



"No man is an island," means we support each other regardless of the task at hand. If one is not available, then the other must step up to the plate to show how we truly shine." ~ *The Cottages Credo # 4*

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## The CottageCorner | July 2019



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### A Word from Our CEO...



We are more than half way through the year now, and the The CottageCrew is buzzing around with the second busiest season of our year. We are excited to come into Fall soon, where we are given the opportunity to slow things down a bit, get back into each of these homes, and focus on how to prepare for the upcoming winter season.

Fall is also a wonderful time for our owners to come back into town and enjoy some personal time in your homes. The island takes on a new pace, slow and relaxing. The locals are bubbly and all of your favorite

places require no reservations and no wait times. Though the heat is still on in Florida's fall season, it's always a great time to chill out by the pool and enjoy a frozen beverage.

I have already noticed that many of you have blocked some time for yourselves and we look forward to having you here soon! In fact, Eric and myself would love the opportunity to meet with you personally during your time spent on Siesta / in Sarasota, simply just to check in and see how things are going. If your plans are made, and you know when you will be in town, won't you please [drop us a line](#) and let us know if there would be a good day for us to meet you and take you to lunch? We would truly appreciate a moment to speak with you in person and listen to any concerns, comments, or suggestions you may have.

On a side note, some of you may have blocked time for some significant others in your lives! Perhaps you have friends or family coming into town for a special occasion. Please do [let us know](#) if there is a way that we can personalize their stay and make it particularly special. We want nothing more than to make our owners look like heroes, and what better way than to spoil those that you love! As always, we are here to serve you and yours!



## A Word from Operations...

Hello Everyone,

I hope your summer is going well! Every 4th of July, my family rents Villa Champagne for the entire week. As I write this, I am currently sitting canal front with a drink beside me and a nice evening breeze shooting across my toes and I couldn't be happier. Not only does this allow me to spend some much needed quality time with my entire family from around the country, it also allows me to get in touch with the guest experience from start to finish. I get to see things from a different perspective and really hone into what matters which in turn allows me to perform better at work. In general, as a company, we have become proficient at perfecting the customer experience of our guests. It's very clear when you read our reviews.

I feel like we are pretty good at perfecting the experience of our owners as well when it pertains to when you all come to stay at your own properties. It doesn't mean that there aren't issues here and there, but in general our feedback is very positive.

We are constantly looking for ways to improve, and perfect our



customers' experience (both guests and owners). You might have noticed that we have been able to reduce the cost of Saturday trash removal or that we have improved the speed of Lodgix when retrieving documents but we would like to take it a step further and initiate surveys to be taken by you, our owners.

I believe by developing and putting the proper surveys in place, we will be able to gather and analyze data to determine where our challenges are, which processes need continuous improvement, where additional training can be done for our staff, and what each of you would like to see more or less of from us.

It's your feedback as our partners that enables us to be creative with our solutions, innovate, and bring to life a way to make this experience better for all. We always welcome your feedback, and I appreciate all of you that provide it on a consistent basis. Over the next few months we will be developing surveys for all of you to take if you desire. I really look forward to your participation and feedback.

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## A Word from Administration...



Is it taboo to say **CHRISTMAS IN JULY!!?**

I am hoping this information will serve as a proverbial gift for you. By now I have had the opportunity to speak with each of you in some method of communication. Earlier in the year I sent out several requests for updated tax information and specific documents needed for tax purposes. Admittedly, some of this information was still being established after your individual deadlines.

This month I will begin collecting any missing or required information from you as to avoid repeating my hassling experience earlier this year. With the addition of our Office Assistant, Fallon, we have been able to digitize a mound of information allowing us to search more efficiently for anything unaccounted for. Digitizing these documents also means your requests for missing information can be relayed more instantaneously.

My ambitious task is to begin conceptualizing something that requires your viewpoint. I would like to work with our Revenue Analyst, Barry, to create a year end document which combines your twelve month distribution statements into one comprehensive document. As I stepped into my new Administrative role earlier this year, I discovered how exceedingly frustrating it must be to explore several documents with your respective accountants to finalize your tax transactions. My mission is to eliminate your taxes from being too taxing (*pun intended*) and obtaining end of year documents will be as

effortless as possible and no longer vexing.

I ask that if you have any conducive ideas to please reach out to me. This really only works with your input and collaboration.

## A Word from Marketing...

I hope you all had a wonderful and relaxing 4<sup>th</sup> of July! For the past several months, I have been working to get each and every property listing on our portfolio up to par with current third-party standards. This includes revamping property descriptions into a new and more user-friendly format. This also includes updating professional photos of every property on our portfolio. According to Evolve Vacation Rental, “photos are the single most important selling tool for your vacation rental home.” I could not agree more! With that being said, the Marketing Team has been working diligently to schedule and coordinate as many photoshoots as possible these past few months. I am a huge believer that having professional photos plays a major role in helping The CottageCrew rent out your homes. The way I see it, photos are the first impression a guests has of a home. I can’t tell you how many times I have personally passed over a vacation rental that didn’t have professional photos.

I’ve been gathering data from 2017 to present to you the correlation between photoshoots and amount of bookings. Let’s take a look on some examples...

<b>Monarch Villa:</b>	<b>Before Photoshoot:</b> 04	<b>After</b>
<b>Photoshoot:</b> 12		
<b>Peacock Villa:</b>	<b>Before Photoshoot:</b> 05	<b>After</b>
<b>Photoshoot:</b> 06		
<b>Casa De Mariposa:</b>	<b>Before Photoshoot:</b> 05	<b>After</b>
<b>Photoshoot:</b> 11		
<b>Topsail Cottage:</b>	<b>Before Photoshoot:</b> 28	<b>After</b>
<b>Photoshoot:</b> 32		
<b>Sea Esta:</b>	<b>Before Photoshoot:</b> 02	<b>After</b>
<b>Photoshoot:</b> 07		
<b>Sea la Vie:</b>	<b>Before Photoshoot:</b> 02	<b>After</b>
<b>Photoshoot:</b> 10		

These are just a few examples. Please note: the data from above is for a 1-year span per property to show the amount of booking acquired after each photoshoot was taken. For example, Sea Esta and Sea la Vie’s professional photos were published on 11.06.18. You can see that prior to the photoshoot there were only 2 bookings, but jumped up to 10 bookings after the photoshoot (the first one only 4 days after the photos were up on our website).

The Marketing Team will continue to work with our vendor to achieve





our goal of having professional photos for all homes on our portfolio.

Until next time, #CottageON!

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## A Word from Reservations...



As the temperatures start to rise with these hot summer days, I am sure you have all thought about what happened last year with red tide. Even though we weathered the storm and came out better than almost all vacation rentals/ hotels in Florida, that did not put the brakes on our forward thinking on how we can approve for when red tide happens again.

Even though red tide does happen every year to some degree, last year's episode was especially bad in comparison and the media didn't help matters at all. We have come up with even more ways to combat these situations! The CottageCrew has put a lot of thought on how we can serve our guest and owners at the same time while trying to make the best out of a bad situation.

- Each guest is different, and we must listen to them and educate them on what is going on during this time frame. We live and work out here on the key and we are the ambassadors for the guest and owners that only have media to rely on at times. Guiding inquirers to the right outlets for information is priority number one!
- If the situation is unsafe and the guests are panicking because they have small children or someone in the party has a special condition such as asthma, then we will guide them to move their reservation to different dates for the same property, providing something similar to a credit for their booking.
- We can also entice guests with "free upgrades" for those guests who are still on the fence regarding their vacation and possibly wanting to cancel. We want to give the guest the best experience possible in times like these.
- Our cancellation policy for when red tide is at its worst is one of the best that a vacation rental company can offer. The guest can cancel 7 day prior to their arrival while only losing their administration fee. This will be of course a last resort since we want to do everything in our power to have the guest come and enjoy their vacation that they have been looking forward to for so long.
- We are in the works of also looking into travel insurance companies that will best suit the guest and owner's needs. Travel insurance may be an affordable solution for those that need that extra protection and coverage.

Remember these procedures are just in place in case red tide is as bad a

last year. We are confident though that we should have a great summer here on Siesta Key! As an owner you can be rest assured that we always expect the best, but plan for the worse, so we can overcome any obstacle that comes our way.

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## CottageCalendar | Upcoming Events

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**Event:** Friday Fest

**Date:** 07.19.19

**Time:** 5PM to 9PM

**Location:** Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall

**Address:** 777 N. Tamiami Trail

[Learn More](#)

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**Event:** Downtown Sarasota Farmers Market

**Date:** 07.20.19

**Time:** 7AM to 1PM

**Location:** Downtown Sarasota

**Address:** Lemon Ave/State Street



[Learn More](#)



**Event:** Brunch & Bubbly

**Date:** 07.23.19

**Time:** 10AM to 12PM

**Location:** The Cottages on the Key, Inc.

**Address:** 5011 Ocean Blvd.

[RSVP or Learn More](#)

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**Event:** Siesta Key Farmers Market

**Date:** 07.28.19

**Time:** 9AM to 1PM

**Location:** Siesta Key Village

**Address:** 5124 Ocean Blvd.



[Learn More](#)



**Event:** Siesta Key Drum Circle

**Date:** 07.28.19

**Time:** 1 Hour before Sunset

**Location:** Siesta Key Beach

**Address:** 948 Beach Road

[Learn More](#)

**Event:** Brunch & Bubbly

**Date:** 07.30.19

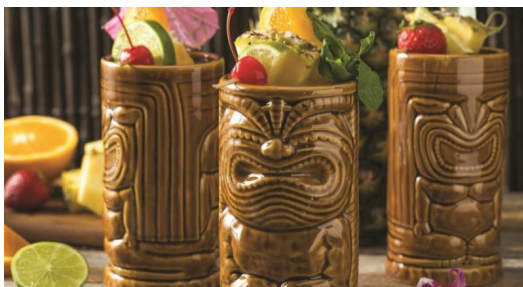
**Time:** 10AM to 12PM

**Location:** The Cottages on the Key, Inc.

**Address:** 5011 Ocean Blvd.



[RSVP or Learn More](#)



**Event:** Tiki Trivia Trolley Tour

**Date:** 08.07.19

**Time:** 2:30PM to 5PM

**Location:** Discover Sarasota Tours

**Address:** 1826 4th Street

[Register for Event](#)

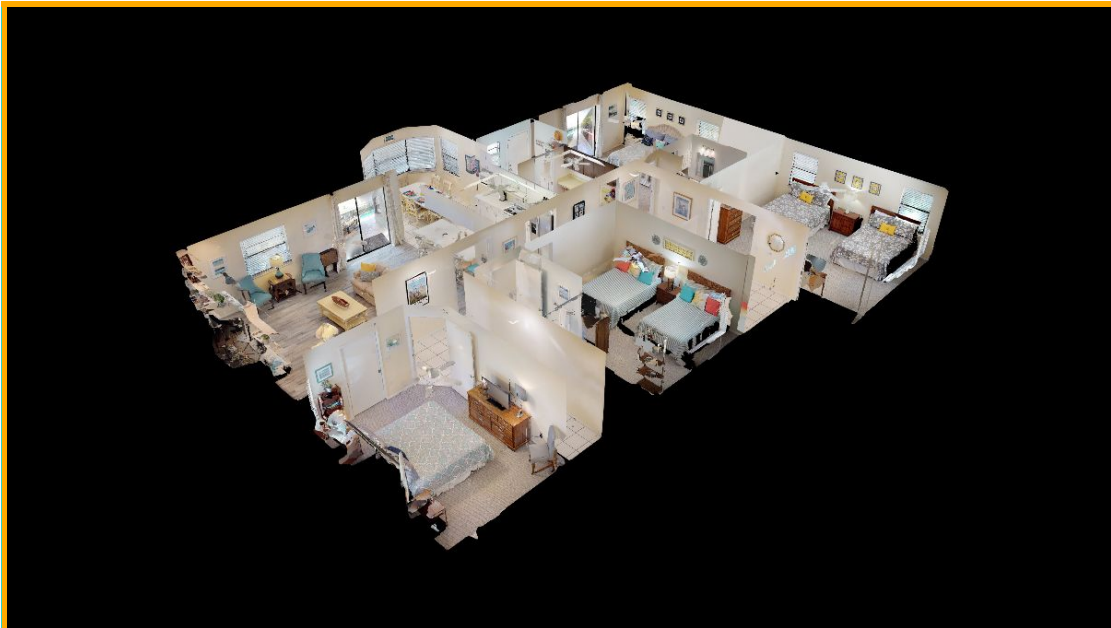


## Updated Media: Buccaneer's Hideaway



Drone Video





**Matterport**

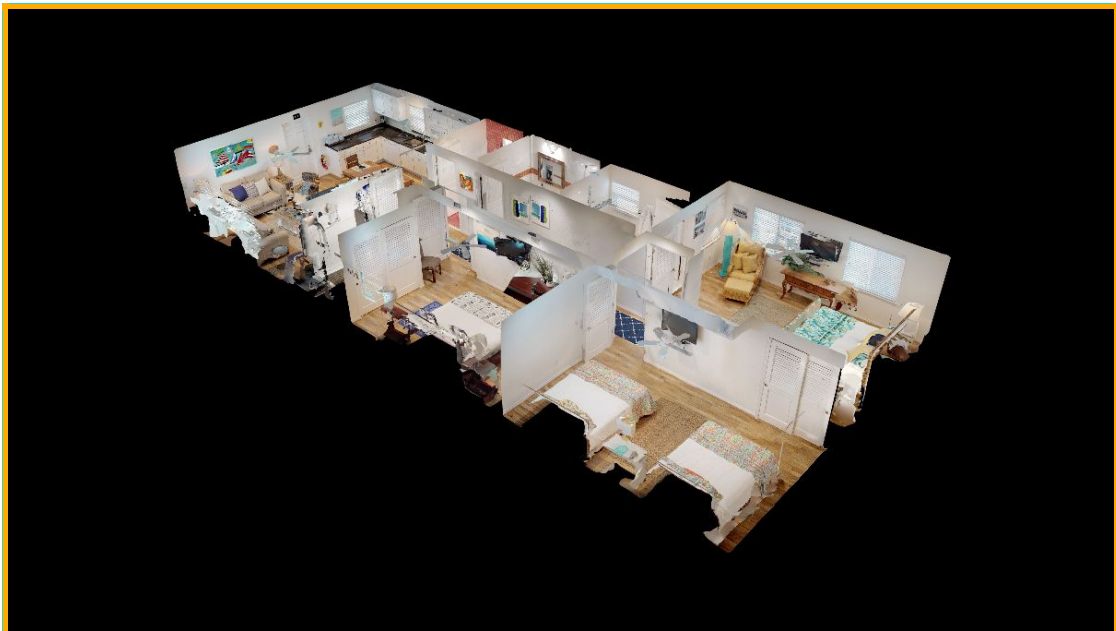
[Learn More about Buccaneer's Hideaway](#)

**Updated Media: Coconut Grove**





## Drone Video



## Matterport - Baybreeze



## Matterport - Pinacolada

[Learn More about Coconut Grove](#)

### Featured Reviews

#### **The Canopy Cottage - ★ ★ ★ ★ ★**

Had a wonderful holiday in Siesta Key. Fab Villa, fully equipped with everything you could ask for.

#### **Villa Vista Mare - ★ ★ ★ ★ ★**

Our family truly enjoyed this property. Everything was exactly as advertised. I recommend this property to anyone interested in Siesta Key.

#### **Sea Esta - ★ ★ ★ ★ ★**

We had a short stay at Sea Esta and loved every minute of it. The unit is decorated very charmingly, the

#### **Sandpiper Cottage - ★ ★ ★ ★ ★**

This is our 1st experience renting in Sarasota & with The Cottages and we have to say it was the best &

welcome cupcakes were adored by my children, and we had a great time both at the beach and the pool. Being right across from the beach access was incredibly convenient. The unit had everything we needed and the available chairs/towels/bikes were all easy to find prior to departing for the beach. And the village was super close to walk to for dinner at night. Highly recommend this rental!

easiest rental we have done so far. We usually go to Destin for our annual family vacation but this stay at the Sandpiper cottage has sold us on Siesta Key. The pool was large & so enjoyable. The guys loved the basketball net. The upper level suite was such a pleasant retreat. The kitchen was fully stocked with all the items we needed. We enjoyed riding the new bikes. The neighborhood was so quite & close to everything. I truly enjoyed the landscaping around the home, it is tropical & gorgeous. The Cottage staff address the few minor issues we had within 15 min with just a phone call. Thanks for a great vacation!!

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**Crescent Cottage - ★ ★ ★ ★ ★**

Very close to beach access- about a 5 minute walk. Check in was easy and communication was great! Comfortable seating for a big group ( we were 7 total) and plenty of bedrooms. Great to have the pool to enjoy when not at the beach.

**Sophie's Quartier - ★ ★ ★ ★ ★**

Great property with a few hiccups but the staff worked quickly to resolve the issues. Great location to the beach and the village (tourist area). We really enjoyed our stay. Both properties work out great for our large family and friends.

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**Villa Brisa Marina - ★ ★ ★ ★ ★**

A wonderful stay with a nice house, well suited for traveling over generations. Nice pool area and a perfect beach! We had such a nice stay.

**The Pearl by the Sea - ★ ★ ★ ★ ★**

We had a wonderful time during our stay at Pearl by the Sea. We have booked three times now with The Cottages on the Key. We would highly recommend your company to anyone looking for a luxurious and relaxing stay in Siesta Key and the

surrounding area. We look forward to our next stay with you.

#### **Villa De Paradisio - ★ ★ ★ ★ ★**

The home was very well maintained and perfect location. Would consider staying at this same location again.

#### **Mango Manor - ★ ★ ★ ★ ★**

This was a great house to rent with a perfect location in walking distance to the beach, as well as access to the trolley.

#### **Villa Champagne - ★ ★ ★ ★ ★**

The house was perfect for our family. The management company was very helpful and attentive. We loved using the bikes and kayaks. Pool was awesome and refreshing. Beach was amazing

#### **Casa Tegula - ★ ★ ★ ★ ★**

We LOVED Casa Tegula!!! The house was very clean and stocked with everything we needed. Location was wonderful, only a short walk to the ocean and shops. Sara at The Cottages on the Key was AMAZING and we will definitely book through her again.

**Until next time, #CottageON!**

*With Love,  
The CottageCrew*



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