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TRAVEL NEWS

Time Stands Still at Eagle Island, Georgia

BY DEBBIE MARTINEZ

THEY SAY IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START, then start at the beginning, so here goes. I had never heard of Eagle Island, a private island off the coast of Georgia, so stepping off the plane in Jacksonville I had no preconceived thoughts of what to expect. Sometimes it can bring unexpected surprises.

Once on board the boat that promised to whisk me to an island all my own, I felt the tension of Miami life leaving my body like a spirit moving on to the other side. "That's Eagle Island," I heard the owner, Captain Andy say, and I turned to see what can only be described as a Lost World. Pulling up to the dock, all I could do was stare as I felt like I had just drifted into a place unknown to man. Before me on 10 acres sat a place where there is no time other than the rising and setting of the sun. Stepping onto the dock, I noticed the catch of the day was a basket of the biggest blue crabs I had ever seen. The pathway to the lodge was made of crushed oysters and artifacts repurposed into magical pieces, such as an enormous tree turned upside down with its stump used as a flower basket. With the moss blowing in the breeze like drapes, I now knew how Alice felt in *Wonderland*.

The lodge's main level has two bedrooms, bath and great room with a bedroom loft. The kitchen was already

stocked with food (you tell them what you want and they buy it and put it away for you), water, wine and every conceivable cooking implement I had no intention of using. The bottom level has a huge bunkroom, bath and ping pong table.

The inside of the lodge left me speechless, but the outside left me breathless. A screened wrap around porch with a hammock on one side, and "the nest," which encompasses a hot tub facing a fireplace and a swinging bed on the other side. As the moon shone brightly and the night sounds became my symphony, I tucked myself under several blankets and with the crackle of the fire in the other room I drifted off to sleep. Morning broke and with coffee in hand, I made my way to the dock for a day of exploring.

Sapelo Island, the fourth largest barrier island and only reachable by ferry or plane, was our stop. An absolute gem of an island with a beautiful beach is where I spent my afternoon, walking the dunes and picking up shells and driftwood with only the crashing of the waves to keep me company. The sun was setting as we headed "home" with our only companions being a lone fishing boat, the sound of seagulls and my own thoughts.

All I can say is for the next three days, the world, as I knew it stopped, and I had a glimpse into a world



lost in time. I spent my days walking a trail among the moss-draped trees and playing horseshoes by the pond. My nights were spent by the outside fire pit roasting marshmallows or by the indoor fireplace snuggled under a blanket reading a book.

My last night's treat was experiencing Captain Andy's Low Country Boil. As the stars came out and I took up residence on the swinging bed, all I could think of:

Ticket to Jacksonville: \$200.00, Cat sitter: \$75.00, Time spent on Eagle Island: PRICELESS

For information on this amazing experience and to book a girl's getaway, romantic weekend or family vacation, visit www.privateislandsofgeorgia.com or call Captain Andy at 912-222-0801.

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