

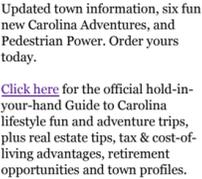
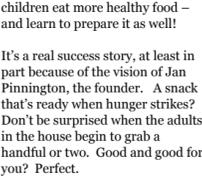
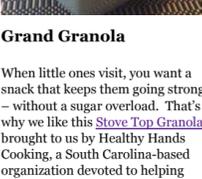
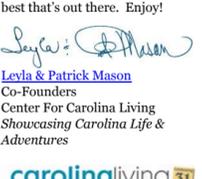
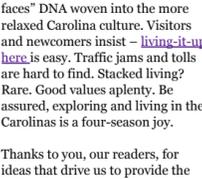
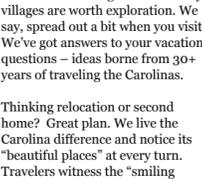
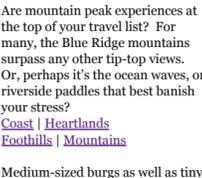
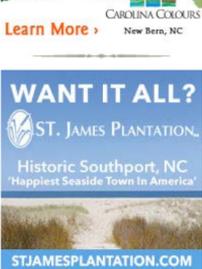
Now's the time for fun getaways and the great outdoors - Welcome!



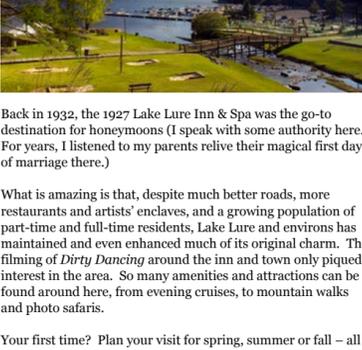
May 11, 2017

Below: Dirty? No. Sexy? Oh yes; Lowcountry luxurious; Wild Indigo; Ariel is calling; Get the crabs; Step back in time; Food for the kids (and adults, too); Pampered perfection; A grand affair; Fruit of the vine.

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Take a Road Trip to Lake Lure



Back in 1932, the 1927 Lake Lure Inn & Spa was the go-to destination for honeymoons (I speak with some authority here. For years, I listened to my parents relive their magical first days of marriage there.)

What is amazing is that, despite much better roads, more restaurants and artists' enclaves, and a growing population of part-time and full-time residents, Lake Lure and environs has maintained and even enhanced much of its original charm. The filming of *Dirty Dancing* around the inn and town only piqued interest in the area. So many amenities and attractions can be found around here, from evening cruises, to mountain walks and photo safaris.

Your first time? Plan your visit for spring, summer or fall – all reasons have their own appeal and the climate is divine.

[Insider Tips.](#)

Where in the Carolina World are You?

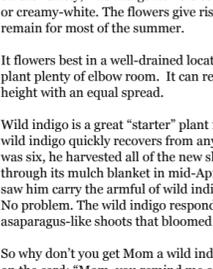


Visit this glorious plantation home, where the current owners share their knowledge of these walls and the history that happened here. Beautifully decorated with a quintessential tea room (great for lunch with the ladies).

Afterward, enjoy downtime in the lovely South Carolina waterfront community just next door. [Where are you?](#)

Carolina Home Grown

by Bob Polomski, Ph.D.



Wild blue indigo is the perfect Mother's Day gift suitable for any Mom who's new to gardening or was born with a trowel in her hand.

This herbaceous perennial is native to the Southeast and has been a part of southern culture since the 18th and 19th centuries. The blue-flowered form (*Baptisia australis*) was cultivated widely in the south and was used to make dye for the growing textile industry in Georgia and South Carolina.

Wild indigo blooms in May and bears spikes of pealike flowers that rise above the gray-green, three-lobed leaves. Depending on the variety, wild indigo flowers come in deep blue to yellow or creamy-white. The flowers give rise to black seed pods that remain for most of the summer.

It flowers best in a well-drained location in full sun. Give this plant plenty of elbow room. It can reach up to 3 or 4 feet in height with an equal spread.

Wild indigo is a great "starter" plant for new gardeners because wild indigo quickly recovers from any mistakes. When my son was six, he harvested all of the new shoots as they poked through its mulch blanket in mid-April. I was mortified when I saw him carry the armful of wild indigo shoots into the kitchen. No problem. The wild indigo responded by producing more asparagus-like shoots that bloomed magnificently.

So why don't you get Mom a wild indigo and write these words on the card: "Mom, you remind me of wild indigo. You're tough, durable, and beautiful."

Well, you may not want to use those exact words. But you can't go wrong by calling Mom and wild indigo beautiful. Happy Mother's Day!

Photo by Bob Polomski, Ph.D.

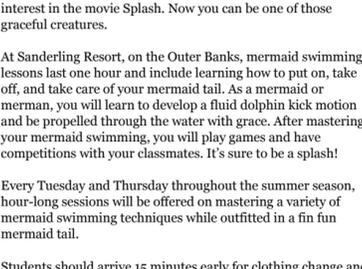
OTHER CAROLINA GROWN PLANTS



Learn more about Carolina gardening from Dr. Polomski's new book, [Carolinian Gardening](#).

Available wherever books are sold.

Best Annual Event



May 20 & 21, 2017

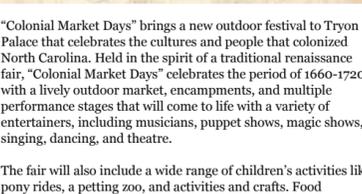
We wandered into this amazing festival several years ago. It was a wonderfully entertaining day. The blue crabs (which my family used to catch in the area) were outstanding. I even tasted my first soft shell crab – now I understand what all the fuss is about!

Located on the beautiful Grand Strand; the *Blue Crab Festival* is one of the largest festivals in the Southeast with attendance of more than 50,000. It will feature approximately 300 fine arts and crafts vendors, specialty food vendors, tremendous entertainment and a phenomenal children's area.

It's been awarded the Best Annual Event/Festival on the Grand Strand by readers of the *Sun News* newspaper for the past six consecutive years. Please leave the pets at home; service animals allowed.

[www.bluecrabfestival.org](#)

Calling All Mermaids



School's in Session

You know you love mermaids, starting with Princess Ariel in *The Little Mermaid* or perhaps Daryl Hannah, Tom Hanks' love interest in the movie *Splash*. Now you can be one of those graceful creatures.

At Sanderling Resort, on the Outer Banks, mermaid swimming lessons last one hour and include learning how to put on, take off, and take care of your mermaid tail. As a mermaid or merman, you will learn to develop a fluid dolphin kick motion and be propelled through the water with grace. After mastering your mermaid swimming, you will play games and have competitions with your classmates. It's sure to be a splash!

Every Tuesday and Thursday throughout the summer season, hour-long sessions will be offered on mastering a variety of mermaid swimming techniques while outfitted in a fin fun mermaid tail.

Students should arrive 15 minutes early for clothing change and tail sizing.

Their mermaid swimming instructors are all life-guard certified with a background in swimming to teach you or your child how to use a mermaid tail effectively and safely. 4-to-1 Student/Instructor ratio

Call 1.877.359.8447

[Kitty Hawk/Mermaid School](#)

A Renaissance Fair



"Colonial Market Days" brings a new outdoor festival to Tryon Palace that celebrates the cultures and people that colonized North Carolina. Held in the spirit of a traditional renaissance fair, "Colonial Market Days" celebrates the period of 1660-1720 with a lively outdoor market, encampments, and multiple entertainment stages that will come to life with a variety of performers, including musicians, puppet shows, magic shows, singing, dancing, and theatre.

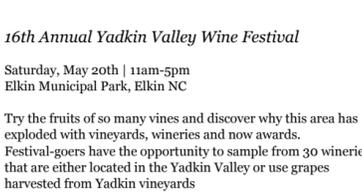
The fair will also include a wide range of children's activities like pony rides, a petting zoo, and activities and crafts. Food vendors, historical goods, and crafts vendors will be available.

New Bern is a wonderful, historic coastal town with amazing architecture and a lively scene.

[Colonial Market Days](#)

More about [New Bern](#).

Facebook



Favorite Hotels in the Carolinas.

What's Your Choice?

Our friends at purewow.com, with the help of bookings.com, just announced their picks for the best hotel in each state.

North Carolina: [Old Edwards Inn & Spa](#) in Highlands. South Carolina: [The Spectator Hotel](#) in Charleston.

Worthy selections, both, but we're thinking you have some excellent alternatives. Favorite hotels in the Carolinas?

Please share with us on [Facebook](#).

Photo: French Quarter Inn, Charleston, SC



A Grand Affair | Hilton Head Island, SC

The Westin Hilton Head Island Resort & Spa announces the June opening of The Grand Ocean Terrace; a new all-glass oceanfront event venue for high-end events.

The Grand Ocean Terrace enjoys unobstructed ocean views elevated above beach level with more than 5,000 square feet of space comfortably hosting up to 400 guests. Glass walls and stone patio overlooks the Atlantic Ocean. The adjacent stone patio with fireplace overlooks an expansive banquet deck for picturesque ceremonies. The Grand Ocean Terrace is considered a one-of-a-kind beachfront structure along the East Coast of the U.S.

slide open to a full-length, covered balcony overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. The adjacent stone patio with fireplace overlooks an expansive banquet deck for picturesque ceremonies. The Grand Ocean Terrace is considered a one-of-a-kind beachfront structure along the East Coast of the U.S.

Award-winning "Ecotech," David Sklar, and award-winning designer, Kelly Caron, collaborated on The Grand Ocean Terrace keeping the history and natural elements of the Carolina Coast paramount. Sights and sounds of the sea fill the space while Hilton Head artisans' crafted fixtures showcase the varied talents of the local community.

View the [Grand Ocean Terrace](#) in 360 degrees.



Become a Resident for a Day at Briar Chapel or Wendell Falls!

What an awesome way to explore the amenities available at Briar Chapel, in Chapel Hill, NC or Wendell Falls in Wendell. Pools, mountain bikes, parks and trails exploration kit and much more. With 100s of acres of preserved open space, there's much to explore – and great folks to meet.

[briarchapelnc.com](#) and [wendellfalls.com](#)



16th Annual Yadkin Valley Wine Festival

Saturday, May 20th | 11am-5pm

Elkin Municipal Park, Elkin NC

Try the fruits of so many vines and discover why this area has exploded with vineyards, wineries and now awards. Festival-goers have the opportunity to sample from 30 wineries that are either located in the Yadkin Valley or use grapes harvested from Yadkin vineyards

Food and craft vendors next to wine tasting. Fun for the kids, too. [Details.](#)

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Compiled by Katherine O. Pettit • Designed by Ann Dolin

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