

KIAWAH ISLAND, SOUTH CAROLINA

When it comes to South Carolina, Charleston may be the state's crown jewel. But 25 miles outside of the city's confines, a very different—and magical—world awaits: the coastal refuge of Kiawah Island. —*Kristin Luna*



Stay

Ten miles wide and 10,000 acres deep, Kiawah Island is a private development—and spawning ground for various species of reptiles and birds—occupied by the resort of the same name. Couples and solo travelers will love the intimacy and grandeur of **The Sanctuary Hotel** at the



Kiawah Island Golf Resort (\$495 per night); many of the 255 spacious rooms (the smallest being 520 square feet) have oceanfront panoramas of the rugged coastline. Families should opt for one of the **Resort Villas** (\$180 per night), condos and cottages of varying size with self-catering facilities, many of which boast easy beach access and are clustered around a pool.

Explore

Having hosted tournaments such as the Ryder Cup, PGA Championship, and World Cup, Kiawah has earned its reputation as a world-class golf destination with



five courses comprising 90 holes. If putts and drives aren't your thing, there are plenty of other active pursuits for which the resort is known. Book a lesson or schedule a match at one of the 19 clay and five hard courts divided up between the **Roy Barth Tennis Center** and **West Beach Tennis**

Club. Rent a kayak from the **Nature Center** and go for a twilight paddle out on the marsh. Or take advantage of the many guided outings that explore the island's ecosystem, like an alligator adventure, a back island birding excursion, or a night walk to see the native loggerhead sea turtles.

Eat

Kiawah Island Golf Resort offers a dozen different dining options, but **The Ocean Room Restaurant**—a steakhouse and sushi bar with a AAA 4 Diamond rating—is the grand dame; book one of the 30 coveted tables and enjoy a mix

of well-prepared surf and turf (like lobster mac and cheese or wet-aged filet mignon). For more casual cuisine, the **Ryder Cup Bar**, overlooking the 18th hole of the Ocean Course, is known for its burgers and beers with a view. Just be sure to tuck into the lavish Sunday brunch spread at **Jasmine Porch** before you check out.

Relax

With golf being the island's biggest draw, it's no surprise there's an entire menu of treatments at **The Sanctuary Spa** dedicated to those who are fresh off the links. Non-golfers can also indulge in a personal training session followed by an Athletic Recovery Massage, or simply make use of the spa's facilities, which include a vitality mineral whirlpool, a steam room, and a sauna.

Get There

Kiawah Island is 575 miles from Nashville, or a nine-hour drive. Southwest offers up to four daily nonstop flights between Nashville International Airport and Charleston International Airport.

APRIL HIGHLIGHTS

Heading to Kiawah for Easter weekend? April 19 features a **disc golf tournament** in Night Heron Park, followed by a Harry Potter-inspired **"Muggle Quidditch" Cup**, capped off by an **EGGstravagant Easter Festival** that evening. Those with kids in tow will want to check out the annual **Easter egg hunt and toss** as well as the **sand-sculpting contest** on Easter Sunday. Arriving early or staying late? Make a reservation for the resort's **Mingo Point Oyster Roast and BBQ**, an alfresco dining experience on the banks of Kiawah River held April 17 and 21.

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