

Down the ocean, lots to do beyond the beach

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Special to the Review

Sun, surf, sand, a perfect vacation – until the sun burns, the surf knocks you down and the sand is in your lunch.

Time to find a quieter, less crowded diversion? There is lots of fun beyond the beach in Ocean City.

Yearning for some air-conditioning with a side order of learning?

At the south end of the boardwalk, the U.S. Lifesaving Station Museum (ocmuseum.org, 410-289-4991) tells about the early days of the resort. On exhibit are a surf rescue boat and photos of past devastating storms.

In Salisbury, the Ward Museum of Waterfowl Art (wardmuseum.org, 410-742-4988) features world-class contemporary and classic wildfowl carving. Even the gift shop is exceptional.

In Berlin, the Calvin Taylor House (410-641-1019) offers a glimpse of the town's past. Stop by the Atlantic Hotel, where Richard Gere's character stayed in "Runaway Bride," for refreshments. The town also has some good shops, with several featuring local handicrafts.

Crazy about the water but like it a little calmer?

Get into a boat! Local kayak tours of Assateague Island offer a different perspective on this wild island. Tours are offered by Coastal Kayak (c-kayak.com, 877-445-2925)

in Fenwick and Super Fun Eco Tours (superfunecotours.com, 888-415-2925) in Ocean City. Or rent your own from Super Fun or Coastal, which also offers tours of gorgeous Delaware scenery you might miss otherwise: the nooks and crannies of a salt marsh and the quiet waters of a bald cypress or woodland fringed pond.

If you'd prefer someone else to drive, go fast aboard the Sea Rocket (410-289-5887) or the O.C. Rocket (410-289-3500) or take it easy with Assateague Adventure tours (410) 289-3500).

Kids and their adult loved ones might enjoy a mild-mannered adventure on the pirate ship the Duckaneer (also 410-289-3500).

How about a different sport, something with a ball?

See the Shorebirds in action at the Arthur W. Perdue Stadium in Salisbury on Route 50. Go to theshorebirds.com for a schedule.

Tennis courts are available at the Ocean City Tennis Center (410-524-8337, https://oceancitymd.gov/Recreation_and_Parks/tennis_center.html) on 61st Street, which offers lessons, tournaments and camps. Play is free on the lit courts before 7 a.m. and after 8 p.m. Free courts are located at 3rd Street and St. Louis Avenue, 94th Street bayside and Gorman Park at 136th Street bayside.

Ocean City offers 17 golf courses, from grand private courses such as Glen Riddle, bay- and ocean-front courses such as Eagle's Landing and Lighthouse Sound, and other layouts, all within a half-hour drive. The Ocean City Golf Getaway Association (800-462-4653) has information about courses and packages.

The trotters at Ocean Downs (oceandowns.com, 410-641-0600) offer an opportunity to see the horses up close. After each race parade, the lead horse gets near enough to the fence for little fans to reach out and touch it. Fans can gather near the winner's circle at the end of each race, too. Generally, the ponies race through late-August.

After a few hours in one of these places, you'll be ready for another beautiful day on the beach.

