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GIFT GUIDE

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LOWCOUNTRY LIVING

Montage Palmetto Bluff in South Carolina boasts that quintessential laid-back Southern lifestyle and dreamy oak trees.

In early September, the East Coast saw the grand debut of Montage Palmetto Bluff's final expansion, set within 20,000 acres of coastal marshland. With the expansion comes 150 new guest accommodations, split between a new inn and new guest houses, and a 13,000-square-foot spa, resort pool, and fitness center, among other newbies. The sprawling estate lies between Hilton Head, South Carolina, and Savannah, Georgia, perfectly tucked away among low-lying oak branches along the May River in Bluffton, South Carolina. The resort is now made up of 200 rooms: the original southern-style cottages (with fireplaces and screens and wraparound porches), guest houses, inn rooms and suites. The new inn is inspired by R.T. Wilson Jr.'s mansion—which burnt to the ground in 1926—and its columns and grand interiors. palmettobluff.com

REASON TO STAY NO. 1: This land is a history lesson. First, the oldest artifacts at Palmetto Bluff date back to 10,000 B.C. The land was purchased by a British naval officer in 1730; he later sold the May River estate as individual plots. During the antebellum era, the land featured 21 plantations, one of which was owned by Confederate Cmdr. Thomas F. Drayton, who was defeated by his brother, Capt. Percival Drayton of the U.S. Navy, in the capture of Port Royal, South Carolina, in 1861. History buffs should visit the history center located at Palmetto Bluff.

REASON TO STAY NO. 2: Whether families or couples, Palmetto Bluff hits everyone's vacation needs. With the renovation came Spa Montage and Jacqueline Piotaz Switzerland treatments, which combine three plant stem cells that target cell protection, renewal and longevity. Guests can also enjoy the outdoors with conservancy tours, bike trails, the May River Golf Course, a Jack Nicklaus signature, and paddle boarding.

REASON TO STAY NO. 3: Breakfast is the most important meal of the day, and now it will also be the most surreal moment of your day. Grab a table at the new Jessamine, serving low country cuisine. There's a cathead biscuit sandwich with Benton's ham and herb aioli during the week. Sunday brunch features shrimp and grits with Gulf shrimp and andouille sausage cream.

