



# The Delaware River and Bay Authority

## NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Contact  
James E. Salmon  
(302) 571-6409

### **Cape May- Lewes Ferry Celebrates National Tourism Day** *Two Programs Started to Encourage Local Residents to “Treat Themselves Like Tourists!”*

*(Cape May, NJ)* Today, Cape May – Lewes Ferry officials announced that the Ferry is bringing National Tourism Day local by creating two programs to encourage local residents on both sides of the bay to experience the area as tourists. National Tourism Day was created by Congress in 1983 to promote the contributions of the U.S. travel industry, but has not yet taken off locally. The Ferry is starting to honor the day by creating day trips and “stay-cations” that allow area-wide adults to take advantage of services that they are frequently too busy to enjoy.

“Cape May and Sussex Counties are two of the tourism engine counties for both New Jersey and Delaware,” states Rhona Bronson, Director of Marketing for the DRBA. “As a result, when tourists are enjoying the best we have to offer, our residents are also busy ensuring that tourists are experiencing the area. It’s too easy for most of us to remember to treat ourselves and take some time to see many of the area’s treasures for ourselves.”

To respond, the Ferry has created two programs called “Treat Yourself Like a Tourist.” Both are geared for the spring season when the weather is good, but before tourist season kicks into high gear. One celebrates National Tourism Day – Sunday, May 7— by offering residents, particularly those who have never taken a ferry ride, a fun, easy way to enjoy a ferry ride. For that special day, adult residents who make a reservation and can show an photo id with a local zip code upon check in from either Cape May or Sussex County will receive one free roundtrip foot passenger journey per person.

A normal roundtrip foot passenger fare is \$18. For National Tourism Day, residents can leave worries and kids at home and take some much needed adult time to sit back on Adirondack chairs, enjoy an adult beverage, and breath in the bay breezes. “If a picture is worth a thousand words, an experience is worth far more,” states Bronson. “We want to make it easy, fun and free for every adult who lives in Cape May, NJ or Sussex, DE to experience the Ferry for themselves. Many people who live close to a tourist attraction like the Statue of Liberty or Seattle Space Needle never visit it, and we know that’s true for the Ferry, too. We wanted to celebrate National Tourism Day by making it easier for our neighbors to hop aboard the Ferry, feel like a tourist for a day and gain first-hand knowledge about this unique local attraction.”

The offer encourages passengers to leave their cars in the free parking lot at their home port of Lewes, DE or North Cape May, NJ and walk on the boat as a foot passenger for a relaxing roundtrip.

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There's no need to get off the boat, as passengers can relax, watch for whales and dolphins and enjoy on board food and beverages. But if a longer day trip is in your plans, local residents should feel free to disembark, explore the other side, and return on a different ferry later in the day.

Reservations should be made at least one day in advance, or no later than Saturday, May 6, using code "Tourism." To reserve call 1-800-643-3779 or book online at CMLF.com.

### **Staycations Help Refuel Energy for the Busy Season Ahead.**

In the same spirit, the Ferry has created a spring program for NJ residents that provides 20% off a one or two-night stay at the Inn at Canal Square in Delaware and 20% Ferry travel to Lewes with or without a vehicle. Savings range from \$42-\$83 for the Inn and another \$18 off roundtrip vehicle/driver fares on the ferry. Reservations are for Sundays through Thursdays from now until May 18. To book, call the Inn at 888-644-1911. The Inn will take the reservation and help coordinate the needed Ferry Travel.

The Ferry marketing team is still working on creating a similar Delaware tourism package and encourages any other NJ or DE hospitality providers to consider National Tourism Day promotions especially if they can be coordinated with Ferry travel and encourage residents on both sides of the bay to become more familiar with the area's wider offerings. "Just call us, or email [cmlfmarketing@drba.net](mailto:cmlfmarketing@drba.net), and let's start a conversation," Bronson adds.

According to respective County data, there approximately 97,000 full time residents in Cape May and over 100,000 in Sussex. Booking data from the Ferry implies that approximately 20% of local adult residents travel on the ferry in any one year, most due to having family, friends and business on the other side. "These are two great opportunities for the other 80% to take a Ferry ride and experience the Delaware Bay from a new perspective." states Heath Gehrke, Ferry Operations Director. "We really hope people take advantage of it, particularly on May 7, and that other hospitality providers jump on board to help us build out these type of packages for this year or next."

### **About the Cape May-Lewes Ferry**

The Cape May – Lewes Ferry is owned and operated by the Delaware River and Bay Authority, a bi-state governmental agency created by Compact in 1962. The Ferry is open year-round and has carried more than 45 million passengers since its inception on July 1, 1964. In 2016, the ferry service, which connects Victorian Cape May, New Jersey, and historic Lewes, Delaware, transported approximately 275,000 vehicles and nearly 1 million passengers. For schedule, rates and other program information, please visit the ferry's website at [www.CMLF.com](http://www.CMLF.com), or call toll free, 800-643-3779. Like us on Facebook or follow us on Twitter @CMLFerry.

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