

KEYS

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INSIDE

# Back at the helm of resorts, Singh is bullish on city

**SINGH / From 11**

Clubs' departure, business is better than ever.

"We're doing great, actually," Singh said. "Occupancy at Tranquility Bay and Indigo Reef are up 50 percent from last year, and our room rates

are up 30 percent. All the units are sold at both those properties, and at Coral Lagoon we only have six left to close."

That fact that repeat buyers account for the majority of recent sales, he said, is a direct result of his company's resolve to always be on the lookout for ways to make guests and own-

ers happy, and improve their experience on the properties.

"We're adding new artwork to Coral Lagoon, including the units that are already sold,"

Singh said. "At Tranquility Bay we're adding another pool and a Jack Nicklaus-designed putting green. We're also adding a meeting room that will hold over 100 people, and we're putting iPod docking stations into all the units at Tranquility and Coral Lagoon.

"You see, we can never stop upgrading if we want to create a fresh, unique, first-class experience," Singh said. "It's the simple little things, like placing a yellow rubber duck by the bath tub, or putting the book 'The Little Prince' on the nightstand, or offering fresh juice to our guests at check in. It took us three days just to choose the best juice."

Happy guests lead to happy property owners, which lead to repeat purchases and growth for Singh's resort dynasty.

While some residents have decried the move toward

upscale venues throughout the island chain at the expense of the "mom and pop" resorts of the past, Singh believes that what's good for his company is also good for Marathon — and he's bullish on the Keys' central city.

"Marathon has been a sleeper for a long time, but that's about to change," Singh said.

"Look at this location. Marathon attracts families and an upscale clientele that loves the outdoors. If we can create a total experience, this town will benefit."

Singh said the average length of stay for guests at his Marathon resorts is over four days, which he says bodes well for the city because his deep-pocketed guests also eat, shop, and pay for recreational activities while in the area.

He estimates that he has up to 300 employees on his company payroll in the Keys.