



# NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **UNDERWATER ESCAPES IN THE DIVE CAPITAL OF NORTH AMERICA**

### **Key Largo Bay Marriott Beach Resort Announces Two-Night Dive Packages for the Summer**

KEY LARGO, FLORIDA: Noted as the dive capital of North America, Key Largo, Florida, is truly one of the country's environmental wonders featuring the John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park – the first underwater park in the United States – and the Key Largo National Marine Sanctuary. These two parks comprise an area of 178 nautical miles featuring 55 varieties of coral and 600 species of fish. Now, the Key Largo Bay Marriott Beach Resort is offering an outstanding way to explore these undersea wonders at a great value rate. The "Dive the Florida Keys with the Marriott Key Largo" package is a two-night, three dive adventure featuring accommodations at the resort and daily dives from "It's a Dive" dive shop located directly on the property.

The **Dive the Florida Keys with the Marriott Key Largo** package is available May through September, priced from \$274 per night, and includes two nights accommodations and three watersport vouchers per person. Vouchers may be used for a SCUBA trip (two tank dive including tanks and weights), snorkel trip, ½ hour waverunner rental, or parasail. The package is exclusively available through the resort's on-site dive shop, *It's A Dive*. Please call (800) 809-9881 to reserve this package. Prices are per room, per night, double occupancy and do not include tax and/or gratuities (single rates available upon request). The package is based upon availability, and requires a two-night minimum stay.

The John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park is named for a late Miami newspaper editor who championed local environmental preservation. This underwater park along with the adjacent Key Largo National Marine Sanctuary features the nine-foot-high "Christ of the Deep," a 4,000-pound bronze statue installed as an underwater shrine. Created by Italian sculptor Guido Galletti, the statue stands on a 20-ton concrete base in 25 feet of water. A duplicate of the "Christ of the Abyss" situated in 50 feet of water off the coast of Italy, the "Christ of the Deep" was a gift to the Underwater Society of America from industrialist and undersea sportsman Egidi Cressi. It has become one of the most photographed underwater sites in the world and is a popular spot for underwater weddings.

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## KEY LARGO MARRIOTT DIVE PACKAGE

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The 510-foot Spiegel Grove, a retired U.S. Navy Landing Ship Dock, is the largest ship ever intentionally sunk to create an artificial reef. The vessel was the center of international attention when it prematurely sank and rolled over May 17, 2002. Three weeks later, a salvage team successfully reoriented the ship on its right side and it subsequently opened to divers. An excellent multilevel dive, the huge ship already has attracted legions of fish and other marine life. The ship can be viewed by scuba divers at various depths of 60 to 130 feet. The Spiegel Grove is positioned about six miles off Key Largo in 130 feet of water. Several mooring buoys provide convenient tie-off points for boaters.

Experienced scuba divers also can investigate two vintage sister Coast Guard cutters purposely sunk off Key Largo in 1987 to serve as artificial reefs. Positioned just south of Molasses Reef, the 327-foot vessels rest on white sand in 120 feet of water. Diving either of the two wrecks is not for novices and should be attempted only with a Keys-based dive-charter operator.

Located less than an hour south of Miami, in the dive capital of North America, the **Key Largo Bay Marriott Beach Resort** is nestled on 17 lush waterfront acres in Key Largo -- the first island of the Florida Keys. Each of the resort's 153 tropically appointed guestrooms and 24 suites include deluxe amenities with most rooms featuring waterfront views. The property offers an outstanding selection of amenities including an on-site dive shop with daily SCUBA and snorkeling trips, extensive watersports, boat dockage, beach volleyball, spa treatments, fitness center, children's program, bay-side beach, swimming pool, whirlpool, tiki bar and the acclaimed Gus' Grille Restaurant. For reservations or more information on the Key Largo Bay Marriott Beach Resort, please call (866) 849-3753 or (305) 453-0000 or click to [www.marriottkeylargo.com](http://www.marriottkeylargo.com).

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EDITORS NOTE: Photographs Available Upon Request