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Tuesday, Sep 4, 2007

## Tourism Talk

Posted on Sun, Sep. 02, 2007

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### EMMA RITCH TOURISM TALK

## Orbitz.com names MB a solid pick for weekend

Myrtle Beach might not have one of the busiest airports in the country this weekend, but according to travel Web site Orbitz, it's one of the best places to go.

Orbitz last week released its list of the most crowded airports and destinations for the Labor Day weekend. The survey was based on flight bookings on Orbitz.com but excludes connecting flights from the rankings.

The busiest U.S. cities will be New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and Washington, D.C.

Chicago's O'Hare International will be the busiest U.S. airport, followed by Charlotte's Douglas International, which moved up 15 spots from 2006. Philadelphia International Airport ranked third, and Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport fourth.

Orbitz staffers picked six destinations that didn't fit into the rankings as off-the-beaten-path choices, and Myrtle Beach was among them.

"As we may see record numbers of U.S. travelers this holiday, our Insider Staff Picks highlight some popular but also not-so-crowded destinations to consider," said Heather Leisman, senior director of merchandising for Orbitz.

The description called Myrtle Beach "a sun-drenched haven for beach-goers, offering endless hours of sunbathing, surfing, boating and other fun activities."

The Insider Staff Pick noted the many golf courses and restaurants, "which offer an impressive array of delicious cuisine, plus some of the country's best seafood."

The other picks were Destin, Fla.; Eureka Springs, Ark.; Portsmouth, N.H.; Santa Barbara, Calif.; and Breckenridge, Colo.

S.C. chamber polls in MB The state Chamber of Commerce was in Myrtle Beach last week to poll business owners and lawmakers on what the priorities should be for the 2008 S.C. legislative session.

Attendees at the Grand Strand Regional Grassroots Meeting at Magnolia's focused on three main issues: transportation funding for Interstate 73 and other state roads, the need for state and federal policies on immigration, and sustaining the investment in tourism promotion.

"More than likely those three will end up on our legislative agenda," said Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce spokeswoman Nicole Aiello.

The local chamber uses the grass-roots meeting to help shape its priorities.

The chamber's Legislative Policy Committee will propose the final list to the board, and it should be completed and announced in November, she said.

Contact EMMA RITCH at 444-1722 or [eritch@thesunnews.com](mailto:eritch@thesunnews.com).

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