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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

South Walton Celebrates the Holidays with a Host of Merry Events

SOUTH WALTON, Fla. (November 21, 2012) – Every winter, many travelers choose to leave their snow-covered surroundings and visit their favorite beaches for a warm, relaxing escape. Those who visit [South Walton](#) on Northwest Florida’s Coast this holiday season are greeted not only with mild weather and the stunning white sands and turquoise waters of the Gulf of Mexico, but also a variety of family-friendly holiday events.

“Each of our beach neighborhoods celebrates the holiday season with its own mix of festive events,” said Dawn Moliterno, executive director of Visit South Walton. “Whether it’s taking in the numerous displays of holiday lights, enjoying a meal at our many holiday celebrations, attending a holiday theater performance or concert, or even just catching up on some holiday shopping, visitors find something new to enjoy every day.”

Families visiting South Walton this holiday season can experience many festive holiday events, including:

Holiday Festivals, Activities & Santa Sightings

- For those visitors who miss the cold and ice, the ice skating rink at The Village of Baytowne Wharf is the perfect opportunity to get into the holiday spirit. Now through January, they can enjoy [Baytowne on Ice](#) in the South Walton neighborhood of Sandestin;
- Santa is going high tech this year! With the help of Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort, children and their families can video chat with Santa Claus and get a sneak peek inside his workshop. These special [Santa Skypes](#) will take place Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 4-5 p.m., through Dec. 21. Simply call Santa at Skype username

SandestinResort;

- The [Festival of Trees in Grand Boulevard](#) will feature a Christmas tree decorating contest, with more than a dozen trees wonderfully decorated for the holiday season. Local nonprofits will compete for prizes such as “Best of Show” and “People’s Choice Award.” The free event has already kicked off and continues through Dec. 25;
- For anyone wishing to burn some calories before their big Thanksgiving dinner, WaterColor Inn & Resort is holding a [Thanksgiving Turkey Trot](#) at Marina Park Nov. 22;
- Alys Beach visitors can join Santa for cookie decorating and holiday cheer at [Alys in Wonderland](#), Nov. 23 in Alys Beach. Alys Beach will also be accepting unwrapped children’s gifts to donate to the local Angel Tree program;
- On Nov. 24, the [Old Florida Holiday & Winter Market](#) at WaterColor Inn & Resort’s Cerulean and Marina Parks will feature carriage rides, a bonfire and s’mores, pictures with Santa, a festive tree lighting, holiday treats and more;
- [Here Comes Santa Claus...](#) will usher in the holidays at The Village of Baytowne Wharf Nov. 23-24. The event will include a family-friendly holiday movie under the stars, the arrival of Santa Claus, a choreographed light show, the Baytowne Lantern Parade and much more;
- [Turn on the Town](#), taking place Nov. 24 in Seaside, combines the small-town atmosphere of a beach neighborhood parade, an official town lighting ceremony and an appearance by Santa Claus himself;
- Children are invited to join in on a parade and enjoy refreshments at [Silver Sands Santa’s Arrival](#) Dec. 1. Complimentary photos with Santa will also be available, with proceeds benefiting the Sacred Heart Hospital on the Emerald Coast;
- At [Tee Off for Toys](#), taking place at Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort Dec. 7 and 8, golfers are asked to donate new unwrapped gifts in exchange for playing one of the resort’s award-winning golf courses for just a discounted green and golf cart fee; and,

- The [Third Annual Baytowne Holiday Lantern Parade](#) will take place at The Village of Baytowne Wharf Dec. 15. This popular event features paper lanterns in the shapes of iconic symbols of the holiday season. Sandestin's homeowners will also light up their golf carts and join in on the fun for this year's event.

Spectacular Holiday Light & Décor Displays

- Now through Jan. 1, the spectacular [Silver Sands Holiday Lights in Concert](#) will feature an amazing display of colorful lights synchronized to favorite Christmas songs;
- The South Walton neighborhood of Rosemary Beach will usher in the holidays with a town [Tree Lighting](#), Nov. 23 at South Barrett Square. The event will be followed by Merchant Holiday Open Houses, as the town's merchants offer a special evening of holiday shopping and refreshments;
- The Merchants of Seaside will host [Visions of Seaside](#), Dec. 1 through 15, where visitors will have the opportunity to stroll through town and view its spectacular holiday lights, while visiting with Santa and Mrs. Claus; and,
- On Dec. 15, the Wesley House at Eden Gardens State Park will be open to the public for an [Eden Gardens Candlelight Open House](#), where visitors will see the home's historic rooms and grounds beautifully decorated for the holiday season.

Holiday Meals & Dining

- The Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa will host a [Thanksgiving Buffet](#) Nov. 22 in its Emerald Ballroom. The dinner buffet will feature a variety of offerings, including traditional Thanksgiving fare, gourmet side dishes and an elaborate dessert buffet;
- Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort will serve a [Thanksgiving Brunch on the Beach](#), Nov. 22 at Finz Beachside Grille;
- Visitors to WaterColor Inn & Resort can also enjoy a [Thanksgiving Brunch and Dinner at Fish Out of Water](#). The next day, Nov. 23, families can also delight in eating [Breakfast with Santa at Fish Out of Water](#). For reservations, call (850) 534-5050;

- Children of all ages can enjoy a magical morning Nov. 24 at [Breakfast with Santa](#) in Rosemary Beach. The event includes a continental, bagged breakfast; a professional color photo with Santa and a special goodie bag from Gigi's; and,
- Fish Out of Water at WaterColor & Inn Resort will serve a special [Christmas Eve Dinner and Christmas Day Dinner](#) Dec. 24 and 25.

Holiday Concerts, Movie Nights & More

- The annual [Seaside Repertory Theatre Holiday Performance](#) is a South Walton holiday favorite. Families can get a sneak peek of "Every Christmas Story Ever Told" Nov. 21 at the WaterColor Marina Amphitheatre and Nov. 24 at the Seaside Repertory Theatre. The main stage production will officially open Dec. 6 and runs through Dec. 29. Additional details, tickets and show times are available at www.SeasideREP.org;
- Seaside's [Central Square Cinema](#) will feature a special holiday movie Nov. 23 in the town's Amphitheater; and,
- Every Wednesday night throughout December, visitors can enjoy a special holiday edition of The Village of Baytowne Wharf's popular [Wednesday Night Concert Series](#).

Special Holiday Shopping Events

- From Nov. 23-25, Silver Sands Premium Outlets will offer an [After Thanksgiving Sale featuring Midnight Madness](#). The sale kicks off at midnight as Thanksgiving ends and runs through Sunday with a wide range of savings at designer outlets. There will be additional holiday shopping events and sales throughout the holiday season, as well as [After Holiday Sales](#) from Dec. 25 through Jan. 26;
- Travelers can get a jumpstart on their holiday shopping at Rosemary Beach's [Holiday Market](#) Nov. 24. Shoppers can browse booths filled with hand-crafted gifts including pottery, jewelry, paintings and more; and,
- This December, there are many opportunities for shoppers to support local charities and children in need while shopping at Silver Sands Premium Outlets. From Dec. 1 through 12, the [Angel Tree at Silver Sands](#) will give shoppers opportunities to provide wrapped

gifts for children in need. Silver Sands is also hosting its [Annual Charity Gift Wrap](#) event Dec. 8 through 24, with donations benefitting Sinfonia Gulf Coast.

New Year's Celebrations

- Fish Out of Water at WaterColor Inn & Resort will host a [New Year's Eve Dinner](#) Dec. 31. Visitors should call (850) 534-5050 for reservations. WaterColor will also offer a special [Kids' Night Out New Year's Eve Bash](#) Dec. 31. There is limited availability so parents should call (850) 534-5975 to reserve their child's spot early;
- Families can celebrate the New Year Dec. 31 at [Countdown Seaside!](#), which will feature live music, children's activities, street performers, and of course, fireworks;
- Another option for celebrating the New Year is the [Baytowne Countdown](#) at The Village of Baytowne Wharf in Sandestin. Several musical performances will take place throughout the night, while fireworks light up the sky at midnight;
- Fonville Press in Alys Beach will host [Salute 2012](#) Dec. 31, as they say goodbye to 2012 with cocktails, food and live music;
- [Seagar's Prime Steaks & Seafood](#), located at the Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa, will host an exclusive New Year's Eve event Dec. 31. Partygoers will enjoy live entertainment throughout the night to help usher in the New Year. Reservations are available and can be made by calling (850) 622-1500; and,
- WaterColor Inn & Resort will host the popular [Polar Bear Plunge](#) Jan. 1, as brave visitors jump into the chilly waters of the Gulf of Mexico to celebrate the New Year. Long sleeve T-shirts will be available for purchase to help swimmers warm up after they take the plunge.

Accommodations Specials & Packages

Travelers can also take advantage of attractive seasonal rates and special offers on accommodations this holiday season, including:

- The Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa is offering a [Thanksgiving Shopper's Package](#), which includes beach view suite accommodations, breakfast for two adults at Sandcastles Restaurant, a \$50 gift card to Silver Sands Premium Outlets, the Silver Sands Shopping Package, which includes more than \$800 in savings and special offers, and complimentary shuttle service to and from Silver Sands Premium Outlets on Nov. 23;
- The [Black Friday Special](#) at Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa will offer travelers 30 percent off the resort's best available rates, when they complete their booking from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Black Friday, Nov. 23;
- This holiday season, the Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa will show its appreciation to its guests with the [Our Gift to You](#) package. Guests can treat themselves to golf at one of Sandestin's four championship courses, a spa experience at Serenity by the sea, a meal at the AAA, Four-Diamond Seagar's Prime Steaks & Seafood, or spend the day shopping at the region's largest designer outlet center, Silver Sands Prime Outlets;
- The Seaside Cottage Rental Agency will offer a [Double Your Fun Winter Escape](#) package, Dec. 1 through Feb. 28. Visitors can take advantage of rates that are up to 50 percent off already low winter rates and receive more than \$1,000 worth of exclusive deals;
- The [Village of South Walton Beach](#) in Seacrest is offering 30 percent off prepaid 2012 bookings, for travel now through Dec. 31;
- The Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa will help its guests ring in 2013 with a bang with its [Beach, Baytowne and Breakfast](#) package. The special package includes upgraded beach-view accommodations, private transportation to and from The Village of Baytowne Wharf for two to help celebrate the new year and daily breakfast for two at the hotel's Sandcastles Restaurant;
- Now through Feb. 28, the Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa is offering a special [Serenity's Spa Getaway Package](#). Travelers can enjoy special offers on

accommodations and a spa package at Serenity by the sea;

- Also now through Feb. 28, Hilton Sandestin is offering a [Sunny Side Up Package](#), which includes breakfast for two every morning, as well as oversized spacious guest accommodations; and,
- From Dec. 22 through Jan. 1, Redfish in Blue Mountain Beach will offer a [Holiday 2012](#) special that allows visitors to book three nights and receive a fourth night free. The vacation rental sleeps 16, and includes four bedrooms plus a loft, and ample luxury amenities perfect for a large group.

For more information about South Walton, please visit www.VisitSouthWalton.com or contact the Visitor's Center at (800) 822-6877.

About South Walton

Located along a 26-mile stretch of Northwest Florida's Coast, South Walton encompasses an unparalleled strand of 16 distinct beach neighborhoods, each with its own traditions, charm and visual style. South Walton is renowned for natural scenic beauty, turquoise waters and sugar sand beaches, including one of Dr. Beach's All-Time Top 20 Beaches. An upscale, yet casual, place to unwind, rejuvenate and build lasting memories, it is here that visitors find their perfect beach. Learn more at VisitSouthWalton.com.

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