



# Paradise Bossed

Oil Nut Bay in the British Virgin Islands is a textbook case study in how to create a deluxe community in a remote, earthly nirvana

Political stability, safe waters, privacy, vibrant local culture, ten-month season, zero corruption... it was in 2000, armed with a lengthy set of tick boxes, that American property developer David V. Johnson, chairman of Victor International Corporation, embarked on what would become a decade-long mission to find the perfect setting for a community of eco-luxe homes in a real-life Eden in the Caribbean. What he eventually settled upon – a Google Earth microdot at just 400 acres, on the eastern-most peninsula



Clockwise from above; arrive in style at the dock; wake up to Caribbean Sea views; kick back at Waters Edge; perfectly positioned Cliff Suites; bathtime could be longer than normal



of Virgin Gorda in the British Virgin Islands – has become the crowning glory of his career. Richard Branson’s Necker Island is visible from many of Oil Nut Bay’s raised properties, and you’ll also see the islands of Eustatia and Mosquito from the chopper or speed boat that escorts you here. But Johnson’s deft touch has made Oil Nut Bay a particularly lustrous jewel – and an ideal location for the UHNWI micro-market – in a broader North Sound area characterised by lush topography and coral-fringed sands. Setting out to blend the sense of being on a private island with premium conveniences such as top cuisine, water sports, wellness and other facilities, Johnson has always been determined to keep a vast portion of the land undeveloped, and hence has no plans to exploit the full quota of 400 homes he has been granted permission to build (at the time of our visit, home sites number 117). To say Johnson is passionate about this Caribbean gem is a serious understatement: when the 200 mph ravages of Hurricane Irma hit the region in September 2017, he glimpsed an opportunity rather than a setback: staff members and 200-plus

contract workers were called back to work days after the storm to start on restoration and clean-up efforts; Johnson’s North Sound Foundation also set straight to work once the winds subsided, with tasks including the rebuilding of the nearby Robinson O’Neal Memorial Primary School. Thanks to Johnson and his staff’s refusal to sit still – even in the face of natural disaster – Oil Nut Bay’s rental offerings include the Bella Beach Villa (from US\$3,950 per night, or around £3,055) which has six bedrooms, a spacious patio, fitness room and direct beach access; Waters Edge Ridge Villa (from US\$2,650 per night, or around £2,050), wedged elegantly into the north side of Oil Nut Bay, has four bedrooms, each with its own private entrance, ensuite bathroom and outdoor patio, while the Master Suite has an outdoor shower and soaking tub; Villa Maronti (from US\$4,050 per night, or around £3,130), a new addition to the island’s rental offerings, has five bedrooms and a vast terrace area with an infinity pool overlooking the Caribbean Sea. The Cliff Suites (from US\$750 per night, or around £580) are the ultimate honeymoon hideaway, while the three-bedroomed Reef House Estate Villa (from US\$2,250 per night, or around £1,740) overlooks the Marina Village and is filled with carefully curated curios from all over the globe. All have contemporary stone-and-glass décor throughout their interiors, and facades which are sculpted into the landscape. If you’re thinking about a more permanent home away from home, and a passion-based property investment, we can recommend nowhere more fervently than this hotspot (see right). Despite the privacy – and if you wish for it, solitude – there’s plenty to do here besides getting a long overdue Vitamin D fix. Stroll around the island and you’ll find a wellness centre, children’s centre and tennis and pickleball courts. Another recent development is the new Marina Village, which boasts overwater dining in the Nova restaurant, a suspended pool lined with overwater hammocks, day beds, bar, coffee shop and boutique shopping. For our money, a boat trip to Cooper Island to swim through its rock caves, followed by a lazy late-afternoon hanging out with turtles in the bay’s lagoon, before enjoying one or two “Painkillers” (the local rum concoction) in the Beach Club, is the most life-enriching way to spend a day that we can think of. – Nick Scott

## A property in God’s back garden

Fancy your own delectable slice of the Caribbean? Here are three current options at Oil Nut Bay.



### MARINA VILLA 6 (FROM \$2.9 MILLION, OR AROUND £2.24 MILLION)

A 1,401-square-foot, two-bedroom property with 180-degree sweeping views over the sea and Oil Nut Bay’s Marina Village.



### PENINSULA VILLA 6 (\$28.5 MILLION, OR AROUND £22 MILLION)

Wrapped around the headland of Oil Nut Bay’s Peninsula neighbourhood, this steadily sloping six-bedroom lot boasts an impressive 200 feet of ocean frontage and seamless transition between indoors and outdoors.



### HALO (POA)

A collaboration between developer David V. Johnson and architect Ken Kao with five bedrooms, six-and-a-half bathrooms, an open living space, infinity pool and double garage.