



Laboratory for Coastal Research & National Healthy Beaches Campaign

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“Dr. Beach” Names Ocracoke Beach America’s Best

Ocracoke is Beachy Keen in an Idyllic Setting

Miami, FL—Summer 2007. Ocracoke Lifeguarded Beach takes the number one spot in the 17th annual Top 10 Beaches ranking produced by Dr. Stephen P. Leatherman, Director of Florida International University’s Laboratory for Coastal Research.

Ocracoke is not the place you go to enjoy a Hilton spa or play a round of golf. Traveling to this remote island on the Outer Banks of North Carolina is like going back in time—getting away from the hustle and bustle. Incredibly the 40-minute car ferry ride is still free, and then you find yourself on 14 miles of wild and empty beaches with a miniature village on the south end. Bikes are the transport of choice on the island, which was once the stomping ground of Blackbeard the Pirate and where he met his untimely death.

“Ocracoke is my favorite get-away beach,” noted Leatherman, an international expert on beaches and coastal processes. “Only swim when lifeguards are on duty, which is true for any oceanic beach. The best time to visit the Outer Banks for families with small children is in June or July since hurricanes in late summer can create strong waves and rip currents.”

As “Dr. Beach” (www.DrBeach.org), Leatherman has selected the annual Top 10 Beaches since 1991. Fifty criteria are used to evaluate beaches, including water and sand quality as well as facilities and management.

What makes Leatherman’s selections unique is his knowledge as a Ph.D. coastal scientist with 30 years of scientific experience studying storm impacts, erosion and ways to improve beach health and safety.

The National Healthy Beaches Campaign

(www.NHBC.fiu.edu) was founded by Leatherman to acknowledge the many beautiful and “healthy” beaches around the country from seaside and lakeshore destinations for any taste. Nominations are accepted by mail for this program for which there is no fee.

TOP 10 BEACHES 2007

1. **Ocracoke Lifeguarded Beach**
Outer Banks, North Carolina
2. **Caladesi Island State Park**
Dunedin/Clearwater, Florida
3. **Coopers Beach**
Southampton, New York
4. **Hanalei Beach**
Kauai, Hawaii
5. **Coast Guard Beach**
Cape Cod, Massachusetts
6. **Hamoia Beach**
Maui, Hawaii
7. **Main Beach**
East Hampton, New York
8. **Coronado Beach**
San Diego, California
9. **Lighthouse Point Park**
Daytona Beach, Florida
10. **Siesta Beach**
Sarasota, Florida