips, tax & cost-of-living advantages, retirement opportunities and town profiles. Just share your dream goals and we'll help lead you to smart Carolina life and times.

Facebook

Farm to Fork.

What's that all about, anyway?

Restaurants are embracing farm to fork – cultivating relationships with local farmers, getting food as fresh as can be, and combining the elements to create a Southern vision creative cuisine that's utterly captivating.

What's your favorite locally sourced restaurant?

Share with us on [Facebook](#) and we'll find recipes that showcase this delicious movement.

Heading your way

- Let's Take a Road Trip!
- Carolina Famous Faces
- Insider Attractions

Two wheels are better than four

The Carolinas have bike trails that follow mountain paths, meander along rivers, and follow old rails through tiny towns. Here are several of our favorites, with links for more information. Alone or with a group, take your water and your phone for images.

New River Route

It's a mountain trail that's gentle, with views of the New River, in Ashe County, as well as lovely rural settings (find it in the northwest corner of the state, near the town of Jefferson). You'll see a Christmas tree farm or two, as well. Bike rentals at RiverGirl Fishing Company, and fresh-baked cinnamon rolls from Todd Mercantile (of course you deserve them)!

Duke Forest

Start at historic Bennett Place, notable Civil War site.

You'll have 30+ miles of biking roads, and a nice stretch that goes through the woods at Duke University golf course. Want more?

Duke's campus is very bike friendly, as well as one beautiful seat of higher education. [More about Durham.](#)

Swamp Rabbit Trail

It's a 22-mile greenway for walking, bicycling, and

motorized wheelchairs (guidelines apply) and follows the Reedy River, connecting the City of Greenville, SC, with the nearby town of Travelers Rest. Beautifully marked, with multiple bike rental facilities and stops along the way. [More about Greenville.](#)

Bike the Neck

The Waccamaw Neck Bikeway is a flat, paved trail of about six miles, with two sections of four miles, traversing mostly shady areas, paralleling US 17. You'll go from Murrell's Inlet to Sandy Island Road, near Huntington Beach State Park. Locals walk and bike the trails frequently and visitors will enjoy the coastal terrain. [More about the Grand Strand.](#)

Want more? These two sites offer more great options, including some heavy-duty biking for thrill seekers and body builders.

Photos: Reedy Rides www.reedyrides.com; VisitNC.com

[NC Biking](#)

[SC Biking](#)

Carolina Cuisine

A Peach of a Recipe

My spouse's first cousin lives in Iowa, and for years, whenever the family gathered together, he would ask if we'd brought South Carolina peaches. "I dream about your peaches," he'd say, time and again. We understand.

It's peach season in the Carolinas, and some say the precious fruit has never tasted sweeter. Peeled or unpeeled, peaches are nothing short of luscious. They freeze well, make fabulous preserves and peach cobbler is unsurpassed. But we wanted something a bit different.

Try the [Peach Bread Pudding](#),* recipe courtesy of Abbot Farms www.abbottfarmsonline.com in the upstate of South Carolina.

Warm from the oven, served with a dollop of just-churned vanilla ice cream and perhaps a splash of sweet sherry. Yummmmmmm!

**Note: One tester cooked this recipe about 15 minutes longer than suggested. The addition of cinnamon sprinkled over the top added eye appeal.*

New Essex Homes

COLUMBIA, SC – Essex Homes announces four new opportunities for buyers to purchase an Essex home in Columbia, South Carolina. The builder has recently opened two new communities, Blythe Creek and The Ponds, as well as new phases at Indian River and Allan's Mill. Located in Columbia's popular Lake Carolina community, The Ponds offers new homes priced from the high \$100,000s and ranging from 1,200 to more than 2,700 square feet and three to five bedrooms. Also new is Blythe Creek in Northeast Columbia. With prices from the mid-\$100,000s, homes at Blythe Creek offer three or four bedrooms, a stainless steel appliance package and more. Finally, Indian River, a golf course community in Lexington, features homes priced from the low \$200,000s. Homes offer 2,500 to more than 4,200 square feet of living space with three to six bedrooms and all brick exteriors. Visit www.EssexHomes.net.

Encore: an integrated new-home lifestyle

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. – Briar Chapel, being developed by Newland Communities, joins forces with [David Weekley Homes](#) to unveil Encore, an integrated new-home lifestyle offering for adults ages 55 years and older. The second release of this housing option in the country, Encore will offer single-story houses and dedicated amenities for residents seeking an age-qualified community along with the activities and benefits already available at Briar Chapel. The community will feature low-maintenance homes that differ from traditional age-qualified housing in the market. Based on innovative real estate research, Encore re-envisioned active adult living by combining the privacy of designated amenities with the camaraderie and interaction of a larger community, plus a 3,100-square-foot amenity center with a private clubhouse, pool and fitness facility.

Sea Pines offers value-packed vacation package.

Available until Sept. 6, the [Inn & Club at Harbor Town Summer Special](#) starts at \$285 per day (four-day minimum) and features a \$50 resort credit and reduced golf rates. Included complimentary are daily transportation to the new, world-class Sea Pines Beach Club (with use of beach chairs, umbrellas, beach towels, and cooler of bottled water), valet parking, adult bikes (with reduced rates on children's bikes), two hours of court time at The Sea Pines Racquet Club, and full access to the Inn's luxurious pool. Feature unlimited use of the resort's fitness center and free wireless Internet service during the stay.

Outdoor Fitness Easy on Daniel Island

More than 25 miles of walking, running and biking trails on [Daniel Island](#) meander through parks and the island's downtown, over marsh and tidal creeks and along the Wando River, offering beautiful Lowcountry views along the way and providing endless opportunities for fitness and fun. Now, new easy-to-follow trail markers and a corresponding mobile app for Android and iOS users, developed by the Daniel Island Company and Daniel Island Property Owners' Association, make it easy and fun for residents and visitors in Charleston's island town to navigate and explore while getting fit on the island's trails. Daniel Island is a 4,000-acre island master planned community in the city of Charleston, SC that is home to traditional neighborhoods, award-winning golf and tennis facilities and an outstanding collection of amenities in a self-contained island town setting.

Image: Daniel Island Company

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