

# *Cayman Kai Vacations*



Specializing in offering  
"The Island Houses of Cayman Kai"  
Vacation Rentals, Rental Management and Investment Properties  
in the Cayman Kai/Rum Point area, Grand Caymans, Cayman Islands  
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## **INFORMATION REGARDING BEACHES, SNORKELING, STARFISH BEACH AND OTHER ACTIVITIES**

The Island Houses of Cayman Kai has a freshwater pool, plus various options for beach swimming and snorkeling. Based on previous guest's questions, the following is some information that should be helpful to you.

**"Is the Cove in front of the Island Houses calm enough for the kids to play in?"**

Here is a view of the cove:



As you can see, the water is very tranquil. Even on those occasions when the winds and waves are strong in the North Sound, the water in the cove stays calm.

That is because the Island Houses are located at the northern end of a protected cove that opens into the North Sound only at the far southwestern end, and relative to the prevailing winds the cove entrance is “upwind” from the North Sound so even closer to the cove entrance there is typically little or no distinct wave action.

Here is a screenshot that shows the Island Houses, the cove, and their orientation relative to the North Sound and the prevailing winds.

The prevailing winds are from the east-northeast and their approximate direction is shown by the yellow arrow. The Island Houses are marked by the red circle.



**How about turtle grass and “ironshore” ... is there any or is the beach area clear?**

Here is another view at a closer zoom.



The Island Houses are right across the street from Rum Point Club & Beach. The cove beach is sandy and has **no ironshore**. There is a type of “turtle grass” on the deeper part of the sea bottom off that beach.

You will notice there is a boat dock at the very northern end of the cove. The water either side of where the dock meets the beach is quite shallow and the slope (the angle of depth increase) is also very slight – that’s approximately the area I’ve marked out in the thin yellow line in this image. The water is usually quite clear but the bottom is a much finer powdery type of sand than you might have experienced on 7-Mile Beach or other Caribbean beaches, and on the bottom there’s a thin layer of light brown algae-type growth; it feels kind of “squishy” like a cross between sand and clay.

The kids may enjoy splashing around in that, but for those of us who enjoy pristine white sand sea bottoms just a few steps away there's another beach right there for you to use. The Island Houses complex is the ideal location in the Rum Point/Cayman Kai area because as you can see the beautiful beaches of Rum Point are just across the street! There are three stretches of beach at Rum Point Club, and you are welcome to use either of those. I've marked those "1", "2" and "3" on the image above.

The Rum Point Club usually sets out beach chairs in front of "1" and "2".

Beach "3" is a good spot to get into the water to go snorkeling – there is another image below to show you where to go from there for great snorkeling!

Below is a glimpse of Beach "3" that also shows the typical clear water and white sand bottom of our three beaches (as numbered above) at Rum Point Club.



By the way in case you didn't know this, all the beaches in Cayman are "public" i.e. you are not trespassing if you walk along the beach from property to property. The only issue with "trespass" could be getting from the road to the beach, so there are designated and signposted public beach access points around the island in addition to access through public beach establishments. It's "no problem" from the Island Houses though because the Rum Point Club right across the road is a public access to the beaches which our guests are welcome to use, and there are beautiful white sand beaches to walk and "go beachcombing" in this area!

## Which is the best beach for young children?

The beach labeled “2” above is probably the best for young children because it has such a gradual slope so there’s a large wading area for the kids to play in shallow water.

Here’s a photo of kids playing in the water at that beach.

Given its usually clear water, white sand bottom, very gradual slope and wide expanse of shallow water, for taking young kids wading and swimming this is probably the very best beach anywhere on the island!



## Where is the best snorkeling?

There are usually several sets of snorkeling gear at the individual Island Houses, and several great snorkeling spots around the Rum Point and North Side area. If you need additional gear such as snorkeling safety vests, check with Red Sail Sports across the street at Rum Point Club.



To go to our favorite “walk-to & swim-to” snorkeling spot enter the water at Rum Point beach “3” and head in the direction shown in this image. The dark spots in the image are coral shoals around which you will typically find many different species of brightly colored fish, corals, and often you can even spot a lobster hiding in a hole in the coral. You may spot conch crawling along the bottom, and you may even spot a stingray cruising along. The water in this area around the shoals will be around 7 to 10 feet deep.

*A couple of aspects to watch out for while snorkeling in this area:*

1). If you swim beyond the shoals you will reach water with a plain sandy bottom that is around 12 to 15 feet deep between the shoals and the reef. If you get to that type of water, we suggest you turn around and head back in to enjoy the shallower water that hosts more marine species you can see up close.

2). If the wind is strong there may be a strong sea current flowing westward i.e. away from the Rum Point beaches (or pushing toward the left in the photo above) so ***be sure to pay attention to your location and “drift”***, and **don’t go beyond your ability to swim back to the beach!**

## STARFISH BEACH & OTHER SNORKELING SPOTS

In addition to the beaches a few steps away from the Island Houses, there are a few other snorkeling spots and also “Starfish Beach” in the vicinity.

### “Starfish Beach”

This beach along the southern side of Water Cay is known for usually having several starfish visible in the water. It is about **1.4 miles** from the Island Houses. To get there, from the Island Houses turn right (south) onto Water Cay Road, follow it down all the way past Camp Road and The Kaibo and continue on (west) till you get to the end of the road in Ivory Kai Point which is still mostly undeveloped land. Walk over to the beach at the point on your left hand side, and if you keep a sharp lookout in the shallows you can usually spot one or more starfish. You may need to wade out a bit into the water, and head back toward the east along the beach (back towards The Kaibo direction), but usually somewhere along there you will spot a starfish grazing on the sea bottom – maybe several!



{ Island Houses marked by red circle. }

The starfish has five arms, typically around 10” diameter, and can be various shades of orange to brown. It does not swim: it moves along the bottom. Sometimes you can spot a starfish in our cove behind Kai Kotch, so when you go on the kayak or paddle boat you can keep an eye out for one resting on the sea bottom.

### Rum Point Public Beach

On Rum Point Drive a short distance east of Water Cay Road (about **0.4 miles** from the Island Houses) there’s a marked Public Beach facility on the north (sea) side of the road. You can snorkel out to the reef from there, and sometimes you can find sea biscuit shells along the sea bottom on the way out nearer the reef.

## **“Babylon Reef” Snorkeling**

A snorkeling spot that gets “rave reviews” on the message boards is called Babylon Reef. To get there you’ll need to drive, as it’s a bit over 7 miles away along the main road heading east.

At the intersection with Rum Point Drive, turn right (east). Follow that road all the way through North Side into Old Man Bay. At the Old Man Bay intersection with Old Robin Road (**6.9 miles** from Island Houses) take a sharp left turn onto Old Robin Road. That follows the north coast heading east. After you pass Northern Lights Villas on the left, keep an eye out for an empty lot on the left (sea side) of the road, with a sign “Conolly’s Cove” on the (usually open) gate (about **1.3 miles** from the start of Old Robin Road, about **8.2 miles** from the Island Houses).

*Note:* A short distance further to the east there is also a private property signed “Babylon Reef” that has a vacation home built on it, but that is not open to public access!

*Note:* If you pass the Queen’s Highway Monument on the right, where Old Robin Road becomes Queen’s Highway, then you’ve gone a bit too far: just backtrack to the west and look for the open lot on the sea side.

Drive in to the “Connolly’s Cove” property, and your entry point for snorkeling will be at that beach. When you enter the water, bear slightly right to follow the reef. The reef is fairly close to the shore so there’s a lot of coral and other marine life to see.



## **Ocean Frontiers Boat Snorkeling Tours**

Ocean Frontiers run a 3 stop boat snorkeling tour usually on Wednesdays. You can call them at 947-7500 to reserve your trip. Ocean Frontiers is a dive operation located at Compass Point Dive Resort in East End, a bit over **14 miles** drive along the coastline from the Island Houses.

Allow about 25 minutes driving time to get there.

To get to Compass Point, follow the directions above to get onto Old Robin Road which becomes Queen’s Highway and keep on that main road following the coastline all the way past The Reef Resort, Morrith’s Tortuga Club, and Gun Bay. Queen’s Highway becomes Austin Conolly Drive. Shortly after you pass the Wreck of the Ten Sails monument with the huge brass propeller (on the left side of the road), Compass Point Villas and Ocean Frontiers will be on the left (sea) side of the road, at 346 Austin Conolly Drive.

### ***A few aspects to watch out for while snorkeling anywhere:***

- 1). Don't go alone! Have at least one "snorkel buddy" go along with you. {Sometimes a little bit of help when you need it can make a huge difference, and often "two heads are better than one" on a snorkel expedition. Besides, if you're all alone nobody may believe you when you tell them all the cool things you spotted!}
- 2). If the wind is strong there may be a strong sea current flowing so be sure to pay attention to your location and "drift", and **don't go beyond your ability to swim back to the beach!**
- 3). Consider renting a snorkel safety vest from Red Sail Sports (across the street), especially if you're not a strong swimmer or experienced snorkeler. The purpose of the vest is to provide extra buoyancy to help you swim, especially if you're finding it difficult to swim back to shore.
- 4). Consider renting a snorkel safety "Divers Down" flag from Red Sail Sports (across the street at Rum Point Club). That's a small floating red flag with a white diagonal stripe that you tow behind you on a light rope while you're snorkeling, to alert boat traffic to your location. Anyway if you hear a boat or other watercraft approaching it's a good idea to get your head above water, look at them and wave if necessary, to be sure they are avoiding coming too close to you.

## **OTHER ACTIVITIES**

In addition to the beaches, snorkeling, and water sports rentals at Rum Point, here are a few ideas of other things to do during your vacation at The Island Houses of Cayman Kai.

### ***Activities***

- Take a glass-bottom-boat tour to Stingray Sandbar, and play with the stingrays. Book this with Red Sail Sports at Rum Point Club. The boat leaves from Rum Point Dock across the street from Kai Kotch, and from there it's only a 15-minute boat ride to the sandbar. Play with the stingrays, or stay aboard and just watch! This trip includes a second snorkel stop at a shallow reef. Families love this adventure!

Internet Link: [http://www.redsailcayman.com/modules/resqwest/display\\_activity\\_details/1491](http://www.redsailcayman.com/modules/resqwest/display_activity_details/1491)

- Go on a Cayman Safari Adventure, riding "open-air" in a Land Rover safari vehicle to special places and people in Grand Cayman's "outer districts". This "personalized" tour gives an excellent orientation to the island, its history and culture. Stops may include Pedro St. James, the Botanic Park and/or Mission House, as well as other authentic local stops/features – tour stops can be modified to your preference. You can contact Susana at +1 (345) 925-3001, request pickup/drop-off at Rum Point Club. Internet link: <http://www.caymansafari.com/>



- See "The Barefoot Man" a very popular entertainer, for a fun evening at the Reef Resort in the air conditioned Pelican's Reef restaurant from 7pm to 10 pm, Tuesday and Thursdays. On those evenings they offer a three-course "set menu" dinner for a reasonable price, but make reservations beforehand: call +1 (345) 947-3100.

- Try your luck at deep sea fishing.** You can contact Capt. Phil of Chip Chip Charters at +1 (345) 916-1680. You can arrange for pick-up and drop-off at Rum Point dock across the street

Internet Link: <http://www.chipchipcharters.com/>

•**Hike the Mastic Trail**, but do it with a National Trust guide! Contact the National Trust for the Cayman Islands at +1 (345) 949-7494 to arrange that.

•If you don't go there with Cayman Safari Adventures, **Visit the Botanic Park** and if you're lucky you'll get to see one (or more) of the blue iguanas that are free to roam in the park. They are an endangered species native only to Grand Cayman. The park is off Frank Sound Road – watch for the sign. {It's more interesting and enjoyable to go there with the Cayman Safari guide though, and he somehow manages to find a blue iguana there just about every trip!} {If you don't go there with Cayman Safari Adventures} Visit the Pedro St. James National Historical Site, and be sure to take in the multi-sensory theatre presentation that's great for young and old, also the tour of the main building and surrounding grounds. Be sure to bring your camera for spectacular photos with the cliffs and coastline as your backdrop. It's on Pedro Castle Road, leading south to the coastline from the Savannah “not-quite-a-roundabout” intersection opposite Countryside Shopping Village.

### **Restaurants**

**Rum Point “Wreck Bar & Grill”** – across the street from the Island Houses at Rum Point Beach – open every day serving a range of “grill”-type sandwiches and meals, and famous mudslides!



**Kaibo Yacht Club** – just one mile south of the Island Houses -has both a (downstairs) beach bar and grill especially popular on the weekends, and “Upstairs” a fine-dining Contemporary Caribbean restaurant open on Friday Saturday and Sunday night's.



**Over the Edge** – about 7 miles east of the Island Houses on the coastline along the main road in Old Man Bay – a popular bar and restaurant for enjoyable dining over the water!



**Portofino Restaurant in Gun Bay** – about 12 miles from the Island Houses– set on the seaside serving a selection of Italian, Indian and seafood dishes. The ocean side patio sits high above <http://caymanislandsdiscounts.com/PortofinoView2.JPG> one of the most beautiful views in the world.



**Vivines Kitchen in East End** – about 14 miles from the Island Houses -a charming authentic Caymanian restaurant recommended for a lunch stop overlooking a picturesque bay and the reefs beyond. Try their fish & fritters with fried plantains, local fruit juices, and “heavy cake” for dessert. {If you go on the Cayman Safari Adventure they will probably take you there.}



**Roland's Garden** – about 11 miles from the Island Houses if you take the Frank Sound Road and then turn left onto Sea View Road – is a unique evening dining experience literally set in Roland's garden in the woodlands, but more suited to adults and older teenagers. If you want to do this, make reservations well in advance: call +1 (345) 926-7070 and Chef Roland will explain it to you.



**The Lighthouse Restaurant** -in Breakers on the way to Bodden Town – is a very fine restaurant, great for lunch or dinner.

