

Kingston Plantation Resort, Myrtle Beach, S.C.

by *Rin-rin Yu*

Even with the beach nearby, the outdoor waterpark at the Kingston Plantation Resort in Myrtle Beach, S.C., runs at maximum capacity.

“People have to wait for guests to leave [to get in], but it doesn’t happen that often because kids come in and out quickly,” says Sabena Robinson, director of sales and marketing at the resort. “Guests who come year after year do so because of the waterpark feature.”

The waterpark gives parents a safer, enclosed and controlled alternative to the nearby ocean. Only hotel guests with key access are allowed in the waterpark. On-duty lifeguards help ensure the park’s safer environment. A separate activity staff entertains guests so the guards can focus on their jobs. The activity staff’s main goal is to make sure the parents are happy, which helps guarantee repeat customers.

Staff-run activities range from T-shirt tie-dyeing to making seashell necklaces and building sand castles. All of these come with a small activity fee. There’s also live entertainment six days a week with bands, karaoke, line dancing or sing-along. Of course, nothing beats the sound of screaming kids when the tipping bucket pours over them, or when they go careening down a water slide.

The outdoor waterpark is open sporadically from March to the end of September, and is fully functional from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Come October, it closes down and the resort switches to convention mode. Many meetings encourage families to visit and the resort hosts a pizza party or activity night to entertain the kids while the parents are at a formal banquet.



Year opened: 2000
No. of waterparks: 1
Square footage: 50,000
Amenities: 72-par golf course, tennis, sports and health club, spa, racquetball, indoor and outdoor pools