



# Hotel with History Gets Stylish Transformation

How a young Bermudian couple are investing in bringing back the golden age of tourism

**J**ohn and Alison Young took over the Ledgelets Cottage Colony about three years ago when John's grandmother, Nelga Spurling Young, passed away.

The Ledgelets is a cluster of seven cottages, centered around a main house with a pool and clubhouse. The property was one of the first cottage colonies operated in Bermuda, opening

in 1948. This was during the "golden age" of travel and international interest in the island. Growing up in and around the hospitality business, John always knew he wanted to get involved with the family business. His grandparents owned three hotel properties over the years, including the Lantana Colony Club in Somerset (and adjacent

to the Ledgelets over the railway trail).

The renovation, and reopening of the Ledgelets Cottage Colony as a tourism product, is a life-long dream and passion project. The Youngs welcomed the opportunity to manage a “micro-sized operation,” both being entrepreneurs at heart. The Ledgelets enabled them to provide the high-quality, old-school hospitality experience that gets back to the roots of tourism in Bermuda.

The re-development plan is to keep four of the cottages as residential rentals “LCC Residences” and offer three in their vacation rental portfolio, the “Cottage Colony.”

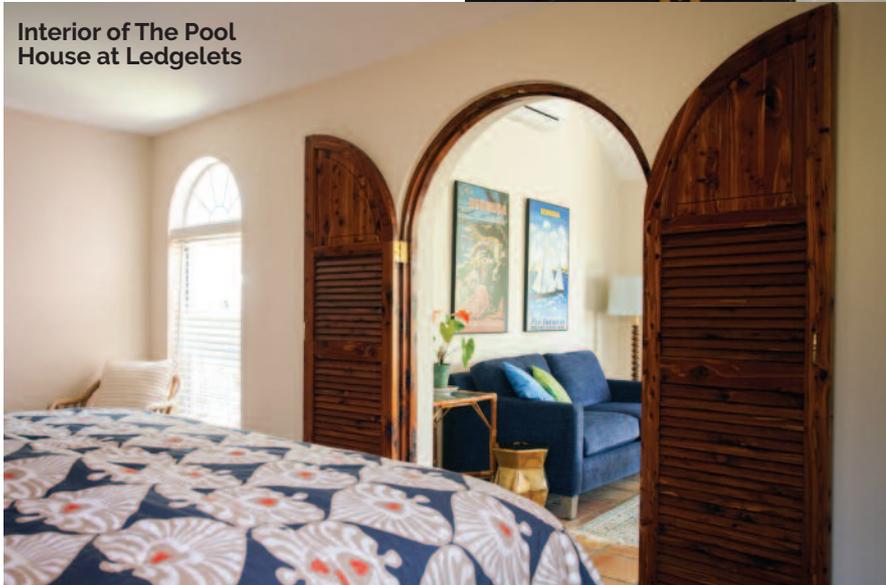
In June of 2016, the couple introduced the Pool House Cottage as their first vacation offering, on Air Bnb. It took about six months to do a partial renovation on this cozy, chic, one-bedroom to include a new kitchen and a complete interior style overhaul. All the work was completed by John, Alison, and their full-time superintendent, David. The cottage has been almost fully booked since, with consistent five-star guest reviews.

Feeling cautiously optimistic, The Youngs decided to renovate Sunrise Cottage, a three-bedroom unit, their largest. This project was much more detailed than Pool House. The cottage needed all new plumbing, electric, and HVAC. It needed a new kitchen and three new bathrooms. The existing spaces still housed some of the original fittings – such as the old wooden windows and shutters, which were com-

**The Kitchen in Sunrise Cottage at Ledgelets**

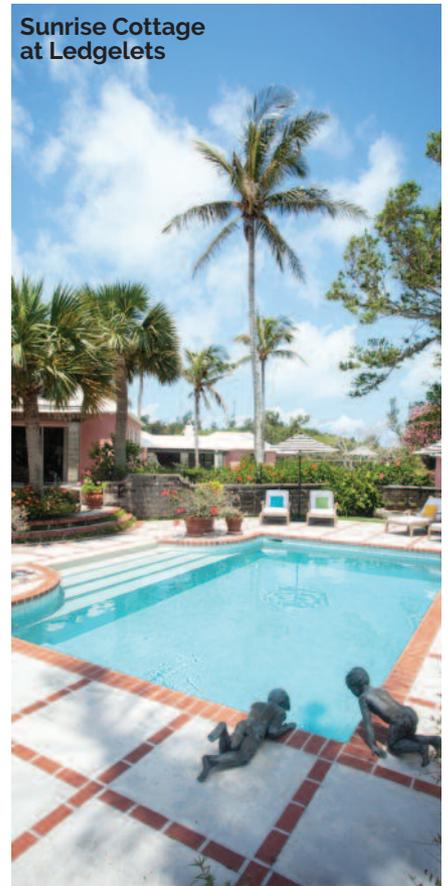


**Interior of The Pool House at Ledgelets**



pletely rotted with salt air and humidity.

The couple hired Sunrise Construction as general contractors, to assist in making their vision for Sunrise Cottage a reality. Alison project managed the renovation, while John focused on the day-to-day operations. “Orville and Bernard of Sunrise were a pleasure to work with. Their team was skilled and



**Sunrise Cottage  
at Ledgelets**

efficient. I appreciated their detailed budgeting, 24-7 communications, and highly organised time-planning,” says Alison. “I am a perfectionist when it comes to design. I like to get the details right. If I know that a light pendant is off a centimetre, I assume we’ll have a guest that will also notice. The details matter. And these guys put up with my

level of intensity, which is hard to find in Bermuda.”

“Our goal was to have Sunrise Cottage ready for summer 2017, and we hit that goal with Sunrise Construction. This was an aggressive plan, as we didn’t start demolition until February 2017. We tried to source everything we could locally; however, sometimes that

just wasn’t feasible with our timeframe. We were vying for materials and goods along with all the resources going into the America’s Cup. As we are located in the west end of the island, near the location of all the AC action, timeliness also really mattered. We knew this vacation season would be a big one for us. From the uptick in reservation requests after the great media coverage of the sailing events, we are glad we saw this through.”

Several pieces of vintage furniture from the old Lantana have been re-furbished and re-used throughout Ledgelets. “We like the fact we can be sustainable in this way, as well as give these quality, well-made pieces a fresh, modern look. A lot of the furniture was crafted from Bermuda Cedar and made especially for the property in the 1950s, 60s and 70s. And incorporating these pieces is good hospitality jujitsu” says Alison.

The couple is about midway to full completion of their hospitality vision. They plan on renovating and re-introducing “Forbidden Fruit,” a two-bedroom cottage, in summer 2018. This fall they will be completing the refurbishment in the lower half of the main

house, which includes the “Cedar Room.” This is a groovy throw-back type of bar and lounge space within which guests will “arrive” – not “check-in” – and opens onto a pool and terrace, perfect for dancing. They are developing a plot of land at the top of the property, which guarantees breath-taking views of the ocean, for lounging or for private dining.

John adds, “Alie is in the beginning planning phases of opening a gift shop, as her first love is merchandising – we can’t forget that one, of course!”

“With a property as rich as this is with island beauty, the dreams for the future of this place are endless,” says John. And the patron saints of grandparents are sitting off somewhere, drinking a swizzle, and smiling. They wouldn’t have it any other way. ■

The bathroom in Sunrise Cottage



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