

# The Locals' Guide To Summer Sanity

This is for people who live here year-round, but you visitors are welcome to read along—after all, it's your vacation, a rare and precious time, and you have a right to do (or not do) just about anything you want during it.



Lynn Carlson

Okay, locals, listen up. Grip about the heat, the traffic, the fact that you can't get into your favorite seafood restaurant without having to stand in line. Whine all you want—to anybody but me. It's butterbean season and I'm happy.

All the little aggravations of summer are a small price to pay. Life is never sweeter than when the sea water reaches 80 degrees, daytime lasts 15 hours and every produce stand and fish market in the South Brunswick Islands is open for business and stocked to the hilt.

Judging from my observations of other locals, this is not a typical attitude toward peak tourist season. In the past couple of weeks I've watched some of you store clerks roll your eyes and sigh, palpably annoyed by the fact that you're busy. I've overheard you nine-to-fivers wearily proclaim that you're going to spend the weekend at home, "hiding from the tourists." The most insufferable of you confess smugly that you haven't set foot on the beach all summer.

**GET HOLD OF YOURSELVES!**  
We live in a place people are willing to pay upwards of a thousand dollars to visit for one week each year—and that doesn't include the cost of gassing up the old customized van every four hours between Cuyahoga County and Brunswick County. They live for that week all year, because they love it here. If you think that's a mystery,

then what are you doing here?

In that spirit, I humbly offer this list of Locals' Tips For Summer Sanity, suggestions for activities to help you carve out a little piece of summer vacation for yourself. I must confess I have not always, for one reason or another, been able to adhere to these guidelines myself, but I do deeply believe in them and make it a point to try hard to:

■ Spend at least one hour on the beach each week.

"But it's so crowwwwwded," you wail. It's a lie! Unless you're too trifling to walk a couple hundred yards, you're virtually guaranteed to find a nice quiet place to park a sand chair that distance in either direction from any public accessway.

When we lived in the mountains, the serious backpackers called it "Trail-Head Maggot Syndrome," a crude but oddly fitting analogy. During peak leaf season, traffic is bumper-to-bumper on the Blue Ridge Parkway, and every overlook brims with vacationers as thick as...well, larvae... But you need only to hike one mile into the woods from any trail head to be sufficiently alone to have yourself a fine Wilderness Experience.

Same is true of the beach, but you don't have to walk as far.

■ Go swimming in the ocean.

The water is warm and silky and will cleanse body and soul in way a thousand showers never could.

■ One night a week, prepare an entire meal using only ingredients obtained from your most convenient fish market and produce stand.

The possibilities are endless—two dozen varieties of fresh seafood running the gamut of cost and flavor, from succulent little clams at two bucks a dozen to tilefish at \$3.95 to delectably sweet lump crabmeat at...don't ask. Slice some ripe tomatoes or fry up some green ones. Pick out a fragrant cantaloupe the size of a volleyball and eat it for dessert, or churn up some fresh peach ice cream.

■ Sit outside in the shade. You'll realize the weather is quite pleasant and it's not really that hot after all. It just feels that way when your only recent exposure to unconditioned air has been walking across pavement between your car and your office. (The most meaningful shade-sitting sessions include a porch rocker, a good book and a cold beverage garnished by lime or lemon.)

■ Sometime during the summer, put something up for wintertime.

It doesn't have to be complicated, and you don't have to have a deep-freeze or a lot of time. I don't have either one, but I do manage to shell

and freeze just one bushel of butterbeans and about 20 pounds of shrimp to ensure we'll have a little taste of summer during the wasteland that is February.

Bean-shelling and corn-shucking are also pleasant shade-sitting activities; and when you do it outside, it doesn't feel at all like work.

If you've read this and still maintain that you don't have the time, I regret to inform you that you may very well be a lost cause. Your only hope is to ride around Sunset, Holden or Ocean Isle Beach and witness my spouse and I call "Sadder Day Morning"—when the vacationers around us glumly reload their vans for the long ride home while we rock on the porch and watch them.

They'll travel quietly, reminiscing about lying in our sunshine, listening to our seabirds, combing our beaches, swimming in our ocean, feasting on the gifts of our waters and soil, and doing what too many of us take for granted—being here.

**URGENT!!** **URGENT!!**

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## MORE LETTERS

### He's Out Of Jail Before She's Out Of Hospital: There Is No Justice

To the editor:

As reported in a Winston-Salem paper, a young mother was wounded in a drive-by shooting, necessitating hospitalization, surgery and therapy—very expensive health care. The perpetrator was caught and convicted of the crime. He was sentenced to 10 years, but the judge suspended the sentence. He was out of jail before she was out of the hospital. We may be talking about legality, but certainly there was no justice.

In such cases the courts should establish that the perpetrator should pay for the medical care of the victim, plus any related costs such as child care.

The article was another attempt to condemn firearms, but instead has pointed to the real problem of crime—leniency, no jail time, no fine. This is the most shameful case of injustice I can recall reading about.

What was done to the perpetrator to convince him not to do this

again? How much did the medical care cost you and me?

Because of the socialism in both the crime bill and the health care bill—neither of which addresses the problem as stated—they should be defeated as proposed. We need more justice in this country.

J.C. Fletcher  
Calabash

### Write Us

We welcome your letters to the editor. Letters must include your address and telephone number. (This information is for verification purposes only; we will not publish your street/mailling address or phone number.) Letters must be typed or written legibly. Address letters to:

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