



## Going Green on Florida's Gulf Coast

South Walton, Fla. – As the largest full-service beachfront resort on Northwest Florida's pristine Gulf Coast, Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa is naturally committed to protecting the environment through a variety of activities that conserve natural resources.

In 2009, the resort earned the Florida Green Lodging Program Designation from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for its ongoing use of green practices such as recycling, water conservation and energy reduction. In 2013, Hilton Sandestin Beach was recognized with the TripAdvisor GreenLeader Bronze certificate and ConventionSouth magazine Green Meetings Approved certificate for its efforts to decrease their carbon footprint and make the resort a more eco-friendly property. And in 2016 Hilton Sandestin Beach was recognized again by TripAdvisor as a Silver GreenLeader.

Hilton Sandestin Beach has made a number of enhancements to decrease their carbon footprint further and protect the natural wildlife that surrounds the beachfront property. Hilton Sandestin Beach installed more than \$250,000 in "turtle safe" LED lighting, specially designed to minimize disturbances to nesting sea turtles, their hatchlings and other coastal wildlife. The lighting on the 20,000-square-foot pool deck, gives off a warm, orange glow so guests can enjoy beachside dining and evening swims, without distracting turtles from the moonlight. The resort also planted more than 30,000 new sea oats to protect the shoreline dunes.

In addition, the beachfront deck area is made of MoistureShield, an environmentally-friendly, long-lasting composite using a 50/50 blend of recycled wood fibers and plastics. Unlike pressure-treated wood decks that quickly fade and splinter, Hilton Sandestin Beach's MoistureShield deck is aesthetically pleasing and splinter-free for barefoot guests hopping from

the pools to the beach or to Picnix for a quick snack. Throughout the resort, electrical upgrades to LEED lighting and A/C enhancements totaling \$2.5 million resulted in a \$50,000 rebate check from Gulf Power to Hilton Sandestin Beach, in recognition of their extreme conservation efforts. Their largest to date, the check marked Gulf Power's first rebate on their commercial customized incentive program for customers who undertake environmentally friendly improvements.

To help educate guests about some of the Green efforts at the property, Hilton Sandestin Beach recruited Sunny the Sea Turtle, a cute and informative companion who shares information about protecting mother turtles as they lay eggs, hatchlings' journey back to the ocean and the resort's turtle-safe lighting. Educational programs about sea turtles and other green efforts will be introduced throughout the year in the kids programs and through other family-friendly activities to inform guests of the natural beauty which surround them at the property.

With more than 40 percent of Florida's Panhandle preserved for nature – guests are encouraged to explore the four state parks, 15 coastal dune lakes, state forest, and more on the water, on foot, on bike, or horseback. All activities are available either from the resort's front and back doors or just minutes away.

For reservations, contact Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa by calling toll free 800-559-1805 or 850-267-9500, or visit [HiltonSandestinBeach.com](http://HiltonSandestinBeach.com).

*- Hilton Sandestin Beach -*

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