



Waterfront Real Estate

Your Own Slice of Paradise

By LINDA MCKEE

Sunsets that make the sky appear as if it is glowing, with colors that change from a breathtaking pink, to orange, and red, and are so vibrant you'd swear you've never seen them before. An ocean with water so clear you can stand ankle deep and watch curious crabs as they scurry out from the safety of the rocks. While traveling down US 1, one grasps for a description beyond "blue" to describe its colors; teal, aquamarine, greenish jade, or even a royal azure that sometimes matches the sky on a stormy day. A quick boat ride out to the sandbar just to hang out with friends, or a longer ride out to the reef to dive for lobster.

For the locals it's our backyard, our Shangri-La. Paradise. For others it's a dream that they hope becomes a reality. But as most locals can tell you, buying your own little "slice of paradise" can be a challenge—unless you know Shane "Waterfront" Wilson and Derek Rodberg.

Wilson and Rodberg were raised in the keys. Their roots are here, and their ancestors are here. Wilson's kids have spent so much time here, you could almost say they are "keys kids", and Rodberg's children attend our local schools.

"We've been friends since elementary school," begins Wilson, who met his lifelong friend and business partner while attending Plantation Key School. "That was before there was even a building at PKS," he laughs, "we were in trailers behind Coral Shores."

They grew up the way a lot of keys kids do—fishing, diving, boating, skiing, tubing and circumnavigating the islands on boats. Along the way they learned that being your own captain brought freedom and sometimes a few personal challenges.

Both men are captains of their own respective industries and decided they had the perfect combination of knowledge and experience to become business partners.

That partnership includes Wilson's 24+ years of experience as a real estate broker in South West Florida, Cape Coral, Ft. Myers, Bonita Springs, and Naples. He carries a plethora of titles when it comes to selling homes. He is a third generation real estate broker in the Florida Keys, and his grandparents opened a successful Real Estate/Development company in the early 1970's where Wilson's family worked. His father held a General Contractor's license and built homes from Ocean Reef to Marathon. One of his family's accomplishments is the building and selling of the Tamarind Bay Club in Key Largo,. Wilson has achieved the honor of being a graduate member of the Institute for Luxury Home Marketing and is a member of the Elite Million Dollar Guild, which is only bestowed to members who meet a required sales volume and have closed a minimum number of properties. In addition, Wilson is a RMM (Residential Marketing Master), ABR (Accredited Buyer Agent), CRS (Certified Residential Specialist), GRI (Graduate Realtor Institute), and Premier Service Certified.

"Knowledge is power," states Wilson. He works on the belief that the more knowledge he has, the better he can serve his clients. This is how he's kept a 100% client satisfaction rating since 2008 by QSC (Quality Service Certification.) Now he intends to combine his special talents with his love and knowledge of the keys.

Together, Wilson and Rodberg opened Real Living Cypress Realty, Inc. in Islamorada at the beginning of 2016.

"It's a return to our roots but with a ton of experience. I lived in New York City for a long time, 24 years on Wall Street, so we can take that knowledge and apply it to the market down here and Shane can bring his knowledge from his endeavors in South West Florida and bring it down here, it's a pretty powerful partnership," says Rodberg.

With that powerful partnership comes a harmonious relationship with the Shane "Waterfront" Wilson team that buyers and sellers can trust. Once expectations are discussed and both the buyer and seller agree that the team is a good match, they get started immediately. "Today's consumer wants their Real Estate Broker to be experienced, honest, ethical, and knowledgeable on the local market, and to have a great standing in the community. Someone they can trust," states Wilson.

Clearly, both buyers and sellers will benefit from the team's honesty and experience, and will also profit from Rodberg's special insight into today's markets. Even though he no longer lives in New York, Rodberg continues to deal in the financial markets, and has been buying real estate locally for several years—including property used by the Netflix sensation Bloodline."I still keep pretty active in the financial markets. I think it helps in real estate

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to keep my finger on the pulse of the economy."

One of the properties he acquired is their current office which is located at 81651 on Old Highway, and is part of the Heritage Monument Trail... but it wasn't always the alluring structure it is today. "This was a Red Cross building. There was no electricity, or plumbing, this was a mess. They wanted to tear it down," begins Rodberg. He teamed up with one of his former classmates and friend, Brett Ekblom of Native Construction Contracting Inc. to completely renovate and restore the beauty of the historical place. "It was a monumental effort. But what better place to have a real estate office than right here in downtown Islamorada, in a historic building? I think that's really cool." Today, the walls are decorated with black and white photos of the keys in their former years, which includes pictures of one of the 16 Red Cross buildings that were built after the devastating 1935 Hurricane. History buffs will enjoy the plaque placed by the Matecumbe Historical Trust at the corner of the property describing the way in which the office was originally built.

There is even more to love than the fabulous sunsets, the history of the keys and the people here. Both men are fathers and have a deep love for their children: they have made it a point to make sure their children grow up knowing the keys' way of life.

"Growing up in the Florida Keys, you can give your kids more freedom than

you can other places. They can actually go explore and live life. It's a really good place for them to grow up. It's safe," explains Rodberg. Then he proudly pulls out his phone to show a picture of his son's first Swordfish caught only the day before. "It's a dream come true to come back here and give the kids the life that I was given."

And it's the times he lived life with his own father that he remembers fondly. "Days I will never forget are the ones where I'd go out with my brother and my dad and we'd get conch when it was legal. We'd go out, then go home, my brother and I would clean the conch and my dad would have the fryer going... We'd make conch fritters. Those times I remember very vividly, and that was a pretty magical time back then. You could go out in your own backyard and get 20 – 30 conch in an hour, that was really fun."

Both men feel that growing up and going to school in the keys give them a unique vantage point that others may not have. "We had to earn everything we got." Wilson explains "When Derek and I—and our friends—were little kids, our parents would tell us, 'We need lobster for our friends and our own dinner tonight.' So we'd go out lobstering and make like...twenty dollars. If they wanted snapper, grouper, or stone crab we knew where to go, so we'd go get it and sell it to our parents and their friends to make gas money for our boat and spending money to go buy snacks and soda at Tavernier Creek Marina, or Purdue Dean Marina (which is now Plantation Boat Mart). Our parents taught us you can do anything, anything you put your mind to."

With their expertise of the water, their history here in the Keys, as well as their love for selling Real Estate, the Shane "Waterfront" Wilson Team is unstoppable.

Today, Wilson and Rodberg still go boating, diving, and fishing with their family



and friends. These same friends and family are also now an integral resource to their clients. "We know builders, electrical contractors, plumbing contractors, air conditioning companies, trades people, sign and banner companies, and restaurant owners. We know these people. They trust us and we trust them, and we trust referring our new found friends and customers to them, knowing that they will be taken care of. All of our people are local, not the people who won't show up," states Wilson.

"It is all about relationships" claims Wilson and Rodberg, "We are not just selling a property, we are selling a lifestyle and a home to folks. We want to be part of their transition to the Florida Keys, we want to help and be part of, say, their new boat purchase. Oh my gosh, if we got paid for every boat we have helped our customers buy over the years, we would have a fat wallet!" laughs Wilson and Rodberg. "This is part of the relationship and helping folks to acclimate to their new Florida Keys Lifestyle. We want the phone call or the text asking, 'Hey Shane, Derek—where is a great place to go diving or a great shallow water reef we can take our family and friends to, to go snorkeling?' Or, 'Where is a great beach for us to go to or great sand bar to go to and just lounge in the ocean?' 'Hey Shane, Derek, where is a great place to go have an amazing dinner by boat and enjoy a killer sunset along the way?' Or, 'What is biting out in the ocean?' Many of our friends we grew up with in the Keys are professional fishing guides, so we get the real daily fishing reports!"

Making sure people experience "the Keys way of life" is something this talented team does well.

"It's a lifestyle they've never had that they want to live. It's about helping people achieve this dream, this goal. We see the happiness it brings our clients, their friends and family members. This is probably the most rewarding part of our Real Estate Career, helping folks to live their dream. People come from all over the world to be here," states Wilson.

The the end of the day, it's the relationships they have established and the dreams they've helped create that make Wilson and Rodberg great visionaries. The team strives to provide a specialty service that can be matched by no one else with values and ethics being a top priority.

"To have an honest relationship with your customers and with the people in town is what drives our business forward, our customers are either people we know or friends of people we know, and we're trusted to do the right thing for them."

They love what they do and love helping others. Wilson puts it this way: "It's like that saying, if you find something you love to do you will never work a day in your life."

For more information go to: ShaneWaterfrontWilsonTeam.com

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