

Royal treatment extended to all at The King and Prince Resort



The King and Prince Beach & Golf Resort, St. Simons Island, Ga.
Photo by Chris Johnson



View from oceanfront room. Photo by Chris Johnson



The pros at the King and Prince Golf Club don't mind giving tips on technique. Photo by Kalin Thomas

by Gale Horton Gay

It's a funny thing about our first impressions—sometimes we can be so wrong.

Pulling into the sprawling and palatial The King and Prince Beach and Golf Resort on St. Simon's Island with its stately soft yellow building and distinctive red tile roofs, I jumped to the conclusion that this historic property would be stuffy and, perhaps, pretentious.

It didn't take long for me to realize just how wrong I was. The King and Prince is historic all right with 75 years of tradition

on Georgia's Golden Isles. However, it is a relaxed resort, with diverse facilities—including a wide assortment of guest accommodations—and staff who are genial and welcoming. The royal treatment is generously extended to all, which makes this resort an ideal place to stay—whether for a weekend getaway or a longer family vacation.

Interestingly, the King and Prince sits at the end of an ordinary street in a modest neighborhood, which only adds to its charm. It's like coming upon a hidden jewel. And with its back hugging the Georgia coastline, the Atlanta Ocean is

just a stones throw away from the resort's pool, restaurant, special event spaces and guest rooms.

However, this is no cookie-cutter resort. Its Mediterranean architecture is distinctive, visually enhanced when the sun hits the roof's red tiles. Guests can choose among 198 rooms in suites, beach villas, cottages and private guest houses. Rooms are sumptuously appointed and bathed in shades of soft yellow and other neutral tones and paired with bold blues or gentle greens.

See St. Simons on Page 13B

St. Simons

Continued From Page 1B

The property has had a long and colorful history. Opened in 1935 as a seaside dance club, the King and Prince Club grew into the King and Prince Hotel six years later when the main hotel was added. Local historians point out that dance clubs were big back then and when another opened nearby, a rivalry grew. It was destroyed by fire in 1935 and amazingly rebuilt in a mere 60 days—only to be ruined by fire again in the late 1930s.

During World War II, the hotel served as a naval coast-watching and training facility, and there are many intriguing stories about that chapter of its existence. It wasn't until 1947 that the property returned to usage as a resort. In 2005, it was named to the National Register of Historic Places.

Guests today have the choice of having meals in the Delegal Dining Room (Sunday brunch is spectacular and a bargain at \$21.95 per person) with its one-of-a-kind stained glass windows depicting local scenes and history or in the King's Tavern or at the laid-back Beach Bar and Grill (all have views of the Atlantic Ocean).

And chefs at King and Prince know how to make an event special. In celebration of the resorts 75th anniversary I was fortunate to sample a seven-course dinner with dishes that reflected each decade of the resort's history and included a Poached Salmon Louis for the 1940s, Escargot in Puff Pastry for the 1960s and Creole Black Grouper for the 1980s. Each dish was something to marvel at before devouring it.

Those with golf on their minds will likely be in a state of anticipation about playing at the recently restored King and Prince Golf Club. Located about 12 miles from the resort, the 18-hole, par 72 golf course presents unique challenges as golfers work their way past forests and through salt marshes, lakes and lagoons. Although I'm not a golfer, a golf cart tour (including more than 800 feet of elevated cart bridges) almost made me want to hit the links.

Back at the resort, there are also four outdoor pools, one indoor pool, tennis courts, a fitness center and massage and reflexology services at The Royal Treatment Cottage. A walk on the beach may require a walk through the neighborhood to reach a nearby park that has easy beach access. The tide is often so high directly behind the resort that the beach there is underwater.

For more information on the King and Prince resort, visit www.kingandprince.com.

Don't miss things to do/places to eat on St. Simons Island

Shrimping aboard the Lady Jane is a relaxing and fascinating way to spend part of a day. Captain **Larry Credle** and his crew not only take visitors out for a sea adventure, they also provide a lively and insightful lesson on shrimping and the sea life in St. Simon's Sound. Credle and company take pride that their excursions take place on a U.S. Coast Guard certified 49-passenger steel vessel that has been retired from active shrimping. Watch as the crew lowers the gear and after a while raises the net with its bounty of shrimp as well as crabs, stingrays, flounder, jellyfish and an assortment of other creatures that the crew is happy to identify. A highlight of the trip is when a pot of shrimp caught the day before are cooked with spices and served hot. The two-hour cruises run \$39.95 for adults and \$25 for children younger than 6. www.credlesadventures.com. (912) 265-5711.

Gnat's Landing. Any place that puts equal emphasis on its entertainment and its food and describes itself as "flip-flop" friendly is my kind of place. Located in Redfern Village on the island, Gnat's Landing offers bar drinks, seafood, sandwiches, salads and specialties such as a Fried Green Tomato Club, Fried Dill Pickles and Vidalia Onion Pie. I suggest that those in search of a lively time get a table on the large side porch where the musicians and singers perform (and there's plenty of room for dancing). Located at 310 Redfern Village. www.gnatslanding.com. (912) 638-PEST.

Serenity House Tea Society and Shoppe is a lovely tea emporium in the village that carries more than 70 teas from India, Africa, China and South America. The owner and staff are exceeding knowledgeable about the black, green, white and flavored teas and extremely willing to share their knowledge. The shop also sells tea accoutrements such as mugs, teapots, strainers and personal tea bags. Loose teas range from \$8 for two ounces to \$54 for a half pound. The shop is located at 504 Beachview Drive. www.SerenityHouseTea.com. (912) 638-0381.

Lighthouse Museum and Maritime Center provide a look back to when the lighthouse was part of guarding the coast. Exhibits about the routines and responsibilities of the guardsman who were stationed on the island in the early 1940s are displayed. In the Maritime Center there are seven galleries that are home to exhibits about the beaches, marches and forests as well as the areas' Coast Guard and military history. The lighthouse grounds also include an 1890 oil house and a Victorian style gazebo. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Located at 4201 First St. www.saintsimonslighthouse.org. (912) 638-4666.

Sandcastle Café & Grill is a great spot for a casual breakfast or lunch. Their \$8.35 daily breakfast buffet comes with biscuits, muffins, three kinds of sausage, bacon, corned beef hash, hashbrowns, fruit, tea, coffee and orange juice and made-to-order eggs. Also unlimited pancakes, French toast and waffles. Located at 117 Mallery St. (912) 638-8883.



The catch is in aboard the Lady Jane shrimping cruise. Photos by Kalin Thomas



One can't go wrong with the King and Prince's shrimp and grits.