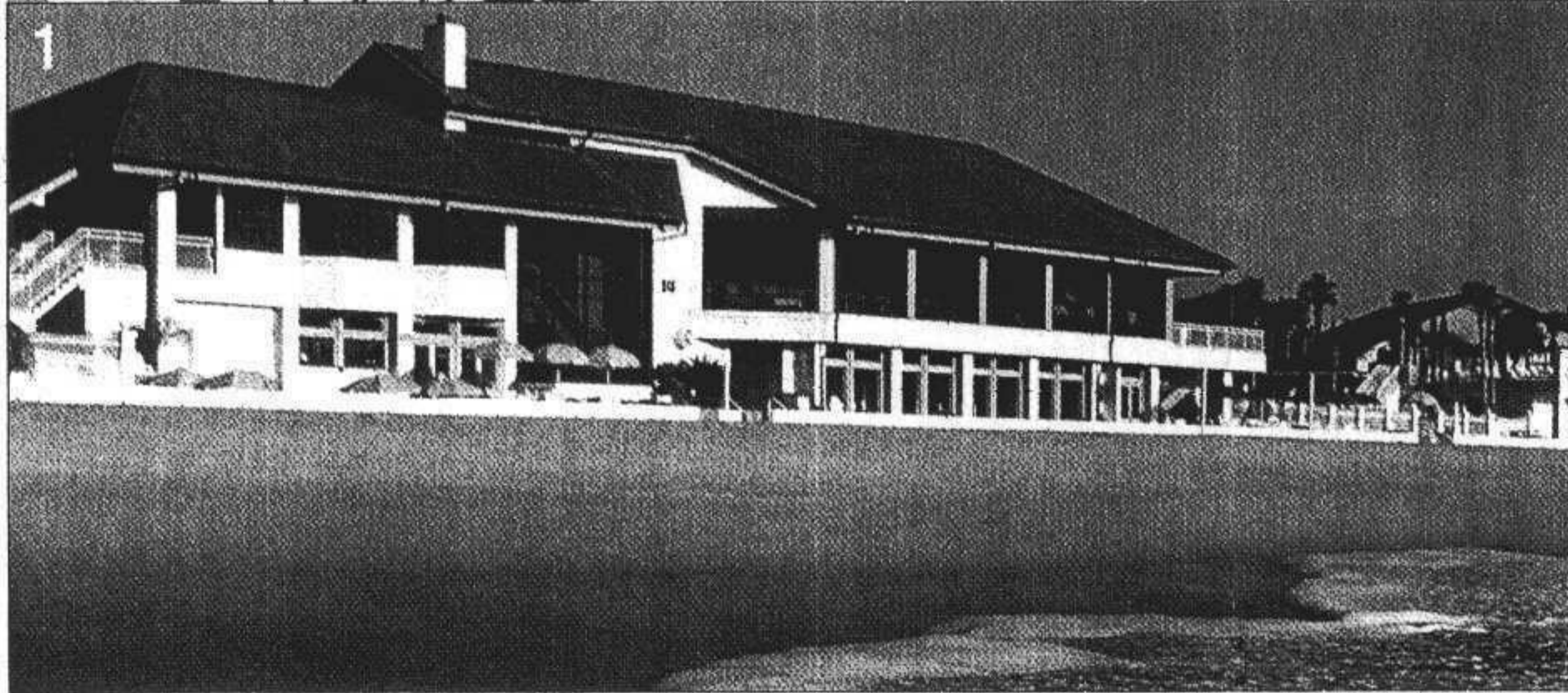


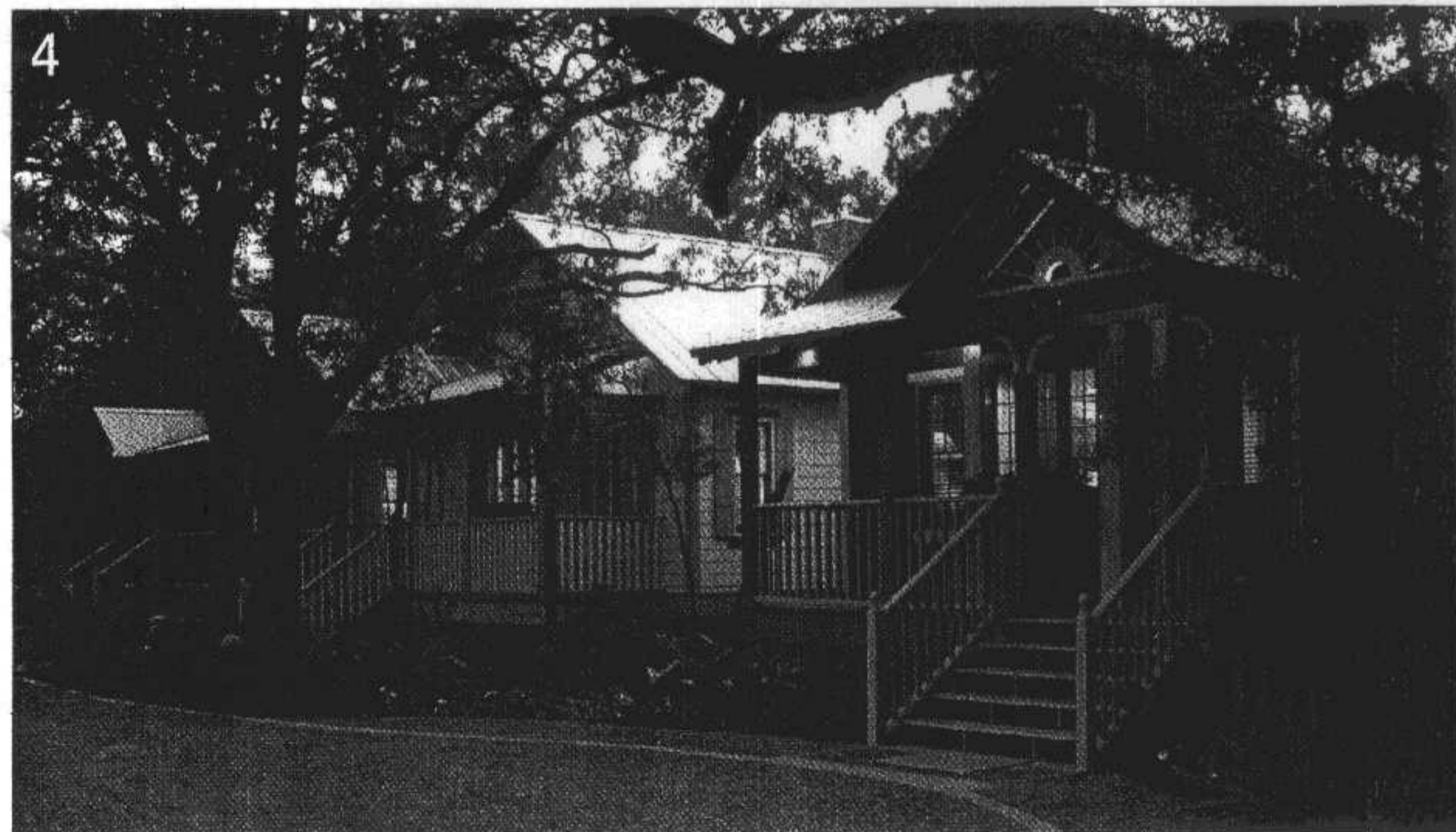
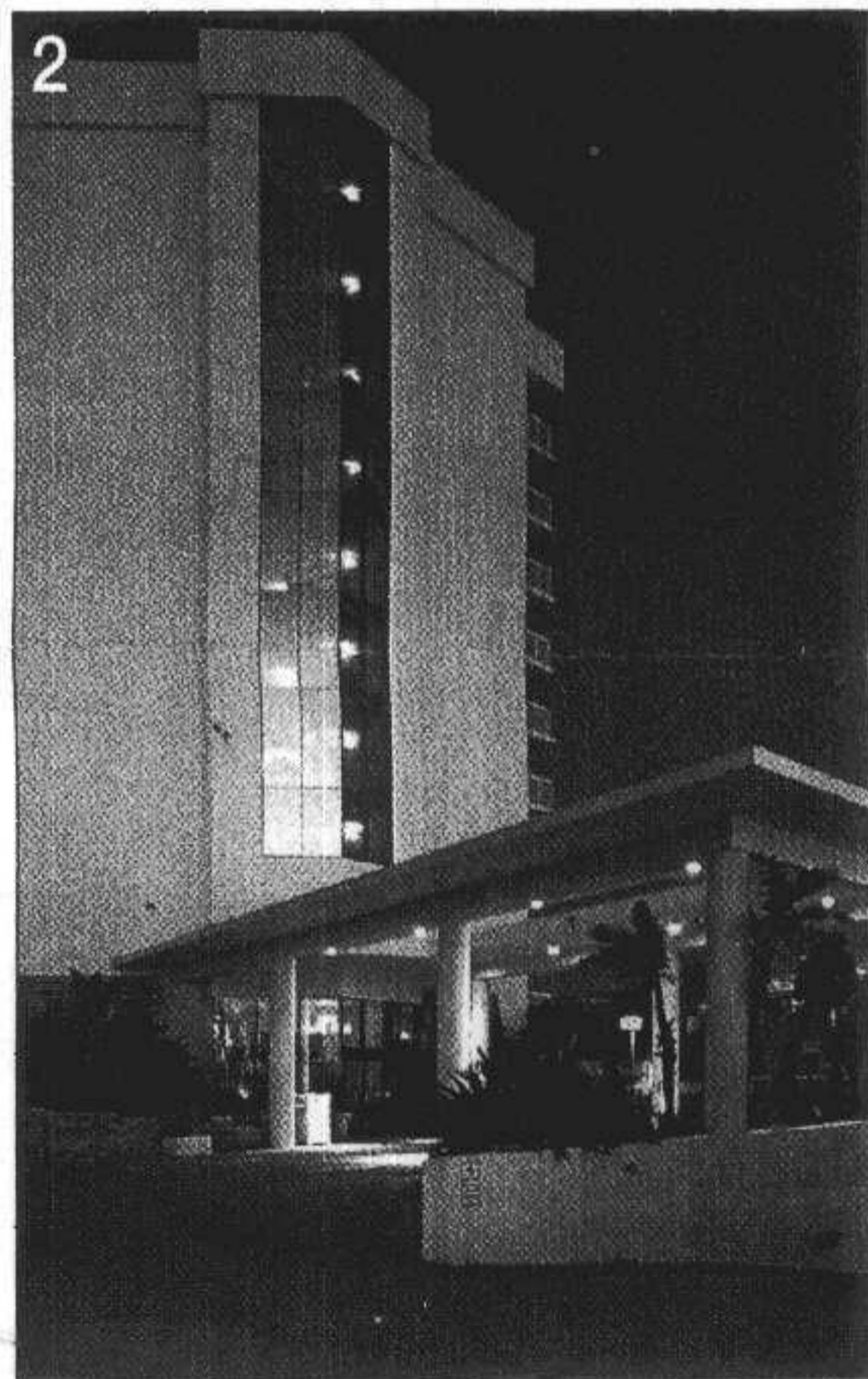
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TRAVEL



SECLUDED AND SEQUESTERED

You might need MapQuest to find these tucked-away getaways



1. STARTING PONTE

Those in the know are already familiar with the **Ponte Vedra Inn and Club**; after all, AAA named it one of its five-diamond resorts for 2006. But Ponte Vedra Beach, 22 miles south of Jacksonville, hardly gets the traffic of Miami Beach or Orlando, so word must be spread about this sprawling country lodge set on a 300-acre landscaped preserve. Along with the 205 luxury guestrooms and 45 suites, there are two 18-hole golf courses, 15 tennis courts, and spa with 22 treatment rooms (ask about the "Spa Getaway" package). Your gourmet Valentine dinner can be enjoyed at the Seafoam Dining Room or the Outpost, which accommodates everything from clam bakes to turkey shoots. Rates begin at \$220. 904/285-1111

2. BAHAMIAN HOLIDAY

Don't let its residence on Daytona Beach's buzzing Atlantic Avenue deter you. **Bahama House**, the newest boutique hotel in Daytona Beach, is on a quiet stretch of the Atlantic that's perfect for families looking to avoid the bikini contests and Harley rumble. Couples will find plenty to coo about as well, as all of Bahama House's Caribbean-style rooms are oceanfront, and many have full kitchens. The active duo can try out the Golf package, which can be customized to your liking and includes your choice of the 13 area golf courses. Rates begin at \$217. 386/248-2001

3. LA PLAYA, POR FAVOR

Most of the chatter about Naples involves Fifth Avenue, art galleries, the Ritz-Carlton's golf resort, and chic Waterside Shops. But if you break away from the norm — to Gulf Shore Drive between the Atlantic and Vanderbilt Channel, to be exact — you'll find a great getaway with Cupid's DNA. The **La Playa Beach and Golf Resort** has everything that should come standard with a 21st Century resort: 189 elegant guestrooms and suites, masks, wraps and the like at SpaTerre, gourmet dining at Baleen, countless onsite activities (parasailing, kayaks, wave runners, etc.), 18-hole championship golf course and the kind of seclusion that helps build Valentine's Day's famous reputation. Rates begin at \$509. 239/597-3123

4. NORTHERN EXPOSURE

Steinhatchee is an anonymous town because it's surrounded by anonymous towns (stop and ask for directions to Tenille, Cross City and Mayo, and enjoy the blank stares). But that doesn't mean Steinhatchee, southeast of Tallahassee and three miles upstream from the Gulf of Mexico, should be ignored. In fact, it's home to Florida's best-kept hospitality secret: **Steinhatchee Landing Resort**, a Lilliputian Christmas village in large scale. The quaint resort, shaded by live oaks and sabal palms and surrounded by commercial fishing spots, describes itself as "historic in concept but contemporary in convenience." That especially goes for the 36 Florida Cracker and Victorian cottages outfitted with fully-equipped kitchens, stereo systems and Jacuzzis. Rates begin at \$187 per night. 352/498-3513