



Contact: Lauren Frye, (212) 724-7783, lauren@gilliesandzaiser.com

Tweet: Remote learning on the road: Bald Head Island, NC offers hands-on experiences to supplement online school #baldheadisland #educationvacation

REMOTE LEARNING ON THE ROAD: BALD HEAD ISLAND, NC OFFERS HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES PERFECT FOR SUPPLEMENTING ONLINE SCHOOL

Bald Head Island, NC (August 2020) – Homeschool, road school, unschool, not to mention virtual learning and hybrid schedules—regardless of what families choose, the 2020 school year is shaping up to look a lot different. Though these new school models all have their challenges, the benefit is that they offer the freedom to take schooling on the road. Whether for a short getaway close to home or a long-term change of scenery in a private rental home, parents are seeking destinations where remote learning can be supplemented with hands-on experiences.

[Bald Head Island](#), a car-free island off the coast of North Carolina, is a destination where families can enjoy plenty of crowd-free spaces and private accommodations ideal for social distancing; diverse natural environments and historical landmarks for experiential learning; and educational programs and remote learning resources created by naturalists at the Bald Head Island Conservancy.

A journey to Bald Head Island starts with stunning views of the Cape Fear Coast during a 20-minute passenger ferry ride to the island (there is no bridge connecting it to the mainland.) Cars are not permitted, so once ashore, guests climb into electric golf carts or jump on bicycles to explore the natural beauty of the island. Bike riding, long walks (or runs) on the island's 14-miles of white sand beaches or kayaking and paddle boarding through acres of protected marsh and tidal creek are all great ways to check the physical education component off the list.

Parents looking to supplement science curriculums can turn to the Bald Head Island Conservancy, whose mission is the conservation, education and preservation of the island's coastal environment. While their sea turtle program is one of their most popular initiatives (already in 2020 the Conservancy has monitored and protected 114 nests from 48 different mothers and watched 26 hatchlings make their way from the beaches and dunes to the ocean) the Conservancy fosters a community of growing conservationists through programs such as the [Next Generation Club](#).

The Next Generation Club, which launched in August, was designed to immerse children up to age 18 into an environmental learning experience from a distance and teach them how they can make a difference starting in their own home. For a \$25 membership fee, members receive a signature Bald Head Island Conservancy string bracelet with the colors representing some of the island's most important features including: green sea turtles, marine life, island sunrises and sunsets, coastal birds, sea foam and the salt marsh. Also included is a checklist of activities to encourage stewardship of the environment and a monthly newsletter suggesting ways to help live out the Conservancy mission in their own communities. In addition to the Next Generation Club, the Conservancy offers a monthly schedule of programming and tours including tidal exploration, hands-on dissection, night surf fishing and kid's crabbing.

History is an important part of any grade level and Bald Head Island, which was once a favorite stop for notorious pirates like Stede Bonnet and Edward Teach (aka Blackbeard) for replenishing provisions and burying booty, has a history dating back to the 1800's. The most iconic historical site on the island is Old Baldy, the state's oldest lighthouse, which has marked the mouth of the Cape Fear River since 1817. The grounds of Old Baldy also include Smith Island Museum which is housed in a replica of the 1850's lighthouse keeper's cottage and contains artifacts that shed light on the island's rich maritime past. Students can even get in a little bit of math by counting the 108 steps it takes to climb to the top of the lighthouse. In addition to self-guided tours of Old Baldy and its grounds, visitors can sign up for a two-hour guided tour that goes in-depth about the history of the island with the resident historian.

While exercise, history and science are all important aspects of virtual schooling, relaxation and safety are also essential parts of a learning getaway. The ability to maintain distance from the crowds is an important consideration for many families and on Bald Head Island there are no sprawling resorts or hotels. With only two small inns, the majority of island visitors rent private homes ranging in size from small harbor front condos to sprawling oceanfront homes sleeping a dozen or more. Special rates for long term rentals are available and the island's resort rental companies have implemented enhanced CDC-approved cleaning and sanitation standards for all vacation rentals both inside and on decks and porches.

Bald Head Island is a boat-accessed community located two miles off the coast of Southport, NC. Transportation on the island is restricted to golf carts, bicycles and pedestrian traffic. Of the island's 12,000 acres, 10,000 acres of beaches, salt marsh and maritime forest are protected and will remain undeveloped. To learn more about the island, visit www.BaldHeadIsland.com.

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Gillies and Zaiser

212.724.7783

media@gilliesandzaiser.com

www.gilliesandzaiser.com

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