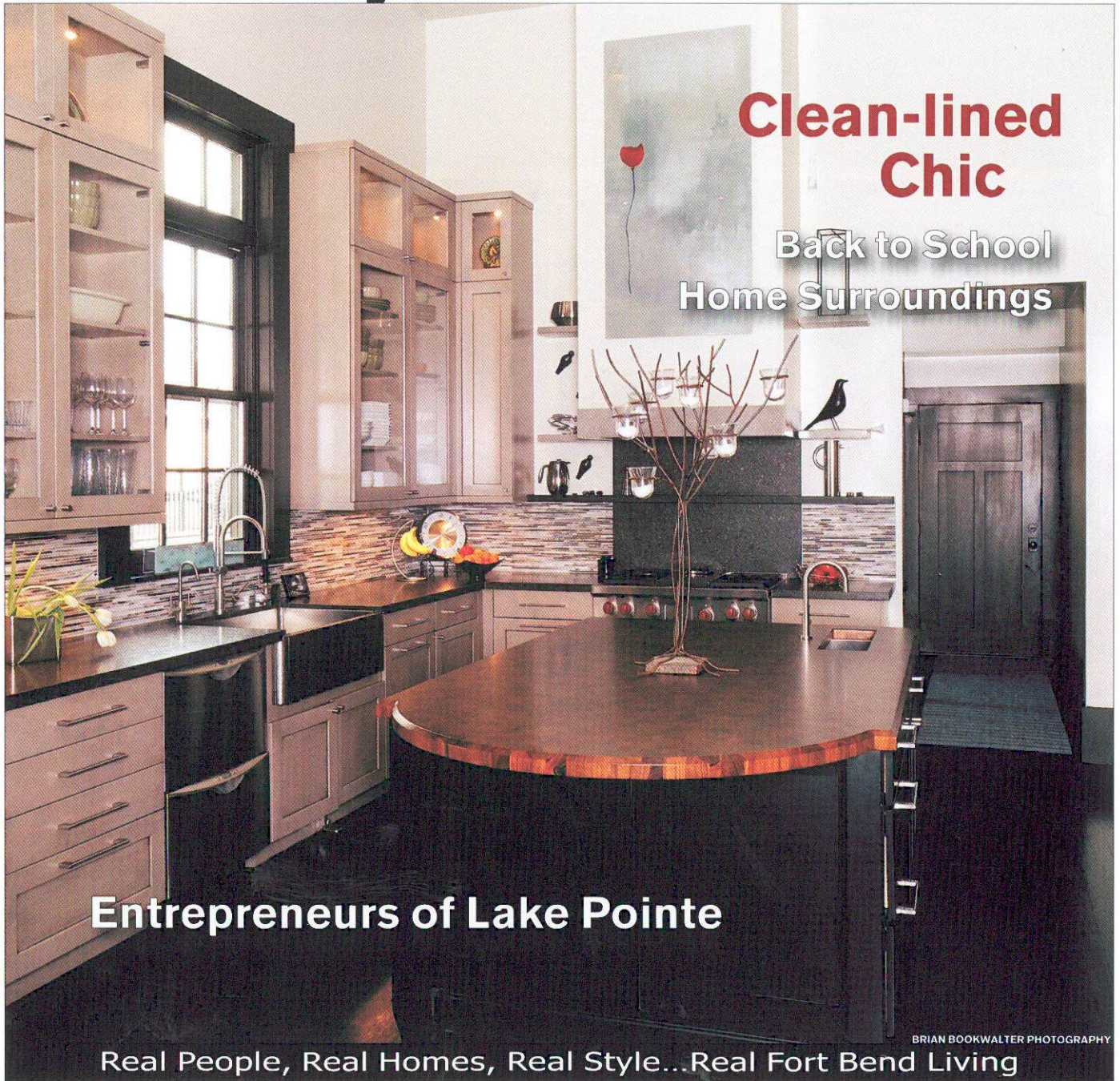


Fort Bend

Lifestyles & Homes

August 2009



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BRIAN BOOKWALTER PHOTOGRAPHY

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Grand Cayman Getaway Offers Great Family Fun

Houston is a 2½ hour flight from this tropical paradise

By Cheryl Alexander



Since Christopher Columbus discovered The Cayman Islands in 1503, folks have flocked to The Cayman Islands for rest, relaxation and rejuvenation. Located 480 miles south of Miami in

the vibrant and vividly blue waters of the western Caribbean, the trio of tiny islands welcomes vacationers of all ages with spectacular recreational activities and safety under a stunning tropical backdrop. Genuine, impeccable Caymanian hospitality greets visitors at every stop, and whether your family seeks adventure, relaxation or education, you'll be served easygoing, Caribbean fun.

Grand Cayman Island is the biggest of the three islands that comprise this paradise, and the most cosmopolitan. It stretches 22 miles long and is about 8 miles at its widest point. The capital city, George Town, is on the western shore, and serves as the main duty free shopping and financial hub. Vacationing in Cayman is now, more than ever, a family affair, offering a wide range of family-friendly lodging, dining and activities that assure great memories and photo ops galore!

The Reef Resort

When booking accommodations on Grand Cayman, you can't go wrong at The Reef Resort. Located on the big island's east end away from the crowds, The Reef is about relaxation. The Reef is family-run and offers the best in Grand Cayman accommodations with 152 studios, one-bedroom and two-bedroom condominiums—all overlooking the teal-blue Caribbean and with their very own 1,600-foot white sugar beach. Families who choose condominium accommodations enjoy all the luxuries of a lavish vacation with the coziness and freedom of a home-style getaway. Nearby grocery stores present the opportunity to cook traditional meals in fully equipped kitchens.

At The Pelican's Reef, you'll dine on the finest of international gourmet cuisine and select wine from a full wine list. The Rusty Pelican presents a more casual fare and drink choices from fresh mojitos to mango margaritas. Divers find what they need at the Ocean Frontiers' Dive Shop and Beach Locker right on-site. Those who prefer more lazy days feel right at home in The Reef's full service spa, Le Soleil Spa. Additionally, stop by the Thirsty Surfer

Liquor Store for your spirits or the Internet Café for your land-based surfing needs.

Choose from three beautifully landscaped pools, including an infinity pool and a children's pool, with a Jacuzzi and showers on the pool decks, as well as two sandy beach swimming areas. You can play beach or pool volleyball or tennis, take a bike ride or snorkel right off the shore among the many vibrant fish that congregate around the wharf and coral reef.

The Reef's Grand Cayman accommodation packages simplify your family vacation, diving holiday, honeymoon or wedding escapes. Book with

The Reef and they'll make all your arrangements including your car, your dive bookings and any rentals you may require.

If an all-inclusive vacation is the way you prefer to travel, The Reef Resort gives you an unbeatable option: three meals per day (a la carte or buffet), and all beverages, including wine and champagne by the glass.

Cayman Summer Splash

This summer, lots of families are taking advantage of the Cayman Summer Splash package where you and your family can enjoy the beauty of the islands and save big on your trip. If you travel before Sept. 5, you can book four nights and receive the fifth night free (or stay for 10 and get two free nights). Got kids? Children 11 and under can fly free on Cayman Airlines. Call for details. Ask about how children 11 and under can eat free and how children between 5 and 11 years can attend Cayman Sea School and learn a lot about Cayman's marine environment. Additionally, the whole family will enjoy on-island discounts and activities island wide from the coupon book you'll receive upon arrival at The Reef.

For fun away from your hotel, The

Cayman Islands offers the ultimate experience in land and sea activities for every age group. Kids and adults will enjoy a field trip to Rum Point, just a short drive from The Reef Resort. Fringed with Casuarina pines, this area evokes the Cayman of yesteryear.

If your family is the adventurous type, you'll find loads of activities to fuel your adrenaline. Play "pirate" on a two-hour pirate cruise aboard the *Jolly Roger*, an authentic replica of a 17th century Spanish galleon. Afternoon and Dinner excursions are available where guests participate in firing cannons at enemy vessels, making "victims" walk the plank. Snorkel some of Cayman's world-renowned reefs, with a vast array of exotic marine life, coral formations and many shipwrecks located just off shore. Snorkeling, especially at Stingray City, is probably the most popular activity in Cayman.

Fishing is one of the "hottest" sports in The Cayman Islands, and you'll find many experienced Caymanian captains operating excursions.

Glass bottom boat trips provide less adventurous vacationers a way to enjoy the underwater scenes. Book your tour at Rum Point on Grand Cayman's north coast. If your family wants to "dive a little deeper," book an excursion on the *Atlantis*, a submarine that descends more than 100 feet below the surface.

Land-based activities abound on The Cayman Islands, too! The Butterfly Farm is a magical place. The Dutch family that owns it is extremely welcoming and knowledgeable, and there are butterflies here from all over the world.

At the other end of the island in West Bay, the Turtle Farm at Boatswain's Beach

is distinctly Caymanian. There are nature trails, an aviary, cottages built to look like those of an older, classic Caymanian street, and a predator tank where you can get up close and personal with reef sharks, green moray eels and a line-up of various fish, and that's before you have even seen the turtles! You will have the opportunity to handle turtles of various sizes (16,000 in all), so have your camera ready!

Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park showcases 65-acres of Caymanian flora, history and beauty in the Heritage Garden, Floral Colour Garden, Nature Trail, Blue Iguana Habitat and more.

Skate Cayman

Skate Cayman is the first destination skateboarding camp of its kind in the Caribbean, and it is being held at The Black Pearl Skate and Surf Park. Black Pearl is a challenging but rider-friendly park that features three different main courses—expert, intermediate and beginner—with both a flow and street course for each level. With 64,000 square feet of concrete bowls and half and quarter pipes, it is the second largest skatepark in the world. Until Aug. 21, some of the most well-known professional and amateur skaters will descend on Black Pearl for a completely distinctive camp and family vacation experience.

Monday through Friday, Skate Cayman is offering hands-on instruction for campers, and throughout the summer campers will have the opportunity to skate with the likes of Bucky Lasek, Rune Glifberg, Brian Sumner, Josh Harmony, Shaun White and the Shut Skates team. Learn from these top instructors, skate with pros and experience one of the most unique skateparks in the world for \$63/daily or \$282/weekly. Sign up for



Britannia Golf Course

the Skate Cayman camp by registering on www.skatecayman.com or follow the camp on twitter under the name "SkateCayman."

Golf

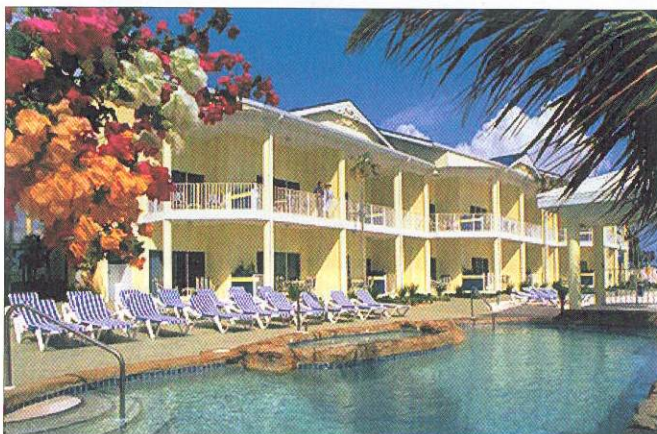
A must play is the Britannia Golf Course designed by Jack Nicklaus. For tee times, call 345-745-4653.



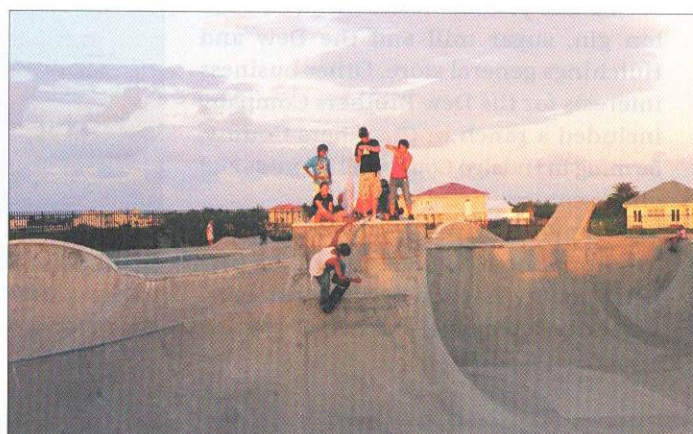
The reasons for vacationing in The Cayman Islands abound, from diving down deep, duty free shopping or lounging lazily on the soft warm sand, everyone agrees Cayman has got it going on! Come... Relax. Enjoy.

For more information, visit www.caymanislands.ky or contact your travel agent. To book at The Reef, e-mail reservations@thereef.com, call toll free 888-252-0541 or contact your travel specialist for more information. ●

Call Dollar Rent A Car
800-800-3665 or locally 345-949-4790
www.dollar.com



The Reef Resort



Black Pearl Skate Park