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BY GINGER STREJCEK

Southern Sanctuary

Listen to the soothing sounds of nature while soaking in a bath of lemon balm and jasmine on a private veranda. Savor a succulent platter of fresh seafood on a wrap-around porch overlooking sparkling blue waters. Slip into a state of total relaxation with a warm river stone massage.

Southern comfort truly takes on new meaning at The Inn at Palmetto Bluff. Located in the Carolina Low Country, just minutes from Savannah and Hilton Head Island, this small luxury resort offers upscale amenities in the most scenic of settings. The Inn boasts 50 spacious bungalows, a Jack Nicklaus signature golf course, a waterfront restaurant and a world-class spa, poshly tucked into Palmetto Bluff's 20,000 acres of pristine wilderness, on the banks of the May River near Bluffton, S.C. It's the first East Coast property of the prestigious Auberge Resorts, creators of Napa Valley's Auberge du Soleil.

"We offer a high level of service with no pretension, well-designed facilities, a superior culinary program and a one-of-a-kind spa experience," said Mark Harmon, principal and CEO of Auberge Resorts. "When we embarked on this project, we knew it would bring something new to the Southeast."

Indeed, the Inn at Palmetto Bluff – recently honored as the second best resort in the country by *Condé Nast Traveler* readers – offers the seclusion of a private resort with the ease of accessibility.

The charming cottages along the river banks celebrate the region's architectural heritage, with pine floors, vaulted ceilings and cozy fireplaces. Screened porches show off panoramic sweeps of nature. Fine bed linens and custom bath products add to the

The Inn at Palmetto Bluff pampers guests with luxurious resort lodging in the scenic surroundings of the Carolina Low Country



creature comforts, along with the high-tech offerings of plasma TVs and Internet access.

Whether guests are in the mood for a gourmet meal or a casual snack, the resort satisfies culinary whims with a variety of dining choices. The 90-seat River House Restaurant serves exceptional cuisine, incorporating the area's bounty of oysters, crab, shrimp and other fresh and saltwater fish into the menu. Lighter fare is offered at several other places on the property. In-room dining is available 24 hours a day.

And then there's the heavenly spa. Modeled after a Southern manor home, the 9,500-square-foot facility is serenely situated on an island oasis, accessible by footbridge. Here, surrounded by flowering gardens and lush greenery, guests can enjoy revitalizing body treatments and

soothing massages which draw upon healing traditions and ingredients indigenous to the area, such as cotton, wild rice and red river clay.

The beauty of the Bluff itself is enough to stir the soul. Recreational opportunities abound in this unique habitat that brims with ecological and geographic diversity. That includes the 18-hole golf course that Jack Nicklaus has woven into the fabric of Palmetto Bluff, winding past shady live oaks and palmettos along the high bluffs of the river. There's also a private golf club with a practice facility, pro shop and grill.

The waterways around the resort are a paddler's paradise, with complimentary canoes and kayaks provided for exploration. The trails are perfect for hiking and biking. Escorted nature walks, archaeological tours and fishing excursions are also offered at this family friendly destination.

FOR RESERVATIONS OR MORE INFORMATION, CALL 866/706-6565
OR VISIT PALMETTOBLUFFRESORT.COM.



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