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Warm Up While Playing The Big Cats at Ocean Ridge

By Allison Woodward

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Drop those snow boots, grab your golf clubs and forget about winter for a while at Ocean Ridge Plantation in Sunset Beach, N.C.

Unlike its northern neighbors, Sunset Beach boasts a mild climate year-round. The warm weather and pristine natural surroundings make Ocean Ridge Plantation the perfect destination for active golfers who don't want to settle for just a few short months of golf at home.

Sunset Beach experienced no serious weather issues this summer and fall, leaving the courses in beautiful condition.

Ideally located between the history of Wilmington and the excitement of Myrtle Beach, Ocean Ridge Plantation boasts one of the most diverse golf experiences on the East Coast with its three "Big Cat" courses - Lion's Paw, Panther's Run and Tiger's Eye. A fourth course, Leopard's Chase, is in progress.

Lion's Paw is an open, hilly 18-hole course that treats golfers to spectacular views of a creek valley and wetlands. It has been described as designer Willard C. Byrd's finest work.

Panther's Run, an 18-hole course carved out of rolling woodlands runs along several untouched natural wildlife habitats, and offers large multiple tee areas, giving golfers of all skill levels a fair shot at making par.

Tiger's Eye, Ocean Ridge's crown jewel, is a rare treat and one of the most highly praised courses along the East Coast. This upscale, daily-fee 18-hole golf course is distinguished by dramatic 60-foot elevation changes and a stunning combination of natural waste areas, native wild flowers, waterfalls, coquina boulders, and coastal marshland. Tiger's eye is a thinking-person's course, requiring precise shot making and a reliable short game.

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Construction on Leopard's Chase, Ocean Ridge's next Big Cat course, is on schedule with completion slated for 2006. The par-71 course measures more than 7,000 yards and features stunning natural vistas and dramatic elevation changes. Course architect Tim Cate, who also did Tiger's Eye, believes that Leopard's Chase will turn out even better than Tiger's Eye and that golfers will be lining up to sample the next great cat at Ocean Ridge.

And that's quite a prediction. Tiger's Eye is one of "America's 100 Greatest Public Courses, 2003-2004," says Golf Digest magazine. North Carolina magazine named it the "Most Scenic Golf Course" in coastal North Carolina, and the third most scenic course in the entire state.

In Golf Digest's prestigious bi-annual golf "bible" Tiger's Eye is rated at 4 1/2 stars, which makes it a "don't miss" golf course. In addition, Tiger's Eye -- along with its sister courses Panther's Run and Lion's Paw -- is on Golf For Women magazine's "America's "Top 100 Fairways" list.

Ocean Ridge also boasts high-quality shopping, service and dining. The Ocean Ridge Golf Shoppe was named one of America's 100 Best Golf Shops for four consecutive years by Golf Shop Operations Magazine and Tiger's Eye Golf Links' store has been named to Golf World Business' prestigious "America's 100 Best Golf Shops" list.

The two clubhouses that overlook the golf courses offer a variety of dining options.

With the Canadian dollar at a 15-year high, now is the perfect time to visit Sunset Beach, N.C.

So forget the snow and come play in the sun with the Big Cats at Ocean Ridge Plantation in Sunset Beach, N.C.

Allison Woodward

My background includes serving as an editor at Life Insurance Selling magazine in St. Louis, Mo., where I was responsible for writing, editing, selecting editorial material, managing the magazine's Web site, and covering industry events. In addition, I have worked as an editor, reporter, and photographer for several newspapers in the St. Louis metropolitan area.

Reasons For Neutering Your Cat

By Grace Palce

Cats are warm blooded carnivorous mammals and they certainly feed on protein-rich meat. They are predators and hunters and they usually prey upon rats and mice. Cats are also known for their great fighting skills. Some can even win a fight against snakes. And cats survive in almost all climates and geographical conditions.

Historians cannot pinpoint nor describe the details of how and when the first cat was domesticated. What is known, however, is that domesticated cats have existed for more than five thousand years now. According to biologists, the modern domestic cat is either a direct descendant or a subspecies of

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the African Wildcat. And this is why the domestic cat belongs to the genus Felis. Some artifacts indicated that the domestic cats first appeared in ancient Egypt. Today, these cats have occupied all continents, Asia, Europe, and America, except for Antarctica. And they have evolved into over fifty different breeds.

Being one of the most popular pets in the world, cats are certainly not listed as endangered species. Female cats are also known to produce an average of three kittens about twice a year. Thus, the spaying and neutering of cats cannot hurt their world population.

A spayed and neutered cat will be to the advantage of the owner's house. Cats that are not altered, especially the female ones, may just spray their urine in areas that they consider their territory. All owners of cats are too familiar with the obnoxious smell of the urine. And no matter how much cleaning one does, the smell can never be entirely removed, especially from carpets, beddings, upholstery, and furniture made of wood. The urine of neutered cats are less smelly and these cats may not even consider marking many territories in the house.

When not neutered, a female cat in heat will howl terrible noises at inappropriate hours, like midnight or dawn. The noises will be eagerly answered by male cats that howl outside your door. You will certainly lose your sleep. And your neighbors may not be too happy about all the racket. These cats in heat will be restless and will forget whatever toilet training you may have taught it. And such condition can last up to three weeks and occur three or more times a year.

Some cats who are not neutered may choose to roam far away from your house. This will cause you endless worry. And you certainly have reason to do so. Your cat will be facing cat fights and fast-moving cars. When in danger, dogs tend to run away. But cats stay frozen in its place. This is why many cats are run over by vehicles.

Neutered cats, on the other hand, will always stay in your house. They will be more content and less restless. They will also have longer life spans.

Grace Palce is writing articles for pet meds 101, a comprehensive pet medicine guide

Specializing in cat and dog medicine

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