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World-Class Within Reach

FANCY A GETAWAY TO A PLACE THAT'S REDEFINED LUXURY? IT'S CLOSER THAN YOU THINK.

BY BARRY KAUFMAN

Thinking of planning an escape? Maybe a relaxing getaway to an all-inclusive resort, a cruise aboard a luxury liner, or a week spent exploring a foreign destination. Before you call your travel agent or book your flight, don't forget that some of the world's most prestigious luxury accommodations and amenities are right here in the Lowcountry.

Follow May River Road from Old Town Bluffton, winding your way beneath a canopy of live oaks and over gold-green marshlands, and you'll find a lavish enclave of understated elegance adored by celebrities and world travelers alike.



Photo Courtesy of Palmetto Bluff

Welcome to Palmetto Bluff, where world class dining and luxurious amenities are set amid lamp-lit streets, forest trails and gorgeous views of the May River.

A World Apart

The rich coastal elegance that first drew global attention to the Lowcountry is expressed in sublime simplicity at 20,000-acre Palmetto Bluff, where Montage Resort offers luxurious lodging options set among carefully planned and well-manicured green spaces, waterways and neighborhoods. The cottages and hotel coexist with undisturbed natural beauty. Not a tree is planted nor shovel turned in Palmetto Bluff without a look at how the work will impact the ecosystem. As part of this focus on environmental conservation, the Palmetto Bluff Conservancy has kept a tight rein on every aspect of development, creating a breathtakingly pristine natural wilderness that coexists in peaceful harmony with a thriving gated community.

That's part of Palmetto Bluff's primary goal: to protect and nurture the ecological treasure that is the South Carolina Lowcountry while still enjoying the natural world to the fullest. For example: the wide village green of Wilson Landing and the park at Moreland Landing were carefully constructed to afford the finest May River views – both to those on land and those who arrive by water. Palmetto Bluff also has a small but thriving commercial village, with a casual restaurant,

small history museum, RT's Market, other shops, a chapel for intimate weddings and a deep water dock. In addition to vacationers, locals enjoy dining at Palmetto Bluff and being pampered at the resort's spa.

To help people get an up-close and personal look at the region's natural beauty, the conservancy hosts regular education tours on the area's unique ecology, as well as its history. Take to the water for a sunset cruise aboard "Grace," which is Palmetto Bluff's 60-foot antique yacht. Or explore on your own via canoe, kayak or paddleboard. Sport fishing has a long and storied history at Palmetto Bluff, going back to the resort's days as a rustic getaway for clients of the Union Camp Corporation. As a result, the many waterways that run through Palmetto Bluff are stocked with largemouth bass and bream. Reel one in with a complimentary fishing pole from the Canoe Club Paddle House.

But, of course, this is the Lowcountry, and perhaps no tradition is as honored here as the game of golf. The Jack Nicklaus masterpiece at May River Golf Club blends inspired design with a dedication to Palmetto Bluff's natural beauty. »

Opposite Page: **Those who get away to Palmetto Bluff stay in elegant rooms, suites, cottages, and vacation homes designed in classic Southern style.**

Bottom: **Offering sweeping views of the gorgeous May River, Palmetto Bluff has calm inland waterways for fishing and kayaking.**



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A New Level of Luxury

Since its expansion and re-opening in 2016, Montage Palmetto Bluff has set a new standard for luxury in lodging in the Lowcountry. It would do New York banker Richard T. Wilson Jr. proud – Wilson bought Palmetto Bluff in 1902 and set to work creating an idyllic retreat for the social elite of his day. His mansion drew some of the most esteemed names of the early 20th century to the Lowcountry for celebrations that lasted weeks.

To honor this legacy of artful luxury nestled in a Lowcountry paradise, Montage set to work renovating the inn and property, turning it into a \$100 million world-class resort. Its 200 guest rooms are carefully tailored to rival the most luxurious hotels in Europe – 400-thread-count Italian linens, mixed with a uniquely Southern blend of charm and hospitality.

“Montage Palmetto Bluff authentically represents the heritage of the destination, and we are excited to bring it to life as we welcome visitors from both our local community and around the world,” said Alan J. Fuerstman, founder and chief executive officer of Montage Hotels & Resorts.

That luxury extends well beyond the guest rooms, though; look past their walls – which bear photos from the long-gone days when New York’s upper echelon spent their summers sipping ice tea on the bluffs and boating in the May River – and you’ll find a variety of different dining experiences, from the Southern-inspired all-day menu at Jessamine’s to the waterside relaxation of Fore & Aft, plus a decadent spa experience at the 13,000-square-foot Spa Montage, with its hot tubs, cold plunge pools, eucalyptus steam rooms and redwood saunas. Or cool off in one of two outdoor pools, then lounge on the terrace and enjoy the relaxed, comforting aesthetic.

When wanderlust strikes, remember that you don’t have to travel halfway around the world to find five-star luxury and once-in-a-lifetime experiences. Whether you’re looking for an indulgent daytrip or an extravagant staycation, having Palmetto Bluff just down the road means never having to go too far to find world-class luxury. **M**



Cast a line into one of Palmetto Bluff's many ponds and lakes or in the May River. Explore tranquil water trails in your own kayak or canoe, or be a little more adventurous and grab a paddleboard.

So what will a staycation living the high life cost you?

- Starting room rate at Montage Palmetto Bluff: \$295
- Round of golf at May River Golf Course: \$315 in peak season (April-June, Sept.-Dec.) and \$215 in off-peak season (Jan.-March, July, August). Includes green fee, walking caddie or cart with forecaddie.
- Golf Cart rental: \$75 per day
- Bike rental: \$12 per day
- 60-Minute facials and massages at Spa Montage Palmetto Bluff: Start at \$205
- Kayaking, canoeing, paddle boarding and fishing: complimentary with resort stay

Packages:

1. Choose Your Adventure: which includes accommodations in an Inn room, guest house, cottage or village home, \$150 resort credit activity, breakfast daily for two at your choice of Buffalo's or Jessamine. Rates starting at \$430 per night and a three-night minimum stay is required.
2. May River Unlimited Golf: includes luxurious inn rooms, guests house, cottage or village home accommodations, unlimited golf on the Mary River Golf Course, breakfast each morning at Buffalo's (\$60 credit per bedroom). This is a two-night package and rates start at \$650 per night.



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