Native, Low-Maintenance Landscape Design Projects

Scenes like this sunset over Kiawah Island are the inspiration for Lowcountry Vistas Native Landscape Design's native, low-maintenance landscape design philosophy. The South Carolina Lowcountry is one-of-a-kind…I strive to harmonize customers' residential and commercial properties with its awe-inspiring beauty. (I took this shot from Folly Beach County Park.)

Using my native, low-maintenance landscape design & installation philosophy, I harmonize residential & commercial properties in the Charleston area and beyond with the awe-inspiring natural beauty of the South Carolina Lowcountry.

As a Charleston native, I've been tilling the Lowcountry soil since I was 9 years old. As a native Charleston landscape designer who brings a unique native, low-maintenance landscape design philosophy to every landscape design & installation project, I've been harmonizing residential & commercial properties with the awe-inspiring natural beauty of the Lowcountry since 2015.

Hopefully, the projects I've showcased below will help you understand why my native, low-maintenance landscape design & installation philosophy has brought tremendous praise over the years from Charleston natives and newcomers to the Lowcountry alike.

Let's compare a photo that exemplifies what makes the South Carolina Lowcountry special with some examples of my native, low-maintenance landscape design and installation projects:

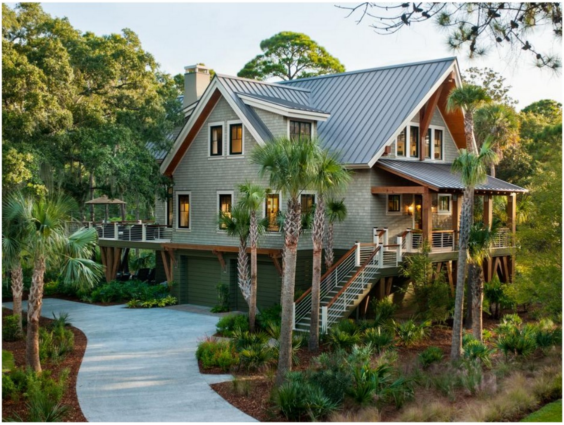
The above marsh transition zone on Kiawah Island (zip code 29455) is the native habitat of some of the Lowcountry's most iconic plants: grand trees such as live oaks and palmettos, cold-hardy shrub palms such as sabal minors and saw palms, and unique coastal grasses such as spartina and muhly grass. (There's a wild holly in the background, too.)

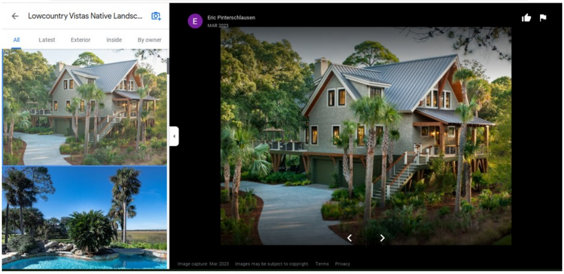
Note the similarities between that photo and the projects I've showcased below: **I design as if Mother Nature herself were a landscape designer in the South Carolina Lowcountry.** The idea is to:

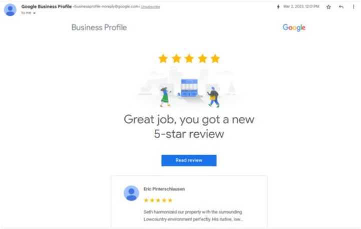
1) Harmonize residential & commercial properties with the awe-inspiring natural beauty of the Charleston area and the Lowcountry as a whole.

2) Keep maintenance to a minimum by using plants & materials that Mother Nature "made" especially for the Lowcountry.

Residential Landscape Design & Installation on Kiawah Island, zip code 29455



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★★★★★

Great job, you got a new 5-star review

Read review

Eric Pinterschlausen

★★★★★

Seth harmonized our property with the surrounding Lowcountry environment perfectly. His native, low...

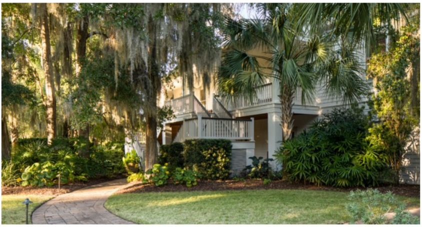
In addition to being breathtakingly beautiful, the homeowners of this property can save their breaths **because I used native plants that are best suited for the property...the yard hardly needs any maintenance at all, regardless of the season.**

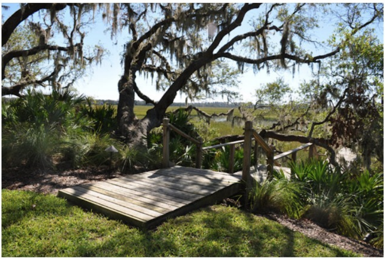
Like most of the properties I design, this one is comprised of nothing but plants that Mother Nature “made” especially for the Lowcountry.

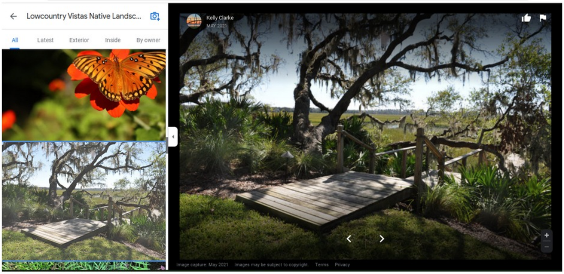
I use native, low-maintenance plants nearly exclusively in all of my projects.

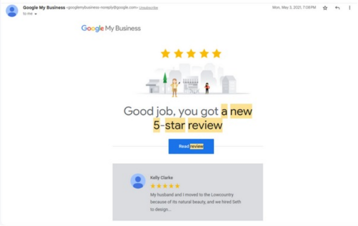
The house is modern, but the same landscape design would look great surrounding an old Lowcountry “country house” on the same property. (I’d use a darker driveway in that case.) As you’ll see in the last photo I showcase on this page (from a self-serve car wash of all places), my designs can harmonize basically any man-made structure with the awe-inspiring natural beauty of the Lowcountry, regardless of how “unnatural” the structure is to the native environment.

Residential Landscape Design & Installation in Mt. Pleasant, zip code 29466









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★★★★★

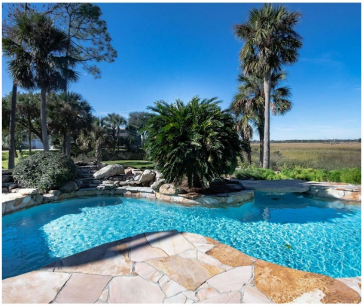
Good job, you got a new 5-star review

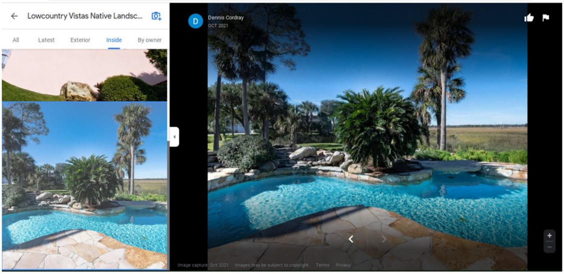
Kelly Clarke
★★★★★
My husband and I moved to the Lowcountry because of its natural beauty, and we hired Seth to design...

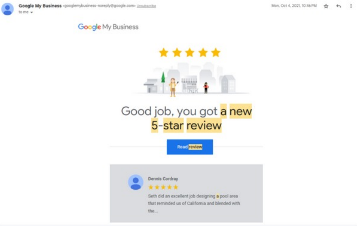
I’m a big fan of iconic Lowcountry author Pat Conroy. I’m such a fan that I consider old Pat a muse; he was well-known for articulating the breathtaking natural beauty of the South Carolina Lowcountry.

When I lived in Mt. Pleasant after undergrad school, I used to read Pat Conroy novels at Palmetto Islands County Park…there’s nothing quite as “Lowcountry” as reading Pat Conroy next to spartina salt marsh. The inspiration for the dock area of this property came directly from those sessions of “deep Lowcountry immersion” at the Charleston County Parks and Recreation Commission’s crown jewel in Mt. Pleasant.

Residential Landscape Design & Installation (pool area) in Mt. Pleasant, zip code 29466







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Good job, you got a new 5-star review

Dennis Cordray

★★★★★

Seth did an excellent job designing a pool area that reminded us of California and blended with the...

These customers were from California and had an affinity for the Caribbean…they wanted a pool area that reminded them of their home state, reminded them of the Bahamas, **and harmonized with the native Lowcountry natural environment.** It wasn’t a typical customer request or an easy task, but the couple was happy with the results.

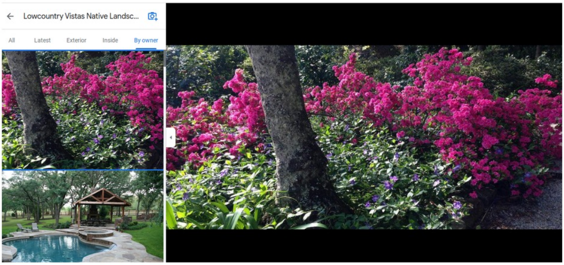
The spartina salt marsh backdrop is obviously quintessentially “Lowcountry”; I designed the pool area to represent the rocky California coast using colors that represented the various shades of white sand commonly found on the South Carolina coast. What’s more, I added palmetto trees (icons of the SC coast) and two shrubs that are commonly found on both the SC and CA coasts: a sago palm and a yaupon holly.

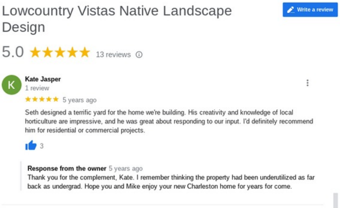
I made the pool as clear-blue as possible to represent the seawater of the Bahamas, and I tied everything together using some of the same indigenous coastal grasses that can be seen in the photo from the marsh transition zone at the top of this page.

Update: They hired Lowcountry Vistas Native Landscape Design to design and install new landscaping in front of the house. As

with the pool area, it's a harmony between a California, Bahamas, and Lowcountry look, and it harmonizes with the native environment:

Residential Landscape Design & Installation in Hollywood, zip code 29449





Lowcountry Vistas Native Landscape Design

5.0 ★★★★★ 13 reviews

Kate Jasper
1 review
★★★★★ 5 years ago

Seth designed a terrific yard for the home we're building. His creativity and knowledge of local horticulture are impressive, and he was great about responding to our input. I'd definitely recommend him for residential or commercial projects.

Response from the owner 5 years ago
Thank you for the complement, Kate. I remember thinking the property had been underutilized as far back as undergrad. Hope you and Mike enjoy your new Charleston home for years for come.

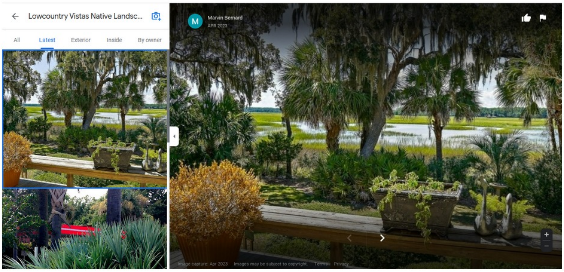
A lot of “iconic” Southern plants such as azaleas, camellias, and crepe myrtles are actually from Asia. (And I used a ton of them on this project.) Nevertheless, they’re been a staple of the Lowcountry for centuries; they might as well be native. I’ve used plenty of these species in the Historic District of the Charleston peninsula…I like to use them in open, rural areas of the Lowcountry, too.

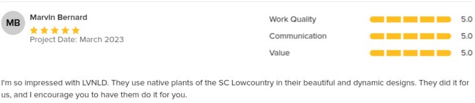
The pool area is simultaneously modern and rustic/rural…the rustic look of the cabana balances the modern look of the hardscaping.

Since the primary surface of the pool area was made of slate, I suggested that it be made out of the slate that gives the sidewalks of downtown Charleston their special character, further balancing the modern/rural look. However, the homeowners preferred a lighter color, so I obliged. I also suggested that we wrap the trees around the pool area with some flowering evergreens (azaleas, camellias, etc.), but they preferred open mulch around the bases of the trees. (They complemented me in their review for my responsiveness to their input.)

As for the installation, it’s important to note that I only work with specialists who have proven that they’re able to install the various elements of my designs to customers’ satisfactions as well as my own. I only work with trusted a group of plant specialists, hardscapers, pool builders, fence builders, etc.

Residential Landscape Design on Isle of Palms, zip code 29451





Marvin Bernard
★★★★★
Project Date: March 2023

Work Quality	▬▬▬▬▬	5.0
Communication	▬▬▬▬▬	5.0
Value	▬▬▬▬▬	5.0

I'm so impressed with LVNLD. They use native plants of the SC Lowcountry in their beautiful and dynamic designs. They did it for us, and I encourage you to have them do it for you.

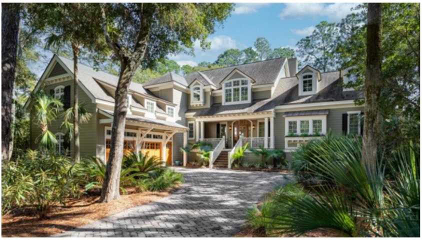
Liked (1) | March 20, 2023 Last modified: March 20, 2023

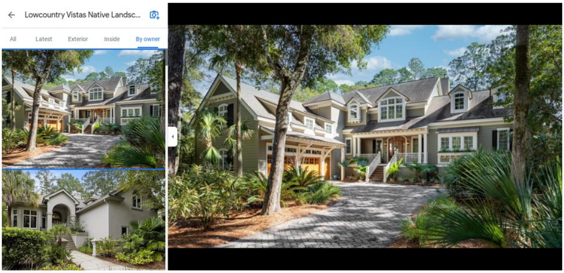
Comment from Lowcountry Vistas Native Landscape Design:
I appreciate the complements, Marvin. I hope your redesigned property brings you many years of joy.

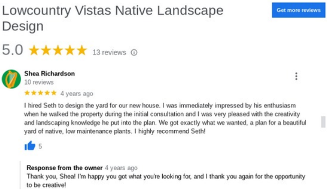
This customer posted a shot that they edited to look like a metal print…they said the scene “looked like art”. (I’ll take the complement.) When people think of Isle of Palms (or any of the barrier islands in the Charleston area), they usually think of sandy beaches. But sandy beaches are just part of what makes the Lowcountry great; the spartina salt marshes are the linchpin of the unique Lowcountry maritime environment. So, I “enhanced” this customer’s backyard by enhancing the native spartina salt marsh environment.

This customer also wanted a clear delineation between the “allow-to-grow-wild” natural marsh area and the “maintained” area around the house, which they also wanted harmonized with the surrounding natural environment. So, I gave the back deck area a rustic, yet orderly, Lowcountry look.

Residential Landscape Design in northern Mt. Pleasant, zip code 29429







Lowcountry Vistas Native Landscape Design

5.0 ★★★★★ 13 reviews

Shea Richardson
10 reviews
★★★★★ 4 years ago
I hired Seth to design the yard for our new house. I was immediately impressed by his enthusiasm when he walked the property during the initial consultation and I was very pleased with the creativity and landscaping knowledge he put into the plan. We got exactly what we wanted, a plan for a beautiful yard of native, low maintenance plants. I highly recommend Seth!
5

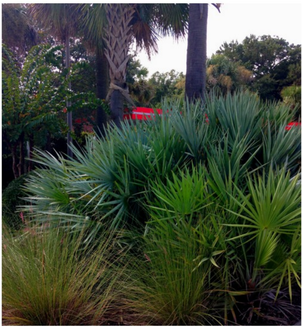
Response from the owner 4 years ago
Thank you, Shea! I'm happy you got what you're looking for, and I thank you again for the opportunity to be creative!

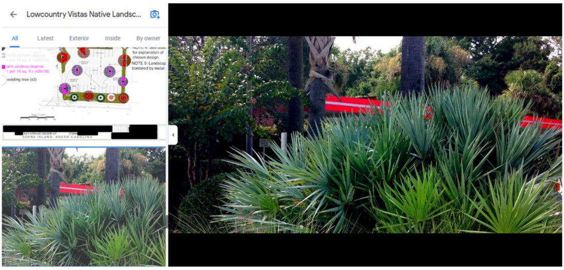
Now that Mt. Pleasant and the Charleston suburbs have grown north beyond 29466 into 29429 (much of which is protected wetland that’s connected to Bulls Bay), it’s more important than ever that the landscape design of residential properties built East of the Cooper harmonize with the surrounding natural environment.

My original plan for this property called for 100% native plants; the area surrounding the tree on the right side was to be filled with sabal minors and saw palms, two native shrub palms that I make very frequent use of. However, the homeowner preferred sago palms…as I work to please the customer, I was happy to oblige.

Otherwise, this design fits the character of the area and minimizes the aesthetic and environmental impact on the surrounding wetlands. I did my best to keep light pollution to a minimum as well…although I think the branches of the trees in the foreground would look fantastic illuminated, I limited illumination of those trees to the bases, and I used a soft light with a subtle blue tint that looks like the natural twilight sky.

Commercial Landscape Design on James Island, zip code 29412




Lowcountry Vistas Native Landsc...
All
Latest
Exterior
Inside
By owner
pink azaleas (approx. 1 per 16 sq. ft.) (x30-35)
existing tree (x3)
for explanation of chosen design.
NOTE 5: Landscap
bordered by metal
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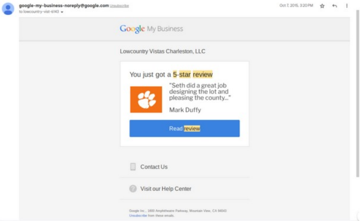
SAVANNAH HIGHWAY
JOHNS ISLAND, SOUTH CAROLINA



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Lowcountry Vistas Charleston, LLC

You just got a 5-star review

"Seth did a great job designing the lot and pleasing the county..."

Mark Duffy

Read review

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Coming full-circle and tying it all together…this self-service car wash on James Island was one of my first landscape design projects and my very first commercial landscape design project. If you spent much time on James Island or Folly Beach between 2015-2017, you probably passed it countless times. A couple of years before the pandemic, a lot of the landscaping was removed to make room for the expansion of the intersection of Folly and Camp…I'm very fortunate that a certain search engine didn't delete this shot, lest my first commercial design be lost forever.

The job was simple in nature, yet conceptually difficult: I had to make one of the island's ugliest commercial properties look more like the pristine Lowcountry maritime forest depicted in the first photo…and I had to keep maintenance ultra-low. This is what I came up with…note that I was able to hide a lot of the gas station in the background, too. (As with the pool area in Mt. Pleasant, the yaupon holly was my idea, but manicuring it wasn't.)

I'm passionate about harmonizing YOUR residential or commercial property with the awe-inspiring beauty of the South Carolina Lowcountry.

I strive every day to harmonize customers' properties with the exceptional natural beauty of the Lowcountry that Pat Conroy described so eloquently. Click the button below to schedule a free consultation…I look forward to harmonizing your property with the awe-inspiring natural beauty of the Lowcountry, too!

-Seth Mason, Charleston SC

Click here for a free consultation.

For a limited time, I'll provide an initial assessment free of charge.

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