

Worth[®]

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2017 Editors' Picks: Richard Bradley

The products, services and experiences *Worth* editors loved in 2017.

Whether it's outstanding service, impeccable artistry or exquisite manufacturing, excellence can take many forms. But what a person defines as excellent also depends on his or her own individual taste. In the Editors' Picks series, *Worth* staff members share their favorite products, services and experiences for you to look into this year. Click through to see editor in chief Richard Bradley's selections.



THE CLOISTER OCEAN RESIDENCES AT SEA ISLAND

Golfers and Southerners have long known that [Sea Island](#) is a special place. Nestled on the Georgia coast about halfway between Savannah and Jacksonville, Fla., Sea Island is a resort that combines top-notch facilities, high standards of service and a stunning natural environment.

I visited Sea Island recently with my wife and two children. We stayed at the [Cloister Ocean Residences](#), which are one-, two- and three-bedroom condos just a short walk from the Sea Island Beach Club, which is probably the core of the resort. You can buy quarter-shares in these residences—13 weeks a year—for prices ranging from \$375,000 to \$1.1 million; not a small amount, but on the other hand, you might pay more for a month in the Hamptons, and to my mind Sea Island is a far better escape.

The Cloister may be the ideal way to experience Sea Island. The residences are very well done; thoughtfully designed, tasteful (conservatively so, but that's probably what many of their buyers want) and spacious. The kitchens are beautifully equipped; if you wanted to, you could easily stay in and cook and never feel short a pot or whisk. Best of all, they open onto a massive strip of private beach—but we'll get to that in a moment.

During the day, Sea Island offers a ridiculous number of things to do: The golf courses are world famous, which is a cliché, but it's true; the tennis courts are better than just about anyone's game; there's biking and horseback riding or just hanging out at the multiple pools at the Beach Club. My favorite activity: taking a boat tour through the salt marsh, a natural tidal basin that serves as a natural fish hatchery and bird sanctuary. On the tour we took, my family and I saw dolphins (just off the dock!), river otters and countless sea birds.

For kids, this place is heaven. The Beach Club offers specially designed pools for young children that would calm the most nervous of parents, or the kids can fish and crab from the Cloister Dock, spend a day at the nature camp or catch a movie at a special, kids-oriented theater. It's hard to imagine a nicer place for a child to spent part of a season than this.

In any great travel, the most special moments are the unexpected ones, the kind you can't plan for, and at Sea Island this happened for us on the aforementioned beach. My wife and sons and I walked out the door of our Cloister residence, down a dune trail for about 50 yards, and found ourselves completely alone on a mile-long beach. My kids, 3 and 5, couldn't believe it; they couldn't wait to run in the low tidal surf and dig holes in the sand, watching as the holes filled up with sea water when the waves rolled in. After a few minutes, we were joined by two slightly older children, a boy and a girl carrying nets and buckets. As my sons watched transfixed, these newcomers started peering under the rocks of the nearby jetty and fishing out the blue crabs hiding underneath. The crabs would dangle angrily from the string of the net, waving their claws threateningly before the kids would pick them off and return them to their sites. The crab-hunters invited my boys to join in, which, after some initial disbelief, they did. The four children played together, yelling in excitement when they found a crab, every time just as passionate as the one before it, and I felt that rare sense of parental good luck that you feel when you've somehow managed to provide your children with a perfect moment.

For more information about the Cloister Ocean Residences Sea Island, visit cloisteroceanresidences.com.