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If You Love The Sporting Life, Palmetto Bluff Is The Place For You



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Travel

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Palmetto Bluff is a 20,000-acre residential resort that does not look or feel like a development. ... [+] COURTESY OF PALMETTO BLUFF

Palmetto Bluff, the residential resort in Bluffton, South Carolina, is paradise for anyone who loves outdoor pursuits with a touch of sophistication. The 20,000-acre development located in the heart of the South Carolina Lowcountry offers something for everyone.

Featuring 32 miles of riverfront, Palmetto Bluff is a private escape where every kind of adventure can be had. Your biggest challenge will be deciding what to do first as there is so much from which to choose, from hunting and fishing to horseback riding, golf, tennis and water sports.

Members of the Palmetto Bluff Club never need to worry about carrying cash or credit cards as everything can be charged to your membership account. Dine at any of its eight restaurants or have a cocktail at one of its lounges, and all you have to do is sign your name.



Montage Palmetto Bluff is a five-star hotel with 200 guest accommodations in the form of guest ... [+] COURTESY OF PALMETTO BLUFF

Five-Star Amenities

Montage Palmetto Bluff is a five-star hotel with 200 guest accommodations in the form of guest rooms, suites and cottages that makes it possible for those who don't own property there to enjoy all that it has to offer (village homes and Montage Residences are also available for overnight stays). Be prepared to fall in love with the resort as approximately 25% of its property owners first visited the property as hotel guests of Montage Palmetto Bluff.

The development has many of the same amenities (world-class golf, dining and racket sports) as do other residential resorts such as Hilton Head, Sea Island and Kiawah Island. But while it is approximately two-thirds the size of Hilton Head (which has 40,000 houses and a dozen hotels), the density has no comparison. Indeed, when it is fully developed, Palmetto Bluff will not have more than 4,000 homes and the goal is to place half of its land in permanent conservation.

Also setting it apart from the other resorts is that many of Palmetto Bluff's facilities are managed by a five-star hotel management company. Montage manages a variety of restaurants, fitness facilities and non-member programming, which ensures the same five-star level of quality and service Montage Hotels & Resorts is so famous for providing around the world.



Palmetto Bluff has a plethora of sports and wellness facilities. In Moreland Village, The Boundary ... [+] COURTESY OF PALMETTO BLUFF

The Palmetto Bluff Company, the developer behind the resort community, is led by an experienced team. Its president, David O'Donoghue, has extensive experience and was involved with the development of Silverleaf & The Country Club in Scottsdale, Martis Camp in Truckee, Ca. and Kukui'ula in Kauai. O'Donoghue's hospitality experience includes positions with The Boulders in Ariz., Shutters on the Beach in Santa Monica, Ca. and the Four Seasons Hotel Company.

Since its groundbreaking in 2003, the Palmetto Bluff Company has sold more than \$1.3 billion in real estate. Of the 4,000 entitled homesites, just over 1,000 have been sold to date with just under 700 homes built and another 180 homes in the design review or construction process. Currently 7,500 acres are in permanent conservation and by the time Palmetto Bluff is fully developed, the goal is to leave half of the land untouched, pristine and in permanent conservation.

Natural Beauty

Incredibly, Palmetto Bluff does not look or feel like a development, which in part is due to the fact that its development plan is not being rushed with a completion date that is still years in the future. Rather than sell the lots with the best views for the highest price possible, the developers have opted to use these locations for public parks and common space which everyone can enjoy. "Because we have a lengthy timeline, we are able to make decisions like that and think long term about how it benefits everyone," says Courtney Hampson, Palmetto Bluff's Vice President of Marketing. "It is being developed in a thoughtful way."

The resort has a charming small town feel with a proper village green in the Wilson Village area, where you will also find a post office, restaurant, fitness center with a large heated swimming pool and a cocktail lounge. There is also a three-story treehouse with a spiral staircase, metal slide, wooden boardwalk, and a rope ladder (a five-story treehouse built around, so as not to touch, a centuries-old live oak was also constructed elsewhere at the resort). If you didn't know any better, you'd think Wilson Village is a real town—albeit a small one with over-the-top amenities—that you might see flipping through the pages of Architectural Digest.



Throughout Palmetto Bluff there are mature trees, including southern magnolias, red oak, eastern red ... [+]
COURTESY OF PALMETTO BLUFF

Everywhere you look, there are mature trees, from towering live oaks trees dramatically and beautifully draped in Spanish moss to southern magnolias, red oak and eastern red cedar. In the area closest to Wilson Village, the streets are laid out in a grid pattern and [Palmetto Bluff has the appearance of a quintessential American neighborhood](#) with brick sidewalks and Colonial-style white clapboard homes patriotically displaying American flags. While the two villages of Palmetto Bluff (Wilson and Moreland) are more densely developed and the location of most of the amenities, outside of these areas, the lots are bigger and where custom estates are built. [Unlike other developments where most of the homes look the same, Palmetto Bluff doesn't have the appearance of a planned community.](#)



Water sports such as kayaking, standup paddle boarding and canoeing can be enjoyed on its miles of ... [+]
COURTESY OF PALMETTO BLUFF

[Hunting and the shooting sports](#) have been a long-standing tradition at Palmetto Bluff. The Palmetto Bluff Shooting Club features 13 sporting clays stations winding through an expansive 40-acre hardwood bottom. There's also an elevated and covered 5-stand station, plus a wobble deck field make for a total of 15 shooting sites. The Palmetto Bluff Shooting Club offers a shooting school, including one tailored specifically for people who are new to the world of shooting clays.



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PALMETTO BLUFF

Outdoor Pursuits

[Palmetto Bluff](#) provides ample opportunities for members and guests to enjoy the outdoors. It offers 22-plus miles of hiking, biking and jogging trails which make it possible to enjoy a peaceful journey on foot or on bike with only the sounds of nature breaking the silence.

[Water sports](#) include kayaking, standup paddle boarding and canoeing can be enjoyed on its miles of water trails that meander throughout the property.

An angler's paradise, fishing is another long-standing tradition at Palmetto Bluff. For centuries—even since it was inhabited by Native Americans—the wide diversity of sea life provided by its inland water trail system has made it a haven for fishing. There are also several ponds and lakes, stocked with largemouth bass and bream, that have been carefully managed for more than seventy years. Boat rentals are available for those who prefer saltwater fishing, with tarpon, cobia, redfish and sea trout in the spring and summer.

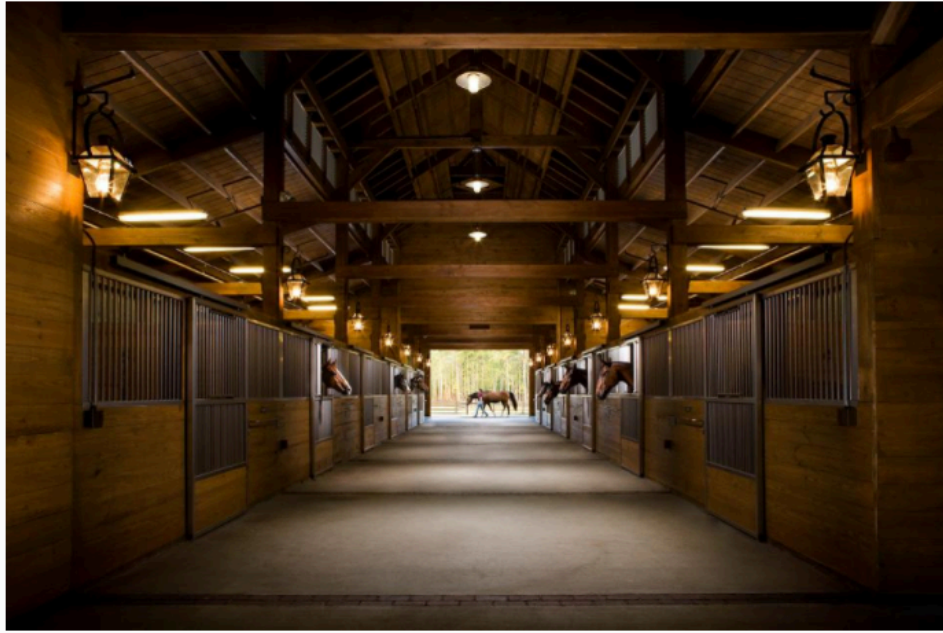


The May River Golf Course (seen above) is a Jack Nicklaus Signature Course that was designed ... [+] COURTESY OF PALMETTO BLUFF

Sports, Fitness and Wellness Facilities

Palmetto Bluff has a plethora of sports and wellness facilities. It maintains two pristine croquet lawns and its Racquet Club features eight Har-Tru tennis courts, six pickleball courts, and two bocce courts. In Moreland Village, there is an amenity space with a four-lane, state of the art bowling alley and game room equipped with pool tables, foosball and shuffleboard tables, board games and card tables.

There are several fitness centers outfitted with state-of-the-art equipment and one also has a movement studio. Personal training is available as well as a schedule of organized classes from yoga and spinning to Pilates. There are several heated horizon lap pools overlooking the scenic May River. At [Spa Montage Palmetto Bluff, the award-winning full-service day spa](#), members and guests can have body treatments, facials and massages, or enjoy its steam baths, saunas, cold plunge pools, whirlpools and lap pool. There's also a hair and nail salon.



Palmetto Bluff's equestrian facility, Longfield Stables, is a 173-acre farm and arguably one of the ... [+] COURTESY OF PALMETTO BLUFF

Palmetto Bluff's equestrian facility, Longfield Stables, is a 173-acre farm and arguably one of the best equestrian facilities in the southeast. The stables include a covered arena, an FEI-regulation outdoor dressage area and a five-acre turf event field as well as a main barn and receiving barn, both featuring oversized stalls. Private and group lessons are available.

The May River Golf Course, a Jack Nicklaus Signature Course, was designed specifically for the coastal weather of the location. The scenic par-72 course is almost 7,200 yards in size and features century-old oaks and serene native landscapes. Woven throughout the May River Forest, several holes are located on the banks of the river.



The Palmetto Bluff Conservancy is dedicated to protecting the natural resources on the property. The ... [+] COURTESY OF PALMETTO BLUFF



Palmetto Bluff Conservancy Director Jay Walea is responsible for ensuring the conservation vision of ...

[+] PHOTO BY CARRIE COOLIDGE

As the custodian of the natural and historical world of Palmetto Bluff, the Conservancy has a platform to educate everyone involved in the development of a new piece of property. It also has a full-time archaeologist on staff and a History Center where artifacts found on the property are displayed—some dating back 12,000 years. The Conservancy hosts more than 300 lectures, tours, field trips, and hikes each year.

A Love For The Land: The Palmetto Bluff Conservancy

While there is still much more to be developed at Palmetto Bluff, it is evident the developers and those who choose to live there have a deep love for the land. After all, it is one of the most diverse pieces of property in terms of habitats with 20 different habitat-types. “This means that the bio-diversity and wildlife is very diverse, too,” says Hampson, who adds that more than 300 bird species live there.

Indeed, every home site or home sale has a flip tax that is used to fund a non-profit organization, [The Palmetto Bluff Conservancy](#), that is dedicated to protecting the natural resources on the property. The Conservancy has a mission of protecting the lush maritime forests and winding tidal creeks that define the spectacular geography of Palmetto Bluff.

[Conservancy Director Jay Walea](#) is responsible for ensuring the conservation vision of the land is preserved and protected. A trained wildlife manager who also studied forestry, Walea knows Palmetto Bluff better than anyone. He interned there while a college student and as a young boy he spent time on the property as his father was an executive of Union-Camp Co., the paper company that previously owned and used Palmetto Bluff as a shooting preserve. A celebrity of sorts at Palmetto Bluff, Walea is an affable, burly man, who is also the unofficial mayor of the development.

“My job at the end of the day is to make sure the developer is doing right by the land,” says Walea. “The [Conservancy](#) has the most important job on the property.”



Walea has his hands in every aspect of the development. He sits on the design and review board which ... [\[+\]](#) COURTESY OF PALMETTO BLUFF

Walea has his hands in every aspect of the development. He sits on the design and review board which must approve architectural plans and he has a seat at the development table. No survey can take place without his approval.

If you spot a tree that is in the middle of the road, Walea is surely responsible. “The [Conservancy](#), as the lead, are allowed to tell us ‘no’,” says Hampson. “So if you are driving around and see a tree in the middle of the road, it is because Jay said ‘you are not going to cut down that tree. You can move the road or move the neighborhood, but you are not going to get rid of that tree.’”

Walea oversees controlled burns of the undeveloped land, which protects the wildlife by providing a better habitat for survival, while also preventing unwanted forest fires. He is also responsible for healthy heard management by determining how much and which game is available for hunting from season to season by tracking the population of each species. This year, for example, wild turkeys were off the table because their numbers were too low, while quail, pheasant and boar were eligible for hunts.



Management organizes more than one hundred special events each year, including an outdoor concert ... [+] COURTESY OF PALMETTO BLUFF

Special Events

There is an abundance of activities to keep you busy as the management organizes more than one hundred special events each year, including an outdoor concert series and live acoustic music performances. There is an abundance of activities to keep you busy as the management organizes more than one hundred special events each year, including an outdoor concert series and live acoustic music performances.

In February, for example, Palmetto Bluff hosted an event featuring a series of programs called “Field + Fire.” Ticketed events open to the public included Southern artisans who displayed and sold sporting art, jewelry, outdoor gear and apparel. There were also exhibitions such as one in which handlers explained the training behind their retrievers (dogs) and classes on fly casting and how to tie fishing flies.



At the Field + Fire festival, wildlife conservationist Steve Hein (seen above) hosted birds of prey exhibitions and took groups of members and guests into the woods of Palmetto Bluff where they displayed how their trained dogs and falcons hunt pheasant, quail and squirrels as a team. The weekend was capped by a five-course “Bourbon & Birds” game, bourbon and wine pairing dinner created by, Adam Evans, a well-known guest chef and executive chef and owner of Birmingham, Alabama-based Automatic Seafood & Oysters, and Mike Wolf, a celebrity mixologist and author of “Garden to Glass.” A well-known folk rock band, Jamestown Revival, was flown in from Texas to entertain the crowd.

COURTESY OF PALMETTO BLUFF

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Palmetto Bluff offers a wide variety of real estate offerings. Seen here is a new custom home at 33 ...

[+] COURTESY OF PALMETTO BLUFF

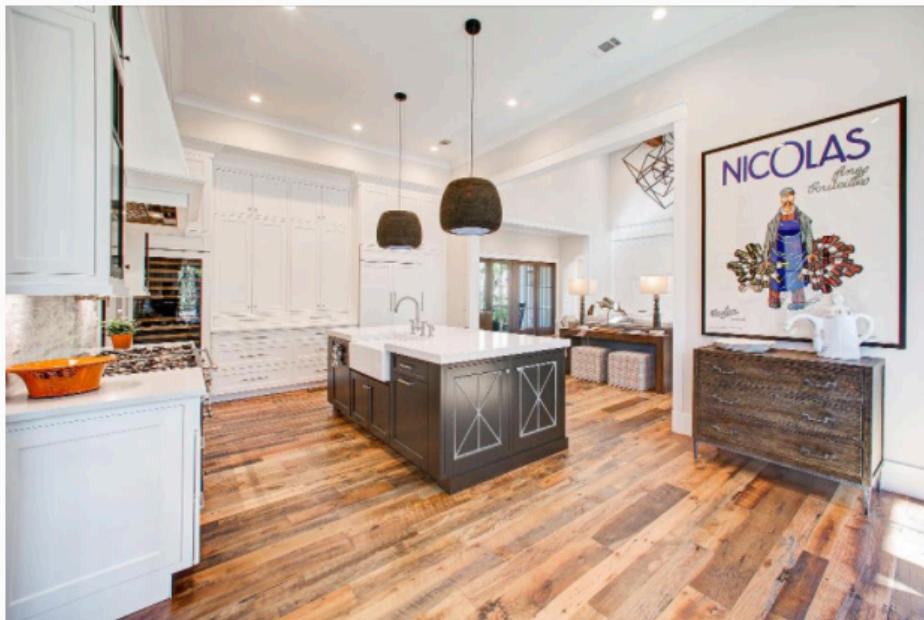
Real Estate Opportunities

Palmetto Bluff's newest "village" is Moreland Village – located in an incredible natural setting and is designed to blend seamlessly into the landscape, blurring the lines between indoors and outdoors. Three leading architecture firms ([Lake Flato](#), [4240 Architecture](#) and [Hart Howerton](#)) came together with distinct design concepts to create a lively village center that embodies a simple, casual lifestyle that celebrates the Low country vernacular combined with modern sensibilities, with prime access to Palmetto Bluff amenities such as a fitness center, pool, restaurants, the Conservancy Headquarters and the Artist Cottage, which houses the [Artist in Residence](#) program. With a variety of home site offerings that each reflect the informality of a small town and a relaxed, coastal way of life, Moreland has a true village aesthetic with its thoughtful street planning and picturesque architecture.



The 3,648-square-foot home at 33 Camp Park Road features four bedrooms, four and a half bathrooms ... [+] COURTESY OF PALMETTO BLUFF

One new custom home currently on the market is a 3,648-square-foot home with four bedrooms, four and a half bathrooms with a detached three-car garage with additional space for a golf cart (and a one-bedroom, one-bathroom guest quarters above). Priced at \$2.325 million and located at the end of a private drive at 33 Camp Park Road in the Longfield area of Palmetto Bluff, the home sits on nearly five acres and is situated among gorgeous pastures and large swaths of maritime forest.



Adjacent to the great room there's an eat-in gourmet kitchen with Caesarstone counters, custom ... [+] COURTESY OF PALMETTO BLUFF

The home boasts an open great room with reclaimed oak floors, gas fireplace, and expansive windows that capture abundant natural light and bring the outdoors in. Adjacent to the great room there's an eat-in gourmet kitchen with Caesarstone counters, custom cabinets, Sub-Zero refrigerator, wine cooler, as well as a back kitchen with additional storage. Just beyond the kitchen is the laundry area and two additional guest ensuite bedrooms. On the opposite end of the home is a private master wing with two separate office areas, a large walk-in closet/dressing area and a spa-like bathroom with dual vanities and large walk-in shower.



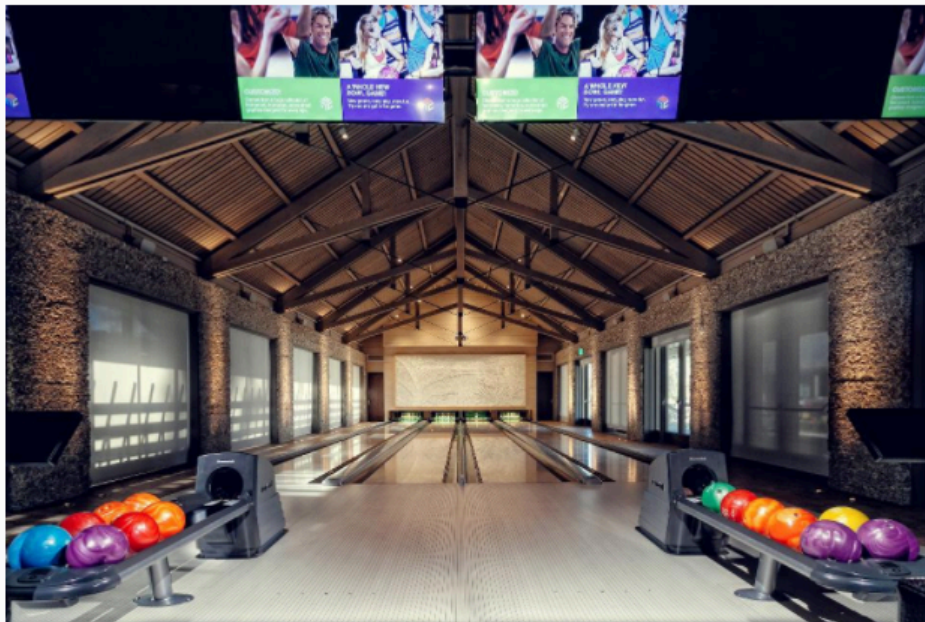
This five-bedroom, five-and-a-half bathroom residence at 602 Old Moreland Road in Palmetto Bluff's ...
[+] COURTESY OF PALMETTO BLUFF

Another home on the market is a five-bedroom, five-and-a-half bathroom residence in Palmetto Bluff's Moreland Village that features beautiful views of Lake Bales. [Listed at \\$2,395,000, the 4,436-square-foot home located at 602 Old Moreland Road](#) features an open concept living space, a dining room and downstairs master suite with white oak hardwood floors throughout. The master suite features a spa-like bathroom with a generous walk-in closet space.



Listed at \$2,395,000, the 4,436-square-foot home located an open concept living space, a ...
 [+] COURTESY OF PALMETTO BLUFF

Custom features of the spacious gourmet kitchen include Thermador appliances, a large wine refrigerator, butler's pantry and stunning cabinetry for ample storage space as well. The second floor features three ensuite bedrooms, and a detached two-car garage with space for a golf cart as well as a guest suite with a full bathroom, kitchenette, and laundry.



The Boundary in Moreland Village is an amenity space with a four-lane, state of the art bowling ...
 [+] COURTESY OF PALMETTO BLUFF

The home is within walking distance of the Boundary, which features [Cole's restaurant](#), a bowling alley, art loft, pottery studio, treehouse and two swimming pools. A community dock on Cauley's Creek is also within a short distance.

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Getting There

[Palmetto Bluff](#) further benefits from its proximity to the [Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport](#) in Savannah, Georgia, which is only 26 miles away. There are many direct flights to and from the Savannah airport.

For more information about Palmetto Bluff and real estate opportunities there, see [this link](#).