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Lodgings Go "Green" in St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra & The Beaches

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St. Augustine, FL, July 10, 2009 --([PR.com](#))-- From the beaches, through the historic district of the Nation's oldest city, to the golfing destinations of Ponte Vedra and World Golf Village, accommodations in St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra & The Beaches are setting the pace for membership in the Florida Green Lodging Program. Administered by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the program establishes voluntary guidelines for hotels and motels to conserve natural resources and prevent pollution. Properties that meet the guidelines are recommended by the state to companies and trade organizations seeking environmentally conscious lodging and convention facilities.

"It's not surprising to me that our destination is among the most environmentally-conscious in the state," said Glenn Hastings, executive director of the St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra & The Beaches Visitors and Convention Bureau. "As one of the nation's most historic destinations, we take preservation seriously – and not just when it comes to history and culture. Preserving our natural environment is also essential to telling both the story of our past and insuring our wise stewardship of the natural world will continue into the future."

Today, 18 properties in St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra & The Beaches have been admitted to the Green Lodging Program – an impressive number for a destination that has less than one percent of the state's population.

The Hampton Inn and Suites St. Augustine at Vilano Beach was one of the first properties to be inducted into the Green Lodging Program and has since received the prestigious Two Palm certification. The management and staff were so enthusiastic and successful at adopting green practices that the property was chosen as a host for a Green Lodging workshop. The results quickly spread throughout the St. Augustine and Ponte Vedra accommodations community.

The historic Casa Monica Hotel is the only other local certified Green Lodging property that has also achieved Two Palm status. The Casa Monica serves as the perfect example of how an elegant, historic hotel can adopt the latest techniques for conserving natural resources and reducing pollution.



The elegant seaside resorts of Ponte Vedra Beach have also embraced the Green Lodging Program. The AAA Five Diamond Ponte Vedra Inn and Club, along with the Lodge and Club at Ponte Vedra and the Sawgrass Golf and Spa Resort, a Marriott property, have all received official certification.

The inclusion in the program of the Renaissance Resort at World Golf Village proved that with planning and commitment, even the largest properties can become eco-friendly. Despite its size (more than 300 rooms) and the fact that a \$10 million renovation was just completed, this luxurious centerpiece to one of the world's great golfing and convention destinations was able to meet all the requirements for inclusion in the Green Lodging Program.

Hilton properties in St. Augustine have also enthusiastically embraced the goals of the program. The beautiful new Hilton St. Augustine Bayfront, was not only designed and built to meet the oldest city's stringent requirements for historical accuracy, it also operates in compliance with the Green Lodging Program's guidelines – as does the Hilton Garden Inn located just across the street from the inviting seaside sands of St. Augustine Beach.

The new Castillo Real Resort Hotel, also in St. Augustine Beach, emphatically proved that architecture inspired by 18th century Spain can be adapted to meet the environmental needs of the 21st century. Just a block north, the oceanfront Hampton Inn located on historic A1A has earned the Green certification while further south the beautifully renovated oceanfront Holiday Inn St. Augustine Beach is now also a member of the elite group of properties included in the Florida Green Lodging Program.

Certified Green Lodging in St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra & The Beaches:

1. Best Western Spanish Quarter Inn
2. Casa Monica Hotel
3. Castillo Real
4. Comfort Suites – World Golf Village
5. Days Inn St. Augustine Beach
6. Grande Villas at World Golf Village
7. Hampton Inn St. Augustine Beach
8. Hampton Inn Historic
9. Hampton Inn and Suites St. Augustine at Vilano Beach
10. Hilton Garden Inn St. Augustine Beach
11. Hilton St. Augustine Historic Bayfront
12. Holiday Inn and Suites
13. Holiday Inn St Augustine Beach
14. LaFiesta Ocean Inn & Suites
15. Ponte Vedra Inn and Club
16. Sawgrass Golf Resort and Spa - A Marriott Resort
17. The Lodge and Club at Ponte Vedra
18. The Renaissance Resort at World Golf Village

Applicants pending certification:

1. The Beach Club
2. Beachfront Bed and Breakfast
3. Best Western Historical Inn
4. Courtyard by Marriott
5. Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott
6. Hilton Garden Inn Jacksonville/Ponte Vedra
7. St. Francis Inn Bed & Breakfast

For more details on the program, including information on the water conservation, energy efficiency, clean air and waste reduction requirements that need to be met in order to be certified green by the Department of Environmental Protection, go to: www.dep.state.fl.us/greenlodging. A full listing of green-certified properties can be found here as well.

For information on vacation opportunities in St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra & The Beaches, including stays at the properties included in the Green Lodging Program call 1.800.653.2489.

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