# caribbean beach

See What's New in Aruba Bahamas Puerto Rico



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## THE PLACE TO STAY

JAMAICA

www.shoteljamaica.com

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## CONTRIBUTORS





Director of Photography

It's all about triggering emotion via imagery. When I convey the very essence of a situation with a single photograph, then I am complete, because the viewer understands more than the moment, they know the situation.



I am the Caribbean.



I'm a chef with Champagne taste and a beer budget, but always seem to find myself surrounded by the most amazing people in the most amazing places. From eating termites in the Honduran jungle to learning how to make dim sum in Hong Kong, for me treasure is in the story.



#### JEFFREY SOBEL Co-Editor-in-Chief

AVA ROSALES

All I need is a book, a bourbon and a boat to a new destination -I'll be just fine.





Time passes like wind on my cheeks. However, with each new travel experience, there is a rebirth. New personal growth and new friends no matter what stage of life.





I'm my best on this island. My flight left last night, but I know I'm not going back home.

- Michael Sobel

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This winter, dates are back and we've honed in on a few exciting activities that will sizzle the senses with flavors and festivals. This is the season for costumes and cuisine. You won't want to miss the action - so, come lime, lounge, linger or just let yourself go, cause it's carnival time in the Caribbean!

At the top of the year, say "bon dia" to Curaçao Fuik Day (Fuikdag) 2024 on January 7. The term fuik is Dutch for trap, and from 8:00 am – 5:00 pm, it's one grand party trap atop the sea. There's bound to be a lot of "mi dushi" (my love/sweetie) greetings when every and anything that's buoyant come together for a big BYOB celebration- be sure to sip responsibly, whether by float or boat! It's the perfect start to Carnival season on the island. There will be vibrant costumes, marches, parades, bands and lots of jump up festivities and food. There are separate horse, youth and teen parades. At Festival di Tumba – the competition is fierce to win the coveted title of king. You won't want to miss a single event if travel plans accommodate the two months of festivities. Curaçao Karnaval 2024 hosts nonstop events across the island January through February www.curacaokarnaval.com/en

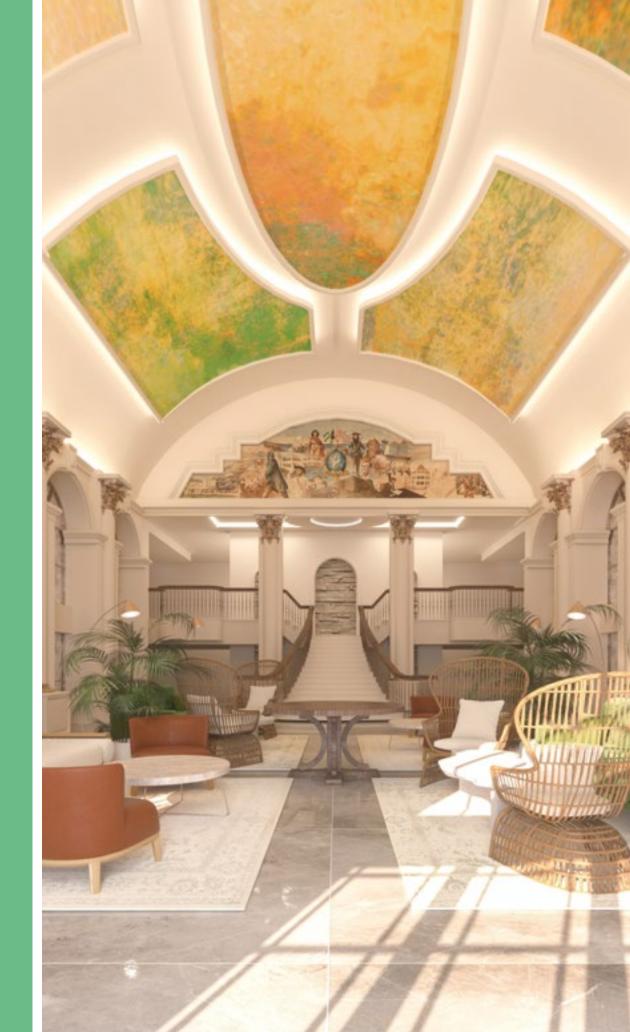
Further north, the British Virgin Islands (BVI) is more focused on cuisine and takes us on a diverse dining experience every Saturday, during the months of January and February. Ferry across for *Jost Lime and Dine* where guests staying on Tortola can hop aboard the ferry at West End to dine or lime – chill/relax – on Jost Vandyke. Ferries leave Tortola at 6 pm and the last returning trip is at 10:45 pm. Hop aboard any Saturday from *January 6* to *February 24*. Stay until March to close the season with an event that Virgin Gorda promises to be "bigger and tastier than ever!" Residents and guests gather for tantalizing delights, wine and entertainment at *Taste of Virgin Gorda 2024*, Saturday, *March 16*.

To the west, over at the Ritz Carlton on Grand Cayman, it's the 15th year of a culinary celebration of some of the finest cuisine in the world. The renowned celebration is back and boasts to be an unforgettable indulgence in food and wine on the shores of Grand Cayman, at *Cayman Cookout* from *January 9 – 15*. *www.caymancookout.com* 





**BY AVA ROSALES** 





#### ARUBA

The new Mercát Restaurant delights the senses with Mediterranean flavors at the Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino. The name literally means market in Catalan. It's an international smorgasbord of mediterranean inspired dishes across Spain, Southern France, Italy, Greece, Turkey, Lebanon, and Morocco.

Apart from the array of menu selections, the second hardest decision would be whether to dine indoors or al fresco with scenic ocean views. Perhaps mix it up, since the restaurant opens daily for a breakfast buffet, and a la carté lunch and dinner options. Savory and sweet fare highlights include starters of Mussels a la Provençale with Provencal herbs, onion, garlic, white wine, and grilled sourdough; scrumptious Fried Zucchini Chips with Tzatziki dip; and for the main course a mouthwatering Short Rib Pasta with paccheri pasta, short rib ragù, parmesan and lemon zest or perhaps a vegetarian delight of Couscous Paella with green beans, bell peppers, mushrooms and pickled veggies- just be sure to leave room for the Moroccan Chocolate Cake with dates, pistachio and caramel.

Mingle at the Apertivo social gathering to meet new friends or get more acquainted with your familiar as you feast on a host of tapas, music, wines and cocktails. This experience is ideally situated at Mercat's bar and beachfront terrace during the after lunch and before dinner snack-happy hours. This is dining done right. Even the lighting and Southern European music are programmed to vary throughout the day, adding to a fresh ambience for each visit - - just as fresh as the fare, all senses are tantalized at Mercát Restaurant.

www.marriott.com/en-us/hotels/auaar-aruba-marriottresort-and-stellaris-casino/dining



#### BAHAMAS

#### Grand Opening January 2024

The long-awaited rebirth of The Bahamas' most storied and iconic hotel, British Colonial marks the renaissance of downtown Nassau and a highly anticipated revival of the local area. Steeped in 100 years of rich local history, the boutique property will be immaculately restored to feature 288 guest rooms and suites with original artwork and early 20th century design touches, seven food & beverage outlets including a sultry supper club that throws it back to a bygone era, two freshwater oceanfront pools that overlook a 300-foot beach, and lush tropical gardens. Not to mention, a prime location on Bay Street that's just steps from Nassau's colorful cruise port, famed straw market, beaches, and more. Can you say shopping at your doorstep? The property blends an upscale and sophisticated ambiance infused with key aspects of Bahamian culture, catering to both leisure and business travelers with a uniquely varied room product and approachable price point while paying tribute to its local surroundings and The Bahamas' past and present.

#### www.britishcolonial.com







#### **PUERTORICO**

Hyatt Regency Grand Reserve Puerto Rico's newest deluxe room category is the sleek and modern Villas en la Reserva. Nestled in a secluded area of the peninsula, the 93 newly constructed villas offer contemporary comfort with a clean design and luxurious touches that include kitchenettes, dining tables, separate living rooms with queen sleeper sofas, bathrooms with rainfall showers and jetted deepsoaking tubs, exceptionally large closets, and spacious balconies with panoramic views of the ocean. A new choice for groups of family and friends, the Villas offer signature amenities that include an interior courtyard with an outdoor swimming pool, the Molido coffee shop, and La Mina — an outdoor restaurant that offers a seafood-forward lunch and happy hour menu inspired by the flavors of the island. As an added bonus, the resort exclusively offers Villas en la Reserva guests an amazing traditional Puerto Rican weekly room service amenity of Pan Sobao (a delicious soft, fluffy cornmeal-based sweet bread made daily in a rustic oven onsite) accompanied by Puerto Rican cafe con leche at no additional cost!

www.hyatt.com/hyatt-regency/en-US/sjurc-hyattregency-grand-reserve-puerto-rico

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### BELLS WILL BE RINGING

With over 700 islands in the Caribbean, every type of bride is sure to find her perfect location for a destination wedding. From the bride wanting to elope to the bride wanting to feel like she's getting married on a private island, the Caribbean is sure to meet everyone's big day expectations. See below!



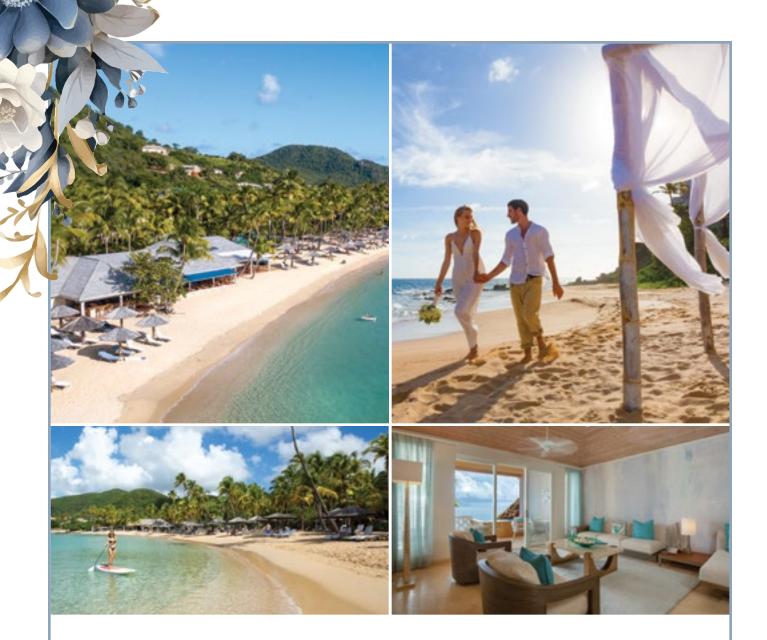


#### FOR THE ELOPING BRIDE THE COVE ELEUTHERA | BAHAMAS

Nestled between two white sand coves on the secluded island of Eleuthera, The Cove Eleuthera is a place unlike any other. Just beyond the narrowest point on earth, this off-the-beaten-path hideaway makes you feel like you've washed ashore on your own private Caribbean island.

An Eleutheran Elopement: The Cove Eleuthera is the ideal location for couples looking for a romantic escape. For the couple who desires a simple "I Do," opt for this Eleutheran elopement offer that includes:

- An officiant (includes preparation and execution of Bahamian marriage certificate)
- Marriage certificate
- Floral bouquet
- Five additional guests
- Ceremony hosted at the North Point or Center Point overlooking two private beaches and the crystal clear Caribbean Ocean
- Upgrade your nuptials with the following:
- Private dinner for two
- Sunset cruise for two
- Solo musician, such as a local saxophonist or acoustic guitar player
- Photographer or videographer
- Hairstylist and makeup artist



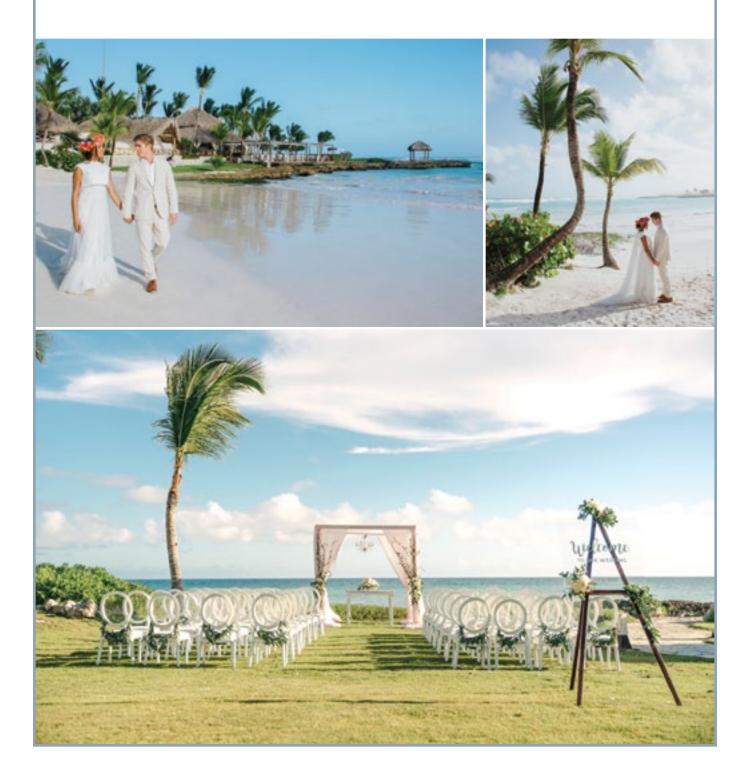
#### FOR THE ZEN BRIDE CURTAIN BLUFF | ANTIGUA

Couples looking for the ultimate tropical wedding destination can look no further than Curtain Bluff – situated on a peninsula on Antigua's southernmost tip, the property's location allows for 360-degree views of stunning sunsets, forested hills and neighboring islands. The all-inclusive five-star sanctuary is the perfect wedding venue, with an experienced and attentive team led by the resident wedding planner overseeing all event details and accommodating groups ranging from intimate private gatherings to full property buyouts of up to 140 guests. The boutique hotel invites newlyweds to stay in one of the signature Hulford Collection suites – complete with a private plunge pool – for the ultimate romantic getaway. Just steps away from the sea, The Spa features four treatment rooms and invites couples to unwind in the luxurious cliffside soaking tub after their treatment and enjoy freshly brewed teas made from herbs picked from the garden. For even more romance and relaxation, newlyweds can lounge on the beach, float in the calm waters of the bluff, enjoy a private cabana with concierge service or dine under the stars with a private beach dinner.

• New for the season, Curtain Bluff will be unveiling its adults-only Wellness Area, featuring an expanded yoga pavilion nestled among the lush Zen gardens and facing the tranquil Caribbean Sea. The property's waterfront spa and gym facilities will be doubling in size and will additionally feature a newly built infinity pool and jacuzzi.

#### FOR THE TRADITIONAL BRIDE EDEN ROC CAP CANA | DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Located on the gorgeous coast of Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, Eden Roc Cap Cana offers elegantly designed indoor and outdoor venues with unforgettable Caribbean backdrops for the idyllic destination wedding. With unforgettable sea views, La Palapa Garden is perfect for ceremonies and cocktail hours or receptions for large or small wedding sizes. The property offers wedding parties and guests with everything they'll need to have the weekend of a lifetime - suites and villas, restaurants, golf courses, and a multi-million dollar spa. The property is even launching a brand new Bridal Suite this November, perfect for all of the getting ready before each big moment.





#### FOR THE TIMELESS BRIDE THE OCEAN CLUB, A FOUR SEASONS RESORT | THE BAHAMAS

The resort's rich history encapsulating Versailles is breathtaking and creates the perfect backdrop for a special proposal in Paradise (literally, on Paradise Island!) Couples can soak in polarizing views straight from their private, uniquely designed multi-room Villa Residence or Plunge Pool Bungalow. After the views, guests are encouraged to take a dip in one of the the property's majestic pools such as the Versailles Pool, offering enchanting and gorgeous views of the resort's iconic Versailles Garden surrounded by flourishing greenery, or head to the Ocean Infinity Pool with endless Atlantic Ocean view.

Package: Guests can book The Love is in the Air Romance Package and set the stage for an undeniable romantic experience, where a bottle of champagne and sweet treats are set up upon arrival and couples can enjoy paradise with a candlelit bath, romantic dinner at Dune restaurant, and wake up to the promise of sweet and savory breakfast. Romantic dinners can also be arranged by the Concierge to be enjoyed straight on the immaculate Versailles-inspired Gardens - or right on the white sandy beaches of the Bahamas during sunset, providing unbeatable views for a proposal.



#### FOR THE BRIDE THAT DOESN'T WANT TO PLAN A WEDDING JAMAICA INN | OCHO RIOS, JAMAICA

As soon as you enter, guests are sure to feel the Old Hollywood meets colonial charm at a 65-year, family-run resort where Ian Fleming famously frequented the bar, Marilyn Monroe and Arthur Miller honeymooned, and Meghan Markle celebrated her (first) wedding. Spread over eight acres, with a 700-foot private white sand beach considered to be one of the best in the Caribbean, with 55 guest suites, all with sea views, including seven secluded cottages with large verandas, sea access, and plunge pools.

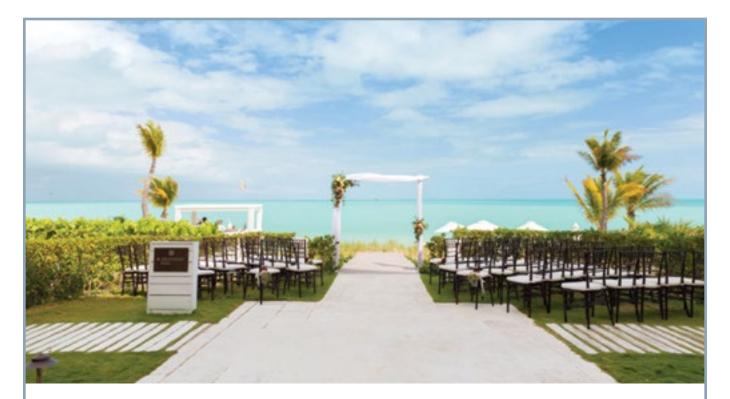
Package: Book the "Elope In Paradise Package" and relax knowing everything will be taken care of in an absolutely magical setting with sweeping views of the Caribbean Sea and breathtaking sunsets as your backdrop. Couples can say "I Do" with the hotel's destination wedding package which includes: On- property Wedding Coordinator, Minister, Photographer, Speaker for Background Music, Marriage Certificate, Bouquet and Boutonniere, Wedding Cake, Sparkling Wine for Toasting, Private Candlelight Beach Dinner for two, and a 30-minute Couples Massage. Package cost: \$1,500. A 5-night minimum stay is required with rates starting at \$544/night. Extras available: Arch, music (e.g. violinist), bridal hair and make-up, video on a DVD.





#### FOR THE FOODIE BRIDE THE PALMS | TURKS & CAICOS

There are many who dream of a fairytale beach wedding with delicious and immersive culinary experiences for them and their guests. Soft, powdery sand underfoot, fragrant sea breezes and the soothing sound of the waves From initial setup, floral design and decoration, to a range of gourmet dining options, the professional staff at The Palms – who book only one wedding per weekend – will be happy to tailor-make your day to your precise wishes. With some of the best culinary on the island - the bride & groom can enjoy customized wedding plans from rehearsal dinners at Parallel23 with a elegant Caribbean infusion, wedding cocktails from L'Attitude Bar before the oceanfront wedding with chef-driven cuisine, to morning after brunches beachside at 72 West, allowing the newlyweds to enjoy themselves and everything on the menu.



#### FOR THE BRIDE WITH A BIG FAMILY ESTATE VILLAS AT THE SHORE CLUB | TURKS AND CAICOS

Exchange vows in the spot known for weddings on property (pictured here) on 850 feet of private beachfront while your guests take in unparalleled views of Long Bay's vibrant turquoise waters and endless horizons. No shoes needed. Enjoy the most chic getaway with all your loved ones by booking one of the resort's 6-bedroom oceanfront Estate Villas. Experience ultimate privacy and elegance for ceremonies and receptions for up to 40 people, surrounded by the aunt and uncle that were just dying to stamp their passport and put on their flip-flops. The villas offer a completely private oceanfront setting framed by a secluded, white-sand beach, with all of the amenities of an exclusive luxury resort. The Shore Club is the ultimate location for that dream wedding - the first and only development on Long Bay Beach with sweeping ocean views, four expansive pool areas, the naturally-inspired Dune Spa and five globally-inspired dining venues and five bars. Villa Rates start at \$6,750/night.

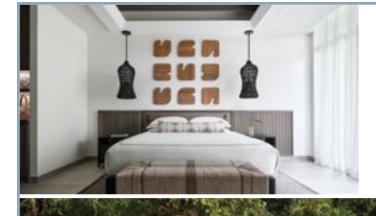


#### FOR THE BRIDE WHO WANTS TO TAKE OVER AN ISLAND NECKER ISLAND | BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

Available for exclusive use only, Necker Island is one of the grandest all inclusive wedding destinations located in the stunning British Virgin Island. From cocktails on the rooftop terrace, beautiful Caribbean views, to a six-course dinner followed by a spectacular fireworks display and a beach club afterparty of your choosing, an expert team will plan every detail - and all inclusive with the property buyout. For those who want to extend the celebration behind the ceremony and reception, guests can spend the day kitesurfing, paddle boarding and kayaking over the crystal Caribbean waters or swimming with the sea turtles. On land, an array of activities awaits - from spending that day roaming the island to playing chess on an oversized outdoor chess board overlooking the ocean. Additional all inclusive wedding details include:

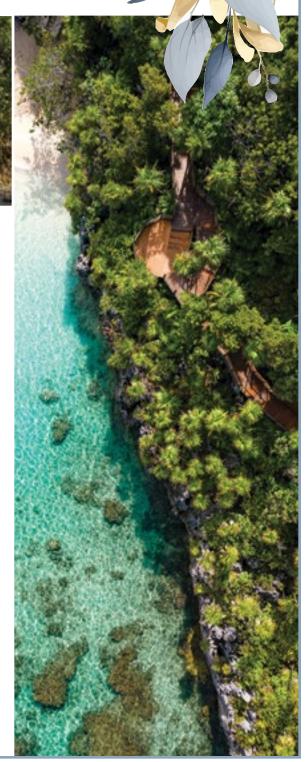
- Wedding ceremony and reception for up to 200 guests (multiple areas to choose)
- Guest rooms for up to 48 adults and 6 children (with extra accommodation available on our nearby sister island)
- Event assistance and concierge for extra activities (think white parties, 70s discos, beach parties, UV nights, casino nights, live music, etc)
- All inclusive food, beverages (including alcohol) throughout stay
- Couples' massage





#### FOR THE ADVENTUROUS BRIDE KIMPTON GRAND ROATÁN RESORT & SPA |ROATÁN, HONDURAS BAY ISLANDS

Nestled on the picturesque West Bay Beach of Roatán, Kimpton Grand Roatán Resort & Spa will provide a vibrant island wedding venue like no other, offering a luxury guest experience full of exciting adventure. With premiere access to the dropoff point of the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef, the world's second largest barrier reef, the new resort is the latest Caribbean gem that's putting Roatán on the bucket lists of adventure-minded brides. The property boasts 119 luxury guest rooms and suites, four chef-driven restaurants and bars, a state-of-the-art spa and nearly 6,000 square feet of wedding event spaces, while the exceptional catering team offers cocktail receptions and seated dinners for weddings of over 100+ guests. Newlyweds can explore the waters of the Caribbean Sea with snorkeling and scuba diving excursions or participate in watersports including paddleboarding, kayaking, parasailing, glass-bottom boating and jet skiing, creating unforgettable new memories to last a lifetime.



Advertorial







Today travellers want an authentic, uncrowded, pristine experience, which is exactly what awaits in the Abaco Islands and its premier property, Abaco Beach Resort. The resort and marina are owned by two Bahamians Manny Alexiou and Andrew Sweeting who have an affinity for boating and island hopping.

The Abacos are known for their wild beauty, azure waters, sandy beaches, emerald hills, six national parks and the best boating in the Bahamas.

Located just 165-miles off the coast of Florida on Great Abaco in the 120-mile chain of islands and cays that comprise the islands of the Abacos, the Abaco Beach Resort recently completed a massive renovation and expansion.

Devastated by Hurricane Dorian, the 2019 storm that was the worst natural disaster in the Bahamas history, the Abaco Beach Resort bounced back better than ever. The resort renovated all its 94 rooms, added deluxe accommodation options, created a fine dining Bistro and a new al fresco restaurant poolside, and built the largest marina in the Bahamas.

"The new look is sleek, modern, and sizzles with a fresh energy," said newly appointed General Managers Andrei & Antonia Mocanu. "It's breathed new life into this historic property."

#### **NewAmenities**

All accommodations at the 40-acre beachfront resort boast an ocean view and a patio or balcony to enjoy it from. In addition to rooms, the property offers one-bedroom oceanfront suites, and updated two-bedroom residences, and a three-bedroom penthouse. All are equipped with high-end Parachute linen from New York and Molton Brown amenities.

"Our Residence accommodations are perfect for multi-generational family travel and offer a more private, luxurious experience," Andrei said.

Foodies will delight at the new dining venues unveiled in the resort's renovation. The casual Pool Bar and Terrace at Marinaville is open all day. Breakfast features classics like Eggs Benedict, while the lunch and dinner menus are packed with local fare like cracked conch and a decadent lobster burger. A variety of salads, pizzas, sandwiches and main courses like Surf & Turf with Bahamian lobster and fillet are also on offer.

The Iconic Abaco Beach Resort is pleased to welcome renowned Executive Chef Rome'ha Forbes to lead its culinary team. A 20-year veteran in the culinary industry, Rome'ha started his stellar career at the age of 16 as an Apprentice Chef at the then Radisson Cable Beach Resort, Nassau, and has since traveled and worked throughout the Bahamas Archipelago perfecting his skills.

Born in the tourism mecca of Nassau, Bahamas, Chef Rome'ha has served as Executive Chef for luxury boutique resorts including Grand Isle Resort, Exuma, and The Abaco Club on Winding Bay, Abaco.

Chef Rome'ha is thrilled to launch his inventive infused Caribbean and Bahamian delicacies at the discerning and quintessential Bistro gourmet restaurant and raise the bar with his authentic menu creation at the acclaimed Alfresco style Terrace at Marinaville overlooking the Resort's state-of-the-art 200 slip marina.

"Chef Forbes impressive culinary training and skills have allowed Abaco to now offer some of the finest dining in the islands," said Antonia.





#### **Boating and Fishing Mecca**

Perhaps the biggest undertaking in the renovation was Harbour. The marina can host pleasure boats, sport fishing boats and super yachts up to 200 ft. in length. Customs and Immigration services are onsite. It's an impressive addition to a resort that was already known for its world-famous fishing tournaments.

Abaco Beach Resort will host four of the top billfish tournaments in the world in 2023. Skip's tournaments include the Blue Marlin Tournament, White Marlin Roundup, The Shootout, which pits production boats against custom craft, and the Custom Shootout, featuring 50 custom boat teams. It is the most elite collection of sport fishing boats in one location.

"We're thrilled to host not one, but four of the top sport fishing events in The Bahamas," said Mocanu. "The tournaments bring the best in the sport to Abaco and an exciting atmosphere to the resort."

Island Hopping The charm of the Abaco's lies in the ability to easily hop between the many islands. If you are an experienced captain or not, both can make use of the very safe waterways between the islands.

From the new marina set sail to photograph the nearby candy-cane striped lighthouse of Hope Town on Elbow Cay and enjoy the sandy, coconut-tree lined Tahiti Beach. On Man O War Cay you can visit with shipbuilders, and at Pelican Cays National Park soak in the beauty of the shallow coral gardens.

Nature lovers should plan to explore Great Guana Cay known for its vast Elkhorn coral reefs, sea turtles, and migrating birds. Don't miss stopping in the local's favorite, Nipper's Beach Bar for a lively island party any time of day.

These are just a few stops you can take in a just under 100 miles of sheltered waterway known as the Sea of Abaco with many surrounding cays and islands to visit.

#### Down Time

While the Abacos provide plenty of outdoor adventures and cute towns to explore, no vacation to these laid-back islands would be complete without some down time to relax, rejuvenate and return home more balanced.

The Abaco Beach Resort offers a private white sand beach for guests to grab a chaise to lounge in, sunbathe, read or enjoy sipping an island cocktail. When you're ready to jump in the water, complimentary kayaks, paddle boards and snorkelling gear are available. Our beach bar offers snacks & drinks and lead the Bahama Buddies Program for all kids 4-12 years. The program offers visiting children the opportunity to learn about the island life from a resident child ambassador by spending an afternoon participating in authentic island activities and crafts.

For many no vacation is complete without some spa pampering. At Abaco Beach Resort the masseuse comes to you, whether you want your massage in a beachside cabana or in the privacy of your room.



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