



# GOLDEN ISLES<sup>®</sup>

CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

*St. Simons Island, Sea Island, Little St. Simons Island,  
Jekyll Island and Brunswick*

**Golden Isles Convention & Visitors Bureau**

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# GOLDEN ISLES

GEORGIA

## Fact Sheet

### **LOCATED:**

- Southeast Georgia coast
- 75 miles south of Savannah, GA
- 65 miles north of Jacksonville, FL
- The City of Brunswick is the government seat for Glynn County

### **AREA:**

- Glynn County is 439 square miles (1,137 sq. km)
- Brunswick is 26.4 square miles (68 sq. km)

### **ELEVATION:**

- 14 feet (4.27 meters)

### **POPULATION:**

- Glynn County – TOTAL: 82,175
- Brunswick (City Limits): 22,336
- Mainland Glynn County: 44,401
- St. Simons Island, Sea Island &
- Little St. Simons Island: 14,745
- Jekyll Island: 693

*\* (Information provided by Glynn County GIS. Glynn County population based on 2013 American Community Survey. All other population figures based on percentages of total Glynn County population.)*

- 40,872 total households
- Median household income: \$46,607
- Median family income: \$56,221
- Per capita income: \$26,724

### **CLIMATE:**

- Semi-tropical
- Long, warm summers
- Short, mild winters
- Average temperature is 68.4 degrees
- Maximum average daytime temperatures range from 62 degrees (December and January) to 89 degrees (July and August)
- Average annual rainfall is 50"

### **ACCESS:**

- Interstate 95 at Exits 29, 36, 38 and 42, and US 17
- East and west corridors are US 341, US 25 and US 82/520
- Three of the islands are accessible by car
- The St. Simons Island Causeway also connects to Sea Island. Little St. Simons Island is *only* accessible by boat from St. Simons Island. A \$6 parking fee is required for access to Jekyll Island.

### **AIRPORTS:**

- The Brunswick Golden Isles Airport (BQK) is serviced by Atlantic Southeast Airlines, the Delta Connection, with nonstop regional jet service to and from Atlanta with several round-trip flights daily.
- McKinnon St. Simons Island Airport (private aircraft)
- Jekyll Island (private aircraft)

- Within easy driving distance of international airports at Jacksonville, FL (JAX), 65 miles south, and Savannah, GA (SAV), 75 miles north.

### **ATTRACTIONS:**

- Pristine beaches along the Atlantic Ocean
- Unspoiled natural beauty comprising of vast salt marshes, coastal plains and maritime forest ecosystems
- Includes two Important Birding Areas (IBAs) and 12 stops along Georgia's Coastal Birding Trail

### **St. Simons Island**

- Avenue of the Oaks
- Cannon's Point Preserve
- Fort Frederica National Monument
- Gascoigne Bluff
- Hamilton Plantation Slave Cabins
- Harrington School House
- Maritime Museum at the Historic Coast Guard Station
- St. Simons Lighthouse Museum
- Accolades:
  - o Travel + Leisure's Most Romantic Town (Ranked #1)
  - o Travel + Leisure: America's Favorite Beach Town (Ranked #1)
  - o Southern Living's South's Best Islands 2017 (Ranked #2)
  - o Smithsonian Magazine's 20 Best Small Towns to Visit in 2015
  - o Country Living Magazine's 50 Best Small Towns
  - o Coastal Living's Happiest Seaside Towns (Ranked #6)

### **Sea Island**

- The Cloister
- The Beach Club
- The Georgian Room
- 3 world class golf courses: Seaside, Plantation, Retreat
- Tennis Center, Yacht Club, Shooting School
- Spa
- Accolades:
  - o Georgia's only Forbes Five Star Restaurant: The Georgian Room
  - o The Cloister, The Spa & The Lodge have all received Forbes Five Star rankings
  - o US News & World Report's Best Hotels in the USA
  - o Conde Nast Traveler's Readers Choice Awards: Top 25 Resorts in the US (The Lodge ranked #9, The Cloister ranked #17)
  - o Conde Nast Traveler's Top 20 Resorts in the South (The Lodge #2, The Cloister #4)

### **Little St. Simons Island**

- 11,000-acre private barrier island nature preserve
- Only accessible by boat

- Can accommodate up to 32 guests at a time
- Day trips are also available
- Accolades:
  - o Conde Nast Traveler's Top 20 Resorts in the South (Ranked #1)
  - o Conde Nast Traveler's Readers Choice Awards: Top 25 Resorts in the US (Ranked #3)

### **Jekyll Island**

- 200-acre National Historic Landmark District that was once the playground of America's elite: Rockefellers, Morgans, Pulitzer, to name a few
- Georgia Sea Turtle Center
- Driftwood Beach
- By law, 65% of Jekyll Island is to remain undeveloped
- Accolades:
  - o Southern Living: The South's Most Secret Beaches
  - o Trip Advisor: 10 Unique Beaches You Need to See to Believe

### **Brunswick**

- Hofwyl-Broadfield Plantation
- Old Town National Register District
- Sidney Lanier Bridge
- Ritz Theatre
- Filming location for Ben Affleck's newest movie, Live By Night, which will be released in 2017
- Accolades:
  - o Travel + Leisure's Most Romantic Town (Ranked #20)
  - o USA Today: 10 Best Historic Southern Plantations (Hofwyl-Broadfield Plantation)

### **RECREATION:**

- 198 holes of golf
- 2 miniature golf courses
- Public tennis courts and swimming pools
- 2 waterparks
- Biking
- Camping
- Hiking
- Charter boats for fishing, sailing, dolphin watching, shrimp boat cruise, casino cruise ship
- Diving
- Kayaking, paddleboarding
- Birding
- Horseback riding

### **SHOPPING:**

- More than 200 locally-owned distinctive specialty boutiques, art galleries, antique and collectible shops

### **VISITOR SERVICES:**

- 75 lodging facilities with nearly 6,200 overnight accommodations
- Luxury hotels to campgrounds; world-class resorts, hotels, motels, historic bed and breakfast inns, and campgrounds
- More than 200 places to dine with something to please every palate;
- Known for locally-caught seafood including Wild Georgia Shrimp, blue crab, soft-shelled crab, trout, flounder, grouper and more
- Two Welcome Centers

### **TOURISM:**

- 2.9 million people visited the Golden Isles in 2017.
- Tourism in the Golden Isles has grown by more than 70% in the last seven years.
- More than 600 hotel units have been built in the Golden Isles since 2010.
- Tourism is the #1 industry in Glynn County. More than 15,000 jobs are related to the Golden Isles tourism industry.
- Tourism provided a \$1.4 billion economic impact in 2017.
- Tourism stimulated more than \$37 million in local tax revenue in 2017.

### **ONLINE:**

**WEBSITE:** <http://www.GoldenIsles.com>

**FACEBOOK:** <https://www.facebook.com/#!/GoldenIslesGeorgia>

**TWITTER:** [https://twitter.com/Golden\\_Isles](https://twitter.com/Golden_Isles)

**INSTAGRAM:** <http://instagram.com/goldenisles>

**BLOG:** <http://www.goldenisles.com/blog>

### **TOLL FREE:**

1-800-809-1790 for Visitor Information

### **AREA OVERVIEW**

The Golden Isles of Georgia is comprised of Historic Brunswick, St. Simons Island, Sea Island, Little St. Simons Island & Jekyll Island. From doing it all to doing nothing at all, the pace of discovery is yours to choose.

Unhurried. . . Unspoiled. . . Unmatched for countless diversions and pleasures. Where vast marshlands, winding rivers and ribbon-smooth beaches frame a legendary corner of Georgia's coast in stunning beauty. History is alive here. The flags of five nations have fluttered in these salt breezes marking a diverse heritage that lingers today. You'll find glorious weather year 'round, outstanding accommodations and a variety of activities. Relax along endless sandy beaches. Swim and sail in the Atlantic Ocean. Challenge 180 holes of golf or play on several tennis courts. Stroll nature trails that wind through live oaks, pine, azaleas, wisteria and mysterious resurrection ferns. Fish, boat, bike and shop. Take a cruise of our local waterways aboard a charter fishing boat, an authentic shrimp trawler or dolphin tour boat, or try your luck on the casino/cruise ship. The hospitality, like the climate, welcomes you year 'round.

For the sports enthusiast . . . and those who love the game of golf, few places anywhere can quicken the pulse quite like the Golden Isles. From the mainland to the islands, along river, marsh and sea, lie some of Georgia's and the nation's most spectacular and widely acclaimed courses. Amid the lush natural beauty that has made this unspoiled corner of Georgia's Colonial Coast so legendary, our 180-hole driving tour includes dramatic Par 4's, testy par 3's, monstrous Par 5's - the handiwork of some of the game's most gifted architects. Acres of tennis courts, fishing and water sports are also enjoyed year round.

For the nature lover . . . Ride horseback along the beaches of the Atlantic Ocean, spot loggerhead sea turtles nesting in their natural habitat, observe dolphins at play during a dolphin tour, kayak in the tidal creeks off mainland Brunswick and in the "big water," rent a sailboat for the day, cruise the waters of the Marshes of Glynn aboard a working shrimp boat, or stroll the sun-kissed shores looking for the Knobbed Whelk, Georgia's official seashell. Watch great blue herons or white egrets soar. Home to five sites on the State of Georgia's coastal birding trail, the Golden Isles is a nature lover's paradise for all ages.

For the history buff . . . From colonial exploration to World War II, the Golden Isles has made its mark in history. Historic Brunswick was named for Braunschweig, Germany, the ancestral home of King George II. The homes along the streets and squares in the Old Town National Historic District are noted for their turn-of-the-century architecture and eclectic mix of styles. Brunswick is home to Hofwyl-Broadfield Plantation, which served as a rice plantation from the early 1800s until 1913. The last heir left the plantation to the state of Georgia in 1973 and it is now open to the public for tours.

Shopping and Dining . . . Treasures can be found in area antique shops, boutiques and specialty shops. The coastline, mossy oaks and historic landmarks of the region inspire local and national artists. Be sure to stop in one of the galleries to take home a special memento from the Golden Isles. In the Golden Isles, we don't just eat to live, we live to eat. With our prime location on the Georgia coast, many of our restaurants and festivals feature locally-caught and harvested ingredients that were in the ocean or garden just hours before finding its way onto your dinner plate. Be sure to sample Brunswick Stew, a perfect complement to seafood or southern barbecue. The traditional low country boil, a combination of sausage, potatoes, corn and shrimp, should not be missed. The culinary fare extends to every taste and every atmosphere, from elegant dining to casual cafes.

On St. Simons Island, at Fort Frederica National Monument, view the ruins of the fortifications, barracks and homes of the settlement built in 1736 by General James Oglethorpe to defend Georgia against the Spanish. The St. Simons Island Lighthouse, built in 1872, is the oldest brick structure in the area and is still maintained as a 104-foot operational lighthouse. In 1735, John & Charles Wesley held services under the oak trees where the present structure of Christ Church, built in 1884, now stands. The Maritime Museum at the restored U.S. Coast Guard Station provides fascinating glimpses of the area's natural, maritime and military history. The remains at Cannon's Point Preserve date back to 2500 B.C. when Native Americans inhabited the area. The site also contains the ruins of an 18<sup>th</sup>-century house along with a large plantation-era home, outbuildings and slave quarters.

Jekyll Island, purchased by the State of Georgia in 1947, has one of the largest historic district restorations in the southeast. Thirty-three of the original buildings still stand and have been restored to house museum exhibits, a resort hotel, restaurants and specialty shops. The Georgia Sea Turtle Center is the only rehabilitation and research facility of its kind in the state of Georgia. This facility serves as a hospital for ill and injured sea turtles. Faith Chapel, a small picturesque wooden church with gargoyles

guarding its entrance, was built in 1904. Louis C. Tiffany and D. Maitland Armstrong, the most famous glassmakers of their day, designed the chapel's beautiful stained glass windows. Today, the chapel is very popular as a wedding site. Jekyll Island, once an exclusive retreat for America's wealthiest families, is now enjoyed by all.

In 1908, timber magnate Philip Berolzheimer bought Little St. Simons Island for his family's private hunting and fishing preserve. Today, the island and its seven miles of undeveloped beaches is open to a limited number of guests, who enjoy its rustic elegance, serene surroundings and focus on environmental education and preservation. An ideal destination for family reunions and small gatherings, Little St. Simons Island offers guest activities ranging from guided nature walks through the ancient maritime forest to kayaking, fishing, shell collecting, bicycling and birding.

Sea Island is an internationally acclaimed resort island. The Cloister, a Forbes Five Star Award® winning hotel, is located on Sea Island. Guests of Sea Island who enjoy the game of golf can appreciate the Golf Performance Center and three championship golf courses at Sea Island Golf Club. The Seaside Course, home to the PGA TOUR's McGladrey (RSM) Classic, is a links course graced by majestic ocean vistas in the tradition of St. Andrews. The Plantation Course winds enticingly through marsh and forest, while the Retreat Course offers a uniquely dramatic and challenging design cultivated by Davis Love III and his brother Mark Love.

Come to Georgia's coast - it has enchanted poets and authors for more than 200 years. The long-stemmed marsh grasses that change color each season and the live oak trees draped with moss inspired poet Sidney Lanier to write his famous poem "*Marshes of Glynn*." Eugenia Price, author of more than 19 novels, used the history of the area, particularly St. Simons Island, as the setting for many of her romantic novels. Other writers and poets have found similar inspiration here.

Pristine stretches of marshland, punctuated by small islands known as hammocks, define the breathtaking landscape and create an appearance of a continuous stretch of land reaching out to the barrier islands. Sparkling rivers teeming with birds, fish and other marine life flow calmly around the islands on their way to the Atlantic Ocean.

## ANNUAL EVENTS IN THE GOLDEN ISLES

### JANUARY

- Bluegrass Festival, Jekyll Island
- Island Treasures, Jekyll Island

### FEBRUARY

- Island Treasures, Jekyll Island
- Southeast Georgia Health System Bridge Run, Brunswick

### MARCH

- Christ Church Tour of Homes, St. Simons Island
- Georgia Elvis Festival, Brunswick

### APRIL

- Easter Sunrise Services, St. Simons Island and Jekyll Island
- Glynn Art in the Park EXTRA<sup>v</sup>ARTganza, St. Simons Island

### MAY

- Blessing of the Fleet, Brunswick
- Memorial Day "Taps at Twilight," St. Simons Island
- Turtle Crawl Triathlon & Nest Fest, Jekyll Island

### JUNE

- Summer Classic Movies, Ritz Theatre, Brunswick
- Georgia Sea Island Festival, St. Simons Island
- Southern Grown Festival, Sea Island

### JULY

- Summer Classic Movies, Ritz Theatre, Brunswick
- Old-Fashioned Fourth of July, Brunswick
- Sunshine Festival & July 4 Celebration, St. Simons Island
- Fourth of July Fireworks, Jekyll Island

### SEPTEMBER

- Shrimp and Grits: The Wild Georgia Shrimp Festival, Jekyll Island

### OCTOBER

- Dept. of Natural Resources CoastFest, Brunswick
- St. Simons Food & Spirits Festival, St. Simons Island

### NOVEMBER

- Brunswick Rockin' Stewbilee, Brunswick
- The RSM Classic, Sea Island Golf Course, St. Simons Island
- Community Christmas Tree Lighting Festival, Jekyll Island

### DECEMBER

- Community Christmas Parade and Christmas Boat Parade, Brunswick
- Christmas at Hofwyl, Hofwyl-Broadfield Plantation, Brunswick
- Holiday Tour of Homes and Gardens, St. Simons Island
- Holiday light displays and programs, Brunswick, St. Simons Island and Jekyll Island

Please visit [GoldenIsles.com](http://GoldenIsles.com) - click on the "Events" for updated calendars of events.



## **STORY IDEAS FROM THE GOLDEN ISLES**

**A GOLFER'S PARADISE** ...With 180 holes of golf on some of the country's most spectacular and acclaimed courses, The Golden Isles is a golfer's dream. Lush natural beauty, delightfully inviting year-round weather and a wide range of accommodations all combine to make golf in the Golden Isles an experience to savor again and again.

**HISTORY OF GOLF**... The Golden Isles' first official recognition as a golf venue came in 1894, when the Jekyll Island Golf Club was registered with the United States Golf Association. The millionaire members of the Jekyll Island Club built the area's first golf course in 1898. The Golden Isles received a big boost in prominence as a vacation destination in 1926 when Howard Coffin bought Sea Island and the old Retreat Plantation on St. Simons Island. He chose the venerable Walter Travis to design and construct the Plantation Course, which opened to much acclaim in 1927. That auspicious beginning put Sea Island on the fast track toward becoming a world-class resort and golf destination. Not to be outdone, members of the Jekyll Island Club commissioned Travis to build a course for them. Opened in 1928, the remnants of the course comprise Jekyll Island's historic Great Dunes course. These courses established a Golden Isles legacy of great golf courses conceived by many of the world's greatest course designers. Colt and Alison. Dick Wilson. Joe Lee. Rees Jones. Davis Love III. Tom Fazio. Mark Bennet. Clyde Johnston.

**HISTORIC TREASURES** ... The Golden Isles is filled with fascinating museums and historical sites from Fort Frederica National Monument and the Lighthouse and Maritime Museums on St. Simons Island to Hofwyl-Broadfield Plantation and Old Town in Brunswick to Jekyll Island's National Historic Landmark District.

**OUTDOOR PLEASURES** ... From the Marshes of Glynn to its moss-draped oaks, The Golden Isles teem with unspoiled natural beauty. Bicycling, horseback rides, guided nature tours, birding, shelling, dolphin watch and shrimp boat cruises, sport and deep-sea fishing and kayaking are but a few of the outdoor experiences that await you in Brunswick & The Golden Isles of Georgia.

**COOL STUFF FOR FAMILIES** ... The Golden Isles are an ideal destination for relaxed family getaways. Fun, family-friendly activities abound...sun-drenched beaches, shrimp boat tours, dolphin tours, sea turtle walks, nature tours and programs, bicycling, mini-golf, an 11-acre water park and more!

**MEMORABLE MEETINGS** ... Whether you're planning a convention for a thousand or an intimate executive retreat for a dozen, The Golden Isles offer an array of meeting sites that range from the Deep South's only oceanfront convention center to a private island retreat. Wonderful amenities—180 holes of golf, fascinating historic sites, nature programs, casino/cruise ship, quaint specialty shops and galleries, and glorious year 'round weather combine to make your gathering truly memorable.

**ROMANCE ABOUND** ... Quiet walks along moonlit beaches. A carriage ride amidst moss-draped live oaks. A sunset cruise aboard a vintage yacht or sailboat. The Golden Isles lush natural beauty and quiet atmosphere will help kindle the flames of romance and create cherished memories for couples of any age. Abundant amenities and activities help to make your romantic getaway as active or relaxed as you like.

## **MEDIA INFORMATION**

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### **Services offered to Media**

- Information packet containing area backgrounders, news releases, Visitors Guide
- Images of selected area attractions
- Area tours for qualified visiting writers

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