

North Carolina Lighthouses and Lifesaving Stations (NC) (Images of America)

John Hairr

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Since the earliest days of European exploration, mariners have heard tales and relayed their own stories of North Carolina's perilous shoreline. With bold capes jutting into the ocean, sandy shoals extending miles offshore, fickle weather, and treacherous currents, it is no wonder that the coastline of the Old North State came to be known as the "The Graveyard of the Atlantic." The inherent dangers of traveling North Carolina's coast long ago gave rise to a fascinating and world-renowned strand of lighthouses and lifesaving stations from Currituck to Cape Fear. For more than two centuries, these bright beacons of safety have guided ships into busy harbors, signaled dangerous navigational obstacles, and warmed the hearts of homesick travelers. Their unique shapes and stoic beauty, as well as the adventures and lore that surround them, have elevated North Carolina's lighthouses to a legendary level far beyond their practical purposes. Indeed, they have become symbols of a brave and triumphant way of life. As the use of satellite navigation increases, many of the lighthouses along the coast are being phased out of operation. Not surprisingly, a new wave of travelers have begun making pilgrimages, whether by land or sea, to visit these famous landmarks. Tourists from all over the world now make the journey to lighthouses at Currituck Beach, Bodie Island, Cape Hatteras, and others. North Carolina Lighthouses and Lifesaving Stations presents to readers the tales behind the lighthouses, illuminating their past in both word and image.



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