

Wild Dune's Harbor Course Has an Intimate Feel

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Just eleven miles from the Ravenel Bridge lies Wild Dunes Resort on the north-eastern tip of Isle of Palms. Two distinctly different golf courses are here, the Links Course and the Harbor Course. This week I had the pleasure of touring the Harbor Course.

Along the beginning holes are the first of numerous lagoons and ponds that line the course. Along the banks turtles and alligators sunbathe as heron wade by in search of a meal. Two islands each bear a single large oak tree whose branches are laden with dozens of egret, ibis and cormorant. Fish routinely jump, their oxygen supply ample from numerous fountains circulating the waters. The course passes through numerous small neighborhoods, each with its own unique look and personality. Passing the IOP Marina, the course heads through the tidal flats out to the coastal estuary. Then the majority of the lengths of holes 9 through 18 run back to the clubhouse along the Intra-Coastal Waterway, overlooking Goat Island and the tidal marshes with Mount Pleasant distant on the horizon. There is an intimate feel to the course as it makes each subtle shift from the resort area's swimming pool and tennis courts to the marine environment and back again.

Overlooking the 17th fairway I stand on Finch Bridge atop Morgan Creek talking with Helen Finch, whose father Raymond developed the land with the help of golf course designer Tom Fazio. One childhood memory, before the land was developed, was moving into a cabana that would sway if the washing machine was un-balanced. But more-so she remembers the countless hours of discussions between her father and Fazio as to how the many elements of the land could both be preserved and enjoyed by all those to follow. We meet John Rector, a resident along the course. "The course preserves a lot of extra green area which gives us space to walk our dogs, chat with our neighbors, fish

or just watch our children play. It also leaves the south-western edge of the island open which allows many more of us to enjoy the spectacular sunsets than if it was developed” says Rector.

Compared with the neighboring Links Course, the harbor course has a much more relaxed and intimate feel. Says Director of Sports and Golf Jeff Minton: “The Harbor Course has been a long time favorite for Resort guests, Members and local area golfers for years. The par 70 lay-out with six par 3’s will test the shot making skills of all levels of players. The Harbor Course is unique in that the first nine holes all play away from the Clubhouse and the back nine all play back towards the Clubhouse, which presents a challenge to players based on the direction the wind is blowing on that particular day.” The course is open to Charleston Area residents, and will not disappoint if a few peaceful hours of golf away from the daily grind is what you desire.



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