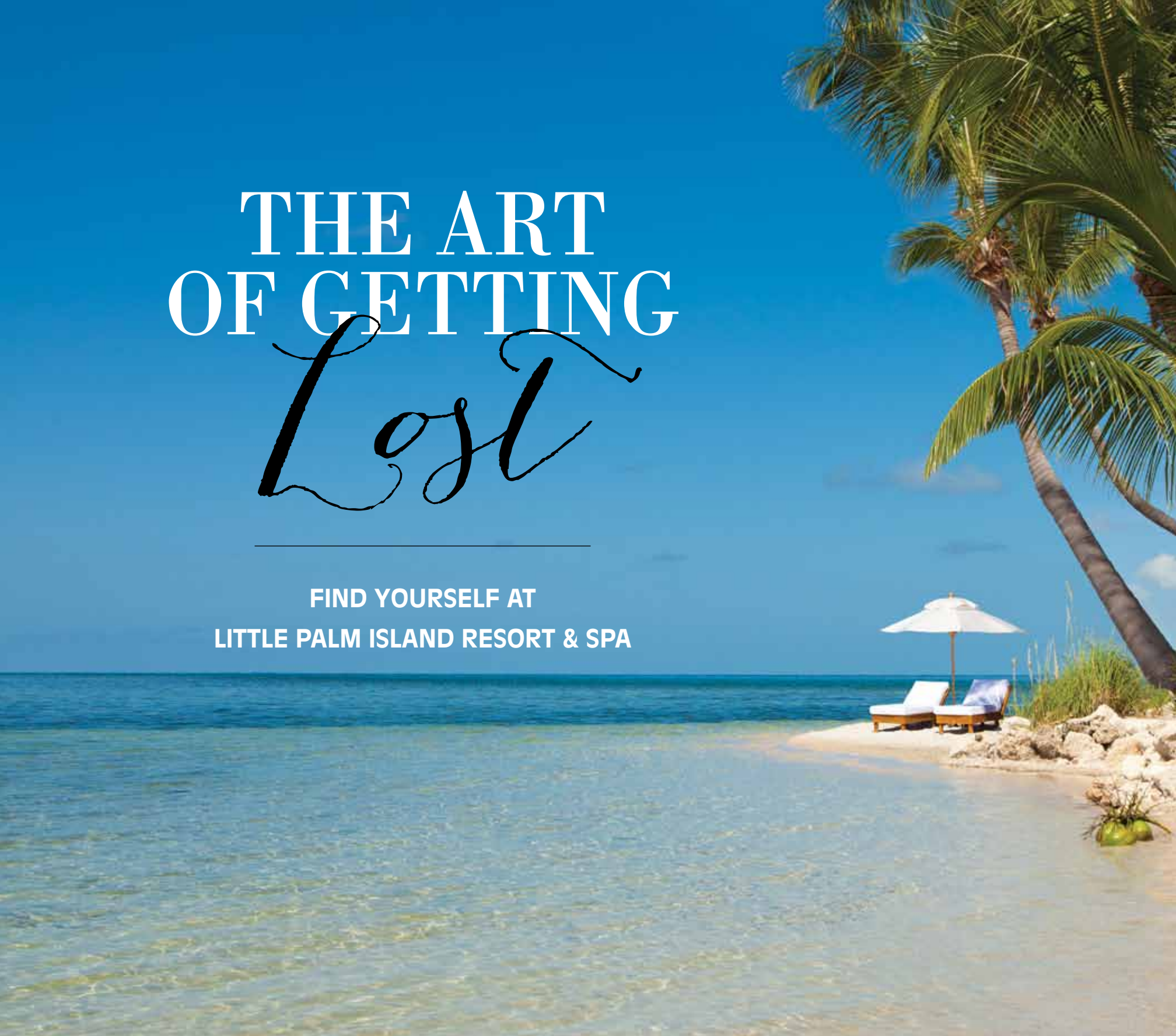


THE ART OF GETTING *Lost*

FIND YOURSELF AT
LITTLE PALM ISLAND RESORT & SPA



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Contents

8 **WELCOME**
14 **HISTORY**
20 **DINE**
28 **DISCOVER**
36 **RELAX**
40 **WEDDINGS**
45 **RESORT MAP**





Welcome



WHERE *Lost* MEANS *Found*

There is something inexorable between the lapping of waves breaking the shore and the indolent rustle of palm fronds and their terrestrial shadow play. They correlate to the sound of a piano following the fading note of a horn player's last gasp in the music of a still mind. Such sketches conjure that of imagination and abandonment, a melting of mental activity into a state of peace, and the idea that the senses are free to do nothing more than soak up pleasure's afterglow.

On Little Palm Island, the art of getting lost is just that: an art. Stepping aboard *The Truman*, an experience set to the low rumble of this classic wooden motorboat, is to embark on a journey that is a removal of oneself from the everyday. Feeling the thrust of its engine, while looking back at the frothing wake and the mainland trailing away, is to know that the music about to be played upon arrival is the kind where the staff and its services are the accom-

paniment to any song of your choosing.

Positioned at latitude 24°37.11, longitude 81°24.42, Little Palm Island is no more than a low-lying coral reef that, over time, has risen from the ocean as sand has accumulated and life has grasped a chance to spring into a mix of verdant and wild. In fact, calling this five-acre dot an island is to make it seem a large enough space to escape on. As an islet, which it technically is, the point of escape is to simply reach its shores. Once this is assured, the only thing left to do is indulge.

Fifteen thatched bungalows are scattered among the bouquet of tropical greenery and the island's contours. With furnishings made of grasses, teak, marble, and yards of flowing white netting, your accommodations fit in with the environment as if there are no walls. But the sense of feeling like a castaway is all but fleeting – a call to room service for something cool to sip will allay any fears that you are



Robinson Crusoe. Outdoor soaking tubs, verandas, deluxe fixtures, and sumptuous beddings guarantee a stay where the lap of luxury is taken a notch higher.

The beauty of Little Palm Island is that its physical integrity remains untouched. Despite the resort's awards and accolades from *Condé Nast Traveler* as one of the "Greatest Hotels in the World" and *Travel + Leisure's* "500 World's Best Hotels," the harmony between resort and natural world is vital to the guest experience. The tiny key deer that swim over, the plethora of fish that weave among the docks, the tropical birds and the occasional dolphin that break the horizon – they all exemplify that, here, luxury doesn't dominate its environment; it enhances it.

If any word could best describe the ambience, flavor, and visual surroundings of the island, "fusion" might be perfectly suited. At 90 miles from Cuba, the island's culinary influences have been woven into elegant cuisine that is haute international and mucho delicioso. So too is true of its surroundings, where the waters are the blend of the cool Atlantic and the nutrient-rich currents of the Gulf Stream. This aquatic buffet entices marine life of all sorts to come, especially the fish that are caught each day and enjoyed on land. But moreover, it is the fusion between getting away and staying away that is most prominent. The absence of connectivity, television, the static of all that was left behind when departing is kept at bay. What fills the void of these external intrusions is tranquil emptiness.

In his book, Defoe's Robinson Crusoe reflected deeply on what his shipwrecked existence afforded him: "I learned to look more upon the bright side of my condition, and less upon the dark side, and to consider what I enjoyed, rather than what I wanted: and this gave me sometimes such secret comforts, that I cannot express them..." On Little Palm Island, Crusoe's "secret comforts" have been perfectly realized. ■





History

History



TIME AND TIDES

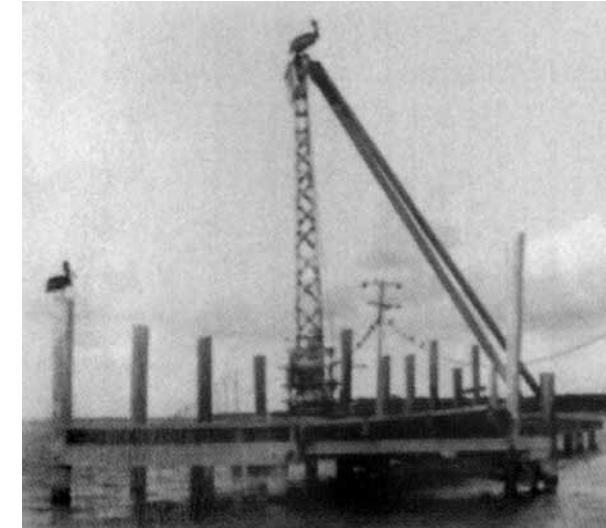
When F. H. Gerdes surveyed the Keys in 1849, he wrote in his *Reconnaissance of the Florida Reef and all the Keys*, “The small key due north of Looe Key is called Newfound Harbor Key.” As short lived as Gerdes’s classification was, Little Palm Island had a few iterations to go through before its luxurious “becoming.”

In 1923, Charles Newton “Newt” Munson, the man of the eponymous steamship line, purchased four islands in

the Keys. He made Newfound Harbor Key his winter home and renamed it Little Munson Island. Included in Newt’s idiosyncratic upgrades came 250 Jamaican Tall coconut palms and a five-room bungalow that have played a large part in the island’s aesthetic we see today.

Much like the forces of nature that sweep in and out of the Keys, Munson’s island then traded hands after his death, first to his secretary, then to a brass magnate from





Chicago, before it was sold to Florida State Senator John Spottswood in the early 1960s. With Spottswood's acquisition, the island, now named "Sheriff's Island" on account of Spottswood's former role as sheriff of Monroe County, Florida, moved into its Golden Age. Spottswood liked to entertain, and so the island played host to a spectrum of dignitaries, such as President Harry Truman, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, Governor George Wallace, and other front-page notables.

In 1962, Spottswood, by then an entrepreneur who dabbled in everything from hotels to radio and cable TV, arranged for the filming of the Warner Brothers movie *PT-109* on island. The movie was of Lieutenant Junior Grade John Fitzgerald Kennedy stationed in the Solomon Islands in 1943, where the future president, played by Cliff Robertson, reported for duty to command a patrol torpedo boat. Spottswood even got in on the action, playing the skipper of the vessel, and President Kennedy paid a visit during production to lend some authenticity to the story line.

In 1974, Spottswood sold off his pleasure island. Again, the smallest of the southern Keys switched hands, finding, during a decade-plus of merry-go-round ownership, proprietors as varied as a campground owner, a group of 32 veterinarian doctors, a well-to-do couple who gave it up when snared in a drug sting, and finally a corporation that had the prescient vision of turning the five-acre gem into an ecologically minded tropical resort.

Little Palm Island, the resort, opened in 1988. As a correspondent for the *South Florida Sun Sentinel* relayed at the time, "An overdose of palm trees and a lack of civilization are what have drawn some well-heeled Floridians and politicians to vacation on the island during the past few decades." Less than a decade later, Patrick Colee of Noble House Hotels and Resorts purchased the island, overseeing a multi-million-dollar renovation in 1995 that set the stage for a resort, which, by anyone's standards, is in a class of its own. The rest, as they say, is pure indulgent history. ■



Dine



THE COORDINATES OF TASTE

The cuisine on Little Palm Island is one that adheres to its surroundings. Its powerful flavors and eye-catching appearance are rooted in the ocean, colored by the sun, and influenced by the proximity of Cuba's zesty Caribbean taste profiles. Moreover, the cuisine is tethered to the one simple maxim that less is always more.

With its 2010 *Zagat Survey* distinction as the third "Best Hotel Dining Experience" in the U.S. and best in Florida,

The Dining Room broke through the pack and has ever since been a leader. Guided by Cuban-born Luis Pous, the restaurant's former executive chef who now oversees the kitchens at all of Noble House's dining establishments, the food, the staff, and The Dining Room itself have come together in a union of haute service and first-rate execution.

To sit down and have a five-star experience with minimal fuss is dining on Little Palm to a tee. Absent is a grove of



silverware and the many dos and don'ts that have no place in a lazy-day environment and a suit-yourself outlook. Here, dining is fun, and your preferences are treated as a matter of course.

In the morning, guests filter in after a deep slumber set to the music of rustling palms. They need not the fresh-brewed coffee to perk up – Caribbean-influenced twists on breakfast, such as Florida lobster hash with a poached egg on top of brioche French toast served with fresh guava marmalade and almond mascarpone, will do that. Midday, the plates are simple and filled with color-fish tacos here, a watermelon and jalapeño martini there.

Yet, it's with the sun's final salute that this former fishing cabin set on the beach reaches its full height and acclaim. Dressed in white linen, its cutlery gleaming, its crystal stemware throwing starbursts onto the walls, the epicenter of island life for the next five hours looks red carpet ready. As for the food, the descriptions alone are enough to overload the palate: foie gras Cuban sandwich with banana tentación; conch ceviche; citrus-tequila-cured tuna; mango-guava cheesecake. They read like the last-meal request of a gourmet and a gourmand sitting down together.

Fish, caught daily and served daily, is the jewel in the restaurant's culinary crown. Since Pous took over The Dining Room in 2006, the directive regarding the preparation of any fruit of the sea has been simple to the point of premeditated neglect. "My direction to my culinary team is to keep it as plain as possible," explains Pous. "If they are sautéing the fish...a little butter and tarragon...nothing on the top. On the side, sure, but leave the fish alone."

From breakfast, lunch, and dinner to picnics, brunches, and those in-between moments of sheer indulgence, dining on Little Palm is a procession of highlights, dotting the day when food sets the stage for conversation and moments of reflection. Punctuated always by what sits on the plate and rests in the glass. ■





WITNESS TO IT ALL

Set back in the kitchen, where candles flit and flicker in an enormous cognac glass half-filled with sand, where bar stools hunker around the table, is the setting for a rare dining experience. Welcome to the Chef's Table. It's dining that's live and direct, and where your host is none other than Little Palm's executive chef.

As food tickets arrive, waiters flow in and out like the tides, and guests of the Chef's Table are treated to five or seven courses prepared expressly for their preferred tastes.

The evening can be an intimate one meant for two or a bubbly soiree for ten. What is assured amid the culinary orchestra is an informal education in food coupled with lively conversation with the master of the kitchen. Every table in and outside The Dining Room offers a romantic experience; however, if you want to couple that with something even more customized, even more engaging, then the Chef's Table is a must. ■

INFORMALLY ACCLAIMED

The island's Sunday brunch has become so popular it has spilled over to be offered on "in-season" Saturdays, too. The acclaimed morning meal is a mix of self-service at the many food stations found inside The Dining Room, coupled with some self-indulgence directed at the mimosa or Bloody Mary bars. Where you sit to enjoy the meal is an

episode in informality – a welcome break from the trappings of many resort-style brunches: Choose the Atlantic Deck under a parasol on the beach or on The Dining Room's veranda. With the tang of ceviche or sweet undertones of the Little Palm's signature French toast, brunch is all about what you want, where you want it. ■





Discover



ACTIVE WHILE CAPTIVE

When staying at Little Palm Island, it seems almost unnecessary to exert oneself beyond swinging from a hammock. After all, isn't the purpose of this getaway to permit an absolution of any activity that doesn't require sipping, eating, swimming, or lounging? Alas, there are times when the soul stirs for a bit more. And in those moments, the resort is happy to oblige.

Taking to the sky or cutting through the water by means

of wind and sail or plunging beneath the waves to explore another world are the tenets of Little Palm's activity repertoire.

Perhaps the top option is traveling to Looe Key National Marine Sanctuary. Found four miles due south (10 minutes by boat), this 200-yard-wide by 800-yard-long U-shaped groove comprised of both patch and outside reefs is where the Gulf Stream and Atlantic Ocean mingle, where marine





life flocks to and feeds within. The channel is deep enough for snorkeling and is so enclosed that the feeling of swimming inside an aquarium is all but a reality.

To feel the push of wind against sail conjures a romanticism befitting of this island retreat, as well. Charter *Lilyanna*, the 38-foot catamaran, to go on a full-day adventure mixed with moments of snorkeling or diving, picnicking, and laying out on deck. Don't worry about sailing skills; the father-and-son crew pulls on halyards and banks off another warm gust in search of a sunset moment just for you.

With so much fish around, it's no wonder that the lure of throwing a hook into the water is to court the worlds of chance and reward. In these waters known as some of the best bonefishing grounds in the world, the pursuit's lazy-day persona is swapped for one requiring a calculating eye and a deft cast to catch these elusive creatures, under the direction of your guide. This is light rod and tackle fishing, perched off a small boat meant for "skinny" water. No huffing

and puffing, pulling or fighting. Just grace and lots of play.

On the other end of the fishing spectrum, you can also head out for some trophy specimens, such as tarpon and permit fish. Upon request, lucky guests get to have their catch prepared in the kitchen and served that night.

To truly take in the watercolorist swirls of blues and greens that make up the Keys, a seaplane charter is your best medium. For those wishing to venture a little further, a day trip to Key West for a little sightseeing is easily done flying over the many reefs that rest in the deeper waters of the Florida Straits.

But if all this sounds a bit much, strolling the sand path that loops around the island – four times round makes a mile – en route to a gourmet picnic, or plopping down in the Zen garden with a pair of binoculars and a bird chart provided in the rooms may constitute the most strenuous thing done all day. ■



WHEN STARS AND TIDES ALIGN

Three words describe select evenings throughout the year when the muse of music and dance put on a very special show on Little Palm Island: iconic, eclectic, and intimate. The Sandbar Sessions encapsulate those moments that can live on in the memories of anyone fortunate enough to attend. When Aaron Neville, Rickie Lee Jones, Steven Marley, or the Indigo Girls steps onto the sandy stage by the water's edge on the island, a warm breeze ushering them in with the last drops of the day slipping behind the horizon, the audience understands that this isn't an everyday night of entertainment.

As with all things on Little Palm, these special events are a casual affair. With less than 100 gathered, chairs, chaise lounges, and any other random seating are rounded up and placed on the beach. Tiki lights show the way, and the crowd settles down for an unforgettable set of Marley's version of his father's "No Woman. No Cry," or the band America's "A Horse with No Name."

Beyond the live entertainment that happens throughout the week within The Dining Room, these special sessions are the jewel in the crown and spark regular inquiries stream-

ing into the resort about the year's lineup. But what the Sandbar Sessions say most about life on Little Palm is that coming here is to tap into the very best and make a visit to this unparalleled oasis an unforgettable one. ■

Find past acts and videos of some of the performances at Littlepalmisland.com/florida-keys-sandbar.aspx.



EXCLUSIVELY YOURS

While Little Palm Island is exclusive, it can also be exclusively yours – for a once-in-a-lifetime special event, renting out all 30 suites

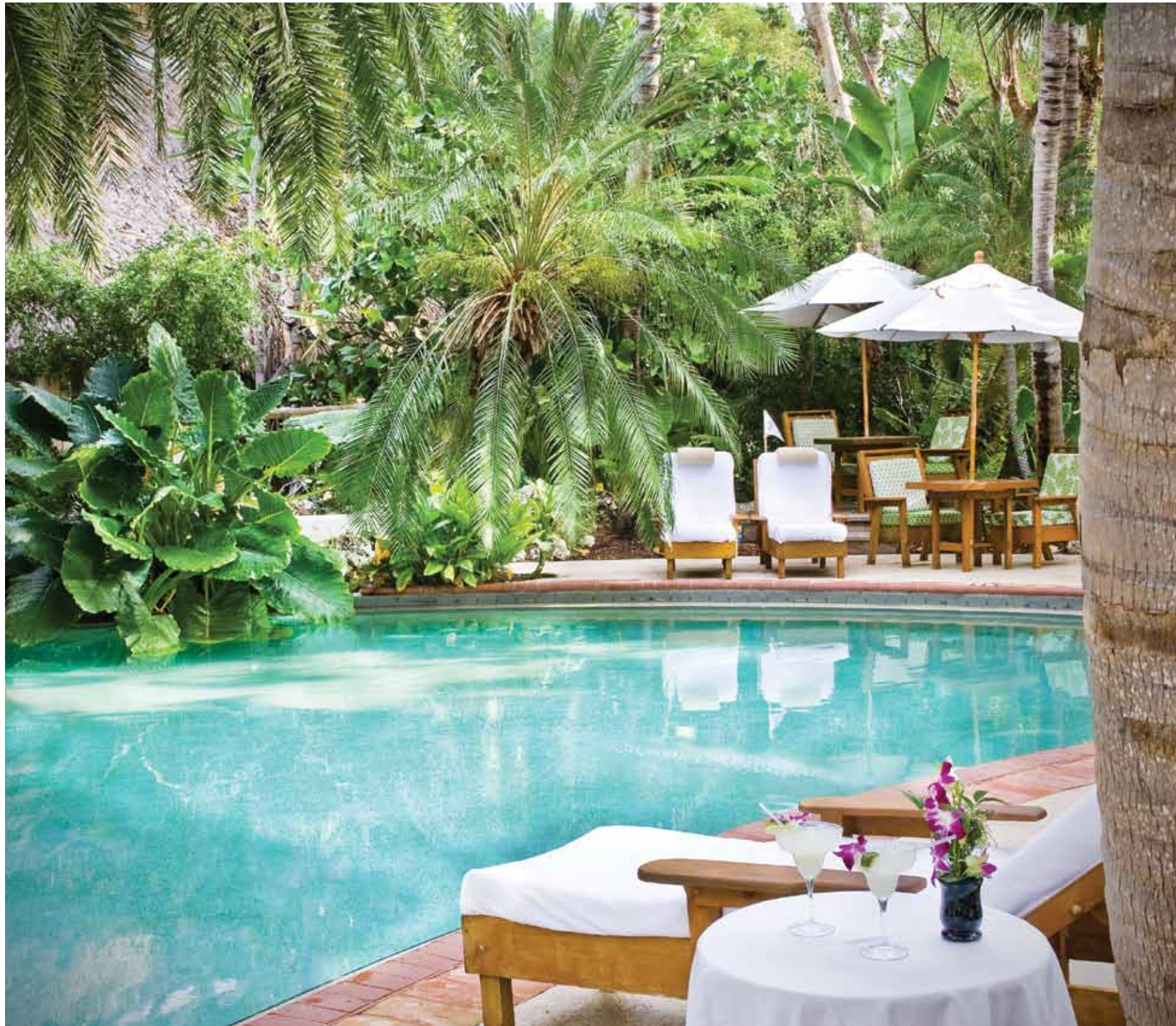
guarantees a celebration no one will ever forget. In consultation with the resort, guests who wish for such an experience can plan beach banquets, poolside

buffets, entertainment, and any other group activities that the resort has to offer, tailoring the amenities to their specific desires. After all, coming to this

island is to experience a level of service and hospitality unlike anywhere you've ever been. Exclusively Yours is just that; the occasion, we'll leave up to you.

A close-up photograph of a green leaf, showing a network of veins. The main vein runs diagonally from the bottom left towards the top right. Smaller veins branch off from it. The leaf has a slightly glossy texture and some light-colored spots or damage on the left side.

Relax



SOOTHING AS THE SEA

Dotted about the island are three oasis locations for Little Palm's own SpaTerre, each with an experience unlike the other. Under a jewel-blue sky where cotton-wool clouds dot the horizon, the Madrugada Water Massage places treatment beds directly in the water so guests can be one with the elements during this transformative treatment. In the Rainforest Room, and with the walls slid wide open to take in the tropical luxuriance, the resort's signature Javanese Royal Treatment presents a two-hour corporeal indulgence that mixes an exfoliating body scrub with a long soak in a tub, returning to the table for a concluding

massage. At the main spa, massages, facials, and soaking baths go skin deep while stimulating the body surface into complete relaxation.

Innervating techniques such as these employ indigenous South Floridian ingredients of mango, herbs, sugar, coconut, as well as the Javanese-style elements of rice, turmeric, and jasmine. The purpose of these rituals is to take the body on a transformative journey where the senses are indulged and care and stress are gone for good. In the case of SpaTerre, there is just you, your technician...and all the time in the world. ■





Weddings

Weddings



AN ISLAND OF “I DOS”

Weddings on Little Palm Island fall into the same category of pleasure seeking as every other activity on this nugget of ocean-bound paradise: They are an escape. Most marrying couples come on their own, but should the event be a small and intimate affair for close friends and family or a grand gathering that occupies the entire island, weddings here are always an elopement of sorts – a quick departure from the everyday to celebrate one of life’s greatest moments.

The island offers the kind of privacy that draws couples who wish to stop time and have the moment be suspended in an almost dreamlike context. Many who find themselves saying their vows at the edge of the beach at sunset, or at the sunset dock at sunrise, or the veranda outside their cottage have chosen their location because of a previous stay. Their choice of one of these settings evokes an indelible moment when the proposal was made and accepted, and when the promise of returning to wed was met with an irrefutable “yes.”

Couples blend seamlessly in with the many other couples here for their own romantic escape. However, for those wanting more engagement and aren’t afraid of letting their hair down, a short ceremony at the poolside bar brings in fellow guests as a part of a short, very casual, bride-and-groom-both-in-beachwear, fun-loving ceremony. Don’t forget: There is only one wedding ceremony per day. Little Palm Island is careful to maintain the atmosphere of relaxation by always adhering to the fact that keeping something special is to have it be uncommon.

For grander celebrations, Little Palm Island can accommodate parties of up to 40. With a talented staff working in tandem with the resort’s wedding planner on inclusions, such as fireworks, décor changes, and even personalized sand castles – the ice sculptures of the tropics – the feeling of being surrounded by an extended family is the subject of many former couples’ post-wedding comments and whole-hearted tributes. ■





Resort Map



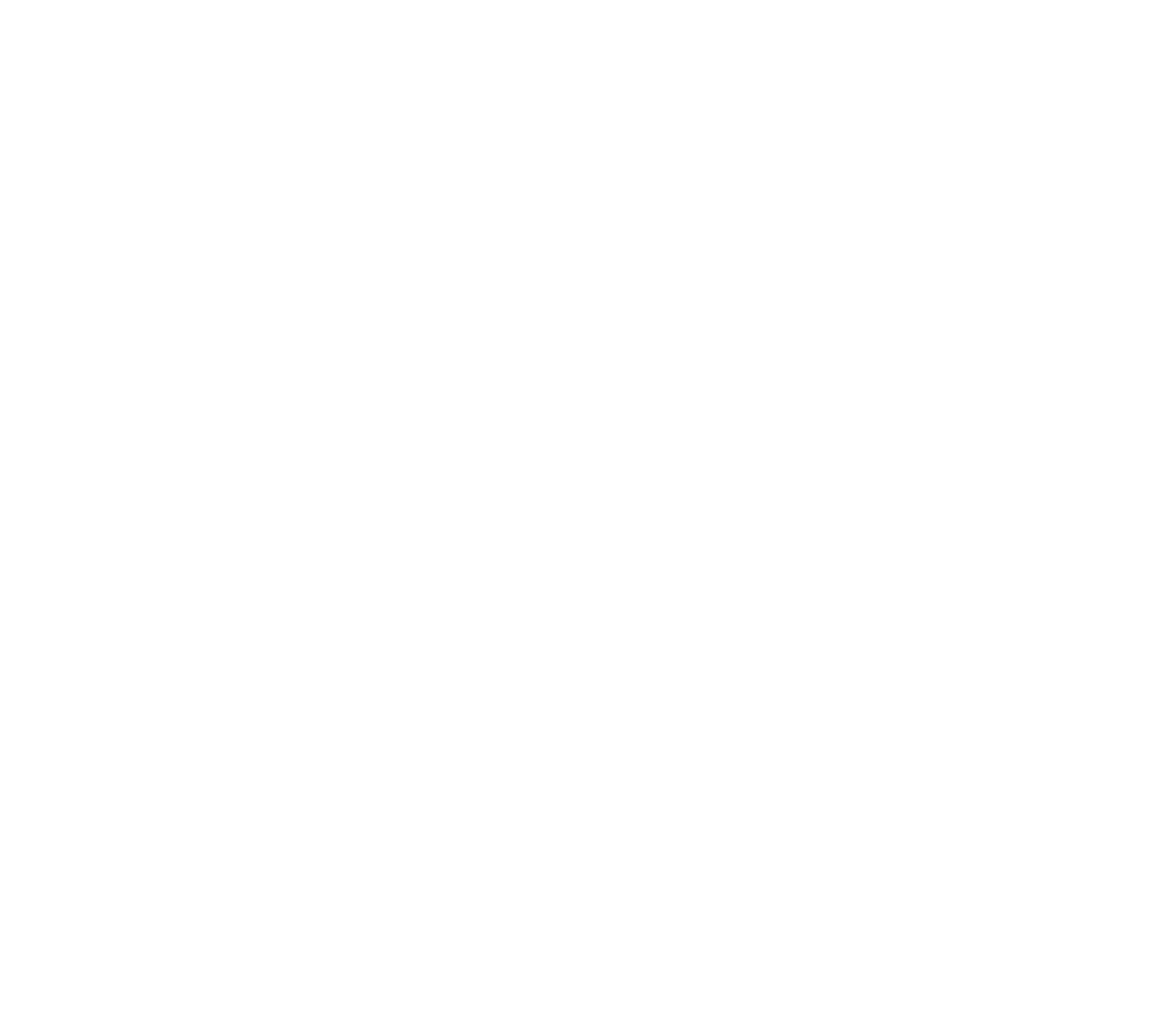
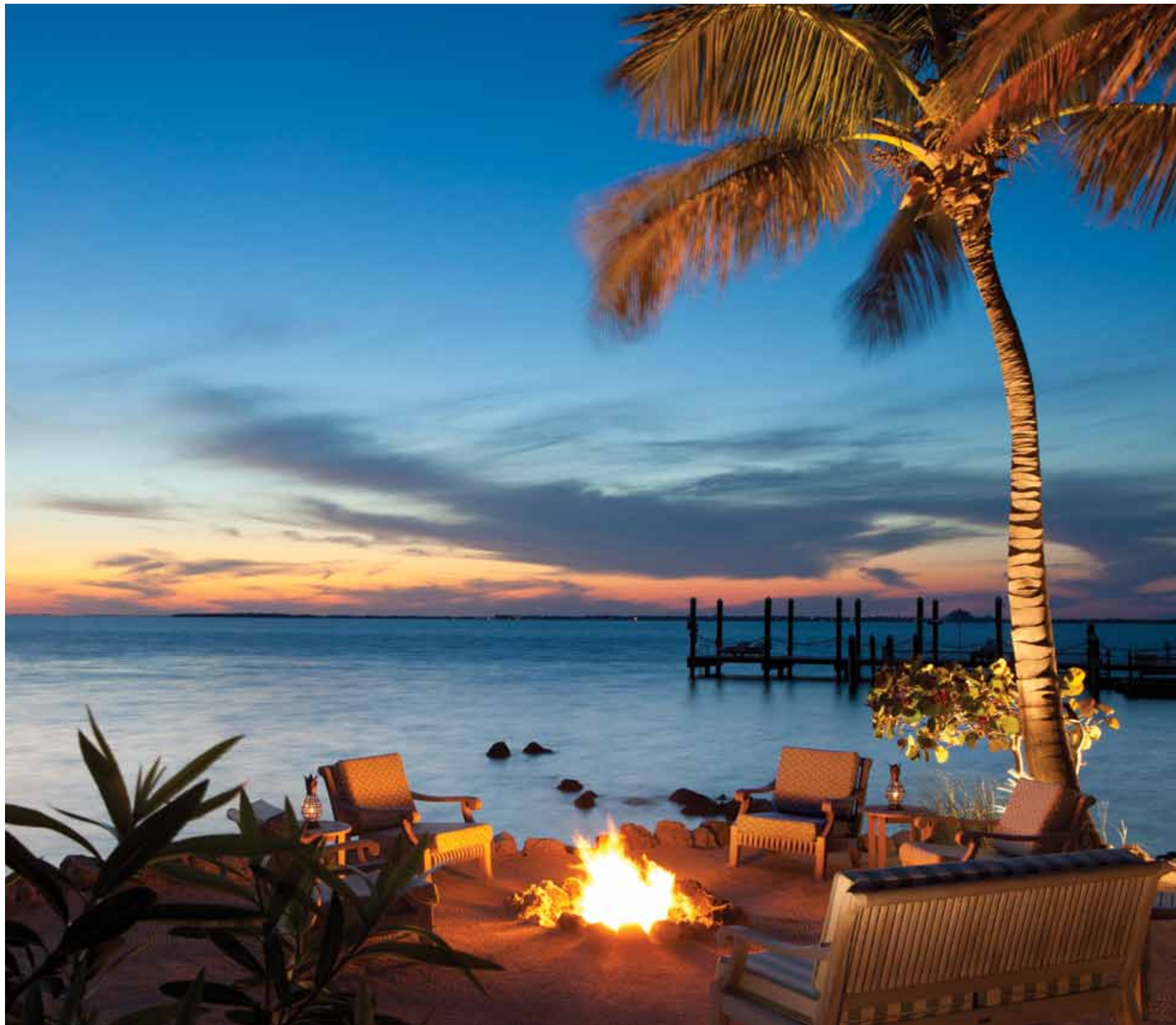
SUITES

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Eagle Nest, "Lower Level" | 10 Gull | 21 Green Heron |
| 2 Cukoo, "Upper Level" | 11 Heron | 22 Pelican |
| 3 Dove | 12 Reddish Egret | 23 Sandpiper |
| 4 Tricolor Heron | 13 Ibis | 24 Skimmer |
| 5 Night Heron | 14 Kingfisher | 25 Spoonbill |
| 6 Egret Nest | 15 Woodpecker | 26 Stork |
| 7 Warbler | 16 Cormorant | 27 Tern |
| 8 Flamingo | 17 Mockingbird | 28 Great White Heron |
| 9 Frigate | 18 Night Hawk | 29 Snowy Egret |
| | 19 Osprey | 30 Willet |
| | 20 Owl | |

FACILITIES

- | | |
|--|--|
| A Dining Room | J Palapa Point – Relaxation & Outdoor Massage Area |
| B Poolside Bar – Palapa Bar | K Monkey Hut Lounge |
| C Salon | L Spa & Fitness Center |
| D Great Room – Library | M Outdoor Spa Pavilion |
| E Quarter Deck – Dockmaster & General Manager's Office | N Dive Shop |
| F Zen Garden | O Concierge Hut |
| G Sunset Dock – Slips 9 & 10 | P Island Store |
| H Atlantic Dock | |
| I Harbor View Dock – Slips 1–8, Sunset Sails | |





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Resort & Spa

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