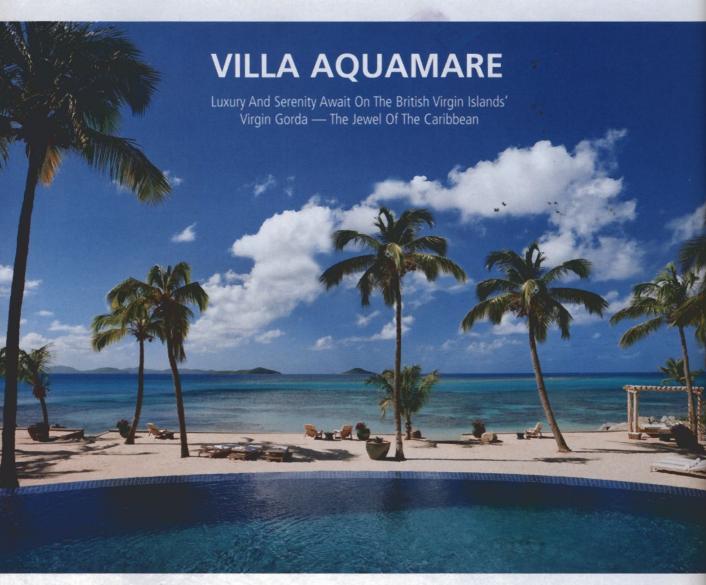
FLORIDA DESIGN

THE MAGAZINE FOR FINE INTERIOR DESIGN & FURNISHINGS

VOLUME 18#4





TEXT Jesse Bratter PHOTOGRAPHY Courtesy of Villa Aquamare, Virgin Gorda, British Virgin Islands



ABOVE: Villa Aquamare comprises three villas, each set on different elevations to maximize views of the Sir Francis Drake Channel. Each villa accommodates up to 12 guests, but two or all three can be rented out to host 36 people for intimate weddings and other celebrations.

ithin a cluster of isles along the clear turquoise waters of the Caribbean Sea and Sir Francis Drake Channel lies Virgin Gorda, a British Virgin Islands destination with light-filled grottos, white sand beaches, scattered granite boulders and winds that make it a sailor's dream.

And perfectly placed on this tropical paradise, discerning travelers will find Villa Aquamare - an enclave of villas that combine the first-rate service and luxury amenities of a

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TOP: Each villa at Villa Aquamare on Virgin Gorda in the British Virgin Islands boasts its own infinity pool fronting the Sir Francis Drake Channel. A white coral sandy beach is replete with chaises and a king-size daybed suspended over the sand.

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five-star hotel with all the exclusivity of a private home. Situated along the pristine west coast of Virgin Gorda's Mahoe Bay, Aquamare's trio of 8,000-square-foot, glass-enclosed, shingle-roofed villas exist in "a place where time seems to have paused at that magical moment when elegance and understated luxury reigned," so its mantra says.

Guests can rent one, two or all three, allowing up to 36 people the opportunity to experience this magic.

Each villa, situated on a different elevation from the next, features its own waterfront infinity pool, terrace, living room, dining area, outside dining area, gourmet kitchen, three master suites with marble bath areas and

separate outdoor shower rooms, a double suite and junior suite, and an observation deck. Local stonework, travertine marble and rich hardwoods run through the villas, creating a warm and welcoming, contemporary feel.

Villa Aquamare has an on-site Concierge House, where personnel attend to guests' every need, such as pre-ordering groceries and supplies for delivery prior to arrival, and securing top personal chefs. They can also arrange excursions along the Sir Francis Drake Channel, champagne sunset cruises, beach picnics, helicopter tours of the British Virgin Islands, or spa treatments in the outdoor shower rooms, invilla, on private balconies or beneath a thatched palapa on the beach.

For those who seek adventure, Villa Aquamare offers guests use of its kayaks and snorkeling gear, and close proximity to more than 30 diving sites ready for exploration.

But to stay above the surface, the concierge can also arrange for guests to enjoy Aquamare's fleet of yachts, including an Azimut 62-foot power yacht and a Tiara 36-foot cruising yacht. "What sets Aquamare apart is that it is a purpose-built villa with more space and master suites than the traditional, private home-style villas," says Guillermo Paz, co-owner of Aquamare.

Fore information, call 787/461-2638. ◆

