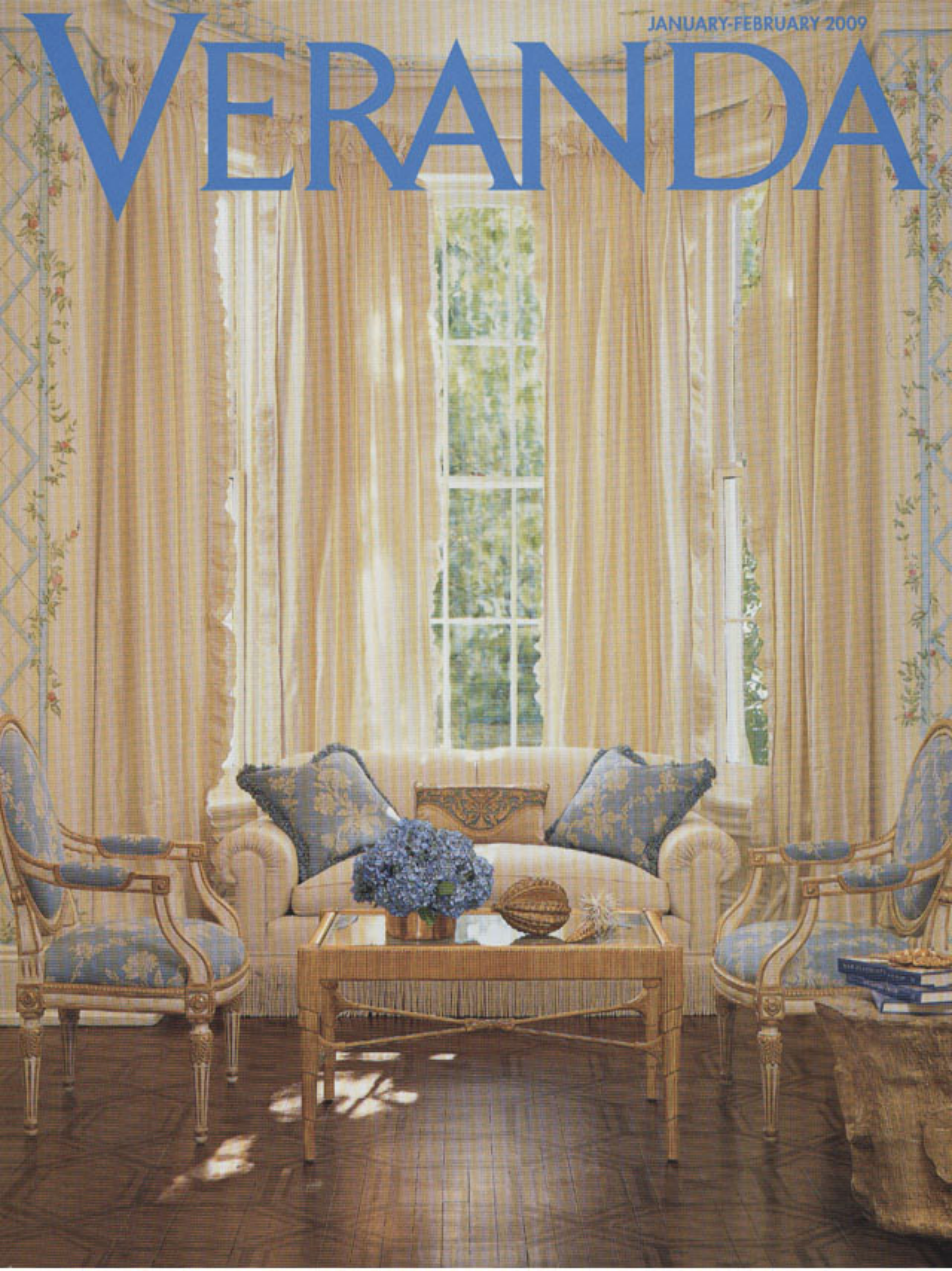


JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2009

VERANDA





COASTAL AND MOUNTAIN PROPERTIES

SOUTHEASTERN SANCTUARIES

TEXT BY TRAVIS NEIGHBOR WARD PRODUCED BY DEBORAH SANDERS AND JILL AUSTIN

The view outside is always foremost on buyers' minds when shopping for a vacation home, but these days there's more to the choice than what meets the eye. Purchase in the wrong spot and you may find there's no water to boat on. Build beside a rezoned stretch of sand and you might find your perfect seascape blocked by a neighboring home. And then, of course, there's the risk of future overcrowding, always an annoyance. Today's savviest house hunters are

scrutinizing the lay of the land when evaluating luxury real estate developments and often calling for a healthy dose of eco-friendly idealism to boot.

For a truly private tract of land, where residents can avoid seeing neighbors altogether if they wish, there is Frederica on the north end of Georgia's St. Simons Island, located along the Frederica River and near the new Sea Island Equestrian Center. Frederica takes up 3,000 gated acres,

to golf, one must head off site—a small trade-off for residents who can enjoy these amenities.

Another coastal development with a strong focus on environmental stewardship is Palmetto Bluff in Bluffton, South Carolina, situated along the May River between Hilton Head and Savannah. Spread over 20,000 acres—6,500 are managed forest and the rest is limited to 3,000 homes—Palmetto Bluff is a residential community, resort and nature preserve. On the one hand it offers a small-town atmosphere mixed with an upscale resort: The town square in Wilson Village includes gas lamps, houses with wrap-around porches, a café, shops, post office, and the Inn at Palmetto Bluff, the only Auberge-managed resort in the Southeast; there is a full-service spa and pool complex. On the other hand, it harkens to the sensibility of a country estate with an equestrian center and horse farms, “family compound” lots, salt and freshwater fishing, plus a three-day celebration with celebrity Chef Tyler Florence.

Palmetto Bluff is about 20 percent complete with another 10 to 15 years of construction remaining. Homesites go from \$250,000 to \$3.65 million and custom-built single-family homes cost from \$1.15 million to \$3.8 million. Golf is already a major attraction. At the May River Golf Club members pay a \$75,000 initiation fee, plus yearly dues of \$4,975 to enjoy the 7,100-yard par 72, 18-hole Jack Nicklaus Signature course. At the Palmetto Bluff Club there’s no initiation fee but annual dues are \$2,800 per year. Amenities include a lawn and racquet club, canoe club, hiking trails and nature programs. In 2009, houses and homesites with marsh, river and freshwater views will become available in the Moreland area, and in the next couple of years The Anson Marina Village will be ready with a yacht club and lake. Also in the future: a new marina, organic farm and gun club.

Two very new developments just getting under way include the Green Homes at The Greenbrier and The Cliffs at High Carolina. The Greenbrier Sporting Club’s newest real estate neighborhood (DPS is also developing the private island of Ambergris Cay in Turks & Caicos), Green Homes at The Greenbrier is located in Summit Village at the

3,300-foot-high peak of Greenbrier Mountain in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. The houses will be constructed following the National Association of Home Builders’ strict National Green Building Standards and will include features such as wood harvested from sustainable forests. There are only 56 lots in the 213-acre neighborhood amidst 6,500 acres, with prices ranging from \$500,000 to \$1.1 million. At press time, a release of 10 lots was available for purchase. Buyers can also choose from four- and five-bedroom timber frame post-and-beam home designs costing from \$1.45 million to \$1.95 million and crafted by architect Campion Platt. Named a top architect by *Architectural Digest*, he co-designed the Mercer Hotel in New York and has come up with a palette of eco-friendly furniture and interior finishes to complement elements such as game rooms and large covered porches on dual levels. Views include the Allegheny Mountains and Greenbrier Valley. Amenities include 20 miles of hiking trails and the Snead Golf Course, a 7,025-yard, par 71, Tom Fazio-designed course, rated number three in *Golf Digest’s* “Top 10 New Private Courses in America.” The course is also one of only six in the state to have the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary designation. Other attractions include a spa, fly-fishing, clay shooting, naturalist programs and an equestrian center. At Green Homes, the planning is focused on the natural environment and how to preserve it. Residents pay a one-time 80 percent equitable homeowner association fee of \$140,000 for club membership and access to The Greenbrier resort, plus annual dues of \$11,000.

Another Cliffs community grabbing golfers’ attention is The Cliffs at High Carolina near Asheville, North Carolina, which had its first sales release in November 2008. There are approximately 50 homesites from \$500,000 to over \$3 million, and in 2009 buyers can begin placing dibs on un-built cottages and condominiums. The amenity making headlines is the Tiger Woods golf course, the first he’s designed in the U.S., scheduled to open next year. Now that’s sure to make neighbors green with envy. □

Pricing and figures are subject to change.

NOTABLE DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SOUTHEAST

Alys Beach

Alys Beach, FL
866-732-1760
alysbeach.com

Frederica at Sea Island

St. Simons, GA
866-411-6749
fredericaliving.com

Green Homes at The Greenbrier

White Sulphur Springs, WV
888-741-8989
greenbriergreenhomes.com

Hampton Island Preserve

Hampton Island, GA
888-276-0064
hamptonisland.com

Palmetto Bluff

Bluffton, SC
843-757-3333
palmetto-bluff.com

The Cliffs at High Carolina

Asheville, NC
888-884-5801
discoverhighcarolina.com/veranda

The Cliffs at Keowee Springs

Six Mile, SC
866-435-5127
discoverkeoweesprings.com

The Ramble Biltmore Forest

Biltmore Forest, NC
888-271-1336
ramblebiltmoreforest.com

The Reserve at Lake Keowee

Sunset, SC
877-922-LAKE
reserveatlakekeowee.com