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GOLF & TRAVEL

By SYVJ Staff

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Charleston Place's Southern charm

On the eastern seaboard, Charleston is one of the most interesting and romantic destinations. The city's historical buildings and sites are surrounded by water, as the downtown area forms a peninsula. The Charleston Place Hotel is one of the most elegant hotel properties here, and a perfect place to stay when visiting the area.

The hotel

The Charleston Place Hotel is ranked among the "Top Ten Hotels in North America" by Condé Nast Traveler. Guests checking in are met by an Italian marble lobby with a signature Georgian Open Arm staircase and a 12-foot crystal chandelier. This luxury continues in the hotel's rooms and suites, which are appointed with traditional Southern furnishings and marble baths.

It is no surprise that Charleston Place has been the selection for many visiting celebrities, including Richard Gere, Prince Charles, Mel Gibson, Oprah Winfrey and Barbara Streisand, among others. Most of the rooms offer views of the city's historical landmarks stretching to Charleston Harbor on the upper levels.

Charleston Place offers a club level superior to any hotel at which I have ever stayed. The club is located on the top two floors, which are connected by a grand staircase. This service is ideal for those who have a lot to see and do. The continental breakfast is quite sumptuous, and includes salmon, bagels, croissants, scrambled eggs, as well as several different kinds of fruits and fresh juice. Afternoon tea is served, as well as evening cocktails with hors d'oeuvre. The early evening offering includes shrimp, quiches, assorted meats and cheeses, artichokes and fresh vegetables.

The Hotel's pool, spa and health club offer a wide array of options. The indoor-outdoor pool area allows guests to enjoy a swim regardless of weather. The fitness area has state of the art equipment and views of the city. The spa offers all the treatments one would expect from a five star hotel.

Charleston Place has three excellent dining options. The Charleston Grill, just off the lobby, has long been recognized as one of the best restaurants in town. Celebrated chef Bob Waggoner is nationally known for his unique culinary style and innovative use of Lowcountry ingredients.

The Palmetto Café overlooks a central garden and bronze fountain and offers Lowcountry favorites with a Mediterranean flair.

The Thoroughbred Club pays homage to the city's former racetrack. It exudes the casual sophistication of a social club and has an extensive racing-themed menu. The Club's bar area is a very popular meeting place for all guests and visitors.

The hotel is about a 20 minute drive from Charleston International Airport. For more information visit <http://www.charlestonplace.com> or call (888) 635-2350.



The Town

Charleston Place is located in the heart of the historic district at the corners of King, Market and Meeting Streets. The city's history dates back to 1663 and has been carefully preserved. Narrow cobblestone streets and Old World architecture add to the charm. Charleston is a great city for a walking tour. King Street has all the upscale shopping one needs and it flows down to White Point Gardens with views of the Ashley River and Charleston Harbor. From here you can easily walk past the grand antebellum mansions on East Battery Street and Murray Blvd. The harbor scene in Charleston is quite diverse, ranging from sailboats to pleasure craft as well as huge tankers delivering freight to this bustling port.

There is a wide array of great golf in the area, but the Patriot's Point Links is the closest option. Located just across the city's inspirational new suspension bridge, this course is very well kept and offers scenic harbor views.

New Orleans Investment Conference

Sometimes it helps to have a purpose when traveling. In these turbulent times, getting a gauge on future economic developments is very important. You can combine these two purposes by attending the New Orleans Investment Conference November 13-17. This is the granddaddy of all business investment conferences. The conference has been held annually for three decades now and draws the top names from politics and business. This year's speakers include former U.S. Senator Fred Thompson, Steve Forbes, Dr. Marc Faber, Dennis Gartman, Peter Schiff, Doug Casey and James Carville. These and many other financial experts will help attendees try to navigate the future of investment and finance. While in town you may well want to experience the famous restaurants and nightlife to be found in the French Quarter just a couple of very walkable blocks from the conference venue. For more information visit <http://www.neworleansconference.com> or call (800) 648-8411.