









Clockwise from above: a street in Harbour Town; Stan Smith at Smith Stearns Tennis Academy at Sea Pines Racquet Club; the beach at Hilton Head Island

BREAKFAST

Take the boat over, drive or bike to Palmetto Bay Sunrise Cafe, a favorite local hangout. Sit outside on the covered porch or at the counter and watch them flip pancakes or order the Strata, a layered egg, onion, sausage and cheese baked dish with house-made chili sauce. Open for breakfast and lunch. (palmettobaysunrisecafe.com)

MORNING TENNIS

Take a lesson with Smith or one of the coaches at the Smith Stearns Tennis Academy where Smith, former USTA director of coaching and No. 1 player in the world, and B.J. Stearns, a former top nationally and internationally ranked player and the academy's director, line up camps, clinics,

exhibitions and classes. Located at Sea Pines Racquet Club. (seapines.com)

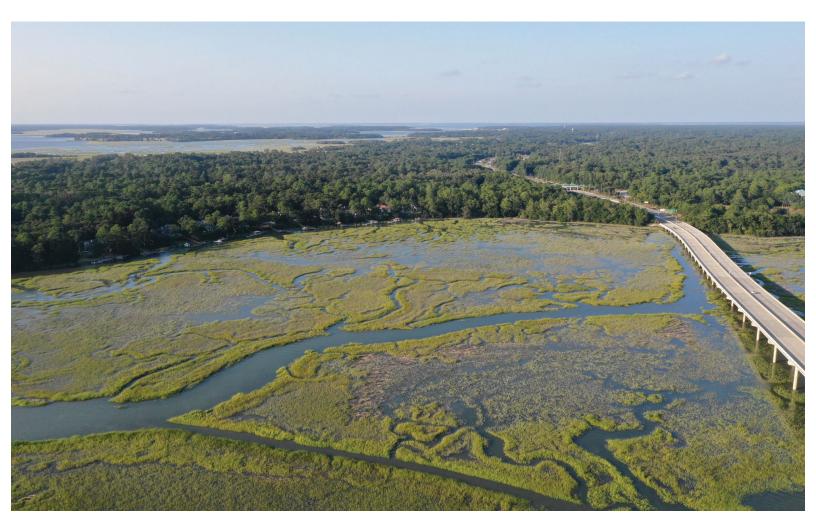
HIT THE TRAILS

"Hilton Head is one of the most bike-friendly places you'll find," Smith says. Rated as a Gold Level Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists, wheel your way through 60 miles of multiuse trails and make your way to South Beach for an ice cream at The Salty Dog Cafe, where more than 50 flavors are scooped daily. (saltydog.com)

LUNCH

From the racquet club, walk to Fraser's Tavern for lunch. Fraser's Tavern overlooks Atlantic Dunes





by Davis Love III and Heron Point by Pete Dye golf courses with wide views of the greens from the restaurant's shady porch. (seapines.com)

AFTERNOON AT THE STABLES

Meet the resident goats, cows, miniature donkeys, potbellied pigs and alpacas at Lawton Stables. Trail rides (8 years and up) with a guide sharing Hilton Head Island culture, history and wildlife meander through trails, forests and lakes in over 600 lush acres of the Sea Pines Forest Preserve. Pony rides are available for riders 7 years and younger. Reservations required for trail rides; call 843-671-2586.

OR ... AN AFTERNOON ON THE WATER

"My daughter and her husband met while standup paddleboarding and like to head out on the Calibogue Sound or try fishing from a SUP on the Broad River, venturing into the inlets and quiet waters." Call Saltmarsh Paddle Tours and talk to owner and native Dean Windley. He will take you on a tour or send you on your way and recommends being on the water at low tide when dolphins and birds are feeding and active. Expect

to see manatees, shrimp, waterfowl and stingrays. Self-guided tours, SUP and kayak rentals are available on the quiet Broad River. (saltmarshpaddle.com)

Above: the bridge to Hilton Head Island Harbor; below: biking on trails to and from South Beach









Left: The Salty Dog Cafe at Hilton Head Island Marina; right: the lighthouse at dusk

DINNER

At the end of the day, Hilton Head glows under a Lowcountry sunset (around 5:30 p.m. in January). Here are a few of Smith's favorite dinner spots:

RED FISH OF HILTON HEAD

"Sit outdoors and check out the extensive wine list," Smith says. Red Fish specializes in seafood, steaks, fresh local fruit and vegetables and Lowcountry specialties. Enjoy homegrown produce from Bear Island Farm, plus an extensive wine list that has won Wine Spectator's "Best of Award of Excellence." (redfishofhiltonhead.com)

CQ'S RESTAURANT, HARBOUR TOWN

"I've been going to this classic place for 40 years," Smith says. Wander over before dinner to shop, then stay for Grand Marnier Shrimp and Grits and the daily warm bread pudding. (cqsrestaurant.com)

MICHAEL ANTHONY'S

Check out this restaurant, cooking school and Italian market owned by Hilton Head Island residents Tony and Becky Fazzini. (michael-anthonys.com) M

SIGNATURE EXPERIENCES

dive into the Lowcountry, from nature, cuisine and mixology to history and culture, including an up-close look at the Gullah community as it comes to life. Here are a few to choose from:

Beyond the Battlefield: Hilton Head Island in Civil War

From 1861 to 1865, decades before the At the Coastal Discovery Museum, visitors can learn more about the experience that soldiers, former slaves and civilians had here during the Civil War. Through first person accounts and historic photographs, guests learn about the Battle of Port Royal, Head Island and a day in the life of a soldier. (70 Honey Horn Drive, Hilton Head Island)

Gullah Heritage Trail Tours

Tour guides, all of whom are of Gullah linguistic and cultural heritage than any other African-American community in the United States. An authentic culture of the Sea Islands of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia Gullah is the West African-based system of traditions, art forms and family life that has century of free lifestyle. (70 Honey Horn Drive, Hilton Head Island)

Mitchelville

This journey begins in Mitchelville's slave face with an actor playing Harriett Tubman, an American abolitionist, humanitarian and armed scout and spy for the U.S.

Army during the Civil War. Tubman will explain how after the slaves were freed, addressed the former slaves' longings for their own land and independence. While Mitchelville once had over 3,000 residents, after the Union army left the area in 1868, connection to the town endures through For more signature experiences visit hiltonheadisland.org.