



Architecture of Key West

Key West architecture is a product of nearly two centuries of growth and change, influenced by a variety of factors.

The region's natural resources offered limited building materials. South Florida slash pine - Dade County pine - proved to be hard and resistant to decay, but lumbering eventually depleted supply. Soon, builders employed other Southern woods, such as yellow pine, cypress, and cedar. Miami oolite, the bedrock of the Lower Keys, saw use mainly as foundation piers - and only rarely as building stone for whole structures.

Key West's hot tropical climate also influenced building. Faced with long, sweltering summers, early settlers built houses on piers, allowing air to circulate underneath floors. Additionally, front porches and louvered shutters provided shady, well-ventilated living spaces, whose occupants lived without the benefit of fans or air conditioning. Upstairs, roof scuttles - similar in form to hatches on the decks of ships - permitted much-needed ventilation of attics. For similar reasons, Key West's unique eyebrow houses featured cooling second-floor windows sheltered under overhanging front porches. Moreover, unwanted sources of heat, such as fireplaces and later stoves, saw use only in kitchen outbuildings separate from main houses. Meanwhile, seasonal dry spells required using gutters, downspouts, and cisterns to channel and store rainwater.

Early building types focused on primary functions:

houses, warehouses, and churches. Later, as the economy diversified and the population grew, other building types appeared, too, such as military structures, government offices, and cigar factories. Nevertheless, most historic buildings in Key West are single-family houses, exhibiting a charming variety of scale, form, and ornamentation. Many interiors boast walls and ceilings of tongue-and-groove wood sheathing instead of plaster.

The military made a significant and visible contribution to Key West architecture. Establishing its base near Mallory Square, the Navy gradually expanded to cover most of the south side of the island. Further concern about security during and after the Spanish-American War led to more construction on base.

The cultural heritage of incoming settlers also influenced architecture. Wreckers from the Bahamas arriving before the Civil War constructed simple, well-proportioned buildings exemplifying the best of vernacular architecture. Soon, American influence - from New England to the Deep South - brought Key West more into the architectural mainstream.

The first national style in the United States, based on ancient Greek and Roman prototypes, saw expression in Key West between the 1850s and the 1880s. Such Classical Revival buildings

often boast a gable (or "temple-front" façade) featuring columns rising two stories and supporting a clearly defined triangular pediment. By the end of the century, the Queen Anne style burst into flower, replete with soaring turrets, complex roof forms, asymmetrical massing, and a variety of surface treatments, including scroll-sawn "gingerbread" decoration.

The influx of Cubans in the last third of the 19th century left a three-part architectural legacy. Large cigar factories heralded the arrival of a new economic mainstay, small cigar makers' cottages provided simple worker accommodations, and elaborate manufacturers' mansions displayed the wealth of these new enterprises.

Lastly, disasters such as hurricanes and fires have affected Key West architecture. Hurricanes in 1846, 1909, 1910 and 1919 brutally demonstrated the need to pay attention to the siting, scale, and underpinnings of buildings. At the same time, fires in 1843, 1859, 1886 and 1923 taught the need for flame-resistant construction, such as masonry walls and metal shingle roofs.

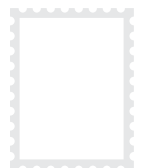
*By George Born,
Former Director
Historic Florida Keys Foundation*

Paradise Real Estate in Key West 521 Simonton Street Key West FL 33040

BAR
Barbara Anderson, REALTOR®



631 Greene Street Key West 305-294-3100



Summer 2014



Tips for Fishermen & Boaters

(courtesy of Reef Relief)

- Practice good seamanship, and safe boating.
- Maintain a safe distance from other fishermen and divers.
- Do not troll over or near divers. Stay at least 100 feet from a red and white diver down flag and watch for bubbles.
- Know and observe size and catch limits; release any fish you can't eat. Florida law requires a fishing license. Applicable size, bag limits, and seasons must be observed when harvesting seafood.

NOTE: Avoid throwing fish carcasses and wrung lobsters overboard or into canals, as they decompose and degrade water quality.

- Use reef mooring buoys if available. Otherwise, anchor in sandy areas away from coral and seagrasses so that anchor and chain do not drag or grate on nearby corals or tear up seagrass beds.
- Accidental boat groundings damage the reef. Consult tide and navigational charts and steer clear of shallow areas (shallow seagrass beds appear brown in color). Accidental boat groundings damage coral and seagrasses, and fines are imposed for such damage. Remember, "Brown, brown, run aground. Blue, blue, sail on through."
- Avoid disturbing wildlife, harassing fish and invertebrates; it only makes them wary of people.
- Keep boating speeds and noise to a minimum, and avoid boat wakes near isolated mangroves.
- When in a diving area, slow down to an idle speed.
- It is illegal to dump trash at sea; plastic bags and other debris can injure or kill marine animals.
- Try to retrieve fishing gear and equipment, especially monofilament line.
- Bring your trash back to shore and recycle it.
- Camping, campfires, and collecting of any kind is prohibited on all National Wildlife Refuges.
- Personal watercraft and airboats are prohibited in all National Parks and Wildlife Refuges in the Florida Keys.



2817 Venetian Drive

Large canal-front home with pool. Beautiful waterfront patio and manicured lawn accessible by spiral staircase from upper deck.

Kitchen has been completely renovated with stainless steel appliances, granite countertops and an eat-in bar.

3-bedroom, 3-bath home with two-car garage and additional off-street parking. Completely fenced for privacy.

New alarm system, updated electrical panel, new garage doors, triple pane windows and storm shutters.

Perfect tropical paradise in Key West!

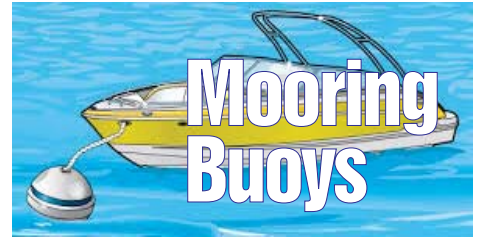


43 Key Haven Drive

Spacious waterfront home located on beautiful Key Haven.

This home offers 2740 square feet of living area with 5 bedrooms and 3 baths. Included is a separate mother-in-law unit great for extended family or guests. Screened-in back porch with concrete patio and boat dock overlook the peaceful wide canal with great boating access to the Atlantic Ocean. New tile floors throughout, landscaping, front door, brushed stainless steel appliances, new roof in 2006 & central air conditioning system.

Remodeled in 2006.



Mooring Buoys

One of our most precious natural ecosystems is the coral reef that parallels the Florida Keys - the only living coral barrier reef in the continental United States.

Mooring buoys help make protecting this resource possible with a system of 18-inch diameter blue-stripped buoy markers that boaters can tie off to, and avoid damaging the coral reef with anchors.

Since 1981, the Florida Key National Marine Sanctuary has maintained more than 470 mooring buoys in an effort to avoid breakage and damage to the reef formations.

These buoys mark various locations of artificial reefs, sanctuary preservation areas (SPA), shipwreck trail sites and more.

There is no fee to use these mooring buoys.



Lend a Hand

Human garbage is one of the greatest threats to marine wildlife. If you see refuse in the water or on the reef such as plastic bags, floating debris, monofilament line or other litter, please bring it aboard your boat and recycle or discard on land.

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Summer 2014

Hire a Local Realtor & Lower Your Risk Buying a Home

Why work with a local REALTOR®?

It's in your best interest to use a salesperson who knows the local real estate market and no one knows local real estate better than a local REALTOR®!

When you're choosing a sales person or broker to work with you on the purchase or sale of your home, one thing you'll need to consider is whether to choose someone who has an office based in Key West or outside of the community.

They know Key West

Local Key West salespeople have "local knowledge". They have extensive knowledge of the Town, its communities and all the things that make Key West unique. They know their way around the area and this can save you valuable time when you're on a tight schedule and looking for that hard-to-find listing or trying to view multiple properties in one day.

They Know The Local Market

Key West REALTORS® have expertise in the local market, they know:

- The current issues and trends in the area
- Local market statistics and comparisons
- Properties that may not yet be actively advertised
- Whether a property will provide the environment the buyer is looking for
- Whether a property is suitable for a home or investment
- Whether a property has resale value
- They Have Local Connections

Your local REALTOR® will know your property and has the ability to market it to other local agents and their clients.

A REALTOR® who lives and works in the community they serve also has a network of contacts and can point you in the direction of LOCAL qualified, reliable and professional services, such as:

- Appraisers
- Inspectors
- Contractors
- Repairmen
- Surveyors
- Financial Service Providers
- Lawyers

They Know The Local Issues

They are extremely knowledgeable and experienced on the local issues that are unique to Key West and its properties.

Conveniently Located in the Community

When you use a local REALTOR®, it can save you money, headaches and time. When buying or selling a property by using an out-of-town sales person it may appear you are saving time and money. With a local salesperson, you can be confident that you will have the sound and secure advice that comes from using a local REALTOR® who knows the community.

How does a lien search differ from a title search?

A lien search researches three important areas related to the property being purchased:

1. water bills, 2. open permits, and 3. code violations. These three areas can have fines that can easily amount to tens and thousands and need to be paid at closing. The lien search company checks direct with the local municipality i.e. "City of Key West". The lien search company walks in with a letter and a check and requests information that may not be publicly recorded, but affects the property and thus the new buyer. The county will write a letter as response, (thus the term "lien letters") explaining if there are any issues with the property. Since lien letters often deal with issues not publicly recorded, they differ from a title search because of this.

Title searches deal with only publicly recorded items, but are the crux of all closings due to large

financial liens recorded this way. Lien searches costs range, depending on the city the property is located in. The service is almost always performed by a 3rd party vendor the title company selects. Lien searches are worth every cent. This report can alert buyers of many potential headaches and should be a part of every real estate transaction.

The Closing Department, Inc.



Wendy Gonzalez
 3432 Duck Avenue
 Key West, FL 33040
 305.293.9925
 305.293.9924
 wendy.closing@comcast.net

Ocean Wellness Spa



Eric Wright
 Hair and Bridal Specialist
 829 Simonton Street
 Key West, FL 33040
 tel: (305)320-0500

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Ruben Concepcion
 Corporation Owner / Broker
 ruben@keysfinancial.com
 www.keysfinancial.com
 Office (305) 294-1484
 Fax (305) 294-2938
 Old Town
 302 Southard St. Suite 202
 Key West, FL 33040



Wonderful Old Town Area, 1bedroom/1bath 548 sq ft upstairs unit with a loft and front and back balconies, plenty of storage. Beautifully redone, light and airy.

Bahama Village History

The influence of Bahamian culture is an integral segment of the melting pot of ethnic diversity in Key West.

During the mid 19th century, the poor economic climate and employment opportunities in the Bahamas led a mass migration of Bahamians to the Florida Keys. Most immigrants hailing from both Eleuthera and Cat Islands were instrumental in the early formation of the Conch Republic. Being native to the tropics made work in Key West easy to find and they swiftly began laboring in the profitable industries of the times. Many were employed in the fishing, sponging and turtle industries, while others labored in the construction of the Henry Flagler Florida Overseas Railroad. Although away from home, Bahamian residents were still able to retain much of their cultural heritage. They listened to and performed Junkanoos, rake & scrape music, engaged in the classic art of west Indian storytelling, created Bahamian style art such as straw weaving and canvas art. Cooking traditional Bahamian food staples such as conch, peas and rice, and desserts such as Johnny cake, coconut candy, and duffs (especially guava).

Over time they began to love and embrace the tiny island of Key West and became fixated here. They named themselves "Key West Conchs" and began starting families and populating the Old Town/Bahama Village area. Since then, this area has become one of the eldest African American communities in south Florida



First Black Church

Cornish Memorial African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church
702 Whitehead St

Before the Civil War, blacks in Key West had to sit in a limited number of pews in the rear of St. Paul's Episcopal Church or St. Mary Star of the Sea Catholic Church.

The congregation actually formed as the African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1846 under a lime tree in Key West. They built the present-day structure in 1865 and by 1880 had 300 members.

Of architectural interest, the sharply pitched roof is constructed without nails, and the church showcases beautiful stained glass windows, including a moon shaped window high up in back.



Great free-standing 2 bedroom, 2 bathroom home located in the Bahama Harbor Condominium Complex. The property features split level layout with the master bedroom and bath located in the upper level of the home. Some of the features include wood floors, air conditioning, a large transom window for extra light. The location is just a short walk away from the popular Downtown area of Old Town Key West.



"Yellow Orchid" Open M-F 10am-4pm
Oil 12" x 16" 333 Petronia St
by Teresa Willis 305-296-3515

blue-turtle gallery



Plan a Visit to the FLORIDA KEYS ECO-DISCOVERY CENTER.

Located in NOAA's Dr. Nancy Foster Florida Keys Environmental Complex on the Truman Annex waterfront in Key West, the Center features more than 6,000 square feet of interactive exhibits, which interpret the resources and management efforts of Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, two national parks, and four national wildlife refuges.

Admission is always free, so be sure to stop by for a visit: Tues - Sat 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Admission is free and so is parking! 35 East Quay Road, Key West, FL at the end of Southard Street in Truman Annex across the street from Fort Zachary Taylor.