

The background image shows a bright, sunlit outdoor porch. A white wooden bench is covered with a light-colored sofa set featuring a vibrant floral pattern in shades of pink, red, and orange. A striped pillow and a floral pillow are also on the sofa. In the foreground, a small white table holds a bowl of fresh raspberries, a green cup, and a pink cup. To the right, there are several potted plants, including succulents and a pink rose. The overall atmosphere is fresh and inviting, typical of a cottage-style living space.

*the* **cottage**<sup>®</sup>  
*journal*

SPRING

*Fresh Ideas for*  
**Relaxed Cottage Living**

Simple Style Tips from  
*The Inspired Room's* Melissa Michaels



# *Explore the* CRYSTAL COAST

Spring is the perfect time to get away to the Crystal Coast—an idyllic oasis decked in coastal cottage-style charms that the whole family can enjoy.



#### WHAT TO SEE AND DO

With miles of glistening beachfront, you could easily spend your trip to the coast camped out on the shore beneath an umbrella. But if you're looking for adventure, the Crystal Coast has you covered. Take an excursion to the Best National Park Beach (by *USA Today* 2016) with Island Express Ferry Services. Cape Lookout National Seashore offers escapists a 56-mile stretch of undeveloped, shimmering beaches accessible only by boat, with renowned shelling and exquisite camping. To see why this stunning North Carolina shoreline is dubbed the "Crystal Coast," a climb to the top of Cape Lookout's famed "Diamond Lady" lighthouse is an experience you won't want to miss. Plus, you'll find views of wild horses roaming free just across the waters at Shackleford Banks, and a quick boat or kayak ride will lend an up close encounter.

For the history buffs, a day in Beaufort is the ticket! Explore the charming town astride retro-chic bicycles with a guided culinary tour by Hungry Town Tours or via double-decker bus with the Beaufort Historic Site.

#### WHERE TO STAY

Escape the chain hotel this season and retreat to a dream rental of your choosing. From mammoth beachfront mansions—known locally as “sandcastles”—to quaint cottages and delightfully charming bed-and-breakfasts, there are lodging options to suit every size and budget. Don’t miss the idyllic Pecan Tree Inn in Beaufort, North Carolina, where the front porch and charm-filled rooms beckon guests to linger and relaxation awaits in the garden. And Beaufort’s Inn on Turner invites visitors to escape in a contemporary cottage-style setting that lends a chic touch to a coastal stay. Or, for an easy home-away-from-home experience, check out Emerald Isle Realty.



#### WHERE TO WINE AND DINE

The Crystal Coast is packed with charming eateries sure to delight every taste. Pescara Wood Oven Kitchen is a cottage lover’s dream. Seated in a magnificently restored cedar plank home, you’ll find the interior design to be just as delicious as the menu. The rustic, coastal Italian fare adds a unique flair to the “beach food” scene, and the Yellowfin Tuna Puttanesca is a must-try. Front Street Grill at Stillwater is another excellent choice, located right on the Beaufort waterfront. The ahi tuna tacos and Painkiller cocktail are the best in the area. While in Beaufort, pop into Beaufort Grocery Co. for a lunch sampling of local flavor featuring deli sandwiches, creative homemade soups, and incredible fresh-baked breads. For a “Gourmet Hole in the Wall” in Atlantic Beach, check out The Island Grille. Finally, enjoy a family-friendly hot spot at Amos Mosquito’s for a fresh-from-the-dock seafood menu and festive swamp theme décor—and embrace the local scene as Thursday night sushi and karaoke is not to be missed. [B](#)

TEXT BY KATIE WOOD  
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