

here. We attract a really well-suited clientele to our resort. We're regarded highly because of the peace, the quiet and the serenity.

"It truly feels like you're at the end of the world here. A person walked on the beach into about four feet of water, put their face in, picked out a lobster, took it home and cooked it. There are only so many places in the world you can do that. The pictures are good. But it's like seeing the Grand Canyon on picture. Until you see it up close you have no idea."

Recognizing its strengths has led to positive feedback for the resort from its visitors.

The Reef was awarded a second consecutive Certificate of Excellence by TripAdvisor in 2013, which means it maintained an overall rating of 4 or higher – out of a possible 5 – from a benchmark number of reviewers on the website for 12 consecutive months.

Only the top 10 percent of listed business qualify for the recognition.

The resort has received an "excellent" rating from 86 percent of TripAdvisor users, placing it ahead of three branded facilities on Grand Cayman – Comfort Suites (84 percent), Marriott (83 percent) and Westin (78 percent) – and within close range of another name brand, the Ritz-Carlton (90 percent).

It also earned a spot on the 2012 Expedia Insiders Select List, which combined input from Expedia's worldwide employees along with online reviews to come up with a collection of 650 listed properties whose services, guest experiences and value were considered superior.

"It's extremely important to us," Babin said. "The true rating of a resort is not based on our opinion of what we have. It's what the people who come here think of us. You've got to define the market you're going after."



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AT A GLANCE

WHO: The Reef

WHAT: Beachfront suite and studio resort

WHERE: Grand Cayman

WEBSITE:
www.TheReef.com

You can't just throw mud on the wall and try to please everybody, because it's impossible.

"We know the market we're after. We know who we're trying to attract. We're certainly happy and pleased and humbled by the comments we get."

Maintaining those high marks comes from quality service, Babin said, but also from a consistent commitment to keeping the resort's environmental standards on a high level.

All power needed to sustain the resort is generated on site, recycling has been a standard practice since the facility was built in 1999 and The Reef was the first site on the eastern end of the island for a solar-panel charger for electric vehicles. Surplus energy from the

chargers is fed back into the national grid.

Deals with local vendors are also a first priority when it comes to food and supplies.

"It's a very, very sensitive we live in here, so we all have to be very conscious of the damage that can be done when people are uneducated or unaware," Babin said. "We educate members on what to do and what not to do, and every one of our partners – tour operators, watersport vendors, etc. – goes through an environmental impact assessment to make sure what they're providing isn't harmful."

"The Caymans have a reputation as a very clean and well-maintained place, and it's our job to make sure that doesn't change. That matters to us a great deal."