

# River Town Charm



**1** *The Murderkill River*

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# River Town Charm



Paddle Sports



Wildlife Viewing



Photo Spots

## Still Waters - and History - Run Deep Along the Bayshore

The Delaware Bayshore Byway winds through tidal marshland from New Castle down to Milton. The southern portion of the Byway is the site of three major rivers which were integral to the early settlement of the state. These deep and wide rivers allowed ships to come as far inland as Milton, and created the two prosperous shipbuilding towns of Milton and Milford, both located on the Byway.

The waterways also provided a bountiful food supply to the inhabitants, and small towns, both on the coast and inland, thrived because of them.

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### The Murderkill River

Frederica, DE 19946

The journey begins along the Murderkill River, whose name is taken from the original Dutch meaning “Mother River.” Moeder is mother in Middle Dutch, and kille is river. Later, under British rule, the word “river” was added to the waterway’s name, effectively making it “mother river river.” While the untranslated name is jarring, its true meaning describes its nurturing qualities. Two towns that benefited from the Murderkill are Bowers Beach and Frederica.

#### **Bower’s Beach is the first sandy beach one encounters when coming from the north.**

Its maritime history is celebrated in May during the Buccaneer Bash, and again in August when the town commemorates “Big Thursday,” the official beginning of oyster harvesting season. Spend a little time taking in the quiet coastal town energy.

- If you want to really get into the seafaring spirit, chartered boats are available. The early bird gets the worm as Captain’s Lady, which sets sail every day, rain or shine, leaves at 7 am and returns at 2:30. Rent rods and purchase bait for a day of fishing on the Delaware Bay.
- Once you’re firmly back on land you can head over to the Bowers Maritime Museum to learn more about the town’s rich history.

**The next stop, further inland along the Murderkill, is Frederica.** The town was established at the farthest point inland navigable as a shipping port. The town has a small historic district to explore.

- Just outside of town to the south is Barratt’s Chapel, Museum and Cemetery, which is billed as the “Cradle of American Methodism”.



## Mispillion River

103 S Washington St.  
Milford, DE 19963

2



### A quick 14-mile drive south brings the traveler to Milford.

The town, settled in 1680, straddles the border of Kent and Sussex Counties and is bisected by the Mispillion River.

Milford was once the largest producer of ships in Delaware outside of Wilmington.

- First, take a stroll along the City of Milford Mispillion Riverwalk. This peaceful path takes you along both banks of the Mispillion. If you're lucky you may see some work being done at the Vinyard Shipyard, a still functioning shipyard that restores yachts like those once built there.
- Downtown Milford is thriving with local shops, the Milford Museum, and a variety of restaurants.
- Finally, take a break from your travels at Mispillion River Brewing, but don't overindulge because you have one more stop to visit.

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## Broadkill River

210 Union St.  
Milton, DE 19968

### Heading farther south into Sussex County you arrive at Milton, your final destination.

While Milton was initially founded as a mill town on the Broadkill River, it quickly became a ship town and was renowned for the production of a large flat-bottomed schooner called "the ram."

- You can learn all about the town's history at the Milton Historical Society. Milton is a slow and quiet town with a surprisingly large number of historic structures that seemingly transport visitors back in time.
- Catch a live show or classic film screening at the Milton Theatre.
- Visit the beautiful Milton Memorial Park which provides canoe and kayak access the Broadkill river.
- Finally, a true Delawarean will tell you to experience one of the state's most famous recent exports through a tour at the Dogfish Head Brewery.

