



EXPERIENCE, EXPERTISE AND ENERGY!



### Essential Features of a Profitable Vacation Rental Home

The Outer Banks weekly vacation rental market is competitive. Today's renters want luxury features and amenities. If you are investing in an Outer Banks home and would like strong rental income, you need to keep reading.

"How well will this house rent?" is a question that investors ask about every home they consider on the Outer Banks. The answer depends on a combination of factors including the location, size, condition, amenities, and the home's promotion by the rental company and the owner.

Many homes have a "rental history," which is a report of the income the home has generated in past years. Some homes which are new or have not been rented in the past will have a "rental projection" which is an estimate of what the home could or should generate in rents in the future. A good buyer's agent will help you sort out the facts from fantasies.

Here are the most important features that today's Outer Banks guests are seeking that will help determine your homes "rent-ability":

Location, location, location...especially on the Outer Banks  
Proximity to the Ocean—the closer the better!

#### **Electronics like flat screens and i pod docking stations can provide big sizzle for a relatively small price.**

Most of our visitors come to the Outer Banks to enjoy the beach. Everybody wants to stay on the oceanfront and these homes enjoy the highest and most stable income in any season and any year.

If you are not willing to invest in oceanfront, generally it is best to be as close to the beach as possible.

The distance from the home to the beach access is a common question from potential renters.

Some neighborhoods provide generous amenities that may be important to some renters, but since many amenities like pools can be found in individual homes, this is not critical.

Size of the house...depends on your needs and budget  
There is a strong demand for larger homes on the Outer Banks. Many vacationers want homes that can accommodate several families and offer 6, 8, or more bedrooms. The large homes often offer guests more amenities and features and allow several families to share their vacation.

The number of master bedrooms is important. In most newer homes, every bedroom will (and should) have its own bathroom.

The game room is an enjoyable feature in any home for you and your guests. A pool table, foosball table, or ping pong table will more than pay for itself in a strong year of rentals.

Media rooms and home theater rooms become more popular each year as well. Many folks prefer to stay in a smaller home with just their own family and spend their time walking on the beach rather than playing with the fancy features of a large home. This is still quite common and enjoyable. The rental return on smaller homes may not be as strong, but this may be offset by the smaller investment amount.

Features and Considerations for your guests' comfort and enjoyment  
"Does it have its own pool?" is often a potential renter's second question. "Is it oceanfront?" is the first. Since everyone cannot be oceanfront, pool-front is quite alright for many families. Pool size is important—most guests will see the picture of the pool on the internet before booking. Add the heater to your pool and you are sure to get more weeks in the fall and spring when the ocean may be too cold for swimming. A hot tub is also essential for most weekly rental property on the Outer Banks.

Electronics like flat screens and i pod docking stations can provide big sizzle for a relatively small price. Flat screens, gaming consoles, and wireless internet access are essential amenities.

Up-to-date furniture is also essential. The home may have been built in the 80's, but if the furnishings were built in the 80's also, its time for a change. Mattresses and bedding should be fresh and clean.

Finally, you should allow pets to maximize income and increase the number of weeks booked.

If you view your beach home as an investment and understand what today's guests are seeking, you are more likely to have a profitable home. If you partner with a good rental company, price your rental weeks correctly and have a plan for maintaining and updating your home, you and your guests will have an enjoyable Outer Banks experience.

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