



# Beaufort, South Carolina

## *Lowcountry Cruising at its Best*

Located on Port Royal Island in the heart of South Carolina's Lowcountry, charming Beaufort is a bustling waterfront community with a caught-in-time air. Moss-draped oaks line the historic district's dozens of streets, which are packed with some of the South's best restaurants and shops. A handful of top-notch docking options—the town is on the Intra-coastal Waterway (ICW), halfway between Charleston and Savannah—make it easy for boaters to explore what the area has to offer: an enchanting mix of the sophisticated and the old-fashioned.

The Beaufort Waterfront Park, (Henry C. Chambers Park) was built in 1979, and offers a relaxing setting with swinging benches where you can sit and watch all kinds of boats going by along the waterway.

## What to Do

### Explore Old Point

One of Beaufort's original and most picturesque neighborhoods, filled with houses built from the mid-18th through the mid-19th centuries. Locals in period costume lead groups through the district during the Spirit of Old Beaufort Guided Historic Tours (843-525-0459). Another great option: book a ride with Carolina Buggy Tours (843-525-1300)—the vintage carriages are pulled by Belgian draft horses.

### Shop on Bay Street

Justly known as the go-to spot for galleries and one-of-a-kind boutiques. Two of our favorites: Lulu Burgess (917 Bay St., 843-524-5858) for striking jewelry and a well-edited selection of housewares, and the Craftseller (818 Bay St., 843-525-6104) for hand-made pottery and glass candlesticks.

### Kayak the Salt Marsh

Beaufort is surrounded by a web of creeks and inlets rich with oystercatchers, stone crabs, and bottlenose dolphins. Guided paddling is available through Beaufort Kayak Tours (843-525-0810, [www.beaufortkayaktours.com](http://www.beaufortkayaktours.com)).

### Pedal Around the Historic District

Established in 1711, Beaufort is one of South Carolina's oldest settlements, second only to Charleston—a leisurely bike ride is a great way to explore the town's colorful heritage. Bike rentals are available at Lowcountry Bikes (102 Sea Island Pkwy., 843-524-9585, [www.lowcountrybicycles.com](http://www.lowcountrybicycles.com)).

### Fish the Area Waters

Orvis-affiliated Bay Street Outfitters (815 Bay St., 843-524-5250, [www.baystreetoutfitters.com](http://www.baystreetoutfitters.com)) is one of the leading fishing resources in the region, and can help arrange trips of any kind, from trout expeditions to tarpon hunts. (Tip: if you need a fishing guide, the locals recommend Tuck.)

Beaufort's horse-and-buggy tours of Old Point and parts of the downtown historic district are a great way to see the area. The tours are varied in content, and last about an hour. Guides touch on area history, telling stories about the grand houses and their owners.

## Where to Eat

### Breakwater

Intimate, upscale *boite* reopening this fall with a heightened focus on farm-to-table cooking and regional ingredients such as heirloom Carolina Gold rice, grass-fed lamb, and locally grown peaches. 203 Carteret St., 843-379-0052

### Nippy's

Low-key fish shack with picnic tables and the best oyster rolls and shrimp rolls in town. There's live music most Thursday and Friday nights. 310 West St., 843-379-8555

### Plums Restaurant

Relaxed bistro that's a good choice for lunch. Updated classics included a housemade pimiento-cheese sandwich and grilled crab cakes with Dijon-chive mayo. 904 1/2 Bay St., 843-525-1946

### Saltus River Grill

Popular riverfront restaurant with a patio and happening bar, run by the same folks who own Plums (see above). The emphasis is on local seafood; don't miss the steamed littleneck clams with chorizo and tomato broth. 82 Bay St., 843-379-3474

### Wren Bistro, Bar and Market

Stylish newcomer with a compact menu of excellent soups, salads, sandwiches, charcuterie plates and cheeses. The wine list is eclectic and full of little-known gems. 210 Carteret St., 843-524-9463

The promenade of the Beaufort Waterfront Park is a popular place to fish from the sea wall.



Beaufort's shrimp boats are an important part of the town's history dating back to the 1920's when the first shrimp packing house opened in Port Royal, SC starting the shrimp industry.



## Where to Dock

### Dataw Island Marina

Full-service marina and boatyard with 2 restaurants on-site in a gated community on the Morgan River, about three miles from the ICW.  
*100 Marina Dr., 843-838-8410*

### Downtown Marina of Beaufort

Directly on the ICW in downtown Beaufort and adjacent to Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park, with a well-stocked ship's store.  
*1006 Bay St., 843-524-4422*

### Port Royal Landing

Right on the ICW; a courtesy car will take you into downtown Beaufort; their on-site restaurant, the Back Porch Grille, hosts a popular open-air karaoke night on Fridays.  
*1 Landing Dr., 843-525-666*

### Side Trip: St. Helena Island

If you've got the time it's worth making the effort to get out to St. Helena, one of the most beautiful and unique of South Carolina's famed Sea Islands. St. Helena is a stronghold of Gullah culture, which has West African roots and is still very much alive. Islanders are known for their woven sweet-grass baskets, their distinct gumbo and red-bean dishes, and their Creole-inflected English. The island also has an expansive park with walking paths and a peaceful beach. People travel from miles around to the family-owned Shrimp Shack, where the meaty shrimp burgers are made from seafood the family caught that day (*1925 Sea Island Pkwy., St. Helena Island; 843-838-2962*). It's about a 20-minute drive from Beaufort to St. Helena, and the road is lined with farm stands peddling local produce and fruit. [m/](#)



The shrimp nets hang off a boat at sunset in Beaufort.