

Southwest Georgia Living

true southern lifestyle

Nov/Dec 2019
'Tis the Season
SWGA Style



THE HOLIDAY ISSUE

Holiday Magic
Christmas Past at
Cobble Hill

Enjoy a Getaway
with Christmas in
the Keys

Refined Design
Townhouse by
Robert Brown

Plus
HOLIDAY TREATS
to savor with
family & friends

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Christmas IN THE KEYS

*HOLIDAY STRESS SELTS AWAY AT
A FAVORITE DESTINATION FOR
MANY SWG 1 NATIVES...
THE FLORIDA KEYS!*

By **KK SNYDER**

Proud to be a "Key West Conch," island native Nancy Rose Cooper left the famous southernmost point at age 18 to study at the University of Florida. She practiced interior design for 25 years, in Dallas, Seattle and Orlando. Having returned home a couple years ago, she's happy to be reliving her fond memories of Christmas celebrations on the island.

"Us kids, we always wanted it to be cold so we could wear our new sweaters," she recalls, noting the temperature would only go as low as about 60. When she was very

young, and the undeveloped Keys still had a small population, her family and others would make the 30-mile drive to Pine Key to cut their Christmas trees each year. And though it was years before the start of the popular Key West Lighted Boat Parade, Rose remembers participating in the traditional holiday parades down Duval Street.

"Key Westers love their parades," says Cooper, whose Christmas celebrations centered around food. From a family of Scottish descent, with over two centuries of presence in the Caribbean, she had an interesting mix



T TRAVEL



of traditions.

"So, a lot of their food was Scottish and also Caribbean," says Cooper, recalling meals for Christmas and other special occasions.

"My grandmother was known for her bread pudding, which was made with Cuban bread with layers of guava embedded in it, so it was like a blend of cultures. You baked it with a meringue on top of it, and it melted in your mouth. The locals called it 'the queen of all

puddings.' It would take her the whole day to make the dish, and it was quite elegant."

Her grandfather had family in Nassau and at Christmas would fly over to the Abacos for green turtles to bring home for turtle steaks. "That was their traditional Christmas Eve meal, served on a platter with white rice and green peas. And there was always a pot of pigeon peas, like the equivalent of good luck for New Year's, but they served it on Christmas."

Key West puts its unique stamp on Christmas traditions, including a lighted boat parade.



Hawks Cay Resort
DUCK KEY



TRAVEL

HAWKS CAY AT DUCK KEY • Nothing beats celebrating the holiday season with Santa Claus in flip flops at Hawks Cay Resort, where special holiday programming and themed events for adults only or the entire family will have everyone ready to tuck in for visions of sugarplums.

Among the festive holiday traditions generations of families enjoy are gingerbread house decorating, elf tuck-ins and story time for children at bedtime and sipping hot chocolate with Mrs. Claus in the lobby. In addition, the Coral Cay activities center transforms into Santa's Workshop, where children can create a special ornament souvenir with Santa and Mrs. Claus. And be prepared for Random Acts of Caroling, as carolers often make an appearance at guests' hotel rooms or villas to spread some holiday cheer.

While there is an endless list of activities for family participation, mom and dad can make a dinner reservation and enjoy a quiet evening after delivering the children to Kids Night Out Thursday through Saturday evenings in December. Holiday PJ and Movie Night, Reindeer Games and Holidazzle Glow Party are among the themed activities for ages 5-12.

In addition to all the holiday special events, the everyday offerings at Hawks Cay make vacation here unique any time of year. Hawks Cay has five pools, including one limited to adults only, in addition to an enclosed saltwater lagoon, where guests can safely swim, snorkel and paddleboard, using equipment available onsite. A big draw for kids and adults alike is the resort's Dolphin Connection program, offering varied levels of interaction with bottlenose dolphins, from observing on the sidelines for free to dolphin trainer for a day for \$329.

"We're the only resort in North America that gives guests the opportunity to view dolphins on site in their natural habitat," says Wilner Henry, marketing manager and a native of the Keys.

Having been completely devastated during Hurricane Irma, the recently rebuilt Hawks Cay has a special respect for first responders and each year honors military, fire and rescue, law enforcement and all medical personnel with its annual Heroes Salute program. Running late August to late November, the Heroes Salute includes special rates starting at \$109/night, special discounts on resort activities and weekly tribute events. **SGL**



At
1176 US
229-
Mon-Fri
Sat 10



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THE GARDENS HOTEL

Key West
 The Gardens Hotel on Key West offers a selection of elegant guestrooms, cottages and suites, all with private entrances, outdoor verandas, fine Italian linens and marble bathrooms. For more information, contact gardenshotel.com.



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HAWKS CAY RESORT

Duck Key
 Hawks Cay Resort on Duck Key offers 177 guestrooms and 250 two- and three-bedroom villas, a full-service marina, six restaurants, saltwater lagoon, five swimming pools, kid and teen clubs and the award-winning Calm Waters Spa. For more information, visit hawkscay.com.

Key West **DINING**



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LITTLE PEARL NEIGHBORHOOD FISH HOUSE & WINE BAR

Fresh local catch and innovative cuisine
littlepearlkeywest.com



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THIRSTY MERMAID RAW BAR RESTAURANT

Trendy hotspot featuring fresh seafood, craft beers & wine
thirstymermaidkeywest.com



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NINE ONE FIVE RESTAURANT & BAR

In the heart of the action on Duval Street, offering New Island cuisine of fresh local fare, Caribbean spices, Asian influences and French technique
915duval.com



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SANTIAGO'S BODEGA TAQUERIA

Featuring unique small plate preparations with global influences, authentic sangria and an eclectic atmosphere
santiagosbodega.com

Duck Key



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ANGLER & ALE

Florida Keys specialties and great drinks served on the docks at Hawks Cay Marina—they'll even cook your catch!
anglerandale.com



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SIXTY-ONE PRIME

Fine dining featuring prime steaks, signature seafood and an extensive wine menu in an elegant atmosphere
hawkscay.com