

# 3M's Newest Window Films—Prestige Series—Protect Real Estate Investments While Preserving Ocean Views at the Exclusive Caribe Resort

## C A S E H I S T O R Y



### D E S C R I P T I O N

Many consider Caribe Resort to be the most exclusive condominium address in Orange Beach, Alabama. Caribe's 14-story contemporary condominium towers with dramatic 14-story skylit atriums are surrounded by lush natural landscaping and water on all sides. The 23-acre one-of-a-kind resort borders more than a mile-and-a-half of shoreline with pristine beaches and protected natural habitat. The \$1 million-plus privately owned condominiums boast 9- to 11-foot ceilings and features floor-to-ceiling full-view windows and glass doors, overlooking the oversized, curvilinear balconies.

### P R O B L E M

When cousins Michael and Bob Marto, and their friend Costanzo LaRussa, decided to invest in a shared vacation home for their families last year, it was Caribe Resort's unobstructed views of unspoiled beaches and storybook sunsets that initially attracted them. At the same time, they were concerned about obtaining enhanced protection for their new high-end furnishings from the damaging effects of the sun.

"We hired Glenda McCormick Lewis from Atlanta's McCormick Interior Design, Inc.—one of the best interior designers in the country—to furnish our condominium," says Michael Marto, who is an executive in the production industry. "Glenda did an exquisite job, and we invested more than \$250,000 in the interior furnishings, which range from one-of-a-kind Indonesian antiques and custom handmade fabrics to custom, high definition audio visual equipment. With the massive walls of windows that allow the light to flood into our unit, we knew there was a high risk that the sun would fade and ruin these valuable items. Of course, glare and heat gain were also considerations to maintain optimum comfort when we're vacationing there."

### S O L U T I O N

First and foremost, Marto and his co-owners wanted to find a solution to help deflect the negative effects of the sun, while still maintaining clear views from every angle of the condominium. After extensively researching the various options with the interior designer, they called in the experts at Distinctive Products in Gulf Shores, Alabama. Distinctive Products is an authorized dealer for 3M's newest line of window films—Prestige Series—a world-class film that reduces the effects of solar heat and visible light on furnishings. The films also block up to 99.9 percent of the sun's harmful UV rays.



Owners now enjoy their stunning view while helping to protect their furnishings from the damaging effects of the sun.

"We had just invested \$1.3 million in a condominium with stunning views," Marto explains. "The last thing we wanted to do was to install heavy draperies that would protect the interior but close off views to the outside. Once we learned about unique qualities of these window films, we were quite certain that it was the perfect solution for our new vacation home."

According to Distinctive Products President Jim Fletcher, traditional window films made with metal are often tinted dark and highly reflective, but the Prestige Series of films block nearly all UV rays while offering reduced reflectivity so that the views are clear all day long. In fact, windows with these films actually have less interior reflectivity than the glass they cover. The Prestige Series was developed through

**3M** Innovation



the use of nanotechnology, which allowed 3M to create the highest-performance window film possible without using metal. This is an especially vital feature for buildings located near salt water, because the films without metal won't corrode.

"3M's Prestige Series let homeowners enjoy all of the advantages of inviting the light inside while helping to protect against the negative effects of the sun," Fletcher says. "Oftentimes, people think they have to choose between protecting their furnishings and enjoying their views—but that's just not the case anymore. Another benefit is that these clear films make it nearly impossible to tell from the exterior which windows are coated with the window film and which ones are not. This was a very important feature, since the resort's developer has stringent rules regarding maintaining the integrity of the building's appearance."

### RESULTS

The installation took only a day-and-a-half and covered about 600 square feet of glass. The project ended about a month ago, and Marto says they're thrilled with the results.

"In addition to allowing us to maintain our views with less reflectivity, we now have peace of mind, knowing that we have one of the newest, most effective products available to help keep our furnishings protected from the damaging effects of the sun," he says. "And, while it's too early to calculate the actual cost savings, we know that, from an engineering perspective, the reduced heat gain will also result in lower air-conditioning costs."



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### THE 3M DIFFERENCE

"3M is an innovator and a leader, and they stand behind their products," says Marto. "As homeowners, we wanted to use the leading product in the industry. Our research paid off, and these films have met all of our expectations by helping us protect our investment while increasing the comfort and livability of our new vacation home."



Because the Prestige Series products have no metals, they are not reflective. This technology makes it difficult to see the difference between the windows that have film on them and the windows that don't.

### PROJECT SUMMARY

3M Dealer: Distinctive Products  
Gulf Shores, Alabama

Installation Date: May 2006

Area Covered: About 600 square feet

Installation Time: A day-and-a-half

Type of Film: 3M™ Window Film—Prestige Series PR 40

Remedies Considered Prior to Window Film: Heavy draperies, blinds, shutters

Project Notes: The Caribe Resort's development has strict guidelines regarding a uniform look for the resort's exterior. Because the Prestige Series has no metals, it isn't reflective, so it's difficult to see with the naked eye the difference between the windows that have film on them and the windows that don't.