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 253 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.

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**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.