

WORTHY OF ITS OWN ZIP CODE

OCEAN REEF CLUB

“One of America's most exclusive communities.” – ROBB REPORT

KEY LARGO, FLORIDA: Ocean Reef Club is a member-owned club community set on 2,500 acres on the edge of the Atlantic. Its coastline is famous for great fishing and the only coral reef in North America. The club has expanded dramatically since Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin made visits in the 1960s. Residents can arrive by land, sea, or air. Located about a 55-minute drive from Miami, the community has an on-site, 4,400-foot lighted runway, one of the largest privately owned airports in America. Last year, the Ocean Reef Club Marina completed a project to replace its docks with new Bellingham Marine floating docks that can accommodate up to 175-foot vessels.



Ocean Reef Club has two private courses. The Hammock Course is shorter, tighter, and is carved through thick vegetation. The Dolphin Course, while longer, is more open and forgiving of errant shots.

TRADITIONS AT OCEAN REEF

“I believe what differentiates an exclusive private club from other golf facilities are traditions,” explained John Lyberger, vice president of club operations. “Each summer, Ocean Reef management gathers together to form a list of 100 new member ideas for the upcoming season. The activities are much more creative than a typical social calendar. As an example, our ‘Elf Tuck-in’ staff, dressed in elf outfits, visits member homes the night before Christmas to read a children’s story. I know we must be doing our job when our social membership wait list is 230 deep.”

Before relocating to Ocean Reef, John was director of golf for 20 years at Congressional Country Club in Bethesda, Maryland. “My role at Congressional focused almost exclusively on golf,” recalled Lyberger. “At Ocean Reef, I oversee all facets of operations and a vast array of amenities. As a PGA golf professional, you have to appeal to all constituents. At Congressional, it happened to be Republicans and Democrats. At Ocean Reef, it’s golfers, boaters, spa aficionados, and pilots.”

OYSTER TASTING 101

The U.S. Labor Department reports an average of 31.5 hours was dedicated to employee training last year. “In order to provide the same level of service across all departments, we have taken an innovative approach by establishing University of Ocean Reef,” said Molly Carroll, executive director of communications. “Extensive employee curriculum, with dozens of courses, run the gamut from team building exercises to pickleball rules and playing strategy.

“Executive Chef Damian Gilchrist has been with us over 10 years and continues to create. The Islander [one of 13 restaurants at Ocean Reef] offers an innovative ‘oyster passport’ allowing you to track oyster tasting. So the culinary staff would be knowledgeable about the program, we offered seminars that I call ‘Oyster Tasting 101,’” smiled Carroll. ■

For more information, please visit OceanReef.com.

DELIVERING A BROAD SPECTRUM OF INTERESTS: • ART LEAGUE — classes in watercolor, stained glass, mosaics, glass blowing, and memoir writing.

• BONEFISH BONNIES — a group of over 100 female anglers. • FLYING CLUB — a union of pilots and non-flyers supporting the love of aviation.

• ROD & GUN CLUB — offering sporting clay days, bone-fishing trips to Andros, salmon fishing in Russia, and Argentina Dove Shoots.

• CARD SOUND MODEL YACHT CLUB — conducting weekly races of radio-controlled scale replicas of America's Cup yachts.