

Two MS Coast locations land on Southern Living list of South's most beautiful beach towns

BY MARY PEREZ APRIL 10, 2024 5:00 AM

Two Coast cities join Charleston, South Carolina; Fairhope, Alabama; and other favorite destinations on Southern Living's "15 Most Beautiful Coastal Towns in the South." Southern Living editors researched and visited small towns to compile the list. Ocean Springs and Bay St. Louis made it atop the Southern beach towns with "charming downtowns, excellent waterfront dining, gracious places to stay and scenic vistas," the article says.

Southern Living calls Ocean Springs an "artsy and delightfully quirky community," and a link in the article provides a list of 25 best things to do in Ocean Springs. "If Ocean Springs were looking to make a bumper sticker, it might read something like this: 'My downtown's cooler than your downtown,'" the article says. That speaks to the centuries-old oak trees that shade the streets and the more than 200 small-town shops, galleries and restaurants just blocks away from the beach. Featured are Walter Anderson Museum of Art, Shearwater Pottery, the new Springs Hotel, shopping and fine dining at Maison de Lu and at Vestige, which is one of five finalists for the prestigious James Beard Foundation Outstanding Restaurants in the country for 2024.

Bay St. Louis is just 50 miles from New Orleans and blends "The Big Easy's funky, artsy feel with the mellow, barefoot vibe you can find only in a tried-and-true coastal town," the Southern Living article says.

It salutes the Bay's dog-friendly beaches, the water trails for exploring, fishing from the piers and boats and the vibe of the town's Old Town. Enjoy breakfast at Mockingbird Cafe and the views at The Blind Tiger, it says. It also suggests Cuz's Old Town Oyster Bar & Grill for fresh-off-the-boat shellfish and seafood platters, along with Field's Steak and Oyster Bar. Sit awhile on the porch at Bay Town Inn or be in the middle of all the action at the Pearl Hotel in downtown.

MOST BEAUTIFUL BEACH TOWNS The 15 towns on the list are, in no order: ■ Fairhope, Alabama ■ Wilmington, North Carolina ■ Ocean Springs, Mississippi ■ Beaufort, South Carolina ■ Southport, North Carolina ■ St. Michaels, Maryland ■ Charleston, South Carolina ■ Rockport, Texas ■ Cape Charles, Virginia ■ Beaufort, North Carolina ■ St. Augustine, Florida ■ Norfolk, Virginia ■ Georgetown, South Carolina ■ Tarpon Springs, Florida ■ Bay St. Louis, Mississippi