

US COASTAL LIVING MAGAZINE - KEY WEST, FLORIDA - 1995

With vibrant interiors, lush gardens, and a prime location,
this Key West rental will put you
in an island state of mind before you even unpack.

calypsoescape



guests walking into Havana Lane may want to keep their sunglasses on. Bright tropical colors radiate from pillows, seat cushions, artwork, and painted furniture. Set against Dade County pine, the splashy accents tantalize the eye, bringing the sunny vacation vibe inside.

With permission from Chavez Properties, the company that owns the cottage, British designer Derek Frost revived the rundown 1920s structure with the goal of creating a hideaway that doesn't take itself too seriously. He retained the natural look of the pine floors, walls, and ceilings and preserved the retro, lived-in feel of what locals call a "conch

house." Derek brought in discarded, distressed lumber for architectural accents that underscore the home's rustic charm. "The idea was to keep it very Key Westy, very relaxed, very un-done-up," Derek says. "It's absolutely not your standard rental property."

Vintage and found furniture create a casual atmosphere, with end tables crafted from teak boat-hatch covers resting on rattan bases. Derek constructed the coffee table by attaching blue and red vinyl floor tiles to a wood frame that rests on a Mexican twig base.

When it came to color, he abandoned all restraint. "To me, Florida means bright-colored," he says. Painted aqua





and pink, the dining table and chairs make a playful statement. The whimsy continues in the kitchen, with mint-green candy-stripe cabinets. In the living area, haphazardly placed artwork forms a collage of color on the walls. Standard-issue miniblinds just wouldn't do here, so tropical-motif fabric covers the window. Hot-pink molding crowns the space, and a hodgepodge of daring fabrics brightens remaining gaps.

The cottage's tropical accents smooth the transition between indoors and out. Two sets of French doors open the dining area onto a spacious deck, pool, and sprawling gardens. Plants thrive in the area's subtropical climate, creating a private retreat that's enjoyable year-round. After all, Derek says, "you go to Florida to be outside."

Just a few blocks away from the cottage, you can join the circus-like daily sunset celebration at Mallory Square and the thumping nightlife of Duval Street. You can also soak up Key West culture by bicycle or by foot, admiring the eccentric architecture and browsing local art galleries. There's plenty to do offshore, as well: Rent a boat to explore the islands, fish, swim, snorkel, dive, or windsurf.

Just don't forget your sunglasses.

Send us your favorite beach rental. Write to Guestbook, Coastal Living, 2100 Lakeshore Drive, Birmingham, AL 35209, or e-mail guestbook@timeinc.com.

from the guestbook

"Opening the gate was a magical experience. Nothing we'd seen online could have prepared us for how lovely and spacious Havana Lane is. We immediately called home to our friends—are they jealous!"

—Katherine, Ontario





wish you were here ...

accommodations:

Two bedrooms, two baths, with additional sleeping space in dressing room (best for children)

rates: \$348 per night or \$2,300 per week June 1–December 18; \$430 per night or \$2,940 per week December 19–April 18; \$350 per night or \$2,310 per week April 19–May 31

availability: Year-round

location: Old Town Key West, Florida

nearest airport: Key West International Airport (EYW), three miles away

amenities: Private multi-level deck, heated pool, hot tub, stereo with MP3 input, TV, DVD player, high-speed Internet access, fully equipped kitchen, gas grill, dishwasher, and laundry facilities

need-to-know info:

Pet friendly, four-person maximum occupancy, six-night minimum stay

don't miss: Dining at Seven Fish (305/296-2777 or 7fish.com) and Nine One Five (305/296-0669 or 915duval.com). Shopping for tropical fabrics at the Seam Shoppe; 305/296-9830 or seamshoppe.com. Exploring by water—you can rent boats at Garrison Bight Marina; 305/294-3093 or garrisonbightmarina.net.

contact info: Call 800/833-7368 or 305/294-0990, or visit rentkeywest.com (look for “Havana Lane”). ☼