

Visiting the Lighthouse from Ocracoke Island

Destination: South Core Banks

The Cape Lookout National Seashore lighthouse is on South Core Banks, an island accessible only by boat. Commercial passenger ferry services are licensed by the park to provide transportation. Please contact them directly for schedules, rates and reservations.

The walk from the ferry dock to the lighthouse is approximately 300 yards. Some walking on sand is necessary but a wooden walkway is available most of the way. Although you can walk to the lighthouse and take photos, visitors are not permitted inside.

Getting There

Take the North Carolina Ferry System ferry from Ocracoke to Cedar Island. The ferry ticket and information office is behind the National Park Service Visitor Center on Ocracoke. You'll need a reservation, which you can get at the ferry office or by calling (800) BY FERRY. Don't forget to make your return reservation if you plan to come back to Ocracoke.

The Ocracoke-Cedar Island ferry is part of Highway 12. As you leave Cedar Island, Highway 12 becomes Highway 70 west. You will pass through the communities of Stacy, Davis, Williston, and Smyrna following Highway 70. When you get to the small community of Otway after about a 45-minute drive, either turn left toward Harkers Island or continue straight toward Beaufort and Morehead City.

Map

The colored Cape Lookout National Seashore brochure includes an excell

-ent map which will help you chart your journey.

Harkers Island

For the shortest ferry ride, turn left in Otway onto Harkers Island Road. This turn is marked by a brown sign directing you to Cape Lookout National Seashore.

Ferries leave Harkers Island on demand and are located just off Harkers Island Road. From Otway, your drive will take approximately 15 minutes.

The ferries on Harkers Island run seven (7) days a week but are subject to weather constraints. The ferry ride takes about 15 minutes. These ferries are open, flat-bottomed skiffs with little protection from the elements; please dress accordingly.

Pets are not allowed on the ferries.

Costs quoted are round trip; arrange your return time with the ferry staff. Beach tours (additional charge) are arranged at the time you purchase your ferry ticket.

Barrier Island Transportation Co., Inc.

– leaves from Harkers Island Fishing Center
P.O. Box 400, Harkers Island, NC 28531
252-728-3907
Coordinates with Mule Train Beach Tours

Cape Lookout Ferry Service

– leaves from Calico Jacks Marina
P.O. Box 271, Harkers Island, NC 28531
252-728-3575
Home of Mule Train Beach Tours

SandDollar Transportation

– leaves from Barbours Harbour Marina
P.O. Box 179, Harkers Island, NC 28531
252-728-6181
Offers Cape Point Beach Tours



Beaufort or Morehead City

For a longer ferry ride departing from a more urban setting, continue to drive straight on Highway 70 at Otway.

Highway 70 will take you to Beaufort, then Morehead City. Your drive from Otway to these destinations will take an additional 1/2 to 1 hour. Ferry rides to the lighthouse take 30 minutes or longer, and reservations are required. Listed by area, the ferries are:

Outer Banks Ferry Service –

package includes guided boat tour
328 Front Street, Beaufort, NC 28516
252-728-4129

Lookout Cruises – package includes meal & snack

P.O. Box 329, Beaufort, NC 28516
252-504-7245

Mystery Tours – may coordinate with Mule Train Beach Tours

1227 Creek Rd, Morehead City, NC 28557
252-728-7827

At the Lighthouse

The lighthouse Keepers' Quarters is open daily from April through November. Inside the Keepers' Quarters are exhibits, a small bookstore, and toilets. There are also compost toilets a short walk from the lighthouse on the boardwalk to the ocean side of the island.

The lighthouse is not open to the public. Bring everything you think you will need for your stay, including water, food, sun protection and insect repellent. There are no convenience stores on the island, nor are there any trash receptacles. Please pack out what you pack in.

For More Information

For more information, drive past the ferry offices on Harkers Island to the end of the road. There you will find the **Cape Lookout National Seashore Visitor Center**, which is open daily from 8 am – 4:30 pm except December 25 and January 1. Call 252-728-2250 or visit the website at www.nps.gov/caloc/

