

The Birthplace of *American Civilization*



By Angela Shoultz

You may not have heard about this town in the southern tip of South Carolina, but this lack of chatter says nothing of the town itself. Today an active revitalization effort thrives here, existing blissfully alongside an illustrious past that is also being carefully preserved. After all, flags from four different countries have flown over this little plot of Lowcountry that would come to be known as Port Royal, SC.

Just 22 years after Columbus first reached the new world, Pedro de Salazar raised the Spanish flag, followed shortly after by French Captain Jean Ribaut, and finally, in 1670, by Charles II of England who gave the territory to his eight Lords Proprietor. Years of turmoil lay ahead for the settlement. However, it was spared the fate of most Lowcountry cities during the Civil War by its Union occupation. As Sherman himself marched through, burning and pillaging the neighboring towns of Hardeeville and McPhersonville on his way to Columbia, Port Royal was saved along with beautiful homes and public buildings, many of which still stand today.

Also deeply imbedded in the history of Port Royal is its military tradition. Within minutes of the town are the U.S. Marine Corps Recruit Depot at Parris Island and the Naval Hospital and the Marine Corps Air Station in Beaufort. The town is also home to the 1055th Transportation Company, a unit which has seen service in every war in U.S. history.

But the draw of this charming town isn't just for history buffs and military enthusiasts; this inviting place is recognized as one of America's leaders in small-town New Urbanism. As a result, Port Royal contains a diverse range of housing and jobs. Visitors will particularly appreciate the part of New Urbanism that includes a community beach, boardwalk, observation tower and walking trails which show off the town's unique natural environment. Stop into the Lowcountry Estuarium for hands-on learning about the area's coastal environments and Port Royal's marine life.

Besides the beautiful scenery and rich history, Port Royal also boasts great dining and shopping. If you're hungry for some local seafood, stop at MoonDoggies. You can't go wrong with their delectable crab cakes or other scrumptious seafood. This unique restaurant also features a pet-centric gift shop where you can shop for your four-legged friends after dining.

If you're looking for a more human-centric shop, head over to Lollygags—and do just that. Dawdle through the selection of gifts and knick knacks for every occasion in this shop housed in a structure built in 1885 as a general store. Then, drop over to Old Shell Gifts for something unique. All proceeds of your purchase benefit Beaufort County Disabilities & Special Needs.

If a true getaway is one where you can learn, relax, shop and sightsee, Port Royal is the perfect getaway. And, best of all, it offers it all without the hustle and bustle of many popular tourist destinations.

Find out more in *Places...*

Turn to page 114 in the "green pages" for more on Port Royal.

