



EXPERIENCE, EXPERTISE AND ENERGY!



Increase Your Outer Banks Home's Value

If you have recently invested in a home at the beach, you probably have considered upgrades big and small. Most vacation rental home owners want to find ways to increase their rental income. If you are thinking of selling your Outer Banks rental property, you should also keep reading.

In the vacation rental and sales market, value and perception are closely linked. This article will help you prioritize your off-season punch list. The following suggestions are meant to help improve your home's appearance and improve the experience of your renters, guests and potential buyers without emptying your pocketbook. It does not include major renovations, additions or regular maintenance chores.

Landscaping (\$100 to \$5000+) Curb appeal counts. Frame your home with landscaping and the picture improves. Start with the front yard. Grasses and hardy evergreens are good choices for the Outer Banks. See what does well in your neighbor hood and ask your landscaper or nursery for low maintenance recommendations. A small island of attractive grasses and shrubs can drastically enhance the appearance of a much larger yard of natural and wild plants.

Furniture and Lighting (\$100 to \$10,000+) When your lamps begin to look dated or worn, get new ones. Make sure that the bulbs are bright in all of your lighting fixtures. Consider art work or photography that will help a home feel more inviting. Living room and common area furniture is next on the furniture priority list, followed by pool and deck furniture.

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Window Treatments and Blinds (\$200 to \$3000+) If your rental home has blinds that are bent or point in several directions, its time for a change. Composite, wide-slat blinds are an attractive and affordable option. Plantation shutters, valances, and curtains may also be good alternatives depending on your home and budget. In some cases just the removal of worn window treatments is an improvement.

Electrical and Door Hardware (\$100 to \$3000+)

Replacing exterior lighting is an easy way to improve your home's appearance. Because of the salt air, exterior door handles and locks need regular replacement to look good and to function well. Inside, new door handles, light switches and electrical cover plates are an inexpensive way to make a worn home look fresh. If your ceiling fans droop, its time for new blades or new fans.

Paint (\$200 to \$10,000+)

Its no secret that fresh paint can make a home sparkle. For a vacation rental property, interior touchups and repaints are a must at least every few years. Exterior paint is also critical because it protects your siding from sun, salt and water. Do your homework before investing in "no maintenance" siding or coatings with "lifetime" guarantees. A little paint and effort go a long way include in the following areas: entry doors, interior hand railings, hallways, and game-room walls and ceilings.

Bedding (\$200 to \$1000+)

Fresh Bedspreads, comforters and pillows are one of the best ways to get a big bang without breaking the bank. Your guests will spend one third of their time or more asleep during their visit. Much of their impression of your home will be created the moment they open the door to their bedroom. A clean, fluffy, bright bedspread will go a long way toward making a positive impact.

Create a list, set a budget, and decide upon your short term and long term priorities. Local property managers, real estate agents, maintenance companies and home improvement retailers are generally happy to share advice, ideas, and solutions with vacation home owners. Educated homeowners and attractive properties benefit everyone invested in the future of the Outer Banks.

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