

Outer Banks, NC



Despite its notoriety as a fabulous beach and family destination, and its growing reputation as a golf haven, the Outer Banks will always and forever be known as the place where man first took to the sky. The Wright Brothers of Dayton, Ohio came for consistently faster winds and higher air density to help lift their “flying machine” off the sandy soil in the early 1900s. Their monument and museum at Kitty Hawk is the single most important element of any trip to what is known in the local parlance as OBX.

It helps make the windswept, coastal region North Carolina’s most enchanting tourist destination, as the Outer Banks is a true American treasure. It is a throwback coastal retreat with a charm that is preserved not only in its distinct culture but across many of its big-name golf designs as well.

The region has always catered to families, with plenty of sand, sun, sea and saltwater to excite even the calmest of children. In recent

years, OBX has begun to assert itself as a true golf destination, with an array of courses that are more closely tied to all of nature's coastal elements than what you'll find in other East Coast golf destinations.



Nags Head Golf Links

Two courses in particular possess qualities closely representing the challenge of golf in the British Isles. [Nags Head Golf Links](#), located in the town of the same name, has several holes routed right along the Roanoke Sound with winds that seemingly changed by the minute. The front nine's fifth and ninth and the back nine's 15th and 18th holes actually play right along the water in opposite directions, making club selection more art than science. Though not located directly on the water, the well-bunkered, 160-yard, par-3 17th hole (with sound waters lapping just beyond the dunes that surround the green) provided the best imitation of what is routinely experienced in the UK.



The Currituck Club

The Currituck Club is located 45 minutes north of Nags Head in the town of Corolla. The Rees Jones-designed layout that winds through a premier, gated community and features diverse coastal terrain (including sand dunes, wetlands, maritime forests and sound-side shoreline) and glimpses of the Currituck Sound, particularly on signature holes at the par-5 seventh and par-3 15th. Like all the great links courses abroad, the Currituck Club can change complexion according to the wind speed and direction. Play it on three consecutive days and you'll likely enjoy three different experiences.



Kilmarlic Golf Club

Three mainland courses worth experiencing are **Kilmarlic**, The Carolina Club and The Pointe. Kilmarlic is an upscale Tom Steele design. Though more heavily wooded than the island courses and thus less impacted by coastal breezes, Kilmarlic challenges with numerous water hazards. In fact, there are only three holes on the entire course devoid of a wetland or water feature. Players must think their way around a layout that stretches a modest 6,560 yards in length. Probably the most memorable hole at **Kilmarlic** is the 201-yard, par-3 17th. A precise shot over marsh that runs along the entire left side and then wraps around back of a bulkhead green is required to hit dry land. **The Pointe**, meanwhile, is a traditional design that spreads out across the rural Carolina mainland. Like Kilmarlic, The Pointe's greatest defense is in the form of water on fifteen holes.



The Carolina Club

Last but not least, [The Carolina Club](#) is a brawny layout (especially in relation to the others in the region) that stretches to almost 7,000 yards. Designed by popular architects Russell Breeden and Bob Moore, the layout is more open than its mainland brethren making the winds more significant. The signature hole at The Carolina is the 166-yard, par-3 seventh. It showcases an island green that can be difficult to hit when the ocean breezes kick up and penetrate the mainland. Eateries are almost as plentiful as grains of sand on the beaches. Try [Kill Devil Grill](#) in Kill Devil Hills, if only for the distinctive name. Speaking of hard-to-forget names, a meal at [Risky Business Seafood](#) in Hatteras is also a good option. Lastly, the king of wacky names might be: [Captain Puddle Ducks' Seafood Steamer Pots](#), not easy to say, but great to visit, in Ocracoke.