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Travel

A Getaway to LILTON LIEAD ISLAND



The beach at Hilton Head is amazing; it's absolutely huge at low tide with plenty of tide pools for kids to splash in and hard packed sand for bike riding.



by Jan Ross, Staff Writer

Hilton Head Island is tucked neatly

up against the South Caro ina coast so close that it is just a quick drive over a marsh-lined causeway to get there, yet only a short distance from the cities of both Charleston and Savannah.

Your first glimpse of the lush foliage and the businesses and resorts which are hidden away, well back from the road, gives you a clue that this not your typical island getaway. The island's Natural Resources Division enforces the Land Management Ordinance, which minimizes the impact of local development and even governs the style of buildings and how they are situated among the native trees. You won't recognize the McDonald's and Wal-Mart here; they are small, built of materials which blend into the environment, and surrounded by trees.

The beach at Hilton Head is amazing; it's absolutely huge at low tide with plenty of tide pools for kids to splash in and hard packed sand for bike riding. Most of the island is sublimely private, located inside gated communities and resorts but there are also several public beach access points. One of the nicest resorts on the island is the recently renovated Sonesta Resort. Beautifully redone with a



A suite at Sonesta, one of the nicest resorts on the island.

focus on orange and other colors of the beautiful island sunsets, the resort is located on 11 beautifully landscaped, beachfront acres which contain water features, gorgeous flowers and plenty of butterflies and birds attracted by the colorful foliage. The resort offers several swimming pools, an active kids program for 3 - 12 year olds, bike rentals, tennis, golf, a fabulous spa and some great dining options.

We stayed in one of the one bedroom suites which are absolutely huge with a living room, office/dining area, bedroom and a kitchenette with a refrigerator. With a hide-abed couch, the suite was suitable for the two of us on a girlfriend's

getaway and would be plenty large enough for a family as well.

The Arum spa in the resort was the perfect place for a relaxing facial and we had some incredible breakfasts and an amazing dinner at Heyward's, one of several dining options at the resort. With a huge breakfast buffet and a Friday night seafood buffet, Heyward's is a great choice for family dining.

We left the resort one night for a truly incomparable meal at a fascinating, small, local restaurant called The Studio. Owned and managed by a husband and wife team, the restaurant offers an eclectic menu with a focus on local and organic items. The husband/chef stays busy in the kitchen while the wife, who is an accomplished artist with work displayed throughout the restaurant, works as a friendly hostess and waitress.

If you are a fan of vintage/antique/ consignment shops, Hilton Head is a great place to spend a day looking for hidden treasures in one of the dozens of shops. We found everything from a Kate Spade purse for \$5 to a vintage, handmade, crocheted tablecloth.

Relax, eat, shop, and enjoy the beauty of this lovely barrier island because it is truly a unique place.

