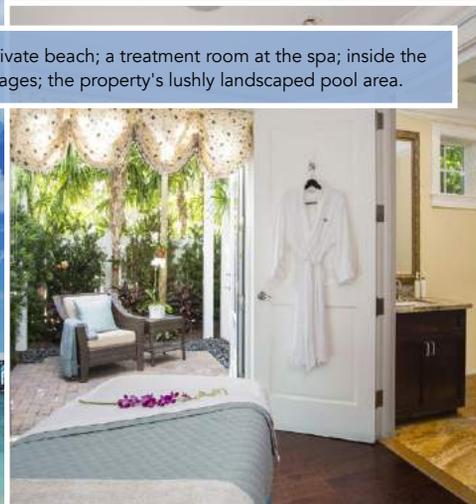




CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Sunset Key's private beach; a treatment room at the spa; inside the bedroom in one of the beachfront cottages; the property's lushly landscaped pool area.



Sunset Key

➤ Sunset Key Guest Cottages, now part of Starwood Hotels' Luxury Collection, is one of those places that is every bit as magical when you're there as it looks like it will be in photographs. Accessible only by a ten-minute ferry ride from the dock at Mallory Square in Key West, it consists of charming cottages—ranging from one- to four-bedroom, although the four-bedroom models, with their full granite and stainless-steel kitchens, second-floor balconies and private swimming pools, can hardly be considered "cottages"—all bearing the trademark Key West architecture and wrap-around verandas. Every aspect of the accommodations delights, from the fully stocked kitchens to the plush bathrobes in the closet to the fluffy, double pillowtop beds. And we must admit, we always look forward to waking up to find a breakfast basket filled with delicious homemade cakes, muffins and fruit (and a newspaper)

outside the door, just about as much as we look forward to the bottled water and bedtime chocolates left on the night tables during turndown service.

Since the resort upgraded last year to its spot on the Luxury Collection's roster, there are some newly added pleasures to savor, such as the Conch Cruiser ice cream cycle, which traverses the grounds delivering complimentary gourmet gelato and sorbet to guests daily at 3 pm. If your idea of a cool treat comes in liquid form, however, you can always lie back on a seaside chaise and let the beach concierge bring you a cocktail. Food is as much a sybaritic pleasure here as anything else, and that includes breakfast (try the Chai Tea French Toast), lunch (the Maine Lobster Salad is fresh, plentiful and addictive) and dinner, which could be anything from a cumin-dusted Yellowtail Snapper to a Grilled Wild Boar with boursin cheese and caramelized onion bonito cake.

Servers are affable and attentive—ours remembered us from our prior visit, which had taken place two years before—and whether you choose to dine at a table outside on the sand among the torches or inside the intricately designed dining room, you'll be in the perfect spot.

The isolation from the madding crowds of Key West adds to the perfection of this romantic spot, known as a favorite for weddings (we see one every time we go), anniversaries, or even family getaways—and just a favorite in general.

Packages include Memorable Mornings, Florida Residents Save 15%, Time Stands Still, and Key West Express Discount; get details at exclusives.lc.com/Westin-Sunset-Key-Guest-Cottages-Resort.

Sunset Key, A Luxury Collection Resort, 245 Front St., Key West, 305-292-5300; sunsetkeycottages.com