



# Baker's Cay Key Largo

## *Reimagining*

The Hilton Key Largo was an underperforming and tired resort hotel. KHP Capital Partners called on Gensler to reimagine the property in its outstanding and lush tropical location, transforming it to a four-star resort destination.

The intent was to take advantage of the property's unique physical setting while overcoming its challenges: a subpar beachfront guest experience, confusing wayfinding on the sprawling 14 acre site, and non-native and uninspiring landscaping. The re-branding to Curio Collection afforded a complete aesthetic and programmatic update for the buildings and grounds.

## *Restoration (Irma)*

Hurricane Irma struck the Keys hard in early September of '17 when the renovation project was at the midway point. The impact and damage caused by Irma required an extensive re-build effort. The entire property including areas already renovated were assessed and documented for reconstruction to meet current code standards.

Gensler assisted KHP in navigating the difficult insurance claim process and worked tirelessly on and off site with the team to put the project back on track.





## *Outcome*

Baker's Cay was transformed with a harmonious integration of environmental and architectural elements. Surrounded by a dense hardwood tree hammock heavily protected in the Keys, Gensler worked with a landscape architect to maintain the integrity of the natural setting while improving waterfront visibility and wayfinding to create an immersive guest experience that feels "off the beaten path." Lush landscaping and a variety of palm trees restore a natural, tropical feel throughout.

The complete arrival experience from the entrance to the registration desk was enhanced. A new monument sign introducing the resort at Overseas Highway and creative landscaping and lighting at the driveway lead to an enhanced porte' cochere. Visibility and layout at the lobby were altered to improve experience and function.



A beachside bar and lounge with an expansive terrace and stepped deck, brings a new food and drink venue to the water's edge of the north beach. Multiple twelve-foot wide operable glass walls on two sides of the bar create an indoor-outdoor experience. In combination with a reconstituted Tiki Bar, this transforms the guest experience.

Within the resort buildings, renovations refreshed the facility throughout including all public and back-of-house areas. Gensler and interior designer Powerstrip updated the tired ballrooms and boardroom spaces and the three-meal restaurant with all new finishes, lighting, and furnishings.





The key count, which couldn't be increased due to zoning, shifted to accommodate six new water facing rooms and six pool facing two-bedroom kitchenette suites. All rooms were completely re-built including 10 deluxe one-bedroom suites.

After this extensive three-year renovation and rebranding, Baker's Cay Resort stands as one of the Florida Keys' most-desired destinations. It was named 2020 Best Resort at the Golden Palm Awards by the NEWH Hospitality Excellence Awards and named #1 Resort in the Florida Keys by Conde Naste Traveler readers.