



Orange, Virginia

## INN AT WILLOW GROVE – CREEKSIDE COTTAGES



### CHALLENGE

Maximizing guest comfort by selecting an HVAC system with ultra-quiet sound levels and design flexibility

### SOLUTION

Mitsubishi Electric Zoned Comfort Solutions®

### RESULT

Luxurious guest cottages with discrete and quiet comfort conditioning

Nestled in the hills of Orange, Virginia, The Inn at Willow Grove – a historic plantation turned boutique resort and spa – attracts guests with its world-class hospitality. In 2017, Travel + Leisure magazine named The Inn at Willow Grove the Best Hotel in the South, the Third Best Hotel in the Country and the Ninth Best Hotel in the World. With accolades like these, owners David and Charlene Scibal decided to build two Creekside Cottages as an expansion, with five guest suites each.

Creating a luxurious experience for guests while upholding the historic charm was of the utmost priority for the Scibals when selecting an HVAC system. After consulting with HVAC Contractor Duct-Rite Mechanical, LLC, Madison, Virginia, the choice was clear: Mitsubishi Electric Zoned Comfort Solutions®.

The Inn at Willow Grove almost never came to be. In 2009, the Scibals were devastated to learn that the neighboring historic property was going up for auction after falling on hard times. David and Charlene – a trained chef and designer – had done several renovation projects and knew this could be their next endeavor.

“We love to fix old things,” said David Scibal. “We just wanted to save this property because it was incredibly beautiful. It’s on the National Historic Registry as well as the Virginia Historic Registry and it needed saving...we got a little carried away.”

One thing led to another and by the Fall of 2010 the Inn opened, complete with a gourmet restaurant and spa. During the 18-month renovation, Scibal and his team



learned which products helped create both the ambience of a hotel and historic venue.

“On the first remodel, we used Mitsubishi Electric products in the restaurant and mini splits for two of the rooms in the restaurant area. We’ve always respected Mitsubishi Electric,” explained Scibal.

When they decided to do the cottage expansion in 2017, Scibal and Duct-Rite drew on this experience during HVAC selection. “As we approached the newer buildings, we understood Mitsubishi Electric products,” said Scibal. “We understood how they could benefit the new cottages and keep them hidden; temperature controls would be good, smaller units...all those things.”

Now a *Forbes Travel Guide* Four Star-rated boutique hotel, the cottages needed to live up to The Inn’s praises.

“It’s a boutique hotel and historic place...[the Scibals] wanted a heating and cooling system where you could not see the equipment,” noted Joe Smith, installing mechanical contractor, Duct-Rite. “They also wanted to have the ability for individual temperature control in each room.”

To meet these requirements, Smith got creative. He paired Mitsubishi Electric’s multi-zone ductless, hyper-heat system with MVZ vertical ducted air handlers.

“For the upper floor of each building, there was an attic above where we could locate the equipment and ductwork,” explained Smith. “We connected three of the upstairs units to one outdoor unit and then for the bottom floors we used the new Mitsubishi Electric MVZ vertical ducted air handler and connected those to another outdoor unit. This gives [management] the ability to control the temperature in each room independently and it also allows them to heat the lower level while air conditioning the upper floor if they want.”

The flexibility of this system also extends to other areas of the cottages.

“You’ve got to think outside the box,” said Scibal. “With Duct Rite, we were able to come up with a solution to actually lower the guest bathroom ceilings and run the duct through so that they flow out of a 10-foot ceiling. You don’t know they’re there.”

Temperature management was also a huge factor in selecting the HVAC

system. The Scibals wanted to ensure they could give guests comfort control while retaining remote management capability.

“We’ve got the thermostats set up so that [guests] can control the temperature between a certain range,” explained Smith. “We gave the staff at The Inn at Willow Grove a Mitsubishi Electric portable controller and it is connected to each of the 10 indoor thermostats. It allows them to monitor and change any of the settings in any of the rooms from a remote location.”

Smith noted that for hospitality settings such as The Inn, Mitsubishi Electric was the best choice for providing independent comfort. “It gets difficult when you have smaller, separated areas and [the client] wants independent temperature control,” Smith said. “There are not a lot of system choices to choose from that will give you the ability to heat and cool each small space independently within a reasonable budget. With this system, it gives you that flexibility.”

Aesthetically, the Scibals found what they were looking for as well. Upon entering each cottage suite, all guests see is the thermostat, with the supply register and return grill flush to either the ceiling or wall, essentially hidden.

**Project Completed:** November 2017 |

“We’re trying to give that incredible experience,” said Scibal. “Nobody wants to see [an HVAC] system hanging on the ceiling or wall. We wanted the HVAC to not be seen or heard at all.”

Cottage guests can also enjoy the sounds of nature without the interruption of their HVAC system. “The systems we put in are exceedingly quiet and they operate very well. They’re very efficient – they’re doing what they’re supposed to,” noted Scibal.

For a property that began with the Manor House, built in 1776, the Scibals have married both historic charm and modern convenience with The Inn. In addition to the two Creekside Cottages, the expansion included a spa renovation, new fitness center and outdoor heated pool. David Scibal credited his team for designing the right systems to create the lavish atmosphere they’re known for.

He said, “We’re so pleased with the outcome. You have to use your imagination and park it with the right people.”



## PROJECT TEAM

### Owner:

David and Charlene Scibal, Orange, Virginia

### HVAC Contractor:

Duct-Rite Mechanical, LLC, Madison, Virginia

### Distributor:

Virginia Air, Richmond, Virginia

## EQUIPMENT

### COTTAGE 1:

- ▶ (1) MXZ Hyper Heat Multi-zone Heat Pump
- ▶ (3) SEZ Air Handlers
- ▶ (3) MHK1 Thermostats
- ▶ (1) MCCH1 Portable Central Controller

### COTTAGE 2:

- ▶ (1) MXZ Hyper Heat Multi-zone Heat Pump
- ▶ (2) MVZ Air Handlers
- ▶ (2) EH05-MPA-S (Electric Back up Heat)
- ▶ (1) PAC Refrigerant Branch Box
- ▶ (2) MHK1 Thermostats