



# the GRAND HOTEL POINT CLEAR, ALABAMA

*By John Companiotte*

*Photo credit: Michael Clemmer for the golf photos.*

*Art Meripol for all hotel and property photos.*



First opened in 1847, the Grand Hotel at Point Clear, Alabama has been considered the Queen of Southern Resorts for generations. Known for exceptional service, Southern charm, majestic oaks and beautiful sunsets over Mobile Bay, the 405-room resort offers everything from golf, to fishing, to spa treatments on property. During a recent three-year renovation, the resort's guest rooms, meeting space, restaurants, spa, golf, pier, pools and grounds were transformed. The resort's Azalea golf course reopens in late 2019 after a major renovation.

Autograph Collection Hotels, part of Marriott International, Inc., together with the Resort Collection on Alabama's Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail in 2018 announced the rebranding of the Grand Hotel Golf Resort & Spa. The Grand Hotel joins the brand's diverse portfolio of more than 150 one-of-a-kind hotels that champion visionary owners, thoughtful design and craft.

Part of the Resort Collection on Alabama's Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail, the Grand Hotel has been praised by group and leisure publications. "With this stunning transformation nearly complete, the historic Grand Hotel enters its next chapter with its Autograph Collection distinction," said Tony Davis, president of the RTJ Resort Collection. "We are debuting a modern sanctuary of golf, tennis, beach, pools and spa filled with gracious Southern charm and attentiveness. Here, as it has for over 170 years, the Grand Life beckons with hospitality and warmth flowing through the resort in cheerful abundance," said Davis. "With our Historic Hotels of America designation, the affiliation with the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail and Autograph Collection signature, the Grand Hotel Golf Resort & Spa will appeal even more to group and leisure guests."





The Grand's transformation blends the best of the resort's Southern charm and traditions with the modern amenities and technology today's guests demand. The resort's iconic fireplace lobby, live oaks and Bucky's Lounge remain while new cabanas, splash pad and restaurants were added. The design mix

honors the Grand's history, traditions and sense of place.

Designed as an all-in-one destination, the Grand Hotel Golf Resort & Spa features a full-service spa, two RTJ Golf Trail courses, seven restaurants and lounges, two beaches, multiple pools and 37,000 square feet of renovated meeting space on 550

lush acres along Mobile Bay near Fairhope, Alabama. The Grand's cannon firing each afternoon honors the resort's history and salutes past and present military.

The renovated pier with fishing poles was completed in 2018. The expanded Grand estate gardens with 72 edibles was completed in 2018. Chefs pick fresh in-

gredients from the estate garden each afternoon after the cannon firing and before dinner. The Grand was recognized for having one of the best gardens by Historic Hotels of America in 2018.

The 20,000-square-foot European-style spa opened in 2002 and was renovated in 2018.

There are a wide range of treatments from massages, facials, manicures, pedicures and body treatments for women and men. Women's and Men's quiet rooms feature whirlpools, steam and dry sauna. There are hair salon and mani/pedi stations overlooking the resort's marina and Mobile Bay.

The Lakewood Club courses are part of Alabama's Robert Trent Jones Golf





Trail. The renovated 18-hole, 7,104 yard, 72-par Dogwood course reopened in July 2018. The Azalea course will be renovated during 2019 and should remain around 7,432 yards for the 18-hole, 72-par course.

Renovations to the feature, adult and indoor pools were completed in 2018. These provide 500,000 gallons of fun and one of the most spectacular swimming sites on the Gulf Coast. There are private cabanas at the adult pool with comfortable seating, fans, televisions, refrigerators and pool butler service. Other features include a waterfall, two whirlpools and slide, zero entry pool for young children, plus a new splash pad. Pool butlers offer drink and food service during peak season. The Jubilee Poolside Grill is open seasonally. An indoor pool is adjacent to the spa and fitness center.

There are also private beaches with beach chairs, sailboats, kayaks, water bikes, volleyball and more. Bon fires are available. Beachside cabanas are available with individual or group seating.

The Marina has 37 slips for sailboats, fishing boats and yachts. Boat charters available for guests. This is the home port of the Joshua, a majestic sailing schooner.

The history of the hotel has involved it in every aspect of U.S. history of the past 150+ years, including wars, fires, and hurricanes. F.H. Chamberlain built the hotel in 1847. It was a two-story building with 40 rooms. A separate building housed the dining room and kitchen. A third building housed a bar called "The Texas." In 1864, a portion of the hotel became a Confederate hospital during the Civil War.

Captain H.C. Baldwin bought the hotel in the 1870s for \$75,000. It was 300 feet long and had 60 suites. In 1893, a hurricane destroyed the dining room and "The Texas" bar. Both were rebuilt. In 1901, Major James K. Glennon of Mobile bought the hotel. In 1906 and 1916, the hotel was severely damaged. Major Glennon was ready to quit, but Mrs. Glennon intervened and supervised repairs that helped reopen it. In 1939, Mr. E.A. Roberts bought the hotel and 25 additional parcels of land. In 1940, the old buildings were renovated and the main building was constructed. The Army Air Corps used the hotel as a training base during World War II. None of the soldiers wore combat boots in the hotel in order to protect the hardwood floors.

After WWII, Robert's company, the



Waterman Steamship Company, built a marina, two tennis courts, an 18-hole golf course and a swimming pool. Ten cottages were added in the 1950s. During the 1960s, the hotel grew to 172 guest rooms. In 1967, a second 9-hole golf course and the first conference center were added.

In 1981, the Marriott Corporation bought The Grand Hotel and added the North Bay House and the Marina Building, bringing total guest rooms to 306. Marriott added an additional 9-hole golf course for a total of 36 holes. Major renovations to the hotel were completed in 2003, including a new spa, pool and additional guest rooms. Hurricane Katrina closed the Grand in August 2005. Half the resort reopened on April 1, 2006 and



the remainder reopened November 1, 2006. A new aquatics and tennis center opened at the resort in July 2009.

With so many activities, a guest is sure to work up quite an appetite. The property offers multiple dining options. Local Market offers coffees and pastries to light lunch and dinner options. The Grand Hall offers breakfast and Sunday Bunch. Bayside Grill provides mouth-watering local fare with ingredients sourced from local farms and the Estate Garden. Bucky's Lounge celebrates the

iconic Bucky Miller, a time-honored associate of the Grand Hotel. Jubilee Poolside Grill is a casual poolside restaurant. Enjoy bay breezes in this open-air environment. Plenty of menu options for children in this family-friendly

restaurant. Southern Roots is an upscale dining restaurant that offers exceptional service in an atmosphere infused with flavor and fun. The 1847 Bar celebrates the Grand's history one glass at a time. Located next to Southern Roots, 1847 offers signature wines by the glass, local libations and house-made elixirs.

For more information: (251) 928-9201. [www.grand1847.com](http://www.grand1847.com). Facebook: TheGrandHotel; Twitter: TheGrandHotel; Instagram: [\\_grandhotel\\_](https://www.instagram.com/_grandhotel_)