

# SOCIAL LIFE

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## MARIA MENOUNOS

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## LOWCOUNTRY LUXURY IN SOUTH CAROLINA

BY ANTHONY MICHAEL



Montage Palmetto Bluff

Entering Palmetto Bluff is like entering a movie. From the minute you turn onto the access road to this otherworld of resort and residences, you know you've signed-up for a unique experience. For some, it may last a few nights. For others, it may be a lifetime. And, while this exercise in perfection may at first take you off guard, you will regain your breath in short order, because this is a place designed to help you breathe long and easy.

Nestled along the May River in the bucolic Lowcountry of South Carolina, Palmetto Bluff is quickly becoming a tony destination, particularly attractive for its location and climate: more and more, those in the know are looking for a temperate Caribbean-alternative within a couple of hours from New York City or other East Coast hubs. They want little fuss, and a lot more peace of mind when it comes to a resort vacation or a rental or forever property.

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Comprising 20,000 acres, Palmetto Bluff gives that piece of mind as a low-key resort and community that encompasses an extensive nature preserve, walking trails, a vibrant village, marina, restaurants, and a Jack Nicklaus Signature Golf Course.

But it's the details that make Palmetto Bluff a new kind of luxury. Miles upon miles of gas-lit street lamps. The 1913 60-foot antique motor yacht, Grace, which is ready for a cruise on the May River or for a very special event. Pristine landscaping, whether you're at the shooting range or enjoying your front lawn. And, impeccable service, distinguished by the laid-back southern hospitality, reminds you that this

Neverland is not only real, but also steeped in history and tradition (it even has its own museum and resident archeologist).

At the center of the property is the Montage Palmetto Bluff resort with its charming rooms, suites, and cottages. These all



Pool at Montage Palmetto Bluff

have luxurious residential touches, such as vaulted ceilings, fireplaces, opulent bathrooms, and verandas with stunning views of waterways, flora, and fauna (watching the dozens of species of birds come and go at dusk and dawn is spectacular).

Guests at the Montage, many of whom are likely on hand to survey the greater property for a vacation home or plan a luxe wedding, are treated to many of the same amenities as full-time residents.

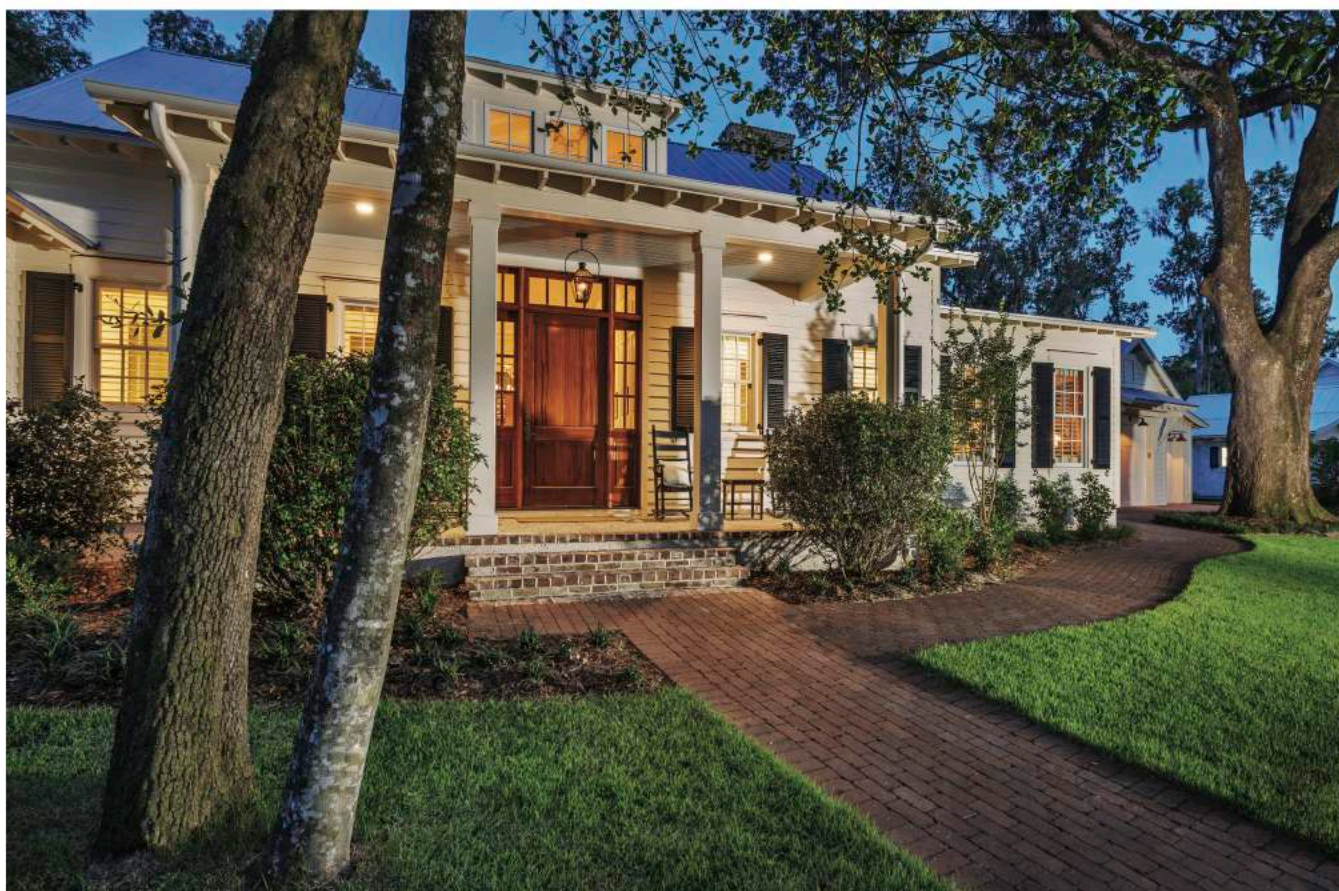
Foremost, you never have to leave the property for a meal. Several full-service restaurants offer everything from simple-but-spectacular soups and salads all the way to five-course meals and fireside s'mores. You can complete your South Carolina epicurean experience with a healthy variety of fine wines, delicious and refreshing craft beers, and unforgettable classic and creative cocktails. The resident sommelier is quick to review an abundant, well-curated cellar should you request it.

For dining, don't miss Canoe Club, a stunning boat-house style restaurant. The coastal kitchen menu celebrates local seafood, drawing ingredients and inspiration from the May River,

such as local shrimp, oysters, and seafood prepared in a variety of ways. Partnering with area farms, the property's executive chef, who honed his skills at the Ritz Carlton San Francisco, and in Portland, Maine's legendary restaurant scene before that, sources fresh vegetables, beef, and poultry to create dishes that honor the bounty of the Lowcountry.

The Spa Montage is heaven within heaven. Swim a few laps in the relaxing outdoor pool surrounded by the lush green maritime forest. Settle into separate men's and women's relaxation areas featuring saunas, steam rooms, cold plunge pools, and whirlpools. Shop in the inviting Spa Boutique, or enjoy a beauty service in the stunning Salon Montage. The signature high cotton massage is an absolute must — opt for the 120-minute treatment.

One thing that makes Palmetto Bluff exceptional is its abundance of activities. From daily culinary events to dozens of sporting and outdoor options, guests and residents never want for something to do. Or nothing to do: porching is another way to spend some Southern time. (And, dog lovers, take note: Palmetto Bluff is canine-friendly.)



The Residences

## THE RESIDENCES

Boasting more square miles than Manhattan, Palmetto Bluff has become a forever home to many of the people who have visited. The pristine houses and available lots are sheltered by arms of moss-draped live oaks and punctuated by a village of cobblestone lanes — reminiscent of Savannah and Charleston — that wind among cottages, shops, cafes, and beside the Montage Palmetto Bluff resort.

The homes, which are customizable and vary in price, boast Southern architecture, wrap-around porches and the aforementioned twinkling gaslights, all with access to world-class recreational amenities: May River Golf Club with its Nicklaus course; equestrian center; lawn and racquet club; fitness centers; the acclaimed Spa Montage; kayaking, canoeing, fishing, and biking along scenic trails.

Of the current hot properties (and various opportunities abound), Montage Residences Palmetto Bluff are among the most exclusive addresses in the Southeast.

The charming two-to-five bedroom single-family residences are inspired by Lowcountry architecture and feature timeless, comfortable design both inside and out.

Offering two to five bedrooms, these spacious single-story cottages are made for stretching out, settling in, and living

expansively. Exteriors are inspired by the existing hotel cottages with simple forms, details, and clapboard exteriors painted warm white with silver grey roofs. The great rooms open out to porches that in turn open out to the communal green. The space flows naturally between inside and outside. The interior details are timeless and comfortable with painted wood on the walls and ceilings contrasting the warm hues of the antique heart pine floors. Homes feature screened porches, built-in grills, and airy sitting rooms with fireplaces, ideal for year-round indoor-outdoor living.

And with the convenience of turnkey living, they allow for immediate occupancy. You can simply lock your doors upon your leaving and trust Montage to take care of everything in your absence. Or, if you choose to participate in Montage's rental program, they will make your residence available at times that you designate.

For families who relish a sense of place and its traditions, Montage Residences Palmetto Bluff offer a lifetime of memories, and the resort is an absolute must-visit in 2018.