

## Fripp Island, SC



A primer on South Carolina's island golf: Best known would be Hilton Head Island, followed closely by Kiawah Island. Seabrook Island (adjacent to Kiawah) is lesser known. But those who are aware of the rustic charms of **Fripp Island** are few and far between.

Directions to Fripp Island: Leave Beaufort, South Carolina, and head east. (Note for first-time visitors: The first syllable in the word Beaufort is pronounced like the first syllable in the word 'beautiful.' Not 'Bo,' as in Jackson or Derek.)

Continue to travel interminably, go by Distant Island, Dataw Island, know you are within hailing distance of Lady's Island, Cat Island and various other sparsely populated islands, and continue towards the end of the earth. Then turn right at the guard gate.

In actuality, it's little more than twenty miles from Beaufort (and about fifty miles from Savannah and Hilton Head itself) to the inner part of Fripp (IE—to the golf courses) It just seems longer on a lonely road. Need proof? Once you pass a sports bar called "The Boondocks," you're within about ten minutes of the sprawling resort, featuring three-and-a-half miles of beautiful beachfront.

Char Cormier is the Director of Golf, and has been at Fripp Island for a dozen years. "We have one of the finest beaches on the east coast," begins the Michigan native. "The whole island is safe, secure, tranquil, and very popular with citizens of both the east coast and Midwest."

Explaining the differences between the Ocean Point and Ocean Creek courses, Cormier offers, "the greens are much smaller on Ocean

Point, and we have nearly half-a-dozen holes within sight or close to the Atlantic Ocean. Ocean Creek is more traditional, more of a tree-lined golf course, with larger greens.”



Ocean Point at [Fripp Island](#)

The ninth and eighteenth are notable on Ocean Point, the former a par-4, the latter an often into-the-wind par-5, both heading directly towards the surf. Ocean Creek highlights include the marsh-side sixth, and the tough sixteenth, an all-you-can-handle par-5. Visitors and island residents tend to favor Ocean Point, with about 65% off all rounds contested on the George Cobb design.



Ocean Creek at [Fripp Island](#)

It remains to see if Ocean Creek designer Davis Love III will end up a big-time player-turned-designer, like a Nicklaus, Crenshaw or Weiskopf, or a lesser light in the field—a McCumber, Player or Watson. Considering that his Fripp Island effort is his first-ever design,

things are rather promising. Not even 6,600 yards from the tips, this par-71 features plenty of wetlands, marshlands, tough tee shots, and airborne carries to tricky greens.

Tennis, boating, fishing, swimming, bird-watching and biking are all popular activities in addition to golf. Adding to the tranquility of the area is the fact that Hunting Island State Park is basically adjacent to Fripp, and offers beaches, marshes and maritime forests amidst its 5,000 acres. It's a popular camping spot, and features the only publicly-accessible lighthouse in the state; nearly 170 steps to climb to its apex.

There are popular dining spots on the road to Fripp, and plenty of good options in the aforementioned Beaufort, thirty minutes away. Close at hand is [MJ's Soul Food Restaurant](#). Very unassuming from the outside, but plentiful and relatively inexpensive shrimp and grits, oxtails, pork chops, collards and many other southern staples. Also within a few miles of the gate is [Bella Luna](#). Good pizza, 'frutti de mare' with locally caught seafood, Caesar salad and linguini with clams are among the highlights.

The ride to Beaufort is well worth it, particularly when visiting [Saltus River Grill](#), a chic eatery with a good-looking crowd in the downtown area. Great raw bar, sushi, a wood-fired grill and choice cuts of meat make this one of the 'go-to' spots in the area. The [Old Bull Tavern](#) doesn't present the refined outward appearance as Saltus Grill, but the soft shell crab, the tenderloin, the famed 'winemaker's salad,' and numerous other menu choices are first rate. Remember it's a pub in addition to a first-class eatery, so it can get a bit noisy.