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# Take a day trip to Currituck

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*By Maggie Miles | Correspondent July 30, 2021 Publication: Virginian-Pilot, The (Norfolk, VA) Page: 8E Word Count: 1002*

In a vacation spot that is famous for its pristine beaches and turquoise waters that rival the Bahamas, most people on the Outer Banks spend their downtime at - where else - the beach! Whether you are vacationing on the Outer Banks or a local with a day off, relaxation for most people means lounging in a beach chair, sipping a cold beverage and taking a dip in the cool, fresh ocean.

But - what if you get too sunburnt or the red flags are flying? What if you feel like doing something different or are simply craving a change of scenery? That's when it's time to look beyond the watery borders of the Outer Banks to mainland destinations. One of those places is the Currituck county, the area on the other side of the Wright Memorial Bridge. It borders the state line, and many vacationers breeze by on their way to the beach our beaches. However, this county offers a world of gems that make it worth a stop or even a spur-of-the-moment daytrip. We are here to tell you about them.

What to do

Take a Vineyard Voyage to Sanctuary Vineyards.

Set out on a breathtaking boat ride through the Currituck Sound, marsh, farmland and 33 acres of viniferous grapes to reach Sanctuary Vineyards, an award-winning North Carolina winery. Once you arrive, you'll get a behind-the-scenes tour of the vineyards and winery where you'll learn the vine-to-glass process, smell the French oak barrels and meet the master winemakers behind the products. It concludes with a private wine tasting.

**BONUS:** Stop by Tarheel Produce Stand, the blue farm stand located across the street, on your way out to shop for farm-fresh produce, local shrimp and fish.

Try German brews and sausages at Weeping Radish Farm & Brewery.

The Weeping Radish Farm & Brewery is a brewery, pub, butchery and eco-farm located on a 23-acre farm plot in Jarvisburg. They brew their beer with only four ingredients: Hops, Malt, Yeast and Water. No additives, chemicals or preservatives may be used. The same applies to their meats, made only with animals raised on local farms. You can experience all of it with their Brew and Brat Tours. Or simply drop in for lunch or a flight. If you have little ones, it's the perfect place to let the kids run wild outside while you enjoy a crisp refreshing beer and charcuterie board with your honey.

Play old arcade games at Flippers Arcade & Laser Tag.

Flippers Arcade Museum, attached to the Sunoco gas station in Grandy, has something for everyone - laser tag, pinball, video games, Skee-Ball, foosball, billiards, super bikes and kiddie games. Yes, it's not the Bellagio, but who doesn't love a kitschy neighborhood arcade? Take a walk down memory lane playing all of your favorite childhood arcade games. And if you have kids, seeing their excitement playing the games you used to love will just add to the nostalgia.

Visit Knotts Island.

Knotts Island can be a daytrip all on its own! You can catch the ferry near the Currituck Courthouse, and word from the people who have done it is that it's pretty amazing - almost like traveling to a National Geographic locale. Mackay Island National Wildlife Refuge is home to a host of birds, fish, reptiles and other animals that thrive in temperate wetland habitats. You could also hike Charles Kuralt Trail, have a picnic at Ruritan Park or enjoy incredible wine and fresh fruit at Martin Farm & Winery. Knotts Island is famous for their peaches.

Where to eat

Masala Bay Grill

Believe it or not, the Outer Banks doesn't have an Indian restaurant. But

an authentic, delicious one awaits immediately across the bridge in Currituck. Not only do they have an array of Indian appetizers, curries and biryanis, but they also have a great wine list. Make the most of their waterfront location on the Currituck Sound on their large spacious deck. Samosas and rosé out on the deck, with a beautiful waterfront view? We say yes.

Mel's Diner

If you are looking for that classic, all-American diner experience - with Elvis memorabilia and neon signs galore - inside of an airstream - check out Mel's Diner in Grandy. This place is fun for the whole family - especially if you are in the mood for a burger and a shake. Our State magazine even included them in their "Foodie's Guide to Currituck." Our editor was once on a plane in Scotland and found herself sitting beside a woman who was disappointed with the U.K. but raved endlessly about Mel's! (Correct me if I have that story wrong, Hannah!) [Editor's note: All true.]

### Pass the Salt

Pass the Salt's motto is "Food does not have to be complicated; it just has to be good." Owner Dan Pennington uses this motto, coined by his Italian mother, Rosario, to bring delicious but simple food to a 1930s home-turned-cozy café space. Popular dishes include gravy fries, the Pamlico pimento sandwich, bacon and apple melt, which has crispy bacon, Granny Smith apples, cheddar cheese, blue cheese and a drizzle of honey in grilled sourdough bread (yes, please!).

### Where to stay

#### Barry's On Walnut Island Restaurant and Lodge

If you want to make a night of it, check out this funky gem hidden away at Dowdy's Bay on the Currituck Sound. since 1958. Not only do they have a plethora eats from their onsite restaurant, featuring local seafood, steaks, pizza and Southern dishes, but they also have a variety of themed rooms for guests to stay in. From a fully decked out Mardi Gras Room, Gone with the Wind Room, Safari Room and much more - there's something to speak to almost every style at this little piece of paradise on Walnut Island.

Now get over to Currituck, and enjoy this underrated slice of the Outer Banks!

There are lots of interesting places to eat, play and stay in Currituck. Brooke Mayo/courtesy A trip to Weeping Radish can include touring the eco-farm, a flight of German-style beers and a sausage sampler. Weeping Radish Farm Brewery/courtesy Plenty of grassy spaces let kids roam free while parents enjoy a wine or beer flight. Brooke Mayo/courtesy Visitors to Sanctuary Vineyards can also try hang gliding over the vineyards and sound. Brooke Mayo/courtesy

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