

HILTON HEAD

FUN FACTS

Hilton Head was a secret training ground during the Civil War.

The Union Army captured Hilton Head early in the Civil War and used it as a headquarters and major naval base. It was also home to Mitchelville, the first self-governed town of formerly enslaved people in the U.S.—a powerful piece of American history that most tourists miss.



It's got serious pirate history.

In the 1700s, Hilton Head was a hideout for pirates like the infamous Blackbeard. Its coastal location and twisting inlets made it the perfect escape zone. Some say there's still buried treasure out there.

The entire island is basically a giant nature preserve.

Over 70% of Hilton Head's land is protected or restricted from over development, meaning wildlife like deer, bobcats, gators, and rare birds are everywhere—and you're basically vacationing inside a live nature documentary.

The island goes full blackout for sea turtles.

From May to October, beachfront properties must turn off or dim all outside lights at night to protect sea turtle hatchlings from getting disoriented. Yes, even fancy resorts follow the turtle rules.

Hilton Head doesn't have any billboards, streetlights, or fast-food signs sticking up.

Everything—from McDonald's to gas stations—is tucked behind trees with signs painted in muted colors. It's all part of the island's strict aesthetic code to keep the "wild island" vibe intact.

It's Shaped Like a Foot.

Locals often describe the island as being shaped like a foot, and many directions are given using the "toe" or "heel" as reference points.