



Keys Sunday
July 8, 2007

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cover story

Need a getaway? No need to go away

Time to slow down, indulge in a little romance close to home

By CLAUDIA MILLER
Keys Sunday contributor

Intimate island retreat

Sneaking away to Islamorada is easy at Casa Morada, a quiet gem on a small road down from the Lor-e-lei restaurant. Owners Lauren Abrams, Terry Ford and Heidi Prayer Werltamer have combined their experience working for the Ian Schrager hotels and taken the mom-and-pop motel concept upscale.

In 2002, they renovated the 16 suites and 1.7 acres of bayfront land, which was formerly the Sunset Inn built in the early 1950s. Book the suites with the open air Jacuzzis and outdoor showers for secluded romance.

Slip away to the hidden cabana or take a dip in the freshwater pool on their island, while sipping drinks from the full-service bar. All meals can be delivered to the room. Breakfast is complimentary; lunch and dinner are catered by local restaurants. Grab a bottle of champagne and book their two-hour sunset cruise. In-room massage and complimentary yoga offer couples guaranteed relaxation.

Casa Morada offers a romance package that includes a chilled bottle of champagne upon arrival, rose petals and candles at turndown, a couple's mas-

sage, a twilight dinner for two and breakfast delivered to the room each morning.

"We are very service oriented, and we have a one-to-one ratio of staff to guests," Abrams said. "You don't feel lost like when you are in a big hotel, and you are just a number. The privacy and intimacy of the whole resort provides the perfect ambiance for the romantic couple."

Casa Morada is at mile marker 82 at 136 Madeira Road. Ages 16 and up welcome. Pet-friendly. Midweek July-August they are offering a \$189 rate on the garden suites, and they have a Dog Days of Summer special, which is 15 percent off midweek through Oct. 31. (305) 664-0044.

www.casamorada.com



Photo by DOMINA DETROCH

A secluded corner beckon of Casa Morada.