



SOUTHERN PLANTATIONS TAKE VISITORS BACK IN TIME

by Sandra Chambers

Nothing evokes the history of the South more than an elegant southern plantation with stately green and grey moss-draped oaks lining its entryway. Within an hour's distance of Myrtle Beach, four plantations offer visitors a unique side trip to South Carolina's early history.

HOPSEWEE PLANTATION

Hopsewee Plantation (circa 1740) is one of the oldest preserved plantations in the United States open to the public. Located on the North Santee River, this plantation was the birthplace of Thomas Lynch Jr., South Carolina signer of the Declaration of Independence. Guided tours of the Plantation House are available Tuesdays through Saturdays. Plan your visit to include the traditional Southern Tea, featuring savory scones, tea sandwiches and homemade desserts. Reservations required. For more information, call 843.546.7891.

MANSFIELD PLANTATION

Mansfield Plantation (circa 1718) is currently a B&B, a member of the National Register of Historic Places and is owned and operated by the descendent of the original Parker family owners. If you're a movie buff, you may recognize Mansfield Plantation as the setting for the movie "The Patriot." Guests can explore the grounds and see the restored slave quarters, rice mill and rice-winnowing tower. Nature lovers will enjoy hiking or kayaking on the nearby marshes and Black River. Call 866.717.1776 for more information.



LITCHFIELD PLANTATION

Litchfield Plantation (circa 1750) is one of the oldest rice plantations on the Waccamaw River. The original plantation mansion is now a country inn. More than 600 acres remain of the original property, including a quarter-mile long avenue lined with massive 300-year-old live oaks draped with Spanish moss. Enjoy southern hospitality with gourmet meals served in the Carriage House Club restaurant, a large outdoor swimming pool and two tennis courts. For more information, call 800.869.1410.

WEDGEFIELD PLANTATION

Wedgfield Plantation goes back to South Carolina's Colonial Period and was in operation before 1750. Before you visit, be sure to research "The Ghost of Wedgfield Plantation," just in case you run into a headless British Dragoon. Today, the plantation is a public golf course and features the Plantation House Restaurant, which is built on the location of the original house. Call 843.448.2124 for more information.