



DATA AND STATISTICS FOR THE MYRTLE BEACH AREA

FAST FACTS

Horry County

- Horry County is the largest of South Carolina's counties by land mass, with 1,134 square miles, but accounts for only 4 percent of the state's population
- The county consists of these communities: Little River, North Myrtle Beach, Atlantic Beach, Briarcliffe Acres, **Myrtle Beach**, Surfside Beach, Garden City Beach, Murrells Inlet, Pawleys Island, Conway, Aynor and Loris
- Population: 238,493 (based on U.S. Census Bureau data)
- Average per capita income: \$26,789 (based on the 2006 S.C. Statistical Abstract)
- Median family income: \$51,300 (based on the 2006 S.C. Statistical Abstract)

Myrtle Beach, Hospitality

The Myrtle Beach area, also known as South Carolina's Grand Strand, represents 60 miles of coastline and nine coastal communities.

- Population (Myrtle Beach): 28,597 (based on U.S. Census Bureau data)
- Restaurants: more than 1,900 full-service establishments
- Annual visitors: 13.8 million (estimate, 2005)
- Lodging: approximately 460 places with 89,000 accommodation units
- Golf: 105 completed golf courses with a total of approximately 4.0 million rounds of golf played (2005)
- Theaters: 8 live entertainment venues with more than 11,400 seats
- Airport arrivals: 716,484 people (2006)
- Shopping: more than 300 outlet shopping stores
- Sunny days: average of 215 days each year

MYRTLE BEACH RECOGNIZED AS TOP TRAVEL DESTINATION, RETIREMENT TOWN

The Travel Channel named Myrtle Beach one of **America's Best Beaches** for 2004-2005, earning 18 out of a possible 20 points. Myrtle Beach was singled out as the **Best Family Beach**. A review on The Travel Channel's Web site, discovery.com, states, "Myrtle Beach is the East Coast's ultimate vacation hub."

Myrtle Beach beat exotic locales such as Waikiki and St. Thomas in an online poll of favorite beaches conducted by **Yahoo! Travel** and **National Geographic Traveler** magazine. The survey of more than 2,200 travelers ranked **Myrtle Beach No. 2** on a list of **Top 10 Beaches**. The qualities most important to beachgoers were cleanliness, scenery, climate, water temperature and romance, in that order.

The Myrtle Beach area has again been named a favorite travel destination by readers of **Southern Living** magazine. In its fifth annual Readers' Choice Awards, the area was named the South's **second favorite beach** and **third most popular family destination**.

For the fourth consecutive year, the Myrtle Beach area is among **AAA's Top Driving Destinations**. In 2005, Myrtle Beach rose to No. 3 on the list.

The Myrtle Beach area was named **one of the nation's top vacation spots for retired Americans** age 55 and older, according to a study by tourism researchers **D. K. Shifflet & Associates**. The company also ranked the Myrtle Beach area **No. 5 in the nation for leisure destinations**.

The Myrtle Beach area was **No. 1** on the 2005 list of **10 Most Desirable Second Home Markets** according to **EscapeHomes.com**, a Web site for second-home buyers.

In a 2004 article, **Travel 50 & Beyond** magazine included Myrtle Beach on its list of **10 Great Retirement Towns**.

RESIDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Editorial note: Georgetown County lies south of Horry County. Pawleys Island lies in both Horry and Georgetown counties.

Resident Population

Horry County <i>(1134 sq. miles)</i>	238,493
City of Myrtle Beach	28,597
Georgetown County <i>(815 sq. miles)</i>	60,860
City of Georgetown	8,706

Based on the U.S. Census Bureau data

Income Demographics

	Per Capita	Median Family
Georgetown	\$30,399	\$49,700
Horry	\$26,789	\$51,300

Based on the 2006 S.C. Statistical Abstract

Age Composition of Horry and Georgetown Counties

	Under 5	5 -19	20 - 64	65+
Georgetown	3,565	11,875	32,091	8,354
Horry	1,1298	35,707	120,154	29,470

Based on the 2000 census

Average Cost of Living Prices

Average New Home Cost <i>(2400 sq. ft. living area, conventionally built on site, 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, 2 car garage)</i>	\$252,950
Average Apartment Rent <i>(2 bedrooms, 2 baths, unfurnished, approx. 950 sq. ft., excluding utilities except water and sewer)</i>	\$605
Average Electric Bill	\$131.61
Average Phone Charges <i>(not including long distance service)</i>	\$25.10
Average Gasoline Price per Gallon <i>(regular unleaded gasoline)</i>	\$2.04
Average Price of a Movie Ticket	\$8.08

As of January 2007 ACCRA Cost of Living Survey

Employment

The majority of jobs in Horry County are related to the services necessary for a successful tourism industry. Approximately 65 percent to 70 percent of Horry County's employment is tourism related. The unemployment rate was 6.46 percent in 2004.

Source: S.C. Employment Security Commission

Top 10 Employers—Horry County

Horry County School District	4712
Burroughs & Chapin Company	3000
Wal-Mart	2358
Horry County Government	1800
AVX Corporation	1200
Conway Medical Center	1100
Blue Cross Blue Shield	1000
Grand Strand Regional Medical Center	993
Myrtle Beach National	970
Coastal Carolina University	765

Residential Building

2000	2083
2001	2179
2002	2546
2003	3476
2004	4473
2005	6816
2006	6694

*Permits Issued - Horry County
(Single and Multi Family Units)
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census*

Climate

Sunny Days	215
Overcast Days	150
Frost Days	42
Wettest Months	Aug. & Sept.
Driest Months	April & Nov.
Days with 10 inches or rain or more	77
Days when max temp is more than 90°	40

*Based on 30 years of data
Source: S.C. Climatology Department*

VISITOR CHARACTERISTICS

Grand Strand leisure travelers spent an average of \$118.80 per person per day, and group business travelers spent an average of \$208.11 per person per day. Furthermore, visitors typically use their own car as their primary transportation (89.5 percent). Most Grand Strand visitors (59 percent) stayed in hotels, while 25 percent stayed in condos and villas.

Tourist Population Estimates

1999	13.7 million
2000	13.8 million
2001	11.9 million
2002	12.7 million
2003	12.8 million
2004	13.2 million
2005	13.8 million

Visitor Age

The Grand Strand attracts a wide range of travelers; approximately 91 percent of visitors were under the age of 65.

Visitor Income

The Grand Strand attracts middle- to high-income travelers; visitor income has steadily increased over the years.

\$100,000 +	12%
\$ 75,000 - \$99,999	18%
\$ 60,000 - \$74,999	18%
\$ 45,000 - \$ 59,999	18%
\$ 30,000 - \$44,999	21%
\$ 30,000 or less	13%

Visitor Length of Stay

The average length of stay along the Grand Strand was 5.0 days for leisure travelers and 3.6 days for business travelers.

Visitor Origin

Along the Grand Strand, 20 percent of our visitors came from North Carolina in 2005. Another 25 percent traveled from New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio and New Jersey. The following are the 2005 top 10 states of visitor inquiry origin: North Carolina, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Virginia, South Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, Illinois and Michigan.

Golf Revenues

One out of eight American travelers played golf while they were on a trip at least 100 miles away from home according to a news release by the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA). Golf generates more income than any other single entertainment or recreational activity in the state. Approximately 4.0 million total rounds of golf were played on area courses in 2005.

ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Admissions Tax - Horry County

2000	\$8.78 million
2001	\$8.97 million
2002	\$9.02 million
2003	\$8.67 million
2004	\$8.92 million
2005	\$9.30 million
2006	\$9.29 million

Source: S.C. Department of Parks,
Recreation and Tourism

Accommodation Tax - Horry County

2000	\$11.52 million
2001	\$11.70 million
2002	\$12.21 million
2003	\$12.37 million
2004	\$13.12 million
2005	\$13.93 million
2006	\$14.56 million

Source: S.C. Department of Parks,
Recreation and Tourism

Retail Sales - Horry County

2000	\$6.05 billion
2001	\$5.98 billion
2002	\$6.17 billion
2003	\$6.64 billion

2004	\$7.48 billion
2005	\$8.28 billion
2006	\$9.25 billion

Source: S.C. Department of Revenue

Airport Arrivals

2000	789,843
2001	709,561
2002	628,923
2003	666,545
2004	766,268
2005	781,088
2006	716,484

Source: Myrtle Beach International Airport

Source: www.myrtlebeachinfo.com/chamber/research/data_and_statistics.htm
 For more information, contact Wendy Bernstein, research manager, Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce, (843) 916-7217