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SPECIAL ISSUE



## BEST OF THE BEST



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for full ownership and \$442,000 for a one-twelfth share); and a three-bedroom fractional-ownership penthouse (six shares at about \$980,000 each).

Scattered throughout the estate, the farmhouses range from 4,000 square feet to 7,000 square feet and have been restored or reconstructed from ruins using traditional methods and reclaimed stone and timber. The homes' traditional Tuscan design—exposed wood beams, barrel-vaulted ceilings, alfresco wood ovens and fireplaces, ceramic and terra-cotta tiles—is complemented by contemporary amenities that include glass-tiled infinity-edge pools. Layouts and color schemes vary, but most of the farmhouses have arched, floor-to-ceiling picture windows; chef's kitchens; oversize bathtubs; and outdoor lounging spaces.

The restoration of Castello di Casole's farmhouses is an ongoing project that started in 2005, when architects and designers from Timbers's in-house team and the Hilton Head, S.C.-based J. Banks Design Group began enlisting Italian

artisans to help source materials such as travertine marble, Bisazza mosaics, and alabaster from nearby Volterra. Rubelli in Venice supplied many of the textiles for the residences, and antiques and vintage decorative pieces—including wrought iron birdcages—were sourced by dealers and auction houses throughout Italy.

Of the 28 farmhouses being restored and reconstructed, all 16 of the finished residences have sold (more will launch this year). Limited ownership opportunities still remain for Castello di Casole's 10 villas, which are more contemporary in design but were refurbished using the same level of craftsmanship as the farmhouses.

Anchoring the Castello di Casole community is the property's namesake hotel, which opened in July 2012 within a restored 10th-century castle. The 41-room property offers multiple dining options, a clubby bar, and an expansive spa.

Castello di Casole also has its own vineyards and olive groves, and it maintains a

private reserve where owners can forage for mushrooms or hunt for wild game. In addition to such basics as around-the-clock security and daily housekeeping, owner perks at the community include temperature-controlled wine storage, sommelier-managed cellars, and exclusive purchasing opportunities of a limited allotment of the estate's private-label wines. A car and driver are also available for round-trip transport to nearby wineries, as well as to Siena, Florence, and many other Tuscan treasures. —SANDRA RAMANI

*Castello di Casole, 888.892.1278, [www.castellodicasole.com](http://www.castellodicasole.com)*

**D**orado Beach, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve (787.796.5620, [www.doradobeach.com](http://www.doradobeach.com)), opened last December on the site of Laurance S. Rockefeller's original Dorado Beach Resort in Puerto Rico. Set on a pristine stretch of sand within the greater Dorado Beach community, the 50-acre





property encompasses a 115-room hotel, a new beach club, an indoor-outdoor spa, and chef José Andrés's first restaurant outside the continental United States. It also includes a limited number of private residences that offer perhaps the most exclusive ownership opportunities at this legendary Puerto Rican paradise.

Properties available at Dorado Beach—the first-ever residences from Ritz-Carlton's ultrapremium Reserve brand—range from two- to four-bedroom beachfront condominiums to four- to six-bedroom villas with

beach and golf course views. Master plans call for a total of 100 condos (\$2.5 million to \$7 million) and 12 villas (\$4.5 million to about \$8 million). Buyers can choose from a number of floor plans and interior styles—from Mediterranean to modern—or create a completely custom home with the community's design team.

Standard to all homes at the Ritz-Carlton Reserve are floor-to-ceiling glass doors, private plunge pools, and Sub-Zero and Wolf kitchen appliances. Home ownership also comes with VIP

access to the resort's amenities, as well as membership to the Dorado Beach community's four Robert Trent Jones-designed golf courses.

—JACKIE CARADONIO

THANKS TO ITS coastal-hillside setting on Virgin Gorda, **Oil Nut Bay** (284.393.1000, [www.oilnutbay.com](http://www.oilnutbay.com)) offers an ocean view with each of its 88 homesites (\$2 million to \$15 million). The 400-acre property launched in 2009 but came to fruition in the past year with the debut of its 8,700-square-foot beach club (with three swimming pools, a bar, and a restaurant), a wellness center, and three Cliff House villas where potential buyers can stay (Oil Nut Bay does not have a hotel) and get a taste of this exclusive Caribbean community.

Twenty-three of the homesites at Oil Nut Bay have been purchased, and six homes are now being completed. The residences emphasize indoor/outdoor living and are limited to one story and 15,000 square feet of air-conditioned space. The community's amenities include a forthcoming marina village that will supply enough permanent slips for every owner at Oil Nut Bay.

—SAMANTHA BROOKS



Oil Nut Bay