

DANIEL ISLAND

CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA



IMAGINE GOING HOMETO AN ISLAND – SURROUNDED BY MILES OF SERENE RIVERS AND MARSH-LINED CREEKS

– where an evolving master-planned town continues to mature with care and vision. Now put that setting amidst the natural beauty of historic Charleston and its legendary Lowcountry environ.

Daniel Island is just that island town – a special place where neighborhoods are thoughtfully laid out and designed around parks, homes are built with careful attention to architectural detail, and numerous shops, restaurants and offices are mixed in, allowing residents and visitors to coexist in a traditional and charming small-town manner.

This vibrant sense of community, where residents can truly live, work and play, is a far cry from Daniel Island's once remote rural roots. Originally settled by several well-known Charleston families in the late 17th century, including the future governor of the Carolina colony (Robert Daniell), the 4,000-acre island was long accessible only by boat and mainly used as farmland.

After passing through several owners in subsequent generations, the prominent Guggenheim family purchased most of the island in 1947 for \$70,000. Like other wealthy industrialist families from the Northeast, the Guggenheims were drawn to the unique Lowcountry lifestyle and used their plantation as a private fishing and hunting retreat. Prior to patriarch Harry Frank Guggenheim's death in 1971, the noted philanthropist preserved the island's future when he sponsored a master plan that ultimately would make Daniel Island the special place it is today.

Twenty years later, the Guggenheim Foundation entrusted a group to responsibly develop the island, now linked to downtown Charleston by the Mark Clark Expressway. Today, the lead developers of the Daniel Island Company, Frank W. Brumley and Matthew R. Sloan, along with the George Brumley



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family of Atlanta, are developing the residential neighborhoods of Daniel Island in partnership with some of the nation's leading developers: Crow Holdings (the holding company of the Trammell Crow family); Greystar Capital Partners and J. Ronald Terwilliger, the national managing partner of Trammell Crow Residential.

The small-town attributes of Daniel Island, located just 15 miles from Charleston, were always an integral part of the development. And frankly, for an old-fashioned city averse to any change within its borders, it was paramount that Daniel Island Company adopt a "slow-growth" approach sensitive to not only local attitudes but regional ones as well.

Ten years after the island was sold to the Daniel Island Company in 1997, the formula has proven to be a success on all fronts. Not the least of which is its national reputation as a well-planned small-town development lauded by a recent New York Times article for having "quality of life" and "authenticity."



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In other words, Daniel Island is by no means just another subdivision. As the development's marketing slogan goes, it's a "town, an island, a way of life."

It's a way of life that encompasses everything from hundreds of acres of parks, 23 miles of rivers and creeks with docks and boat ramps, bicycle and jogging paths, a private in-town country club, a 10,000-seat tennis stadium that annually hosts the women's professional Family Circle Cup, and Blackbaud Stadium, home of the Charleston Battery professional soccer club.

Of course, golf is what lures many people to the Lowcountry, and the Daniel Island Club – situated at the heart of the island's country club development known as Daniel Island Park -- offers two world-class courses that are both welcoming to beginners and challenging to advanced players. The courses are

maintained in tournament-ready conditions year round, and the club's 14-acre practice facility rivals any in the nation.

Designed by two of the game's most respected golf course architects, Tom Fazio and Rees Jones, the Beresford Creek course (Fazio) and the Ralston Creek course (Jones) are the nation's only pairing of these two acclaimed architects at the same private facility.

The Rees Jones-designed Ralston Creek course is less than a year old and it has already been picked to host two significant events, the Nationwide Tour's inaugural PalmettoPride Classic and a U.S. Open sectional qualifier this May.

When Daniel Island Company developed Beresford Creek seven years ago, it made a conscious decision to shift the golf real estate paradigm by fronting



many of the homes on the course, thus enhancing the park-like feel of the community and preserving more backyard privacy for residents.

“In contrast to most golf developments, which are defined by a singular style of architecture and a network of streets circumnavigating the golf course, there’s a sense of place here that defines a small town with much to offer beyond golf,” says Sloan, president of the Daniel Island Company. “Daniel Island represents a revival in the lost art of community-building. Our emphasis is on a better place to live, work and play and a healthier lifestyle with more family time and less stress.”

One of the island’s more stress-free enclaves is Ralston Creek, where developers plan on releasing this spring a collection of limited homesites. According to Sloan, interior lots will probably start in the high \$300,000s with fairway frontage lots ranging in price from \$500,000-\$600,000 and premium marsh frontage homesites going for \$700,000 to a million.

“These not only just overlook great fairways but look out onto what must be five miles of marsh and river view,” says Sloan, whose team is planning roughly 1,100-1,200 residences in the exclusive Daniel Island Park section, with half of them already sold “We’re saving the best for last.”

“Think about the classic southern small town. Often the best part of town is where the country club is located. What we feel we’re doing is very much grounded in this sort of traditional more organic way towns grew over time.”

And by no means is the “best” property exclusive to Ralston Creek. For example, Sloan points out that in the coming years most of the island’s waterfront and marshfront property is being opened up for development, including a rare waterfront marina village on the Wando River with dry-dock storage and condos, and a soon-to-be announced “lifestyle shopping center and village” that will feature several high-end retailers new to the Charleston area.





“What we have to look forward to over the next several years is first of all, our best property,” Sloan adds. “Also, now that we’ve become the market leader here, we have a credibility that we didn’t have many years ago and we have an ability to drive architecture that we didn’t have in the early days.”

“So what I see coming down the road is the best properties being built with the best houses with the best buildings. And really kind of finishing really, really strong.”

When the Daniel Island Company ends up completing the development, the island will have approximately 5,000 residences, comprised of condos, townhomes, single-family homes and custom estates.

“The goal at Daniel Island was never to make a nice master plan community,” says Sloan, whose island currently has about 2,500 residences. “The goal was that Daniel Island would take on regional importance. That it would be part of the local lexicon like the other islands are. Like John’s Island, James Island, or Kiawah Island. It would serve a purpose.

“It would be a natural extension of the city but it would serve a purpose of regional importance. Whether it’s being home to the Family Circle Cup, being home to the Charleston Battery, or being home to the best public school in the area. It’s sort of a deployment of best in market practices and it becomes a source of pride for the greater area.”

Sloan eschews the term “new urbanism” when asked to characterize the development philosophy at Daniel Island because it suggests “there’s a trend guiding our plans.”

Instead, Sloan prefers to describe Daniel Island as a place that is less about trends and more about combining modern convenience with the best of traditional planning philosophies.

Says Sloan: “The result is a community that offers a quality of life well worth living.”

Indeed, and a legacy the Guggenheim family would gladly endorse. ■

