

Rehoboth ranks 4th in top East Coast beach for kids

Leigh Giangreco, Salisbury 2:55 p.m. EDT May 29, 2014

The ABC Travel Guide, a series of travel guides for kids, named Rehoboth fourth out of five for best family east coast beach destination in 2014.



(Photo: CHUCK SNYDER PHOTO)

For the young and the young at heart, Rehoboth Beach is one of the top spots to take the family this summer.

The ABC Travel Guide, a series of travel guides for kids, scored Rehoboth four out of five for best family East Coast beach destination in 2014. Matthew Rosenberger, founder of ABC, lauded the city's beach, boardwalk and restaurants.

While there are plenty of sugary and salty snacks for kids, he found the restaurants accommodated a sophisticated palette for adults. During a recent trip to Rehoboth with his family, he noticed the Dogfish Head Brewpub had even created options for those under 21.

"They had a very kid-friendly menu and homemade soda," he said. "They recognized they were a brewpub, but know they have families there."

Whether on foot or on a bicycle, Rosenberger said the city is easy to navigate. Washington, D.C., resident Caroline Peterson, who visited Rehoboth for the first time with her 3-year-old son, Patrick, enjoys Rehoboth's walkable neighborhoods and access to attractions such as Funland.

"It's great not to have to put the kids in the car," she said. "It's really easy."

Chris Darr, personnel manager at Funland, is part of the fourth generation in the family-owned amusement park business. Many families return to Funland throughout their trip because it's within walking distance from the beach, he said. A few hours in the arcade doesn't break the bank either, he added.

"With a lot of rides being two and three tickets, it's gonna last all week," he said. "Our motto is 'today's fun at yesterday's prices.'"

The Delaware Tourism Office recently put together its own list of kid-friendly attractions in the Rehoboth-Dewey area. The office compiled the list after noticing more requests for kid's amusements in Rehoboth on the tourism review website TripAdvisor, said Tourism Director Linda Parkowski

The list mentions amusements including Jungle Jim's Water Park, sailing trips on the Kalmar Nyckel and putt-putt games on Coastal Highway. No beach day is complete without satisfying a sweet tooth though, she said.

"Of course there's the kid-friendly food," Parkowski said. "It wouldn't be a trip to Rehoboth without Thrasher's (French Fries) or ice cream."

The office also extended the list to include activities in nearby Dewey Beach, such as skimboarding lessons through the Alley Oop skim shop. In recent years, the town has tried to appeal to more families with free events such as Monday movie night and Wednesday night bonfires.

"If you drive through Dewey, you do see more families than you did 10 years ago," Parkowski said. "So I think they've been successful with that."

Even on a recent rainy day, families strolled up and down Rehoboth Avenue. Aelita Girard darted out of a coffee shop with her son, Teo, in his stroller and her mother, Velga Brolis. For three generations, the family has visited the beach town and recently bought a condo for longer stays.

As the city has grown over the past 30 years, Brolis appreciates the way it has balanced old mainstays with more polished options for parents.

"It still maintains that old flavor, they've kept it mom and poppy," she said. "But you can choose the upscale places."

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