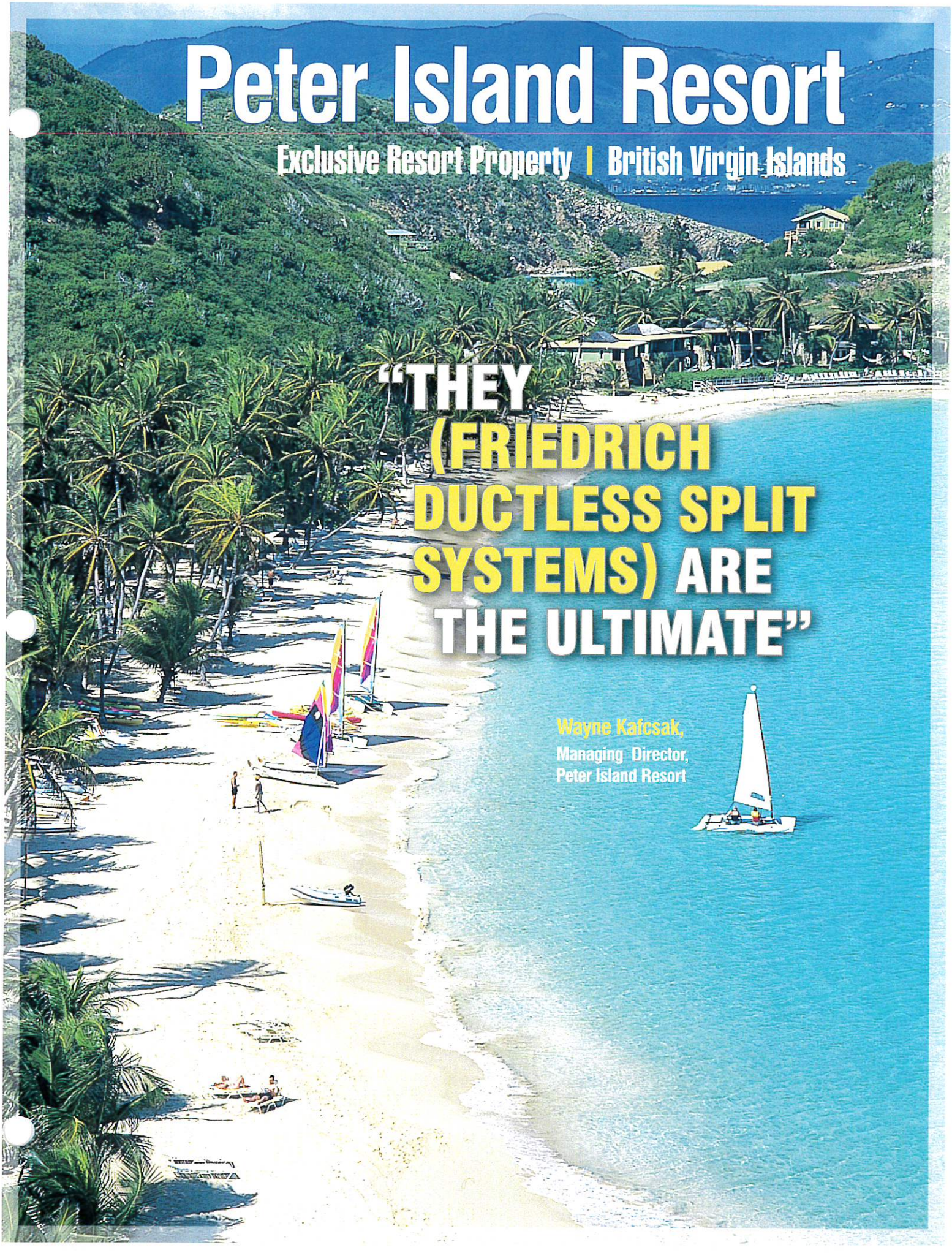
Peter Island Resort

Exclusive Resort Property | British Virgin Islands



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Wayne Kafcsak,
Managing Director,
Peter Island Resort

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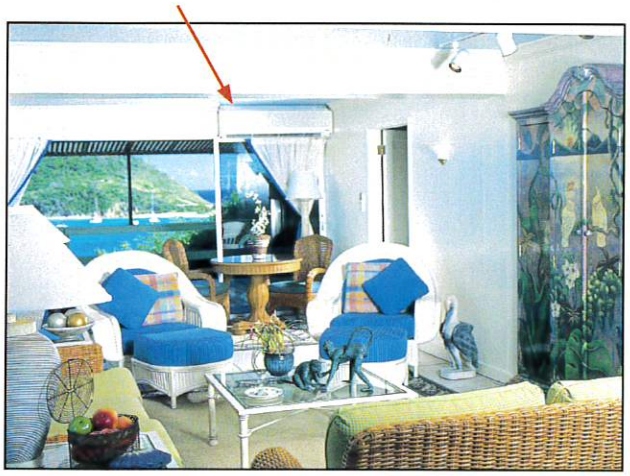

"They (Friedrich split systems) are the ultimate",

Wayne Kafcsak,
Managing Director, Peter Island Resort

Mr. Kafcsak recognizes how much his clientele relies on air conditioning so providing cool, comfortable guest rooms and common areas is a priority.

Project Summary:

Peter Island, located on a small island in the British Virgin Islands about 25 minutes by boat from the nearest residential island, is a tropical island hideaway for the rich and famous. In 1962 one owner developed a small resort using Norwegian prefabricated concrete structures as bungalows. Later, Amway founders Rich DeVos and Jay Van Andel discovered the island and were captivated by its incredible beauty. Together they transformed the property into a luxury island resort that is frequented by guests so elite that their identities are closely guarded. Mr. Van Andel now maintains sole ownership of the property which is rated one of the top 5 hotels in the Caribbean and is also among the top 25 remote hotels in the world with under 100 rooms.

Managing Director Wayne Kafcsak recognizes how much his elite clientele rely on air conditioning so providing cool, comfortable guest rooms and common areas is a priority. Air conditioning is even installed in lobby bathrooms and in part of the dining room, which is a departure from Caribbean tradition.

The property chose ductless split systems to condition the concrete bungalows because ductwork was not a realistic option and window units were not considered desirable in the upscale property. The original ductless units which were made by a different manufacturer were noisy and broke down frequently. This created a particularly difficult problem in a remote location. Almost the entire resort staff is brought in on water shuttles, which run from five in the morning to midnight daily. Trained HVAC repair personnel are not readily available. Parts are also not available on a moment's notice like they are in many land-locked areas. Reliability is essential. New Friedrich ductless split systems were installed throughout the entire property. Mr. Kafcsak chose Friedrich because he had purchased Friedrich split systems while managing another Caribbean resort and was pleased with their reliability and durability. According to Mr. Kafcsak, the Caribbean is saturated with other brands of ductless split systems that have historically had corrosion problems. Friedrich was one of the first to offer split systems and the units are well built to endure the hostile salt and humidity.

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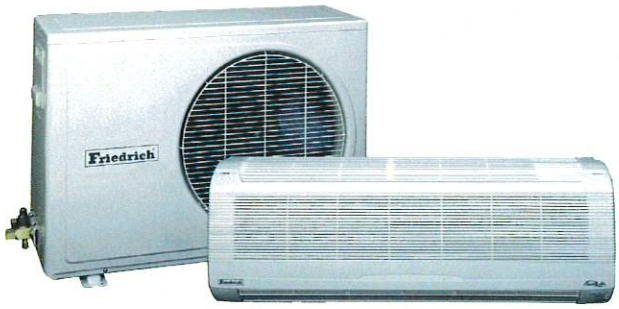
Installation Summary:

Wall-mounted ductless split systems are typically installed by drilling a hole through the wall separating the indoor and outdoor units. An insulated refrigerant line set, electrical wiring and a condensate drain made from pvc or vinyl tubing are then run between the outdoor condensing unit and the indoor coil. Line sets, wiring and condensate drains are then tied together at regular intervals and usually covered with a four-by-four box set which can be painted to match the building.

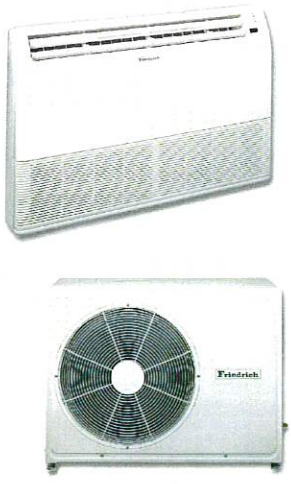
Peter Island's A-frame bungalows, by design, have shorter interior walls than a typical structure. To improve aesthetics and air flow and to minimize noise from outdoor units, the indoor units were carefully mounted at the highest possible point on a wall away from the beach and any interior walkways. The outdoor condensing units were landscaped for additional sound reduction, salt air protection and visual appeal.

Product Summary:

- Easy installation
- Low installed cost
- Lower utility bills
- Ultraquiet operation
- Simple controls
- Security advantage
- Low-ambient cooling
- Washable, reusable air filters
- Auto shut flaps
- Swing louvers (up/down)
- Auto-restart and Auto-changeover (heat pump only)
- Wireless remote control with sleep timer
- Four fan speeds plus auto-fan

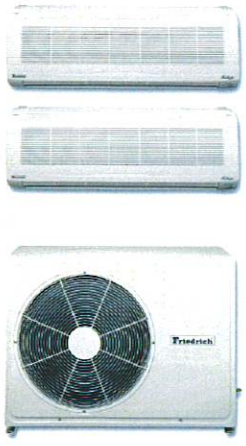


Universal air conditioner mounts on wall or ceiling



Ceiling-suspended air conditioners

Dual Zone air conditioner system



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the NEWS

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Ductless Split Systems focus

coverage starts on page 10

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"The Friedrich ductless systems have proven that they not only fulfill the needs of upscale guests, but can also withstand the beatings of Mother Nature".

Peter Island Resort installed Friedrich ductless mini-splits as part of a renovation project in 1997.

Ductless Splits Keep Caribbean Resort Cool

BY JAMES J. SIEGEL
OF *THE NEWS* STAFF

Ductless mini-splits have made a name for themselves by offering cooling opportunities that just can't be achieved through traditional HVAC systems. Ductless systems can provide better zone control, occupy less space, and, in some cases, are more aesthetically pleasing.

But what about durability and reliability? Friedrich states that its ductless mini-splits have proven that they can provide all of the above-mentioned benefits, and stand up to harsh environments.

For example, these systems were chosen over five years ago to be installed at the posh Peter Island Resort, located in the British Virgin Islands. The resort is situated on a 1,200-acre private island in the Caribbean Sea. This vacation spot is well known for its celebrity clientele.

The remote island has also been hit with hurricanes, which means that the resort and its HVAC systems must be ready to deal with powerful and unpredictable weather patterns.

The Friedrich ductless systems have proven that they not only can fulfill the needs of upscale guests, but can also withstand the beatings of Mother Nature.

QUIET SECLUSION

"We're unique because we're a classic Caribbean resort," says Wayne Kafcsak, managing director for Peter Island. "We've kept the resort very low key."

In fact, this low-key, remote atmosphere is what Kafcsak says has made the resort one of the top five hotels in the Caribbean, as well as one of the top 25 in the world.

He says the remote atmosphere of the island makes this possible. The resort can only be reached by private boat. The island includes

peter island

Ductless cooling was installed in the common areas of the Peter Island Resort, as well as the guest rooms.

two villas with only 52 rooms.

When the hotel was first built in 1962, there was no air conditioning at all. The construction of the building made it impossible to install ductwork. This is still true today. But with guests paying upwards of $1,000 a night to stay on the private island, air conditioning is a must.

Before Kafcsak came to Peter Island, the resort had installed a number of ductless systems that were manufactured by another company. These split systems were used over window units to fit better with the upscale environment.

Kafcsak said that the originally installed ductless systems did the trick, but had a few drawbacks. For one thing, the systems were noisy, especially compared with newer models. For a resort offering a peaceful escape for guests, quiet operation was essential.

Kafcsak indicated that the previously installed units would frequently break down. The need to make repairs on cooling systems obviously should be avoided, and not only for the sake of the guests. Since the resort can only be reached by commercial crew boat, trained technicians are not always readily available. The same goes for replacement parts.

With this in mind, Kafcsak says that the resort also needed a new ductless system that could be reliable or repaired on site. So in 1997, when the island decided to completely renovate the hotel and the villas, Kafcsak decided to go with the Friedrich ductless mini-splits.

Before he was the managing director for Peter Island, Kafcsak worked for a yacht club that also used these systems. Kafcsak says he knew that the models worked well at his previous place of employment, and he wanted the same reliability and quiet operation at the island resort.

The island's chief engineers installed each of the 129 units. The systems were placed in each guest room, as well as in common areas including bathrooms, lobbies, and dining areas. This, according to Kafcsak, is a real departure from what other Caribbean resorts do.

"Kafcsak says he knew that the models worked well at his previous place of employment, and he wanted the same reliability and quiet operation at the island resort".

"Exposure to salt water can be detrimental to some systems. But surprisingly, the Friedrich systems have yet to be affected, even after the hurricane, the company says".

WEATHERING THE STORM

Seven months after the installation of the systems and after an $8 million renovation of the resort, Peter Island reopened for business. But the island was only open for eight months before Hurricane Georges struck.

The hurricane caused 124-knot winds and flooded parts of the hotel with up to 3 feet of water. Peter Island needed to be closed again for another seven months in order to make repairs. But the Friedrich systems needed relatively little repair. Some of the ductless systems were physically thrown by the hurricane; others were submerged underwater. But generally, they continued to work after minor cleaning and the replacement of certain parts.

Exposure to salt water can be detrimental to some systems. But surprisingly, the Friedrich systems have yet to be affected, even after the hurricane, the company says.

The island uses ductless mini-splits in a location that is exposed to salt water almost on a daily basis. Kafcsak decided to have two Friedrich ductless systems installed on one of the island's commercial crew boats. The 65-ft aluminum boat is one of the main modes of transportation for the island.

At first, Kafcsak says, he had his doubts. He believed that a ductless system on the boat would be lucky to last for even a year.

That was more than two and a half years ago. The boat's mini-split systems are still going strong, even after continual salt water exposure. N