

# Top Wilmington & Island Beaches Film and TV Locations

## Famous Scenes Shot around the City and Beaches

### Wilmington – Downtown

#### Wilmington Riverwalk and Riverfront Park

Market St. Wilmington, NC

*Sleepy Hollow* (TV Series, Seasons 1 & 2, 2013-2015) – Take a stroll in [Wilmington](#), NC, – voted as America’s Best Riverfront by USA TODAY’s 10Best Readers’ Choice travel awards – and along the Riverwalk to see the site of the cappuccino scene filmed outside at Le Catalan French Wine Bar & Café with [Sleepy Hollow’s](#) main actors Tom Mison (Ichabod Crane) and Nicole Beharie (Lt. Abbie Mills). Familiar viewers who looked closely could catch a glimpse of the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge and Battleship NORTH CAROLINA in the background.

*One Tree Hill* (TV Series, 2003 – 2012) – The popular [television drama](#) featured many episodes amidst the backdrop of the picturesque riverfront and is the site where Nathan (James Lafferty) gave Haley (Bethany Joy Lenz) a Crackerjack bracelet. Wilmington’s award-winning riverfront is also the backdrop in basketball river court and Burning Boat Festival scenes.

*Dawson’s Creek* (TV Series, 1998 – 2003) – The series that created the modern-day mold for popular teen dramas filmed multiple scenes set against the backdrop of Wilmington’s iconic downtown riverfront. Wilmington’s Riverfront Park at Water Street, across from the Alton Lennon Federal Courthouse, is where [Andie \(Meredith Monroe\) and Pacey \(Joshua Jackson\) first kissed](#).

#### Bellamy Mansion Museum of History & Design

503 Market St. Wilmington, NC

*Sleepy Hollow* – Serving as one of North Carolina’s most spectacular examples of antebellum architecture, the [Bellamy Mansion Museum’s](#) kitchen most recently appeared in “Sleepy Hollow’s” episode, Sin Eater.

*One Tree Hill* – The mansion’s modern-day role as a museum of history and the design arts served well for a scene featuring Peyton (Hilarie Burton) and Jake (Bryan Greenberg), in which it was referred to as Savannah College of Art & Design in the 2006 episode, Every Day is a Sunday.

#### Wilmington Convention Center

515 Nutt St. Wilmington, NC

*Iron Man 3* (Motion Picture, 2013) – The top grossing film of 2013 filmed along the Cape Fear River in Downtown Wilmington. Actors [could be seen](#) suspended from cables flying overhead during the filming of a stunt between the Wilmington Convention Center and Isabel Holmes Bridge.

*One Tree Hill* – The address of [10 Convention Center Drive](#) was the venue for Brooke (Sophia Bush) and Julian’s (Austin Nichols) wedding reception in Season 8.

*Safe Haven* (Motion Picture, 2013) – Follow in the footsteps of the cast and crew during the bus station scenes in this romantic thriller adapted from a Nicholas Sparks novel by strolling by the Wilmington Convention Center.

### **Battleship NORTH CAROLINA & Battleship Park**

1 Battleship Rd. NE Wilmington, NC

*One Tree Hill* – Just across the river, on Eagle's Island and beside the [Battleship NORTH CAROLINA](#) is the site of the former River Court – the outdoor basketball court featured throughout the series. The River Court was dismantled after the series ended.

*Sleepy Hollow* – The thriller mystery drama's carnival scene was [filmed](#) in the same location for "The Golem" episode (Season 1). The magnificent WWII battleship memorial made an appearance as Abbie and Ichabod strolled the main deck during a field trip in the episode "What Lies Beneath" (Season 2).

### **Graystone Inn**

100 S 3rd St. Wilmington, NC

*The Cinderella Story (Motion Picture, 2004)* – It's a Cinderella Story for one of Wilmington's most popular locales for feature films and TV series. [The Graystone Inn](#) has been the host to many a star on set for feature films, such as Stephen King, Shirley MacLaine, Kathy Bates and Dustin Hoffman. The historic landmark has also served as home away from home for a number of star guests, including Tom Cruise, Goldie Hawn and Sir Anthony Hopkins, among others. *The Cinderella Story: Once Upon a Song* filmed extensively throughout the interior, exterior and garden of the property.

*The Longest Ride (Motion Picture, 2015)* – This [feature film](#), from the bestselling author of *The Notebook*, stars Scott Eastwood, son of Clint Eastwood and Charlotte, N.C.-born, Britt Robertson ("Under the Dome"). The story chronicles a young couple whose lives intertwine with a much older man as he reflects back on a lost love while he's trapped in an automobile crash. Main characters cut a rug at a 1940's era party set at the Graystone.

*Secrets and Lies (TV Series, 2015)* – In this ABC drama, Ryan Phillippe stars as a family man who becomes a murder suspect after finding the body of a young boy. In order to clear his name and save his family, he sets out to find the real killer himself. Keep an eye out for the interior law office scenes, which were shot in the Graystone Inn.

*Sleepy Hollow* – The Inn's grand dining room is decorated in turn-of-the-century style furnishings and serves as the site of a riveting moment in which the Headless Horseman beheads the four Masons. Exterior horse scenes also took place here in "The Midnight Ride" episode (Season 1).

### **Historic New Hanover County Courthouse**

24 N 3rd St. Wilmington, NC

*Sleepy Hollow* – Welcome to [Sleepy Hollow Sheriff's Department](#), the show's most iconic location. Exterior shots of this historical landmark can be seen throughout the series.

### **Thalian Hall Center for Performing Arts**

310 Chestnut St. Wilmington, NC

*Sleepy Hollow* – Diagonally positioned from the Historic New Hanover County Courthouse, at Third and Princess Street, is the 2nd Street parking deck where the heads of the four Masons hung from rafters with the elegant [Thalian Hall](#) at 102 N. Third Street visible in the background.

*The Longest Ride* – Scenes from the City Council chambers in Thalian Hall's ballroom are featured in Nicholas Sparks' film.

The well-known landmark in Wilmington film, Thalian Hall, is also the primary venue for the annual [Cucalorus Film Festival](#) – not to mention a great place to catch up-and-coming Wilmington actors onstage in local theatre.

### **Starring Cape Fear! at Cape Fear Museum**

814 Market St. Wilmington, NC

View artifacts from productions from the 1980s to today like *Firestarter*, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, *Dawson's Creek*, *One Tree Hill* and *Tammy*. See a cape from *Blue Velvet*, an *Iron Man 3* mask and the "Panty Dropper" jet ski from *Eastbound & Down*. Test your knowledge of past television programs and major motion pictures with hands-on interactives. Learn about Dino DeLaurentiis' efforts to create the largest sound stage lot east of California.

### **Blue Post Billiards**

15 S Water St. Wilmington, NC

*Tammy (Motion Picture, 2014)* – Fans of the film will love to reminisce about Tammy (Melissa McCarthy) and her grandmother, Pearl (Susan Sarandon) trying to pick up men at this [popular downtown hangout](#), which serves as a Louisville, Kentucky, barbecue joint in the film. The scene also features local bluegrass band, Big Al Hall and Possum Creek, performing.

*Secrets and Lies* – The 2015 first season of this [TV series](#) made good use of this locale, including interior and exterior bar scenes.

*Sleepy Hollow* – Beyond the area's picturesque streets and buildings, Wilmington's alleyways are also featured on camera. The Blue Post alleyway is used in several episodes of this mystery that dates back to the founding fathers.

*One Tree Hill* – Step inside to see the site where Lucas (Chad Michael Murray) and Brooke (Sophia Bush) went on their first 'tattoo' date.

Visitors might also be interested to know that Blue Post is a good place to spot local film celebs hanging out. Past visitors have caught glimpses of "One Tree Hill" cast members and Hollywood legends, such as Dan Akyroyd.

### **Kenan Fountain / Carolina Apartment Building** [Exterior View Only] 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Market Street, Wilmington, NC

*We're the Millers (Motion Picture, 2013)* – With scenes filmed in downtown Wilmington and Carolina Beach State Park, this film starring Jennifer Aniston, Emma Roberts and Jason Sudeikis is about a veteran criminal that creates a fake family as part of his master plan. The film was shot in several recognizable locations, including the Carolina Apartment Building, located at the corner of Market Street & 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue (420 West Market Street).

Other area sites for this film include City Limits Saloon in Downtown Wilmington and the Port City Java at Front and Grace Streets.

*Sleepy Hollow* – At the corner of 5th and Market streets, the Kenan Memorial Fountain is where Ichabod and Abbie encounter the lost boy in "John Doe."

*Blue Velvet (Motion Picture, 1986)* – The building's incarnation as the Deep River Apartments, the home of blue lady Dorothy Vallens (Isabella Rossellini), attracts fans of this cult classic from all over the world. The building's overall exterior feel of the Carolina Apartments contributes strongly to the film's mood. One of Wilmington's few brownstones, the building's fire escapes are featured in key scenes near the end of *Blue Velvet*, *The Bedroom Window* and a shootout on *Matlock*.

### **Cape Fear Community College Downtown Campus**

411 N Front St. Wilmington, NC

*Under the Dome (TV Series, 2013)* – The CBS summer series was based on a best-selling Stephen King novel and chronicled a large cast of characters who were trying to survive under an invisible barrier that had blocked them from the rest of the world while trying to understand what trapped them. Cape Fear Community College’s Downtown Campus can be seen during sidewalk scenes that show the ‘other side’ of the dome. Viewers will also notice the college’s building exteriors.

Author Stephen King has a long relationship with Wilmington dating back to 1984. The filming of his book, *Firestarter* was the first movie filmed in Wilmington and launched the town’s industry. Several other King screenplays were filmed in the area including *Cat’s Eye*, *Silver Bullet*, *Maximum Overdrive*, and *The Night Flier*. Later, King used Wrightsville Beach as the setting in one of his later books *Joyland*.

*Secrets & Lies* – The campus is also featured in the series pilot episode.

*Dawson’s Creek* – Located at 610 N. Front St., the Schwartz Center at Cape Fear Community College appeared as a film festival lobby.

*Sleepy Hollow* – Producers of the show erected a temporary sculpture of Benjamin Franklin to rest under a live oak tree on the Building W grounds (also known as the Emmart and Burnett Buildings), near Water and Walnut Streets.

*The Longest Ride* – Keep your eyes peeled for a hospital scene filmed on the college’s campus when you watch the movie. Can you guess which scene?

### **Lennon Federal Courthouse Building**

2 Princess St. Wilmington, NC

*Matlock* – The opening courthouse and fountain scene from the show’s final three seasons was filmed at this three-story stone structure overlooking the [Cape Fear River](#).

### **Port City Java**

300 N Front St. Wilmington, NC

*One Tree Hill* – Located at 300 N. Front St., this popular [local coffee shop](#) appears in a pilot episode as Karen’s Café and was also used in the final season as Tree Hill Café. A permanent set was later built for Karen’s Café (which later became Clothes Over Bros.) inside a building across the street.

*We’re the Millers* – Once again, Port City Java was transformed into the Burklyn Café when many interior and exterior scenes were filmed here.

### **Cape Fear Club**

206 Chestnut St. Wilmington, NC

*Iron Man 3* – Several productions have filmed inside this private club, located in Downtown Wilmington at 206 Chestnut Street, including *Iron Man 3*. [Exterior View Only]

*Sleepy Hollow* – The upstairs ballroom of this private club is where Abraham gave Katrina a necklace in “The Necromancer.” [Exterior View Only]

### **Brooklyn Arts Center**

516 N 4th St. Wilmington, NC

*Sleepy Hollow* – This majestic, 120-plus-year-old iconic [church](#) is repurposed as a spectacular multi-use event venue, hosting national touring concerts, weddings, galas and more. This site provided the church basement for the Hessian fight scene in “The Lesser King of Solomon.”

*Revolution (TV Series, 2012 – 2014)* – This American post-apocalyptic science fiction NBC series filmed Season 1 in Wilmington & the Island Beaches. The series centers on a group of revolutionaries who must battle a governing dictatorial militia 15 years after an instantaneous global shutdown of all electronic devices known as the Blackout. The cast and crew could be [seen](#) filming in front of this site when it was transformed into Lowell, Indiana for a scene in August of 2012.

## **Midtown**

### **EUE/Screen Gems Studios**

1223 N 23rd St. Wilmington, NC

Since 1983, more than 400 projects have filmed here at EUE/Screen Gems Studios, including One Tree Hill, Iron Man 3, Sleepy Hollow, The Choice and Under the Dome. [Exterior View Only]

### **Airlie Gardens**

300 Airlie Rd. Wilmington, NC

*One Tree Hill* – Be sure to visit the Pergola Garden. This enchanting structure was added to the Garden in the early 1900s and played as the set for Lydia’s funeral in the hit series. The Spring Garden, peaks in the months of March & April, showcasing a variety of tulips, daffodils and azaleas. A dream sequence – where Karen envisions a fantasy scenario with her lost love Keith, along with their young daughter Lily, who is frolicking amongst the azaleas – was filmed here. Visitors can also download a self-guided [map](#) for an extensive tour of the gardens’ film ties.

*Dawson’s Creek* – [The Pergola Garden](#) also served as a popular location for many romantic scenes from this hit television show. If you can’t get enough, be sure to visit Bradley Creek. The natural brush-lined entrances appear in many rowboat sequences from Dawson’s Creek. In season one, filmed in 1998, characters Joey (Katie Holmes) and Pacey (Joshua Jackson) experience a snail hunting adventure shot in this marsh-edged location.

*Sleepy Hollow* – Mount Lebanon Chapel on Airlie’s grounds provided the exterior for St. Henry’s Parish in the season 1 finale, with interiors filmed at St. James Parish in the historic district.

*The Choice (Motion Picture, 2016)* – This film adaptation of Nicholas Sparks’ 2007 novel follows two neighbors who fall in love at their first meeting and spans the eventful years of young love, marriage and family. A scene in the movie took place in the among the gardens’ many paths.

### **Jungle Rapids Family Fun Park**

5320 Oleander Dr. Wilmington, NC

*One Tree Hill* – The series filmed scenes in the arcade, miniature golf and restaurant areas.

*Piranha 3DD (Motion Picture, 2012)* – Parts of this comedy horror film occurred at [Jungle Rapids water park](#). Another cult horror film, *Cabin Fever 2*, also shot scenes in the water park.

*Eastbound & Down (TV Series, 2009 – 2013)* – The HBO series filmed at the water park during the summer of its final season.

### **Bellevue Cemetery**

1701 Princess Place Dr. Wilmington, NC

*Sleepy Hollow* – This historic locale appears in several cemetery scenes, including the horseback chase in the Season 1 finale.

Other famous productions, including “*One Tree Hill*”, “*Matlock*” and “*The Longest Ride*”, have used the grounds.

### **Greenfield Park**

1739 Burnett Blvd. Wilmington NC

*Sleepy Hollow* – Set amidst gorgeous lush [gardens](#), North Lakeshore Dr. doubled as the Lost Colony island in “John Doe” and as a park in “The Golem.”

*One Tree Hill* – Thinking this is an ideal wedding location? The show’s producers did too when they selected the space as a wedding setting for Lucas and Peyton nuptials in Season 6.

*Under the Dome* – As one can imagine, this destination is a popular spot for park scenes and can also be seen in “Secrets & Lies.”

### **Cameron Art Museum**

3201 S 17th St. Wilmington, NC

*The Longest Ride* – As the primary venue for the NC Black Film Festival held annually in March, the [Cameron Art Museum \(CAM\)](#) is popular among Wilmington locales and art lovers far and wide. Actors Britt Robertson, Scott Eastwood and Gloria Reuben mingled under a James Grashow exhibit consisting of dozens of cardboard monkeys.

*Eastbound & Down* – The Cameron Art Museum was also a favorite spot for this production, but the cast and crew were sure to never impede on the museum’s daily visitors.

## **Carolina Beach**

### **Boardwalk**

100 Cape Fear Blvd. Carolina Beach, NC

*Dawson’s Creek* – Ranked one of the top 10 boardwalks in the country by Food & Wine magazine, a stroll on the [Carolina Beach Boardwalk](#) features classic seaside family fun with shops, restaurants and nightlife entertainment. Dawson’s Creek used vintage settings along this nostalgic walk to film scenes at the Big Ace during seasons four and five.

*Eastbound & Down* – In 2011, the cast and crew were regulars in Carolina Beach. Filming locations included one of the [Winner Party Boat Fleet’s](#) boats, [Fat Pelican](#) and on the beach in front of the Courtyard by Marriott.

### **Carolina Beach State Park**

1010 B Rd. Carolina Beach, NC

*Tammy* – This local [treasure](#) features 761 acres of natural beauty and was used in the film as Mark Twain National Forest. Star News reported this was the area where Tammy and Pearl get their car stuck in the middle of the forest. After turbulent driving, they dig their way out of the woods and get back on their journey.

*We're the Millers* – The park features a secluded camping area beneath towering trees and miles of hiking trails that traverse a variety of distinct habitats. Visitors can enjoy the true natural environment of the area, much like the Millers did during their campsite scenes.

*Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood (Motion Picture, 2002)* – A drive along old Dow Road will take fans to where the young Ya-Yas filmed their lingerie joy ride. Trek on to enjoy the park's more than six miles of natural trails that feature wonders like the Venus flytrap, a rare carnivorous plant that grows wild only with a radius of 75 to 100 miles of Wilmington.

## **Kure Beach**

### **Fort Fisher State Recreation Area**

1000 Loggerhead Rd. Kure Beach, NC

*Safe Haven* – The location for the surf [kiss](#) between Alex (Josh Duhamel) and Katie (Julianne Hough) can be found on the southern tip of Pleasure Island. Fort Fisher lies between the Atlantic Ocean on the east and the Cape Fear River on the west. It welcomes visitors with miles of white, sandy beach for sunning, swimming and fishing. While there, be sure to walk the short trail that meanders through the marsh, allowing hikers a chance to view sound-side flora and fauna.

*Muppets from Space (Motion Picture, 1999)* – Watch this movie and you'll notice some special visitors during the beach scene of the Muppets waiting on the mother ship near the jetty. "Dawson's Creek" cast members made a special [appearance](#).

### **NC Aquarium at Fort Fisher**

900 Loggerhead Rd. Kure Beach, NC

*Dawson's Creek* – Recently named a top 20 aquarium in the U.S. by Trip Advisor, this [attraction's](#) quarter-million gallon saltwater tank was featured as "Cape Cod Shoals" for a Season 6 episode. In the episode, sharks, stingrays and other reef fish provide background for a scene between Pacey (Joshua Jackson) and Emma (Megan Gray) while an underwater camera captured the point of view of the fish.

*Surface (TV Series 2005-2006)* – The aquarium was used in several episodes of this sea creature invasion series that starred Lake Bell and Jay R. Ferguson.

*Weekend at Bernie's (Motion Picture, 1989)* – The beach house in this film was a temporary structure built on the beach behind the aquarium. Filmmakers carefully replaced plants and rebuilt damaged dunes.

## **Wrightsville Beach**

### **Crystal Pier**

703 S Lumina Ave. Wrightsville Beach, NC

*Dawson's Creek* – The Crystal Pier attached to [Oceanic Restaurant](#) provides great outdoor seating and is a popular locale for outdoor music when the weather permits. Fans of the show will recognize the wood pier from opening scenes of the show's montage and various episodes, such as the beach party when Dawson (James Van Der Beek) comes to Joey's (Katie Holmes) rescue. The show's final episode also features the pier and the beach during flashback scenes.

### **Dockside Restaurant**

1308 Airlie Rd. Wilmington, NC

*Dawson's Creek* – Just over the bridge from Wrightsville Beach and a tradition for over 25 years, [Dockside](#) doubles as The Icehouse during the show's first and second seasons. The real Icehouse, now closed, was located at 115 South Water St. in Downtown Wilmington, but the script placed it along a channel. Scenes from the outside looking in were filmed downtown, while scenes from the inside looking out were filmed at Dockside. The final episode included a third Icehouse location at Chandler's Wharf.

*The Choice* – The film's first three days of shooting took place at Dockside and in the movie was the go-to spot for the leading man, Travis, and his friends.

### **Brasserie du Soleil**

1908 Eastwood Rd. Wilmington, NC

*The Choice* – Want to dine like your favorite characters in the movie? Book a reservation at [Brasserie du Soleil](#), where an essential scene in the movie takes place. Located in a shopping village right over the bridge from Wrightsville Beach, this restaurant features traditional French cuisine with an atmosphere that is both luxe and comfortable.

### **FAQ'S**

For Dawson's Creek fact sheet, including scene locations, [click here](#)

For a One Tree Hill fact sheet, including scene locations, [click here](#)

For Sleepy Hollow fact sheet, including scene locations, [click here](#)