

Caribbean Calling

By Ivette Manners

By the time March rolls around we're completely over winter and in desperate need of some fun in the sun. So, why not get out of town and head to the jewel-blue waters and warm white sands of the Caribbean for a quick getaway or weeklong holiday? We did a little island hopping to get you motivated and found these gems in the sea that will have you booking the next flight out.



Photo courtesy of Preferred Hotels & Resorts

TURKS & CAICOS Windsong Resort, A member of Preferred Hotels & Resorts

Over the last few years, Turks and Caicos has become a haute destination loved for its luxury hotels amidst uncrowded beaches, crystal-clear waters, and vibrantly-colored reefs. Only 8 of the country's 40 small islands and cays are inhabited, giving Turks and Caicos its far-removed air. Providenciales, locally known as "Provo", is the most well known of the Turks and Caicos islands; and offers a bevy of elegant outdoor restaurants and impressive resorts. The Windsong Resort on Providenciales is a tropical sanctuary encompassing incredible panoramic views and wildlife (don't be surprised if you spot a sea turtle while dining at the café). The resort sits on a prime spot in Grace Bay and features 53 rooms along the beach. The idyllic island has sparked a new trend for vacationers, in which a professional photographer takes their portrait on the beach. (For more information on vacation photography in Turks and Caicos, go to myparadisephoto.com.) windsongresort.com

JAMAICA Half Moon, A RockResort

Americans fell in love with Jamaica in the mid 1950s and development started going up pretty quickly around the island. Montego Bay became a fashionable destination and reggae music ruled. Part of the destination's growing popularity included the legendary Half Moon resort, which attracted a long star-studded list of guests including Joan Crawford, Clark Gable, John F. and Jacqueline Kennedy, and even Queen Elizabeth II and several other members of the British Royal family. Today, the 400-acre resort continues to have major appeal with its key location on a private two-mile beach, 197 spacious rooms, and exceptional service. A spinning studio, equestrian center, and 54 swimming pools are just some of their cool perks, along with a whimsical children's village for the little ones to frolic in when they're not on the beach with you. halfmoon.rockresorts.com



Photo courtesy of Half Moon, A RockResort

PUERTO RICO Condado Vanderbilt Hotel, a member of Preferred Hotels & Resorts

Puerto Rico's capital city of San Juan is a bustling town split into two sections, with Old San Juan known for its historic forts and charming plazas and New San Juan packed with restaurants, bars, and shops. Take comfortable shoes because you'll want to see it all. Afterwards, chill out at the posh pool lounges at the recently redone historic Condado Vanderbilt Hotel. The resort's spot on the coast of the exclusive Condado District offers spectacular views of the Atlantic Ocean. The hotel's overall contemporary décor retains a hint of its historical opulence, while the well-designed rooms are cozy and modern. condadovanderbilt.com



Photo courtesy of Preferred Hotels & Resorts



Photo courtesy of Aman

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC Amanera

Nestled between the two small villages of Rio San Juan and Cabrera, the new Amanera resort is a chic out-of-the-way retreat on the Dominican Republic's northern coast boasting 25 casitas connected by an intertwining pathway weaving through tropical gardens. Set on a 60-foot cliff overlooking Playa Grande and fringed by 2,170 acres of jungle, the secluded resort features a sleek design that seamlessly blends into its natural surroundings. Each of the room's half-open air layout, which is also used throughout the property, features outdoor dining and lounging areas, while inside floor-to-ceiling windows offer unobstructed views of the beach from all the other angles. Book a room with a private pool, but definitely don't be shy to take a dip in the main pool with the other discerning guests. aman.com/resorts/amanera

Photo courtesy of Scrub Island Resort, Spa & Marina, BVI



SCRUB ISLAND, BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS Scrub Island Resort, Spa & Marina, BVI

Considered one of the best secret islands on Earth, Scrub Island is a serene 230-acre private isle at the east end of Tortola accessed only by ferry; and Scrub Island Resort, Spa & Marina is the centerpiece of the destination. The impressive property features 52 rooms, a collection of hillside villas, a spa, two restaurants, and its own marina that flanks a lagoon-style, multi-tiered pool and strip of beach. And the starting guestrooms are so luxe you'll think you were upgraded to one of the suites.

The island might be tiny, but the resort offers lots to do, from daytrips to one of the neighboring islands or cays and sailing lessons to watersports and speed boating. scrubIsland.com



Photo courtesy of Preferred Hotels & Resorts

ST. BARTS
Hotel Christopher,
A member of Preferred Hotels & Resorts

As a trendy playground for the rich and famous, St. Barts is probably on your vacation bucket list. Favored for its French culture in the middle of the Caribbean, savvy jetsetters flock to St. Barts for its white-sand beaches, which seem to melt into the clear water and are dotted with chic hotels. The quaint and remote Hotel Christopher is a no-brainer, with ocean-view rooms and a location of the prestigious Sisley spa. You may end up dining here every night because their Taïno restaurant provides one of the best views on the island, an appetizing menu, and inventive cocktails. But do take time to tear yourself away from the hotel, as a day in Gustavia, the island's capital, will procure a dazzling view of luxury yachts and designer boutiques.
hotelchristopher.com



Photo courtesy of Preferred Hotels & Resorts

ANGUILLA
Zemi Beach House Resort & Spa,
A member of Preferred Hotels & Resorts

The small under-the-radar island of Anguilla is known for its heavenly beaches, stellar restaurants, and swanky hotels—no wonder ballers (both the wealthy and NBA players!) gravitate here. But it's not just for high rollers, as stylish regular folk can also experience all that Anguilla has to offer, such as the new Zemi Beach House Resort & Spa. The pristine six-acre property is adjacent to Fountain Cavern National Park in the Shoal Bay East region of the island. The hotel is designed to incorporate the island's Caribbean culture, from the spa treatments to the personalized minibars; and their dedication to the environment shows through the eco-conscious construction and environmentally-friendly efficiency, such as sustainable hardwoods used throughout the resort and solar heating systems. However, the rooms' décor doesn't skimp on anything, offering uncomplicated luxury and high-tech amenities, all of which you might overlook because the views of the beach are simply breathtaking.
zemibeach.com



Photo courtesy of Preferred Hotels & Resorts

ST. LUCIA
Cap Maison Resort & Spa,
A member of Preferred Hotels & Resorts

St. Lucia is mainly made up of majestic mountain peaks rather than wide beaches, but it's still a favored island destination for savvy travelers. It's a landscape full of palm trees, unspoiled rainforests, and natural waterfalls. Innovative hoteliers have incorporated the country's natural beauty to construct plush resorts set on cliffs overlooking the sea, such as the Cap Maison Resort & Spa. The resort features villa-style suites spread out among tropical gardens and their famed Cliff at Cap open-air restaurant, which offers unobstructed views of the island of Martinique and incredible sunsets.
capmaison.com

PETER ISLAND, BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS
Peter Island Resort & Spa,
A member of Preferred Hotels & Resorts

If you're considering a little splurge for your next vacation, Peter Island Resort & Spa is a unique oasis away from it all. A short ferry ride from Tortola, this 300-acre beachfront boutique hotel dominates the 1,800-acre private island it's located on. Visited by the famous and even the infamous (think Blackbeard the pirate), Peter Island is a preserved destination for unplugging and unwinding. Each of Peter Island Resort & Spa's 52 rooms and suites are just steps away from the beach; and there are a total of five distinct beaches to choose from, each offering a different experience and activity. Book a beachfront junior suite, positioned among coconut palm trees and tropical gardens with hammocks lined up for the perfect view of the beach.
peterisland.com



Photo courtesy of Preferred Hotels & Resorts

NEVIS
Montpelier Plantation & Beach

If you want to get lost in the Caribbean without going into survival mode, head to Nevis—where the vibe is soothing and secluded, you'll find long stretches of empty beaches, and the scenery is a Technicolor fantasy. The small, almost perfectly round island inhabits just one main road that has been used for centuries, a rainforest within the clouds, and old plantation ruins. Hideaway at The Montpelier Plantation & Beach, a 19-room boutique hotel set in an 18th-century sugar plantation surrounded by 60 acres of lush gardens. The property's open design was planned to allow guests to move between the rooms and the outside so that they can feel connected to the rich blues and greens of the island. Each guestroom is individually decorated offering the sense of a beach house, yet the Relais & Chateaux hotel branding provides upscale attention and details.
montpeliernevis.com



Photo courtesy of Montpelier Plantation