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BY KIRA JONES

# FIND YOUR SPECIAL ESCAPE AMID THE SEA PINES

**S**ituated on the southernmost tip of South Carolina's Hilton Head Island, The Sea Pines Resort is a relaxing oasis comprised of equal parts tranquil sanctuary, golfer's paradise and family-friendly vacation destination. It offers loads of satisfying activities for junior golfers, their siblings and parents alike.

## ADVENTURES LARGE AND SMALL

An ideal day at the acclaimed low country resort might include an early tee time at one of three championship courses — Harbour Town Golf Links, Heron Point by Pete Dye and the splendid new Atlantic Dunes, crafted by Davis Love III's Love Golf Design. After golf, a

leisurely lunch at one of the superb restaurants at either of the property's two award-winning clubhouses (Harbour Town Clubhouse and The Plantation Golf Club) works nicely, followed by a stroll around the lively Harbour Town Yacht Basin with its fine selection of restaurants and shops.



# THE SEA PINES

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Restaurants designed to accommodate all appetites include Links, an American grill, in the Harbour Town Clubhouse. For low country-inspired cuisine, visit Live Oak in the Plantation Golf Club clubhouse, with its 35-foot rotunda and floor-to-ceiling windows providing impressive 270-degree views of the golf amenities. The Sea Pines Beach Club features Coast, a beautifully-appointed restaurant and oceanfront bar with the freshest seafood on Hilton Head. For dining of a more casual nature, try Harbourside Burgers & Brews in the Harbour Town Yacht Basin.

Whatever else you do, be sure to journey up to the top of the Harbour Town Lighthouse, which might inspire participation in one of the many water sports offered, including kayaking, parasailing and stand-up paddle boarding. Finally, enjoy a stunning sunset at the new Sea Pines Beach Club before heading back to your accommodations in one of the spacious villas, vacation homes or at the luxurious Inn & Club at Harbour Town – a boutique luxury hotel, just steps from Harbour Town Golf Links, with 60 beautifully appointed guest rooms and suites.

## GOLF WITH A DESIGNER'S TOUCH

Perhaps most notably, Sea Pines offers an unparalleled golf experience. Last fall, the resort unveiled its heralded new Atlantic Dunes course. Atlantic Dunes is a complete reconstruction and recreation of the historic Ocean Course, the first on Hilton Head. Love, the 2016 U.S. Ryder Cup captain, his brother Mark and lead architect Scot Sherman fashioned entirely rebuilt holes to accommodate modern shot values and frame scenic corridors.

Atlantic Dunes now features a pronounced seaside ambience and low country feel, accentuated by coquina shells and seaside grasses. The project's goal to incorporate elements of the surrounding beachfront, along with native pines and oaks lining the fairways, has been fully realized with stunning results.

"Atlantic Dunes is challenging from the back tees, but several additional tee boxes make the course thoroughly enjoyable for players of all

abilities," says Love. "It is a classic layout that rewards strategic thought and well-executed shots, while misses are not overly penalized."

## LEARNING THE GAME IN MULTIPLE WAYS

The new Harbour Town Clubhouse opened just prior to the 2015 RBC Heritage PGA Tour event and is a must-see for golf history lovers of all ages. Its Hall of Champions showcases the rich history of the RBC Heritage, including Pete Dye's original course drawings, as well as oil paintings of past champions such as Davis Love III, Graeme McDowell and Tom Watson.

The state-of-the-art Golf Learning Center is located at the Plantation Golf Club on the property. This 2,400-square-foot teaching facility features two hitting bays, professional club repair work room, viewing studio, indoor putting areas and a separate teeing ground for instruction only. The top-of-the-line instruction features the latest in technology, set in an environment geared entirely toward improvement in all phases of the game.

An expert team of golf instructors is led by the resort's Director of Golf Instruction, Tim Cooke. He was honored in *GOLF Magazine's* coveted list of "Top 100 Teachers in America" for 2017-2018. Cooke was also named "Teacher of the Year" by the Carolinas PGA Section in 2014 and consistently ranks among *Golf Digest's* "Best Young Teachers" in South Carolina.

Cooke's instructional articles have been featured in numerous publications, including *Golf Tips*, *Golf Illustrated* and *Golf Digest*. He has additionally made several guest appearances on Golf Channel's "The Turn," and he participated in an instructional segment that ran on GolfChannel.com's "Weekly Fix."

## WHERE JUNIORS FEEL AT HOME

Junior golfers get plenty of attention at The Sea Pines Resort. A variety of instructional programs are available, including individual lessons, junior golf camps, one-day schools, full swing evaluations and even a junior golf academy. Cooke works with top nationwide juniors sharing a common goal: to play col-



Top: You're never too young to learn good technique

Middle: Sand challenges abound on the seaside courses

Bottom: A variety of terrains makes for an interesting vacation







lege golf. When his pupils leave Hilton Head, he stays in touch with them via Internet-based lessons.

Also available is the popular "Parent Child School," a three-day program that runs from 9 a.m.–3 p.m. Designed for one junior (ages 9–17) and parent, the program offers instruction on the full swing and the short game, and includes golf-specific fitness sessions with a TPI-certified Fitness Pro. It additionally features on-course instruction, a personal game plan for improvement and lunch each day.

"It's a great way for a parent and child to spend time together, improving at the game they can play for a lifetime," says Cooke.

### THE PLAYCATION PACKAGE

Families wanting to experience The Sea Pines Resort can also take advantage of the "Escape Vacation Package," through September 9. This value-packed vacation includes accommodations in a lovely villa or home, complimentary \$100 resort credit (redeemable for golf, dining and activities) and free golf for children 12 and younger on the resort's Heron Point or Atlantic Dunes courses, with each paid adult green fee. Children 12 and younger even get to enjoy a free 90-minute dolphin excursion cruise, with each paid adult, through this generous vacation package.

At The Sea Pines Resort, the itinerary possibilities are almost endless, with its five miles of unspoiled Atlantic Coast beaches, 21 clay tennis courts, 14 miles of bike and walking trails, horseback riding, Eco-Adventures and a 605-acre forest preserve filled with wildflowers, wetlands and more than 130 species of birds.

World-class golf, luxurious overnight lodging, fine food and abundant amenities have earned The Sea Pines Resort its well-deserved reputation as one of the most alluring family-friendly vacation destinations on the East Coast. No wonder so many have made it a place they return to, with pleasant anticipation, year after year.

*Kira Jones is a freelance writer, with a Masters Degree in Sports Journalism from the University of Southern California.*



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