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Flexible space at the Sheraton Myrtle Beach Convention Center

spring, summer, fall or winter — it is the perfect time for a group gathering.

**Columbia** is situated in the center of South Carolina, where three rushing rivers converge to create a green and vibrant city. Columbia's historic homes and antebellum mansions are an essential bookmark to its past, but the urban revitalization that is occurring in the downtown area is the real story here, where high-tech start-up businesses, vibrant nightlife and arts enthusiasts are thriving.

Thanks to its extremely convenient location in the Northwest corner of the state, **Greenville** is located where meeting attendees can easily and affordably get there — just a two-hour drive from Atlanta, 90 minutes from Charlotte, and proximate to a number of Interstate highways. Downtown Greenville is a mere 15 minutes from Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport where Southwest Airlines will begin servicing in Spring 2011.

### meeting sites and sights to See

The Charleston Area Convention Center Complex, North Charleston Coliseum and Performing Arts Center are dedicated to pro-

viding not only excellent meeting and exhibition space but an eco-friendly environment as well. The facilities' green initiatives include recycling of materials, using electric and compressed natural gas for their equipment and vehicles, even donating excess to food banks.

The city offers a prolific calendar of events that highlight its assets — the arts, cultural heritage and celebrated dining. Planners can pair a meeting with the popular BB&T Charleston Food + Wine Festival. Its 2011 events will include a locavore luncheon featuring ingredients produced within 100-miles of the Charleston area, an *Iron Chef*-style competition featuring six former *Top Chef* contestants squaring off with indigenous ingredients, and a tour of South Carolina's oldest brewery, Palmetto Brewery.

Arrange a team dinner at the new Husk, scheduled to open this November by James Beard Foundation Best Chef Southeast 2010 Award winner Sean Brock of McCrady's. With a focus on indigenous Lowcountry ingredients, Husk will offer refined interpretations of Southern cuisine in a restored building on Queen Street. Or combine an incentive program with a trip to the 2012 PGA Championship, which will be hosted on Kiawah Island.

Hilton Head Island's traditional meeting space can be found in sprawling resorts such as the Crowne Plaza Hilton Head Island Beach Resort, Hilton Head Marriott, Palmetto Dunes Resort, Sea Pines Resort, or Westin Hilton Head Island Resort and Spa, to name a few. Untraditional meeting venues run the gamut, ranging from plantations and historic antebellum homes to yachts and riverboats. Because of the destination's natural landscape, outdoor teambuilding is a must. Participants can race kayaks and canoes, scavenger

hunt through Lowcountry, attend golf clinics, fish, horseback ride, dolphin watch, and more.

One of the many advantages of hosting a meeting in the Myrtle Beach area is the tremendous variety of lodging choices and meeting facilities from one end of the Grand Strand to the other. The Grand Strand's total tally of guest accommodations is more than 90,000 and of these, nearly one-third is hotel rooms. Planners choose from amenity-rich resorts, oceanfront high-rises, luxurious condos, tree-shaded golf villas and even historic plantations! The 402-room Sheraton Myrtle Beach Convention Center hotel is ideal for groups whose events are headquartered there, however more than 3,000 additional hotel rooms — the majority on the oceanfront or with ocean views — are only within a mile of the convention center.

The 250,000-sq.-ft convention center is one of the largest on the East coast, and the exhibit hall is 100,800 square feet, column-free and is divisible into three sections. Hall C features telescopic seating for 2,500 people and is ideal for general assemblies as well. With a 17,000-sq.-ft. ballroom and an outdoor, lush 30,000-sq.-ft. Events Plaza, the options are endless.

The Myrtle Beach area offers nationally acclaimed live entertainment venues. For a more relaxed atmosphere, visit Brookgreen Gardens, a National Historic Landmark with the most significant collection of figurative sculpture in an outdoor setting by American artists in the world. Shoppers take pleasure in outlet parks, malls, village-style shopping centers and outdoor shopping/dining/entertainment complexes, while sports enthusiasts will find more than 100 golf courses in the Myrtle Beach area, many laid out on a spectacular Lowcountry landscape complemented



Greenville's Liberty Bridge

by majestic Live Oaks draped with Spanish moss. A must-see in the Myrtle Beach area is the brand new mile-long boardwalk that traverses between two piers, lined with shopping and dining opportunities boasting the best view on the beach.

As a capital city, Columbia boasts more than 537,000 square feet of meeting space in the region and a solid collection of meeting hotels including Hilton, Marriott and Sheraton properties. Downtown pulsates with gastronomic restaurants, live entertainment, and opportunities to absorb arts and culture with the Columbia City Ballet, Columbia Museum of Art and Nickelodeon Theatre.

Delegates will find Greenville a refreshing city that puts great emphasis on enjoying the great outdoors, which is evident as you walk across a suspension bridge — Liberty Bridge — that overlooks waterfalls and greenways right in the heart of the city.

Besides the newly renovated California First Center, Greenville features impressive downtown sites such as the BI-LO Center, a state-of-the-

art, 15,000-seat sports and entertainment arena recognized as one of the top 50 venues in the world for sports, concerts, as well as corporate and community events. The Peace Center for the Performing Arts includes the Peace Center Hall, the Gunter Theatre, the Peace Center Amphitheatre, the Huguenot Mill and the Wyche Pavilion. The Peace Center is the perfect setting for performances, group outings, corporate meetings, receptions and holiday parties.

Hear the history, witness the birth and experience the performance of BMW, firsthand, when you take the Ultimate BMW Experience tour at Plant Spartanburg. This one-of-a-kind experience includes driving the track at the Performance Driving Center with a certified BMW instructor. Fellow drivers can participate in a guided group excursion in the nearby mountains as well.

Biking and history tours are available in Greenville. Online this year is new history tour that allows participants to experience delights from five local chefs while learning the history of the city's culinary scene.

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