

Disney Vacation Club's Hilton Head Island Resort: A Resort Review

by Jill Koenig, PassPorter Featured Columnist

How could a Disney vacation possibly be any fun without characters or rides? Come to Disney's Hilton Head Island Resort in the Low Country of South Carolina and you will soon discover how.

Instead of searching out the Yeti on Expedition Everest, you will most likely spend your days gazing over the gorgeous marsh from your balcony or meandering down the oak-lined paths that run throughout the resort. The peace, tranquility and simple beauty of this resort will capture your heart and spirit from the moment that you check in. Some of our fondest memories of our trip involved just exploring the resort. Whether it was playing horse shoes with our older daughter on a spot overlooking the marsh or pointing out the birds to our younger daughter while walking down the pier, we found delight in the simplest pleasures.

Don't assume that the only thing to do at the resort is to be awed by nature. When you check in, you are given a Recreation Activities Calendar that is packed full of activities and tours for all ages. There are also two pools at the resort: one at the resort itself and one at the Beach House which is located on the other side of Route 278 (otherwise known as the William Hilton Parkway, the Island's main drag), to which you can either take a resort shuttle or drive your car.

Each day, we alternated where we spent our pool time. At the Beach House, we actually enjoyed the other amenities as much as we enjoyed their large pool. When my husband took our younger daughter back to our villa for a nap, my older daughter and I played a fierce game of ping pong and then retreated inside to the cool and comfortable Surfman's Station for board games. The Big Buoy Arcade is also located at the Beach House, but outdoor activities kept us too busy. We also spent time on the beach where a fellow vacationer taught us how to rescue starfish from the pools that formed on the beach after high tide and return them to their rightful place in the ocean. My daughter is still talking about saving those starfish.

The resort pool, The Big Dipper, is located next to The Pool House which is home to the Broad Creek Mercantile, Tide Me Over snack bar, the Community Hall, Bend & Stretch Exercise Room, and the Recreation Activity Sign-Up Window. In addition to a large pool, there is also a winding water slide for the more adventurous and a baby pool, The

Little Dipper, for the tikes in your party. A shuffleboard court and ping pong tables are also located nearby for when you are ready for a break from the pool. Within steps of the pool, a 300-foot pier stretches out over the marsh where you can fish or just take in the beauty of day.

The fun doesn't stop at this resort when the sun goes down. Our older daughter looks forward to the nighttime activities the entire day. She and her dad participated in the Campfire two nights enjoying songs and s'mores. They are still singing the songs that they learned those nights!

Her favorite activities starred Disney's biggest commodity in Hilton Head: B'Lou Crabbe. You will not find Mickey or Minnie at this resort, but B'Lou Crabbe is Hilton Head's answer to these Disney counterparts. He is not a character in the Disney sense of the word; instead, he is a gentleman of character who is a jack-of-all-trades and a lover of magic, music and folklore.

One night he entertained my older daughter and me with a magic show and then, two hours later, he thrilled my husband and daughter with ghost stories. Hearing my six-year-old daughter dramatically recount a ghost story of local legend from my own childhood was pure magic for me.

One of the biggest highlights of our trip came about from my daughter's obsession with a certain dog named Shadow. Shadow is to B'Lou Crabbe what Pluto is to Mickey. She is the mascot of the resort and has quite a following. As the legend goes, she belonged to the owner of the land on which the resort was built and she had free reign over that piece of property. When Disney purchased the land, Shadow did not want to leave her home and kept popping up during construction. Shadow's owner finally gave her to Disney since she seemed to belong to the land more than any one person. You can even see "paw prints" in the foyer of the villas -- an homage to the mischievous Shadow.

Shadow is a beautiful golden retriever who is getting a little older, but is still the sweetest dog you will ever meet. She endures hours of b

eing petted and pulled on by children without a whimper and greets everyone with a wag of her tail. Shadow usually makes daily appearances around the resort, so we were excited to hear one morning that Shadow would be at her dog house, which is located on the porch of the Live Oak Lodge where you check in. Our villa happened to be only steps away, so at the appointed time, my older daughter and I stepped out of our villa and immediately set sight on B'Lou Crabbe and Shadow. For the next two hours, we sat at B'Lou's feet while he played his fiddle and a mandolin, sang and told us stories. Of course, there was much

petting of Shadow too! It was an incredible two hours of Low Country magic and it rivaled any show that you will ever see at Disney World.

Also located in the Live Oak Lodge is Big Murggie's Den where you can relax in a comfortable leather chair or play a game of pool. My older daughter beat her dad in checkers one night in that cozy room.

There are countless other activities to interest people of all ages: kayaking, crafts, nature walks, and dolphin cruises just to name a few. Do not worry about being bored if you're the type of person who does not enjoy sitting on the beach with a book. You can make your vacation as relaxing or jam packed as you wish.

One of my favorite activities, eating, is not forgotten on Hilton Head Island. Some of the best restaurants on the island can be found a short walk from the resort at Shelter Cove Harbour. During the day, we enjoyed delicious sandwiches from Tide Me Over at the resort pool and Signals snack bar at the Beach House. Surfman's Sand Bar at the Beach House serves refreshing tropical drinks and smoothies for the smaller set. My daughter highly recommends the Cookie Monster smoothie.

Vacationing at Disney's Hilton Head Resort has become an annual tradition for our family. It's just not summer if we don't spend at least a long weekend at our favorite Low Country retreat. Just like Disney World, it has something for everyone in our family.

I spent every evening of our trip sipping a glass of wine on our balcony while watching the sun set over the marsh. As day drifted into night, I marveled as the sky turned from orange to red to purple. Disney's Hilton Head Resort had cast its spell on me once again.

About The Author: Jill is a proud member of the PassPorter Message Board where she loves writing trip reports about her latest Walt Disney World vacation and exchanging advice with fellow Passporters. In her real life, she works in the Information Technology department of an insurance company and enjoys reading and cooking. She loves nothing more than being in her happy place with her husband, Thom, and their two daughters, Mary Devall and Maddie.

Article last updated: 10/4/2007

View the latest version online at:

<http://www.passporter.com/articles/disney-vacation-clubs-hilton-head-island-resort.html>

Copyright by Jill Koenig. All rights reserved under International and Pan-American Copyright

Conventions. No part of this publication may be stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning, or otherwise, except as permitted under sections 107 or 108 of the 1976 United States Copyright Act. Resale of this guide is strictly prohibited without the copyright holder's permission. If you purchased this publication from someone other than PassPorter Travel Press, please call 877-929-3273.

View more PassPorter Articles online at <http://www.passporter.com/articles/>