



## Atlantic Beach Home to Fort Mason

Atlantic Beach, part of the eastern North Carolina coastline known as the Outer Banks, is the oldest of the five resort towns known as the “Crystal Coast”. It doesn’t have the hustle and bustle of a Myrtle Beach, nor the grandeur and “dress-up-for-dinner” attitude of Hilton Head. Life there is calmer and quieter; which makes it a great travel destination for those who want their vacation to be more leisurely rather than “gotta go here” and then “gotta go do that”. Not that there aren’t things to do, because they are, but the attractions tend to be slower paced and more contemplative and relaxing.

The reason the area is called the Outer Banks is that the while the Atlantic Ocean beach is on the eastern-most side of Atlantic Beach, the western coast of Atlantic Beach is also bounded by water. The water between the American coastline and the Outer Banks is known as Bogue Sound. The “spit” of land can be as small as 300-400 feet wide in some places, and up to 2500 feet in others. The “banks” are connected to the mainland at several points with bridges.

Less than three miles north of Atlantic Beach, still on the outer bank, is Fort Macon. It is at the extreme northern point of this island so it is surrounded on three sides by water, the Atlantic Ocean, Beaufort Inlet and Bogue Sound. It was used during the Civil War but originally built in 1826 to 1834. It replaced two earlier forts on the site that washed away. It is shaped like a pentagon and Robert E. Lee was stationed there as a young Army Officer. It was the scene of a significant battle during the Civil War, taken by the North, giving them control of the entire North Carolina Coast.

History and particularly Civil War buffs will appreciate its museum and the tour of

the fort, which is basically the same as it was when built. The fort was re-garrisoned during the Spanish American War and again during World War II. The guided tour through the fort is most informative, and it includes many exhibits and audio-visual displays within. One can also just wander about the interior and exterior of the fort at your own pace. The fort made history again as late as 1990 when the U.S. Coast Guard named a woman to its command. The fort is part of the Fort Macon State Park.

**For more information about vacations to Atlantic Beach, NC visit <http://rooms101.com/category/atlantic-beach>**