

SECRET RETREAT

A private coastal community, concealed on a picturesque secluded island, opens its splendor to the public.

BY Elizabeth Bonner Czapski | PHOTOGRAPHY BY Dennis Burnett



Along the scenic Calibogue Sound at the southernmost tip of South Carolina, a private paradise awaits those fortunate enough to find it. The distinctive natural beauty of Haig Point, a remote sea island community with no hotels or cars, comes from a marriage of coastal wonder and Lowcountry charm. Long stretches of secluded beaches where dolphins frolic in the waves give way to live oaks draped in cascading Spanish moss that shades winding streets made for meandering by foot, bike, or electric golf cart.

For centuries, Daufuskie Island has stood as a stunning, well-kept secret just across the sound from bustling Hilton Head Island. In more recent decades, Daufuskie's luxurious 1,000-acre Haig Point community, only accessible by a 30-minute private ferry ride from Hilton Head, has lured residents with the simplicity of island living and well-appointed amenities.

While the island has primarily been enjoyed by its 400 residents and tourists on a day trip, this year Haig Point, which accounts for about a fifth of Daufuskie, is inviting visitors to experience life off the mainland with a new "Stay and Play" package that focuses on its rich history, preserved natural attractions, and modern indulgences.

"The vision of the community was to create an exclusive island retreat where residents feel connected to nature and all Daufuskie Island has to offer," says Adam Martin, director of sales and marketing at Haig Point. "The island's distinct beauty is particularly evident in the wide variety of flora and fauna." Live oaks, magnolias, loblolly pines, palmettos, and azaleas grace the landscape year-round, providing an idyllic setting for a plethora of undisturbed wildlife.

Accommodations include private cottages with contemporary coastal style and historical spots like the 1873 restored

lighthouse turned guesthouse—all with wondrous water vistas. The storied Strachan Mansion, with its four suites, instills a gracious welcome as the first site visitors see after disembarking the ferry. Early developers bought the dwelling's aging edifice, built on St. Simons Island in 1910, for one dollar and moved it to Haig Point by barge in the late '80s when the community was founded. The refurbished structure boasts antique Southern elegance and expansive balconies overlooking the Intracoastal Waterway.

While Haig Point's myriad amenities will keep you busy, take time to peruse eclectic points of interest outside its gates—from history museums and local artisan galleries, like Chase Allen's popular Iron Fish Gallery & Studio, to a coffee shop housed in the space where beloved author Pat Conroy once lived.

After a bit of adventure, plush spaces throughout the community



and fellowship, such as complimentary breakfast and a bar at the Strachan Mansion and an antebellum-style clubhouse that's home to a sophisticated grill room and library. The Calibogue Club, with amazing views of its namesake sound, serves as the focal point of Haig Point's active social scene. It is complete with a gourmet restaurant, specializing in seafood like deviled crab, along with plenty of lounge areas, including a new beach club with an opulent pool and deck.

The visitor package also touts daily golf on a world-class Rees Jones Signature course and access to an acclaimed equestrian center, which includes horseback historic tours and beachfront rides. Water recreation reigns, from boating, sailing, kayaking, and paddleboarding to fishing, crabbing, and shrimping.

While the natural marvels draw you in, it's the people that make Haig Point a truly enchanted place. Its diverse group of residents came for many reasons, but most stayed for the same: the unwavering sense of community and camaraderie fostered by their remote location, and of course, the unique beauty of their home. They're more than willing to share both with all who happen upon their paradise.

"Everyone you pass waves hello," Adam says. "You'll never get lost because everyone is willing to help, and every person just makes you feel at home."

For information, visit haigpoint.com.



SCENIC GRANDEUR

No matter where you wander in Haig Point, you'll be rewarded with breathtaking water views. The golf course offers seven holes with ocean vistas, or you can take in the sights on foot or horseback along pristine sandy shores. A couple of main streets make it easy to find your way around, from the central Constitution Tree (below)—with origins dating back to when the Constitution was written—located just outside the Strachan Mansion to the newly updated beachfront Calibogue Club (bottom left).



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