

Travel Trends

Discovering Desirable Vacations That Deliver Value

(NAPSA)—With the rising cost of gas and the depreciating dollar, many travelers are challenged to find a vacation destination that delivers genuine value.

A destination that maximizes travel dollars will feature lower gas prices, inexpensive accommodations and a great climate, as well as lots to see and do. For example, South Carolina, which attracts more than 30 million visitors yearly with its scenic splendor, historical grandeur and opportunities for fun, also offers:

- **Lower gas prices.** South Carolina's gasoline prices tend to be noticeably less than the U.S. average. That's a big break for travelers interested in exploring the state's scenic byways. Popular routes include the Ashley River National Scenic Byway, with three National Historic Landmark plantations, and the Cherokee Foothills National Scenic Highway.

- **Good lodging prices.** South Carolina's average daily rate for a room in 2006 was about \$80 versus around \$98 in both the South Atlantic and the U.S. overall, according to Smith Travel Research.

- **A moderate climate** makes the state perfect for outdoor enthusiasts of all kinds, especially the penny-wise. Vacationers find the best prices at renowned Hilton Head and Myrtle Beach resorts, for example, toward the beginning or end of the busy summer season, and in late fall and spring.

- **Year-round opportunities for fun.** Surrounded by the Blue Ridge Mountains, Greenville has a big-city feel in a small-town set-



Lower fuel prices can be a great attraction for anyone who wants to explore scenic byways on their vacation. Pictured above: Caesars Head State Park.

ting with boutiques, art galleries and outdoor cafés. It's a "best value" destination, according to Hotwire's Travel Value Index, thanks to wallet-friendly lodging in such high-end properties as the Westin Poinsett, which can go for as low as \$135 a night. At the gateway to South Carolina's mountain wilderness, the area provides outdoor enthusiasts with nearby lakes and hiking trails.

- **Lots of state parks.** South Carolina is also home to 47 state parks. Admission is free or nominal, and campers can pitch a tent or rent a cabin near lakes, in the mountains or on the beach.

- **Museums.** Across the state, museum lovers and history buffs can take advantage of free or low admission at hundreds of military museums and battlefield sites, including Fort Sumter National Monument, where the first shots of the Civil War were fired in Charleston Harbor.

For more information, visit www.DiscoverSouthCarolina.com.