

Courtesy Hilton

FLORIDA

8 Best Florida Keys Hotels & Resorts

8 PHOTOS

by NANCY DEPALMA

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Just like the cast of characters you'll encounter in down here, no two Keys are exactly alike—and neither are their hotels.

▼

Drive south from Miami along this southernmost stretch of the continental U.S. and you'll discover an intriguing collection of islands strung together like a shell necklace, each with its own vibe. First up is the kitschy-cute Key Largo, where t-shirt shops may outnumber the tropical fish in **John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park**. Dive into the gin-clear waters here, then rest your salty head at a boutique-style hotel from some of the big name players in the space. If you continue down Overseas

Highway you'll get to Islamorada, which takes its name from the purple-hued sunsets visible from the beachside hammocks and outdoor tiki bars. Further south still, Duck Key beckons families with a plush summer camp vibe. So whether fish trophies and shiplap or cosmopolitan coastal float your boat, there's a hotel, and a Key, to match your every mood.

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The Moorings Village →

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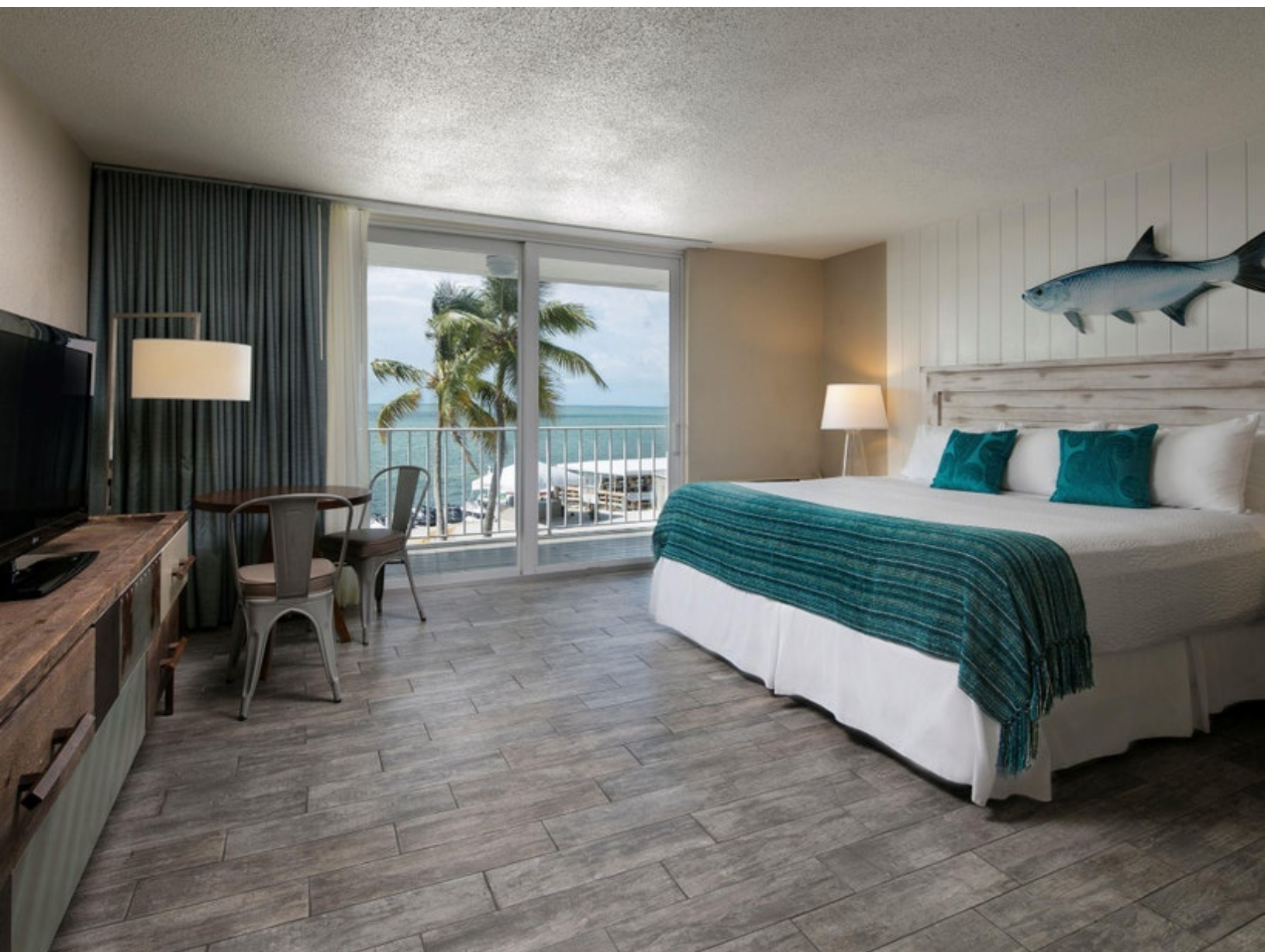
Each of The Moorings Village's 19 villas/cottages are different, in terms of design, size, and views. Some have ocean views; others look out onto the other villas. Clearly, the former is the better option. A recent stay at the Maroni Villa offered 1,000 square feet of space, ocean views from

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Postcard Inn Beach Resort & Marina →

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Postcard Inn Beach Resort & Marina is right on Overseas Highway in Islamorada, so it doesn't offer a tucked-away feeling from the front. Once inside, though, you're struck by its relaxing ambience. The rooms and suites feel like classic beach cottages, complete with clapboard headboards, shiplap

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Courtesy Key Largo Bay Marriott Beach Resort

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Key Largo Bay Marriott Beach Resort →

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Key Largo Bay Marriott Beach Resort isn't a boutique property; it's a typical Marriott with plenty of space and ample amenities. That, plus its beachy location also a popular destination for weddings and meetings, with 50,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor event venues. The rooms are fresh and bright, with green-and-blue striped carpeting and British Colonial-style furnishings. There's also a spa with a comprehensive treatment menu, a basin, and a dive shop. Snorklers will be happy to know that the resort is also only 1.5 miles from John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park.

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HOTEL

Baker's Cay Resort Key Largo, Curio Collection by Hilton →

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Whitewashed and modern, with tall ceilings and walls of windows, Baker's Cay Resort Key Largo is the epitome of contemporary island style. The property has two beaches: Hammock Beach, which tends to be quiet, and a more active beach where you can try your hand at watersports, from

kayaking to paddleboarding (all included in the resort fee). There's also a pool with waterfalls, several great dining options, and an attentive staff—there's even a pet concierge.

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Courtesy Amara Cay

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Amara Cay Resort →

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The chic Amara Cay Resort oozes laidback luxury. Its lobby—with windows overlooking the beach and pool—immediately captures your attention. The rooms have an updated tropical look and feel, with rope and rattan furnishings, plants, earth tones, and pops of turquoise or green. Snorkeling

and fishing trips (Islamorada is the sportfishing capital of the world) happen off property, but kayaks, paddle boards, and a fitness center round out the amenities onsite.

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Courtesy Hawks Cay

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Hawks Cay Resort →

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Just when you thought you'd crossed all of the bridges connecting the Keys, you'll turn off the highway and onto another one, which serves as a grand entrance to Hawks Cay. Surrounded by water, this polished Floridian resort looks and feels like a true island getaway. Rooms are fresh and sophisticated, with hardwood floors, comfortable beds, and beach cottage-style furnishings and accents. Above all though, this a place for families, with excellent kids' programming and an

opportunity for people of all ages to interact with dolphins in their natural habitat. Although there is an adults-only pool and restaurant, there are better places in the Keys if you're looking for romance.

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Cheeca Lodge & Spa →

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Rebuilt and reimagined after the most recent hurricane season, Islamorada's Cheeca has been a beloved resort since 1946. With the longest pier in the Keys, a stretch of sandy beach, two pools, a spa, and almost countless activities, there is no shortage of ways to spend a sunny day here. That's

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Scott Baker/Courtesy Playa Largo Resort & Spa, Autograph Collection

HOTEL

Playa Largo Resort & Spa, Autograph Collection →

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This member of Marriott's Autograph Collection is a welcome sight after driving past almost endless fast food outlets and tacky shops on Overseas Highway. The gleaming lobby feels more

cosmopolitan than tropical with nary a seashell or palm leaf in sight. It's definitely a nice departure from the typical decor. This is a full-service resort with a spa that shouldn't be missed and four restaurants and bars, each offering a different experience. Locally sourced fine dining spot La Marea is even becoming a culinary destination in its own right.

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