



The Top 5 Golf Courses to Play in the Southeast Right Now

With the states in the Southeast some of the quickest to reopen after COVID-19 quarantine restrictions, many courses are open for social-distanced play. Bonus: Each offers an option for second-home ownership, perfect for a continued break from urban life.

By [Shaun Tolson](#) / November 5, 2020

TPC Sawgrass

Designers: Pete Dye (Stadium Course); Pete Dye, Jerry Pate, and Bobby Weed (Dye's Valley).

Completed: 1987

Distinguishing characteristics: Home to golf's first stadium course, TPC Sawgrass also boasts a sprawling, 77,000-square-foot, Mediterranean-style clubhouse adorned with memorabilia

connected to the stadium course's creation, as well as a corridor that displays 45 golf clubs (and counting)—all pivotal pieces of equipment used by the winners of The Players Championship.

Why now: The strongest field in professional golf converges at TPC Sawgrass to contend for The Players Championship each spring—though cancelled for 2020. The course is altered only in minor ways leading up to that event.

Real estate options: 30 homes (starting at \$258,900), and three villas/condos (starting at \$365,000). *tpc.com*



Palmetto Bluff

Designer: Jack Nicklaus

Completed: 2017

Distinguishing characteristics: With its low-profile layout stretching 7,171 yards, Palmetto Bluff's May River Golf Course carefully meanders around the wetlands of its namesake waterway. The course features large, boldly contoured greens that will challenge skilled golfers who like to play aggressively through the air; however, many of those greens are also receptive to bump-and-run approach shots, which makes the course equally playable for higher-handicap golfers.

Why now: Restored by Nicklaus Design a few years ago, the May River course now benefits from improved drainage across the entire layout, as well as clearer delineation between formal sand bunkers and native, naturally sandy waste bunkers.

Real estate options: 15 homes (starting at \$672,900), 36 homesites (starting at \$185,000), and two Montage Residences (starting at \$1.7M).



Kiawah Island Golf Resort

Designers: Pete Dye (The Ocean Course); Tom Fazio (Osprey Point); Jack Nicklaus (Turtle Point); Gary Player (Cougar Point); Clyde Johnston (Oak Point).

Completed: 2017

Distinguishing characteristics: The resort's five courses stretch across much of the Atlantic-fronting coast of a 13-square-mile barrier island about 25 miles southwest of Charleston, South Carolina, and each brings into play the island's lagoons and wetlands, and in some cases ocean dunes. The wind intensifies the difficulty of each course, but the resort's flagship Pete Dye design is impacted most of all.

Why now: Visitors to the resort can test their mettle on The Ocean Course almost a year before it is expected to host the PGA Championship in May 2021. Additionally, three of the resort's other layouts—courses designed by Fazio, Nicklaus, and Player—have benefited from extensive renovations in the last six years.

Real estate options: 134 homes (starting at \$550,000), 121 homesites (starting at \$110,000), 64 villas and cottages (starting at \$249,000), and a selection of fractionally deeded villas and penthouses offered through Timbers Resorts (starting at \$569,000).



Sea Island Resort

Designers: Tom Fazio (Seaside); Love Golf Design (Plantation and Retreat).

Completed: 2019

Distinguishing characteristics: With three distinctive 18-hole layouts, Sea Island Resort offers a golfing experience to suit every skill level and playing style. Tom Fazio's Seaside course is reminiscent of Scottish links surrounded by tidal creeks and salt marshes, while the Plantation and Retreat courses embrace a low-country aesthetic.

Why now: A year ago, the resort opened a brand-new, 17,000-square-foot Performance Center, complete with six instruction and club-fitting bays. More recently, Love Golf Design (led by brothers Mark Love and Davis Love III) redesigned the resort's Plantation Course, incorporating Golden Age design elements such as railroad ties and sharply angled bunkers and greens.

Real estate options: 52 homes (starting at \$589,000), 20 condos and townhouses (starting at \$535,000), and 21 homesites (starting at \$245,000).



Sea Pines Resort

Designers: Pete Dye (Harbour Town Golf Links and Heron Point); Love Golf Design (Atlantic Dunes).

Completed: 2016

Distinguishing characteristics: Simply put, Sea Pines is a shotmaker's haven. Carved through stretches of loblolly pines and live oaks dripping with Spanish moss, the resort's two Pete Dye–designed layouts require careful strategy. No less scenic, the resort's third course, Atlantic Dunes, offers more expansive fairways and larger greens but balances the difficulty with significantly contoured putting surfaces.

Why now: Harbour Town Golf Links just celebrated its 50th anniversary, as did the RBC-sponsored Heritage Tournament that is played there each spring. The 2021 tournament has been scheduled for April 12–18.

Real estate options: 132 homes (starting at \$419,000), 87 condos and villas (starting at \$215,000), seven yacht club slips (starting at \$97,500), and 22 home sites (starting at \$160,000).



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