



A Picturesque and Captivating Coastal Village

For over 200 years the historic coastal community of Southport has guarded the mouth of the Cape Fear River and continues to be the keeper of its history. Originally incorporated in 1792 as Smithville, its progressive citizens changed its name to Southport in 1887 in hopes of attracting a port. The port went further upstream to the City of Wilmington but this entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well in the City today. The historic charm of this community is evident as you walk under a canopy of 200-year-old live oak trees or walk past majestic Victorian homes which once belonged to river pilots or possibly even a pirate or two. The noteworthy architecture of the stately homes, romantic coastal cottages and historic churches, the venerable charm of the downtown area and ambience of the waterfront make this coastal village a uniquely attractive place to live and visit.

Southport is one of few cities with a true downtown, a five block area serving as the central commercial district with banks, antique and collectible shops, restaurants and professional offices. Strolling and shopping for dated furnishings and artifacts, unusual gifts and special accessories are a major pastime. Along the way are opportunities to take an historic tour of the City, catch the scenery along the waterfront, visit the Maritime Museum, rest and enjoy the view at one of the many relaxing parks and sample the diverse offerings of a variety of pubs and restaurants.

True to its nautical heritage, the City offers sailors, anglers and boaters a safe haven through the Southport Marina, Old Yacht Basin and City Pier. Its reputation as a place of scenic beauty, old world charm, and appealing quality of life ranks Southport very highly as a desirable place to retire. The climate is moderate, and the area offers virtually year-round golf, boating and fishing.



Incorporated: 1792
2006 population: 2,677
County: Brunswick
www.cityofsouthport.com

Southport Utilities:

- Electricity
- Water
- Wastewater

Major Employers:

- Archer Daniels Midland Corporation
- J. Arthur Doshier Memorial Hospital
- Bald Head Island, Ltd.
- Brunswick County School System
- Brunswick County Government
- City of Southport
- Primary Energy
- Progress Energy-Brunswick Nuclear Plant
- Sunny Point Military Ocean Terminal
- Tri-Tech, Inc.
- Wal-Mart

Transportation:

- Highways: NC 211, NC 133, NC 87
- Railways: CSX Railroad
- Airports: New Hanover International Airport (commercial carriers), Brunswick County Airport
- Port Facilities: Port of Wilmington (ocean freight and liner services), Sunny Point Military Ocean Terminal



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INTERESTING FACTS

Southport's North Carolina Maritime Museum documents, collects, preserves and researches the maritime history of coastal North Carolina. The museum and its facilities—especially its auditorium, library and Watercraft Center—are made available to community, civic and educational groups.

The Southport Historical Society makes history come alive with a casual one mile walk along a self-guided tour, the Historic Southport Trail. Tour pamphlets are available at the Southport Visitor's Center located at 113 West Moore Street.

Just outside Southport's downtown commercial district is one of the finest medical care facilities in the region, the J.A. Doshier Memorial Hospital. First established in 1930, this facility offers a wide variety of diagnostic healthcare services rarely equaled for facilities of its size. Since 2000, the hospital has added a skilled nursing facility and increased its size to better serve the Southport area.

With its proximity to Wilmington, the third leading US location for film production, and its many scenic assets, Southport has been the site of many feature films, television shows and commercials. The City was the location for the teen drama, Dawson's Creek, aired on the WB TV network.

Across the Cape Fear and accessible by ferry is the Fort Fisher Civil War Museum. Visitors can view the remains of the earthen fort that kept the Cape Fear River and the port of Wilmington open to blockade runners, which delivered vital supplies to the Confederate armies until the fort fell on January 15, 1865.

Across the river and adjacent to the Fort Fisher Museum is the NC Aquarium which offers a wide variety of free programs and activities year-round. Daily programs include marine life videos, live animal programs, audience participation games, demonstrations and more.

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Preserving Seafaring Traditions

The maritime legacy is an important part of Southport's history. From the pirate ships of yesterday to the fishing and recreational vessels of today, the City's protected harbor has long been noted for its beauty and hospitality. Serving the mouth of the Cape Fear River, the Intracoastal Waterway and the Atlantic Ocean, her past and present are inexorably tied to the river and the sea.

From Waterfront Park you can watch large transoceanic ships from every country pass on their way up the Cape Fear to the State Ports. Seated in one of the Park's wooden swings, you can see ferries, giant freighters, barges and sleek sailboats, as well as two lighthouses, creating remarkable photogenic vistas. The Park's City Pier is a popular destination for fishermen and visitors from near and far. The sights and scenery are so spectacular that a number of motion pictures and TV films have been made in and around the City.

A popular Southport attraction is the Riverwalk. Starting at Waterfront Park, it weaves around the riverfront through the Old Yacht Basin to the Southport Marina. Along the way there are ample opportunities to take in the sights and sounds of the village, stop to watch fishermen unload their catch or enjoy fresh seafood prepared at one of the many excellent restaurants.

Captivating Events and Attractions

With the perfect climate and natural surroundings for year-round outdoor activities, Southport has many to offer. There are numerous fishing tournaments throughout the year. Of special note is the U.S. Open King Mackerel Tournament in October which now attracts over 500 boats and is held in high esteem by the fishing community. Historic tours, golf tournaments and boating events are held throughout the year as well as special activities for kids such as the annual Crab Derby and Captain Charlie's Fishing Tournament.

In 1795 the City, then named Smithville, began observing Independence Day. It now hosts the official North Carolina Fourth of July Festival. The City welcomes visitors from all over the country and the world for the annual festivities which include a naturalization ceremony, over 100 arts and crafts booths, a parade, food, entertainment and a spectacular fireworks display over the harbor. Over 50,000 people attend the festival each year.

Year's end ushers in the annual Christmas By The Sea Festival, a collection of events in the coastal area around Southport stretching over three weekends. The second weekend highlights events in the City including: an historic home tour, lighted boat parade (flotilla) and choral concert. Downtown merchants extend their hours of operation for the convenience of visitors.