

# Travel

## Exploring World Class Destinations on a Budget

### Ocean City, Maryland: Hot fun in the summertime

Nothing makes a shore memory better than lazy days spent listening to the waves crashing into the white sand beach. Throw in Ocean City's glorious pink sunsets, fresh seafood from the Chesapeake Bay, and all the amusements and fun one town can muster, and you've got yourself a vacation the whole family will remember.

#### THINGS TO SEE AND DO

Ocean City's 10 miles of sparkling beach are free and open to the public daily. Strolling the Boardwalk is also free, or you can hop the tram and take it all in for just \$2.50 one-way.

To escape the sun, duck into the Ocean City Life-Saving Station Museum at the inlet end of the Boardwalk where you'll find Ocean City heritage items, including relics recovered from shipwrecks,

vintage bathing suits, even a collection of sands from around the world. (Admission: \$3 for adults, \$1 for children 12 and under.)

Shoppers can go on a spree at more than 40 national retail stores at the Ocean City Factory Outlets just across the Route 50 bridge in West Ocean City.

In the evening, the whole family will love Sundaes in the Park, a free family concert series running from July 11 to August 29 every Sunday at Northside Park, 127th St. bayside, from 6 to 8 p.m. Pay a small fee to make your own ice cream sundae and then sit back and enjoy a concert and children's entertainment.

During July and August, enjoy free, live music right on the beach, just off the Boardwalk at North Division Street, on Wednesday evenings starting at 8 p.m. The same spot sees Bonfires on the Beach with a different guest speaker every Thursday

starting at 9 p.m., July 15 to August 26.

#### ACCOMMODATIONS

Many of the hotels and inns in the area are family-owned and -operated. Prices vary according to amenities and location. Some budget-conscious travelers opt to save money by booking a hotel on Route 50 or another area just outside of town. Visitors can also strike a bargain with mid-week deals found on the X-tra Long Summer Deals page of the official visitors Web site ([www.ococean.com/xls.html](http://www.ococean.com/xls.html)). Rates also may be cheaper for Sunday or Monday arrival; be flexible to plan the most cost-effective vacation.

#### FOOD & DINING

General's Kitchen, at 74th Street and Coastal Highway, is a long-running favorite for its home-style breakfast and famous creamed chipped beef. You'll also find good breakfast, homemade doughnuts, and comfort food available in the wee hours at Layton's Family Restaurant, with locations on the north and south ends of Coastal Highway.

Dumser's has several locations, including the Boardwalk, serving up home-made ice cream and unforgettable milkshakes, plus burgers and the lot. Thrasher's French Fries on the Boards is another Ocean City tradition (just look for the long line,



**The Ocean City Boardwalk offers endless options in dining, shopping, lodging and entertainment.**

which tends to move quickly and is worth the wait).

You can also eat well and eat for less at any number of restaurants that have "early-bird specials." For affordable fine dining, try The Hobbit Restaurant at 81st Street bayside, which has a nice early-bird menu.

All-you-can-eat steamed crabs and seafood specials can be found all over town, but Hooper's Crab House (the big barn structure across the Route 50 bridge on the bay) has the best atmosphere for picking and shucking.

#### ENTERTAINMENT

Get sand between your toes and party Jamaican-style with nightly entertainment at Seacrets, located on the bay at 49th Street. Catch happy hour or have dinner as the sun goes down to the "1812 Overture" at Fager's Island at 60th Street on the bay. Another bayside favorite is BJ's South at 1st Street, a great place to eat and drink. If you go early, you get a free sunset cruise with dinner purchase.



**A vintage swimsuit exhibit is one of the attractions at Ocean City Life-Saving Station Museum, located at the inlet end of the Boardwalk.**

#### Did you know?

You can get a free "Sea For Yourself Visitor Guide," outlining accommodations and everything to see and do in Ocean City, by visiting [www.ococean.com](http://www.ococean.com) or calling 800-OC-OCEAN.

#### Expert travel tip

**Courtesy of Donna Abbott, Media Services Manager:** "The best way to get around Ocean City is to park your car and take the bus. Our buses operate up and down Coastal Highway 24 hours a day. The fare is just \$2 and that allows you to get on and off the bus as often as you like from

6 a.m. the day the ticket is purchased until 6 a.m. the next day. We also offer discount coupon books where you can get 10 bus passes for \$15."

#### \$25 For Your Tip

Tell us about the travel bargains you've found. If we publish your item, we'll send you \$25 and credit you by name. Include your address and phone number, as well as the name, address and phone number of any facility you mention, for fact-checking purposes. Photos are welcome. Send items to: Travel, c/o Hollister, 3 E. Wynnewood Rd., Wynnewood, PA 19096-1917; or email contact [us@hollister1.com](mailto:us@hollister1.com) (type "Travel" in the subject line).

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