

## Recommended Plants for the Palms Beach Resort

This list is intended to serve as a guide for selecting plant material for the landscape at the Palm Beach Resort. All of these plants are native to the Virgin Islands and also adapted to the coastal environment found along St. Croix sandy north shore. There are many more plants species that are suitable for the area, but this list was developed based on the plants' ecological suitability, availability and utility in the landscape.

### Sea Lavender (*Argusia gnaphalodes*)



Native to the coast of south Florida, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. This is a partially succulent, evergreen plant reaching up to 3 m in height and having a spreading growth habit and usually found in clumps on coastal dunes. In landscapes it is usually grown for its attractive blue-silver foliage. The plants are highly tolerant of drought and salt spray.

Found from south Florida to Central America and throughout the Caribbean islands. Plants are usually concentrated to coastal scrub and beaches. They reach 4-7 m tall, have dark olive-green, compact foliage and flower throughout the year. Flowers open white and turn purple over several days and the blooming period can last several weeks and bloom multiple times per year. [Please see the attached fact sheet for more detailed information.]

### Jamaican Caper (*Capparis cynophallophora*)



### Coco Plum (*Chrysobalanus icaco*)



Native to both rocky and sandy coasts from south Florida, Central America and the Caribbean Islands. This medium sized shrub usually grows to less than 3 m tall. The waxy foliage makes it attractive in landscapes planted either singly or sculpted as a hedge. The slightly sweet fruit is edible and relished by shore birds and humans alike. The pinkish-white fruit is found on plants native to the Virgin Islands while those from Florida have a much smaller, dark purple fruit.

### Pitch Apple (*Clusia rosea*)



Native to humid forests and coastal areas throughout Central America and the Caribbean Islands. This medium sized tree with an umbrella-shaped canopy can grow to 20 m over time, but tends to be much smaller near the coast and can also be shaped and pruned. Thick leathery leaves and unusual year-round flowers make this an attractive ornamental tree as well as a draw for wildlife, particularly native bats.

Eggers agave, Century plant (*Agave eggersiana*).



This plant's natural world distribution is on St. Croix, U.S Virgin Islands only. It is one of the territory's most unique and endangered organisms. Healthy agaves are found in diverse areas including salty sand, steep rocky slopes and in manicured gardens. Its tolerance to bright sun, wind and drought are unsurpassed. It is locally known as a century plant for the stunning 5 m tall flower spike the plant produce, supposedly, every 100 years. In fact, plants live for 7-10 years, flower once and then die. Nectar from these immense flowers is critical food for wildlife during the dry season. Planted alone, the rosette shaped foliage adds texture and variety to a landscape. Planted together, the triangle shaped thorns along its succulent leaves can be used to create a formidable barrier. This plant is a close relative to the blue Mexican agave from which tequila is derived.

White Frangipani (*Plumeria alba*)

Native to the dry forests and coastal areas throughout Central America and the Caribbean Islands. The small, attractive tree grows to 8 m tall. Branches are succulent, producing copious amounts of caustic white latex when cut. The leaves are very linear and concentrated to the end of curled branches, giving some trees a Dr. Seuss-like appearance. The large, somewhat fragrant flowers are white with yellow centers and are produced in bursts throughout the year. Giant, colorful caterpillars from the pseudosphinx moths consume the leaves in such quantities that they sometimes defoliate the tree and become inedible in the process. However, no harm is done to the tree.



Silver Buttonwood, Mangrove Tree (*Conocarpus erectus*)

Probably native to most tropical, coastal areas in the western hemisphere, but now much more widely planted. The tree can reach over 10 m in height and can be either a tree or manicured into an attractive hedge. This is a very tough tree that can handle almost any seaside or urban conditions and still require little care. It is one of the most widely available native trees in the territory and both green and silver varieties are often available in nurseries. It is ideal for parking lot plantings, as a tall screen or a low hedge.



Native range is from south Florida throughout the Caribbean Islands. Inkberry is a shrub found along sandy beaches and dunes and often occurs in large, dense hedges. It is a beach stabilizing plant that traps sand and sometimes buries itself. The flower is white with all the petals positioned on one side, giving it the appearance of a sunrise. There are several species in the genus, but the Virgin Islands native produces a black, olive sized fruit with a single seed in the center. It has not been reported that this plant could interfere with turtle nesting.

Inkberry (*Scaevola plumieri*)





### Sea Grape (*Coccoloba uvifera*)



Sea grape is a versatile tree well-suited to coastal landscapes. The tree can reach over 10 m in height but; like the buttonwood, can be pruned smaller and even into a hedge. The large, leathery leaves provide a smooth texture and outline in the landscape. The young leaves emerge reddish, providing extra color. Another desirable feature of the tree is the hanging bunches of berry sized fruits which are both edible and attractive. Its tolerance to salt and drought make it a relatively low-maintenance plant that does equally well in sandy beaches and parking lot plantings

### Royal Palm (*Roystonea borinquena*)

The Royal Palm is native from Hispanola through the Virgin Islands, but has been planted throughout the tropics for its beauty and versatility. Reaching over 20 m at maturity, it is the tallest and fastest growing of the Virgin Islands three native palms. This plant was once quite common, but today is found mostly in isolated patches in guts. Although somewhat drought tolerant, the royal palm is one of our more water-loving trees and can withstand occasional flooding. In the landscape it is most frequently planted in rows, giving the appearance of formal columns. Its great height makes it more suited to open spaces. Old leaves can reach 4 m in length and require occasional disposal.



### Pipe Organ Cactus, Dildo Cactus (*Pilocereus royenii*)



This is the most conspicuous cactus of the Virgin Islands and is found in dry areas and along the coast throughout all the eastern Caribbean islands. The succulent pipe-organ stems grow mostly upright in a multi-branched clump reaching 3 or 4 m high and can eventually produce a woody, spineless trunk. The stems are blue green in color with vertical ridges lined with sharp spines. Flowers are large, mostly white, opening at night and lasting a matter of days. In the landscape, its color and texture provide a striking contrast and requires almost no maintenance. This cactus is a slow grower, but should be given ample space and never placed near pedestrian ways. If they are planted in a row they will grow to form an effectively impenetrable barrier. The plant demands well-drained soil and do not grow well in the shade.

### Thatch Palm, Silver Palm (*Coccothrinax argentea*)

This palm is one of three species native to the U.S. Virgin Islands and occurs naturally in grasslands and coastal areas throughout the Caribbean region. The plants can reach 7 m in height with a relatively slender 15 cm diameter trunk. However, silver palms are very slow growing and take many years to achieve such size. The broad, palm-shaped leaves are widely spaced and droop slightly on their long stems giving them a delicate appearance. The leaves are deep green on top with silvery undersides that earn the plant its local name. This plant is growing increasingly rare and few remain in the wild. In landscapes it has been ignored in favor of similar looking imported palms that now threaten the genetic integrity of our natives via hybridization. They can be planted in sandy, rocky or even calcareous soil, but not directly in beach sand. Young plants seem to prefer a small amount of shade. They are most attractive when two or three individuals are planted closely together in a cluster, especially if they are different sizes.

