



## Hampton Island Preserve, Georgia

An exclusive 4,000-acre private retreat about 35 minutes south of Savannah, Hampton Island personifies the spirit of the state's rich heritage of island preservation. For those not familiar with coastal Georgia, a dozen or so of its barrier islands have been designated state and national parks, wildlife refuges, research reserves or heritage preserves, leaving a prime stretch of this coastline untouched.

At Hampton Island, managing member Ronald Leventhal, of Atlanta-based Tivoli Communities, is doing everything he can to keep this south Atlantic coast region unspoiled by development. Located in Riceboro, Ga., Hampton Island still resembles its pre-Civil War roots with its mix of maritime forest, marsh and pasture with lakes and winding limestone roadways—all surrounded by 12 linear miles of pristine rivers and tidal saltwater marshes.

Connected to the mainland by a single bridge, the golf course community actually had the approvals to go high-density. Instead, Hampton Island decided to develop just 20 percent of the island, dedicating a large piece as a conservation easement. Out of 450 memberships, 370 include homesites ranging in size from one-acre lots for \$650,000 to expansive equestrian farms for up to \$3.8 million. The current initiation fee is \$150,000.

While taking extreme caution to preserve its ecosystem, Hampton Island does not shy away from luxurious amenities and services, featuring unique Treehouse and Farm House spa facilities, 24-hour concierge service and a brand new \$2.2 million equestrian center. Ricefields, Hampton Island's 18-hole course designed by PGA Tour star and Georgia native Davis Love III, is being created out

of restored native rice fields and complements the overall eco-conscious land plan with such efforts as non-irrigated native grasses in the unpaved, natural cart paths.

Perhaps the most popular element, however, is Daron Joffe, or "Farmer D" as the Hampton Island members and staffers call him. This longtime "bio-dynamic" farmer oversees Harvest Lake Farm, a community supported agriculture farm that features a two-story barn built with reclaimed rustic wood and a brick-laden courtyard with rows of organically grown vegetables, as well as culinary and medicinal herbs and spices.

Harvest Lake farm is where Hampton Island's manager of operations, Matthew Roher, gets all of his fresh produce, herbs and flowers, and members and guests seek a variety of education, recreation and therapy.

"I love the way it all comes together on Hampton Island," Joffe says. "The horses provide manure for the farm; the farm provides food for the community, and so on. We have our own herbs and vegetables, and down the road we might have a small dairy. It's just the whole combination of the farm, fishing, hunting and the chef. You can catch fresh fish out of the river, lakes or ocean. There's even hunting for wild game nearby.

"Imagine getting up in the morning and going fishing," adds Joffe. "Then coming to the farm with Farmer D and harvesting your own vegetables, and later having the chef prepare your meal at your peaceful, plantation-style home. So you have this truly emotional and physical process that you've been a part of. It's a real cycle of sustainability."

*Hampton Island Preserve, 912.880.8888, [www.hamptonisland.com](http://www.hamptonisland.com)*