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Bluewater Resort And Marina

Spinnaker's Latest Hilton Head Island Addition

BY J.B. BISSELL



Thanks to a perfect mix of challenging golf courses, family-friendly strands of tranquil Atlantic sand, and unspoiled nature preserves — as well as local ordinances that help to ensure all construction blends in with the natural habitat instead of competing against it — Hilton Head Island blends its natural assets into a one-of-a-kind character: The island just to the north of the Georgia/South Carolina state line offers more than a quintessential vacation spot — it exudes a way of life.

And vacation owners love it. In fact, Carolyn Oliver, executive director of Spinnaker Resorts, which is headquartered on Hilton Head, recently completed an owner market analysis in which she discovered that Spinnaker's vacation owners on Hilton Head more often than not exchange to ... Hilton Head, and most often back to a Spinnaker resort.

"So what does that tell you?" asks Ken Taylor, president of Spinnaker. "Those are people who bought fixed weeks in the past and want to come back in a different time period. We have a very high return rate here."

"This will be the first project on Hilton Head that is located on the Intercoastal Waterway. We think Bluewater is unique because of its location."

— KEN TAYLOR, PRESIDENT,
SPINNAKER RESORTS

Taylor might understand this phenomenon better than anybody. His Spinnaker Resorts properties have been hosting those repeat customers since 1984, at seven different local developments, and he's set to open the eighth, Bluewater Resort and Marina, in early 2008.

SOMETHING DIFFERENT, SOMETHING BLUE

Returning timeshare owners are great — and Taylor certainly doesn't want to disappoint them — but Spinnaker is ready to move beyond the popular and proven Hilton Head formula of golf course/tennis/beach property.

"This will be the first project on Hilton Head that is located on the Intercoastal Waterway," says Taylor. "We think Bluewater is unique because of its location. Boating is an added bonus to all of the Hilton Head activities that vacationers currently enjoy. Stand on the dock and see pleasure cruisers and sailboats traveling north to Virginia and south to Florida. It's a very active waterway."

Bluewater's guests won't be limited to merely watching other people take advantage of the aquatic environment — they'll have plenty of opportunities to play skipper, too. Numerous boat rental agencies are within easy walking distance, and the resort itself will have a marina. "If somebody decides to bring their own boat," explains Taylor, "they'd have the ability to tie up at Bluewater during their vacation."

Seasoned captains will fall for Bluewater's maritime temptations, no doubt. "It's also a location for people who aren't as familiar with the water," Oliver says, "but who want to go kayaking, out on a dolphin cruise, tubing, or waterskiing. We can offer all of these water activities for people to experience."

KEY WEST STATE OF MIND

It will certainly be a comfortable introduction to water-based vacationing. The resort is spread out over 18 acres (7.3 hectares), and the first phase of construction includes 30 units — 16



Bluewater Resort and Marina is Hilton Head's first property on the Intercoastal Waterway. Its unique location is sure to present owners and guests with "at-your-door" access to activities from pleasure cruising to dolphin watching. Even the resort's interiors — exhibiting a Key West sensibility — are designed with the waterside location in mind.

two-bedrooms and 14 three-bedrooms.

The two-bedroom villas, which feature two master bedrooms with baths, measure 1,276 square feet (118.5 square meters). Three-bedroom units vary from 1,786 to 1,801 square feet (166 to 167.3 square meters) and have either two twin beds or an additional king-sized bed in the third bedroom.

Living and dining areas and a full kitchen are standard in all the accommodations, and while Hilton Head definitely emits its own woodsy, laid-back ambiance, Bluewater's design and decor may have some visitors feeling as though they've been transported to the Florida Keys.

"There is definitely a Key West feel," Taylor says, pointing out unit details such as yellow tones in interior decor, ceiling fans, wood texture, full metal roofing, and shuttered windows. "The most important thing, though, is that it's substantially different from what we've done in the past. We're on the water here, so we designed something that's compatible with this wonderful environment."

EXCHANGE RATES HIGH

Of course, everything about Bluewater is designed to be compatible with vacation owners, too, from the amenities to the exchange options to the physical attributes of the property.

Although Bluewater is not located on a golf course, Taylor is aware that many people who visit Hilton Head want to spend at least a little time on the links. "All of our owners have daily privileges to play at either Golden Bear Golf Course or the Country Club of Hilton Head," he says.

He and Oliver also understand the importance of exchange. "That's the main way we can compete with the big guys," Taylor explains. "That's how we can offer services that are comparable to the bigger developers. We've been with Interval International since 2003 and feel very comfortable with them."

"The caliber of resorts that our customers can exchange to with Interval is very important

to us," adds Oliver. "And, frankly, the caliber of timeshare owners who are members of Interval will be attracted to Bluewater's quality."

If history is a precedent, when those people do get to Bluewater, they may not want to leave. "Because of the abundance of activities — pools, scenic large lagoons, barbecues, and more — we have learned that many of our owners return to spend their time within the Spinnaker community," says Taylor. "They don't go elsewhere. So we have paid a lot of attention to Bluewater's public areas, maximizing the number of places on-site where people could enjoy this unique Intercoastal Waterway vacation experience."

Initially, at the time of opening, Bluewater will have an activities facility that will include an indoor pool, spa, sauna, exercise studio, lounge, and activities room. Future phases will include additional pools and the full reconstruction of the existing boat dock. Bluewater's dock upon completion will be the host to launch dolphin tours, shark fishing, kayak tours, skiing, and tubing.

FROM CHEVY TO CADILLAC

Spinnaker Resorts is involved in almost every form of marketing — off-site, direct mail, and so on — but the developer's most effective strategy may also be the one that benefits current owners the most.

"We've been on Hilton Head since 1984," explains Taylor, "and we've developed and sold seven projects. Each Spinnaker development has reflected the Hilton Head timeshare buyers' expectation of quality and, as buyers' expectations increase, each Spinnaker development gets better and better. So we've always had the ability to move existing owners from one development to the next. They can roll the original purchase price into the cost of the new one. Then we sell the first one again."

It makes owners happy because they can move into the newest project with less out-of-pocket expense and it makes Taylor happy because "it's a constant movement of inventory that provides flexibility in terms of the kinds of product we're offering."

Taylor sums it up this way: "You shouldn't always be trying to sell a Cadillac. Sometimes people want a Chevy, and you better be able to sell them a Chevy because after three or four years, there's a good chance they'll want the Cadillac. It's a little different marketing strategy, but with our system, they can trade in the Chevy and move into the Cadillac, which, right now, is Bluewater." ♦

See page 3 for currency conversions.

fast facts	
BLUEWATER RESORT AND MARINA	
AN INTERVAL INTERNATIONAL MEMBER RESORT	
location	Hilton Head Island, South Carolina
developer	Spinnaker Resorts
product	Leased floating weeks, with a small number of fixed weeks
units	30 total units: 16 two-bedroom; 14 three-bedroom
web site	www.spinnakerresorts.com