

Serenity on Siesta

Expansive homes in lush surroundings on island's north end

MARKET SNAPSHOT BAY ISLE

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The northern end of Siesta Key offers an unbeatable combination of convenient location, magnificent views, and verdant, coastal surroundings. Known as Bay Isle (not to be confused with Bay Island next door to the east on the other side of Hansen Bayou), the neighborhood belongs to the city of Sarasota, while the rest of the barrier island is part of the county.

Running north to south, the main thoroughfare is Higel Avenue, named after Harry L. Higel, the first developer and passionate promoter of Siesta Key who touted the barrier island as “A Place to Rest and Have Peace and Comfort.” At the intersection with Siesta Key Drive coming from the mainland is a small, beautifully landscaped, triangular green area, Galvin Park.

Short, dead-end streets branch off to both sides of Higel, with quiet, serene atmospheres. One of them, Garden Lane, marks the southern boundary of the neighborhood. Tall palm trees, Norfolk pines, oaks and banyan trees and ample shrubbery make for a luxuriant, natural environment.

A narrow waterway, Bayou Louise, overgrown with foliage on both sides, separates the westernmost section from the rest of Bay Isle. The large, estate-size mansions with docks that line the shore have direct access to the Gulf of Mexico via Big Sarasota Pass.

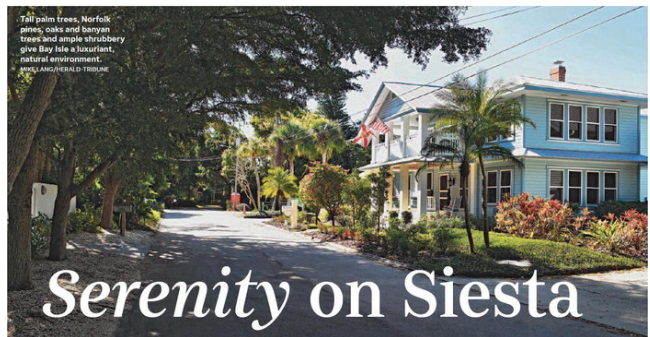
“Bay Isle represents the confluence of mainland and lush island lifestyles – it offers the best of both worlds,” said Kim Ogilvie, a realtor with Michael Saunders and Company. “The lots there are large, boating water is deep, and the atmosphere is lush and tropical. Downtown Sarasota with its cultural activities is just minutes away.”

Joel Schemmel of Premier Sotheby's International Realty agreed. “It's private, has incredible views, and the logistics to get off the island are super easy. And once you're on the mainland, you're in the middle of things,” he said. “It's a very sought-after area. Some

of the most beautiful homes in Sarasota are there.”

He added, “When older homes sell, they're usually replaced with newer, bigger residences.”

His listing at 3536 Bayou Louise Lane is one of the latter. The 4-bed, 5 bath with 6,044 square feet under air was built in 2004. Designed by Sarasota architect Clifford Scholz, it combines elements of Key West design – a metal roof – with a hint of southern charm – the raised, columned entrance.



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MIKE LANG/HERALD-TRIBUNE

