

## Three Reasons Why Sea Pines Country Club is a Safe, Spacious and Fun ‘Third Place’ for Members of All Ages

By Shane Sharp

Sociologist Ray Oldenburg coined the term “the third place” in his 1989 book “The Good Place,” which described why community hangouts like cafes, bars, and hair salons are essential venues for social connections, inclusion and democracy.

Many Americans have been unable to access their beloved “third places” amid the Covid-19 crisis. Others are reassessing the safety and necessity of hangouts in which social distancing and sanitation are challenging if not nearly impossible.

Enter private clubs – member-focused organizations that can control variables that public places, and spaces, simply can’t.



*Relaxing at the Club’s Resort-Caliber Pool*

Private clubs like Sea Pines Country Club have emerged not only as safe harbors for existing members, but as an attractive option for prospective members of all ages in search of a new “third place” for the new normal.

Here are three reasons membership applications at private clubs throughout the U.S. are surging this season.

### 1. Outdoor Activities

According to the Club Management Association of America (CMAA), up to 75% of summer activities at private clubs take place outdoors. This ranges from traditional “club sports,” like golf and tennis and newer pursuits, such as pickleball and bocce, to kids’ camps and just hanging at the pool.

For clubs like Sea Pines in year-round climates, that percentage increases in the fall and spring as daytime temps hover in the 70s. Moreover, weddings and select catered events can also be held outdoors with plenty of spacing and fresh air.

At Sea Pines Country Club, outdoor living has long been a way of life.

Not only does the club have one of the leading tennis centers on Hilton Head Island, it recently opened new pickleball and bocce courts for members to enjoy safely.

The 18-hole, par-72 Club Course has also surged in popularity as members make their way around the Arnold Palmer, Clyde Johnston-designed layout responsibly via single rider carts or walking. Flagsticks are left in holes and golfers use their feet to smooth bunkers.



*Kids Splash in the Pool at the Club's Summer Camp*

Off the course and away from the courts, there's the vast pool deck area, with expansive views of one of the island's most beautiful tidal marshes. Families love the resort-style pool and lounge chairs, and the little ones can splash around in the delightful kiddie pool. Director of Membership Development Nic Booth says she's seen a marked uptick in tours and applications from families in search of a safe, secure environment where they can relax, dine, and workout free of worries.

"There's something for everyone here and that's appealing to families who can check all the boxes with a membership," Booth says. "Our summer golf, tennis and swimming camps for kids are a huge hit with families and also give mom and dad a little break in their day."

## **2. Indoor Sanctuary**

Outdoor enjoyment notwithstanding, some Lowcountry summer days call for time spent in the "great indoors." Sea Pines Country Club is able to oblige with more than 17,000-square-feet allocated among just over 1,500 members.

There's room to move around freely, workout in the state-of-the-art fitness center, take part in a socially distanced card game, and enjoy fine or casual dining with the highest culinary and cleanliness standards at Blue Heron Pub and Grille or the Club Course Cafe.



*Palmer Patio at Blue Heron Pub and Grille*

"Our recent clubhouse renovation and expansion provides ample room for our members to enjoy themselves indoors," says Sea Pines Country Club General Manager and Chief Operating Officer Robbie Ames. "And the screened-in Palmer Patio at the Blue Heron Pub and Grille is a nice indoor-outdoor option for members and guests."

Since private club utilization typically balanced throughout the day and week, and there are rarely more than 100 people inside the clubhouse at any given time.

### 3. The Bubble

As America reopens, many of us are eager to spend time with friends and family we haven't seen in months. That stated, health organizations and state guidelines still recommend limiting social interactions when possible to help stem the spread of the coronavirus.

One way to do that is through the creation of social "bubbles" or what some epidemiologists refer to as "quaranteams." In fact, several countries, such as England and New Zealand, have officially adopted quaranteam strategies to help keep citizens happy and healthy.



*The Club's New Pickleball Courts*

Private clubs, by nature, foster interaction among a clearly defined population that effectively forms one such social bubble in its members' lives. This is diametrically opposed to many public venues that have almost 100 percent turnover in attendance, daily.

"There are a lot of unknowns out there today, so if we can be that third place for our members, then we're fulfilling our mission," says Ames.

For more information about Sea Pines Country Club's membership options, click [here](#), or contact Nic Booth directly at [nbooth@seapinescountryclub.com](mailto:nbooth@seapinescountryclub.com) or (843) 671-2335.

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