



Edenton:

AN INNER BANKS HIDDEN GEM

By Vanessa Infanzon

Edenton overlooks Edenton Bay, part of the Inner Banks. The town links North Carolina to its colonial roots. Edenton is named after the colony's first royal governor, Charles Eden. It served as the capital from 1722 to 1743. Visit this small town for big history lessons and outdoor excursions — all within a quiet and romantic setting.

Historic Stops

Step on Edenton's historical trail by foot or on wheels. The Historic Edenton Trolley leaves from Penelope Barker House Welcome Center. It's a 45-minute guided tour that includes historic homes, churches and the lighthouse. Follow Edenton's Historic Museum Trail for a self-guided tour of important places in town: 1767 Courthouse, Roanoke River Lighthouse, St. Paul's Church and Hewes Monument. You'll also find out why the teapot is the town's official symbol. Most sites have a plaque with information at each of the 15 locations. You can pick up maps and brochures from the Barker House, as well as the Historic Edenton State Historic Site Visitors Center.

Learn about Edenton's Harriet Jacobs, born into slavery in 1813. She escaped and hid in a tiny attic space for seven years. In 1842, she boarded a boat, made it to New York and became an abolitionist. She wrote *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, which is available at the Penelope Barker House Welcome Center. A self-guided tour brochure is available at the Barker House. You can also take a guided tour throughout the year.

Shop and Tour

Wander through downtown Edenton for shopping. Downtown Diva, Feathers Boutique, Finders KeepHERS and Victorians Boutique for Him and Her are women-owned

FINDING EDENTON IS LIKE DISCOVERING YOUR OWN CORNER OF PARADISE. TREE-LINED STREETS WITH BEAUTIFUL HOMES COMPEL GUESTS TO STOP AND MARVEL AT THE CHARM.

businesses. They sell clothing, gifts and new and refurbished home decor. Take a break at the Sugared Fig Bake Shoppe for homemade sweet treats like cookies, cupcakes and breads. Enjoy a cup of coffee or tea and peruse the secondhand books at the Garden of Readin' on East King Street.

For a view of the town from the water, rent a canoe, kayak or paddle board from the Edenton Town Dockmaster Office near Colonial Waterfront Park. For a guided tour, Capt. Mark Thesier will show you around in Edenton Bay Cruises' *Liber-Tea*, a 22-foot electric eco-friendly boat. You'll enjoy a history lesson, as well as a few laughs while traveling the coastline with Capt. Mark.

Charming Stays

Choose from four traditional bed and breakfasts: Captain's Quarters Inn, The Cotton Gin Inn, Inner Banks Inn and Mulberry Hill Inn. Each offers special events and activities throughout the year. Captain's Quarters Inn is a Greek Revival style-home, within walking distance of town. Look for their two-day barbecue smoke pork rib cooking classes and wine and dine weekends with a three-course meal pairing.

"Edenton B&Bs bring Southern hospitality and historic charm together in a romantic stay in the South's prettiest small town," says Susan Beckwith, proprietor of Inner Banks Inn and The Table at Inner Banks. "Edenton's bed and breakfasts are beautiful, historic and offer guests unique architecture, a luxury sleep experience and three courses of gourmet morning cuisine choices."

The Table Restaurant is on property at Inner Banks Inn. The menu features crab cakes, steak and homemade desserts. Waterman's Grill, 309 Bistro & Spirits and Edenton Bay Oyster Bar offer fresh seafood, steaks and other specialty dishes. Craft cocktails, locally crafted beer and a wide selection of wines are available at each establishment.

Year-Round Fun

Plan a trip to Edenton based on one of its annual traditions. “Easels in the Garden” and the “Edenton Pilgrimage of Historic Homes” alternate every other spring. This year, “Easels in the Garden” is May 1 and 2 (see online story for details). Baseball fans can watch the collegiate wooden bat league team Edenton Steamers play between May and August at historic Hicks Field. Travel during Fourth of July for a family-friendly festival and fireworks over the water. Head to Edenton in December for the Christmas Candlelight Tour of colonial and traditional homes decorated for the holidays. (This event often sells out.)

One Saturday night tradition that’s not to be missed is “Vinyl Night” at the Edenton Bay Trading Company. It’s an event that exemplifies the heart of this small town. Grab a drink and walk to the garden behind the building. Brick walls line all four sides of the patio. White lights twinkle from the trees while ‘80s movies like *Ferris Bueller’s Day Off* and *Dirty Dancing* play on the wall behind the DJ booth. DJ Eddie and Melissa spin favorites and hand out props for people to join in the fun. There are microphones, harmonicas and even a pretend keyboard for the frustrated musician. Visitors are welcome to join in this town’s tradition. Who knows? You may end up on YouTube by morning doing your best air guitar impression.

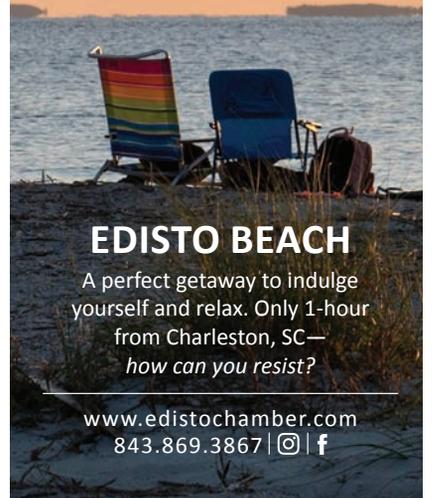
“Eddie delights in playing requests, and recognizing those celebrating birthdays, anniversaries or any other reason to celebrate,” Capt. Thesier says. “To say that DJ Eddie spins records falls far short in describing the entertainment experience.” ■

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