

RESORT REVIEW

Myrtle Beach golf's most exclusive stay-and-play: Grande Dunes resort's Members Club and Marina Inn hotel

By [Brandon Tucker](#),
Staff Writer

MYRTLE BEACH, S.C. - Myrtle Beach may be one of golf's busiest locales, host to more than 4 million rounds annually. But at the **Grande Dunes resort's [Members Club](#)** and its Marina Inn hotel you'll find a golf course that's more exclusive country club than bustling resort.

Even golfers who come to Myrtle Beach each year may have never heard of the Members Club, hiding in the shadows of the older [Resort Club](#) set atop the banks of the Intracoastal Waterway.



Courtesy of Grande Dunes

The Grande Dunes Members Club and next door Marina Inn boast the most luxurious stay-and-play in Myrtle Beach.

Other golfers might not even look into a tee time, assuming there is no public play. True, it's a private golf club, but with one big exception: Guests of the Marina Inn are welcome to play throughout their stay.

Tucked into the back corner of the Grande Dunes' 2,200-acre property, the Members Club doesn't boast the sheer bravado of the more famous, daily-fee Resort Course, which offers six tees and stretches over 7,600 yards, plus several jaw-dropping holes along the waterway.

The Members Club's beauty, on the other hand, is in the subtleties and charming ambiance of this sanctuary. You won't get the waterway views, but you'll get tons of wide-open space to hit away and enjoy golf at your own pace.

The golf course opened in 2005 and was designed by Nick Price and Craig Schreiner (who also oversaw the Pine Lakes Country Club restoration). Price wanted the course to have a South African feel, which comes through especially on the ninth and 18th holes, both of which wrap around a large pond dotted with little islands.

The fairways are tumbling, the bunkering deep and plentiful. The massive, bent grass greens take on a life of their own. They're lightning fast and feature subtle breaks and false fronts, rather than the tiers and shelves on the Resort Course.



Courtesy of Grande Dunes Marina Inn

Guests of the Marina Inn on the Intracoastal Waterway have exclusive access to the Members Club.

The course's perch on relative high ground is also susceptible to South Africa-like winds, giving its modest championship yardage of just over 7,000 yards more teeth.

"When the wind is five miles an hour around Myrtle Beach, it feels like 15 miles on this course for some reason," noted my caddie Mike Boaz on a February afternoon.

And along these rolling, often firm fairways, there's even a bonafide "Member's Bounce," on the 225-yard par-3 13th hole. With a front pin position, take your wood or long iron and play for the front left side; let the ball do the rest.

"I've seen at least a dozen shots come to within a foot or so of the flag," said Boaz. "So long as you land it a little short and left, the ball should trickle its way down to the hole."

Guests are treated like members here, with access to the locker room and dining facilities. It's a no-cash club, even for guests, so a little black card is your passport to all your food, drink and equipment needs. And you won't have to worry about falling out of place on the tee sheet should your halfway house quickie bite to eat turn into a couple of drinks.

The Marina Inn at Grande Dunes

One of Myrtle Beach's newest luxury hotels, the Mediterranean-inspired Marina Inn at Grande Dunes is right along the waterway. Often, passing ships pull into port for dinner at the resort's Waterscapes or the new Ruth's Chris Steak House on the water.

And although it's a waterway property, beach bums shouldn't blow this property over. Free shuttles escort guests from the resort to a private cabana on the beach just a short drive away.

Guest rooms start at one-bedroom, with certain floor plans offering full kitchens. For larger groups, there are two and three-bedroom villas with full kitchens, two or three baths and terraces overlooking the waterway. Guests can order a variety of in-room spa treatments.



Courtesy of Grande Dunes

The Marina Inn offers a variety of one, two and three-bedroom floor plans overlooking the Intracoastal Waterway.

Golf packages at Grande Dunes' Marina Inn

Amid the many amenities and services you'd expect from a AAA four-diamond hotel, you'll have access to a concierge who can assist in planning your golf.

Or set up your golf vacation package in advance. The Marina Inn offers a collection of exclusive packages that couple both the Resort Course and the Members Club. You'll also have free use of the practice facilities with select packages.

One particularly appealing package is the brand new "Grande Trio," which offers golf at the Resort Course, the Members Course and [Pine Lakes Country Club](#), Myrtle Beach's oldest golf club, dating back to the roaring 20s, and showing off a brand new look after extensive renovations. This package offers a taste of three of the top golf courses in Myrtle Beach.

March 23, 2009

Any opinions expressed above are those of the writer and do not necessarily represent the views of the management. The information in this story was accurate at the time of publication. All contact information, directions and prices should be confirmed directly with the golf course or resort before making reservations and/or travel plans.