

## **The Marina Inn at Grande Dunes Offers a Surprisingly Elegant Retreat in Myrtle Beach, S.C.**

When Marina Inn at Grande Dunes first entered the landscape of Myrtle Beach, S.C., a mere two years ago, the hotel's creators set out to offer guests a retreat with the personal feeling of a world traveler's home.

In fact, the AAA Four Diamond hotel has become a resting place for a number of world travelers, with celebrities like The Eagles and former New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani making it their hotel of choice when visiting the area. Pro golfer Anika Sorenstrom has spent down time there, and Senator John McCain called it "The best hotel I've ever stayed at."

Since arriving on the Myrtle Beach landscape in 2006, the European-style luxury hotel and resort has been changing what travelers know about the area. With its surprisingly elegant style and quietly attentive service, Marina Inn at Grande Dunes offers a luxurious retreat from the destination city's popular Grand Strand and tourist-laden attractions. Tucked away in a quiet enclave of 2,200 forested acres, Marina Inn offers a private escape within the Grande Dunes estate – a lavish collection of award-winning golf and tennis, acclaimed restaurants, a private beach sanctuary and stunning views of the Intracoastal Waterway.

With its long list of A-list guests, the resort offers plenty of ways for the not-so-famous to travel celebrity style, too. The latest special offer – a new "*Vacation Like a Star*" package introduced last month – combines the resort's most exclusive features with superstar indulgences. The full-service package comes with optional round-trip transportation in a private jet, unlimited limousine service, a professional make-up artist and hairstylist and 60-minute massages, plus nightly in-suite champagne service, gourmet breakfast each morning with caviar tastings and in-room omelet stations, and an exclusive in-room dinner party catered by the resort's award-winning executive chef, [James Clark](#).

It's an all-out vacation, no doubt, but travelers looking for a more low-key experience can take heart, too. It's not just the exclusivity and award-winning amenities that make Marina Inn stand out...or, for that matter, the lavish design – from Italian marble floors and sparkling crystal chandeliers to imported linens and oriental art.

"Our superior service makes Marina Inn at Grande Dunes a popular getaway, and it's what keeps our guests coming back," said General Manager Axel Suray. "Each member of our staff strives to give every one of our guests the highest level of attention possible."

That strategy may seem simple enough, but it's one that's clearly working. McCain's observation and many more like them are repeated in dozens of postings on travel Web sites, where guests rave about the hotel's one-of-a-kind customer service.

That high level of service starts at check-in, where valets are ready to take care of every need, and continues on to everything from the in-room spa services to superior, 24-hour concierge assistance. It even spills into the resort's signature restaurant, WaterScapes, where guests can indulge in fresh local seafood hand selected by Executive Chef James Clark himself. Clark's imaginative cuisine stems from his stints at the Ritz Carlton in Atlanta, the famed Charleston Grill in Charleston, S.C., and Palette

Restaurant in Washington, D.C., where his culinary creations won accolades from *Bon Appetite* and the National Restaurant Science Association.

WaterScapes is one of four restaurants at the resort, which together offer everything from tapas and signature cocktails to modern American dishes and an extensive wine selection. Each restaurant offers a distinct ambiance, allowing guests to enjoy a sunset cocktail at the waterfront Anchor Café, ~~dine~~enjoy in a casual beach atmosphere at the oceanfront Cabana Beach Club or enjoy panoramic views of the marina while sipping wine and dining on select tapas at Reflections.

Outside the hotel, visitors are drawn to the resort's array of activities.

Golfers love the par 72 Grande Dunes Resort Club Course for its Bermuda fairways, acres of freshwater lakes and seven holes that play along the Intracoastal Waterway. The course — along with a private member course to which guests have exclusive access — is what led *Professional Golf Association Magazine* to name Marina Inn at Grande Dunes “One of the Great Golf Resorts of the World.”

There's also the award-winning tennis club, where players can choose from ten Har-Tru clay courts, sign up for lessons with USTA certified pros or check out the fully equipped fitness center.

Ocean lovers, meanwhile, are attracted to the private Cabana Beach Club ~~-beach cabana-~~located oceanfront on the Grande Dunes a short shuttle ride from the resort. The tranquil setting of the landscaped sanctuary, ~~which~~ includes free complimentary beach chairs and umbrellas while enjoying as well as light an-oceanfront dining, -restaurant, is a far cry from the crowded beaches elsewhere in Myrtle Beach.

Of course, no Four Diamond stay would be complete without luxury accommodations. At Marina Inn, the options range from cozy guest rooms to 1,800-square foot, 3-bedroom suites featuring fully equipped kitchens, spacious living and dining areas and, fireplaces, and in-suite laundry setups. Each room has a private terrace with views of the Intracoastal Waterway and 130 slip marina, and includes high-end amenities like imported bed linens and plush robes.

Rates at Marina Inn at Grande Dunes range from \$319 a night for Grande Guest Rooms to \$419 for three-bedroom suites during peak season (\$169 to \$269 during off-season). The Vacation Like a Star package starts at \$3,500 for two people for two nights in a two-bedroom suite.

For more information and to make reservations at Marina Inn at Grande Dunes, call 866-437-4133 866-437-4120 or visit [www.MarinaInnAtGrandeDunes.com](http://www.MarinaInnAtGrandeDunes.com).