

BEACH HOPPING  
JOURNEYS FOR JETSETTERS

200 MINUTES IN  
DUNWOODY

AUGUST 2017

# Points North

Atlanta



COMIC  
RELIEF

with author  
Amy Lyle

# Beach Hopping

# USING

# All

# YOUR

# VACATION

# DAYS

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SUMMER MAY BE WINDING DOWN, but it's the perfect time to plan ahead. We scouted favorite coasts from stylish St. Barths and magical Mexico to trendy Turks and Caicos with a bonus stop in Puerto Rico for good measure. What we discovered are resorts to fit any whim. Whether you prefer your seat on a direct flight or to island hop via a charter plane, it's no surprise that reservations at these tropical getaways fill fast.

## NO. 108

## Bonjour, St. Barths: Le Guanahani

WITH A DEEP INHALE, I FELT THE TINGLE OF CITRUS AND FLORALS, of lemon, jasmine, ylang-ylang and sage, mixing together with the omnipresent fresh sea air. Just steps away stretched the white sandy beach between St. Barths' Grand Cul-De-Sac and Marigot Bay, but I was staying dry inside while a steady stream of rain fell outside.

The raindrop-splattered view through the portrait window of vibrant green ferns and fuchsia bougainvillea looked as if a watercolor painting had





PHOTOS COURTESY OF LE GUAMANN

## ● BEACH HOPPING: ST. BARTHS



come to life. Playing peek-a-boo beyond the lush vegetation were 18 pristine acres and 67 multi-colored, West Indies-style guest cottages of Le Guanahani (meaning "welcome" in an indigenous island language), including the one I called mine for a little while.

I took another invigorating inhale. The custom blend of BODY BLISS essential oils I was creating could improve creativity when applied to pulse points — or so I was told by the brand's producer Nick James during an aromatherapy lesson. James was invited to Le Guanahani from his home in Sedona, Arizona to lead a wellness weekend and train the staff at the hotel's sophisticated Spa by Clarins to incorporate BODY BLISS in treatments.

Throughout the aromatherapy session, each participant was encouraged to add their choice of energy-infused gemstones into the vial of blended essential oils. I felt drawn to the shiny, dark blue Goldstone and the green Aventurine, and spooned a small scoop of each into my container. Together, they seemed to mimic the mesmerizing color of the Caribbean waves lapping the hotel's private beach. Collectively, the stones were thought to attract good fortune and promote positivity, harmony and happiness.

Outside, the quick tropical rainstorm was passing and St. Barth's' sunshine started to stream through the window. The rest of the afternoon was wide open, and with a quick reassessment of the view around me, how could I argue with James' methods?

## WELL-TO-DO

Wellness is a well-regarded statute at Le Guanahani, both to guests and managing director Martein van Wagenberg, who places his guests first. Under his leadership, the hotel's penchant for well-being extends beyond the expected yoga classes, watersports and fitness center. One offered wellness package is also customizable based on a guest's intended goal: to rest, to engage or to cultivate. During special pre-planned weekends, the hotel hosts experts like James as well as Chaya Mueller Bronsten, a licensed massage therapist and psychic reader who led Osho meditation sessions each morning during my stay.

If these offerings don't sound particularly unique, let me back up. St. Barth's is famous for its status as a destination for socialites and celebrities, Parisians and yachtsmen alike. The former are drawn here for the island's privacy and exclusivity; the landing runway is a mere 2,170 feet long and is ideal for private planes and eight-seat charter flights.

Since the 1950s, these types tend to congregate at the buzzing scene on Nikki Beach's Eden Rock, the island's first hotel — a short ride away by moped or Mini Cooper from the quieter, family-friendly Grand Cul-De-Sac.

Le Guanahani maintains its own fleet rentals, including bright orange Mini Coopers for those who want to brave the winding, craggy roads and explore the vistas of nearby St. Maarten across the island's



### GETTING THERE

Founded in 2001 by brothers Eric and David Zipkin on the principle that every flight deserves the highest quality aircraft, crew and service, Tradewind Aviation offers scheduled shuttle service throughout the Northeast and Caribbean on its modern fleet of Citation Jets and Pilatus PC-12s. With the added safety of a second pilot on board, the airline primarily operates scheduled service from Westchester County Airport to Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket, Boston and Stowe in the summer and throughout the Caribbean including San Juan, St. Barths, Anguilla, Nevis, Antigua and St. Thomas in the winter. Tradewind also operates on-demand charter service to virtually anywhere in the world. [flytradewind.com](http://flytradewind.com)

dense 9 square miles. Don't forget to stop often and assist any turtles crossing the road, as is customary among the friendly locals.

Another sight to see is Gustavia, a busy port tracing back to the days of Swedish and French colonization during the 18th century. The charm of the island is very much due to the endurance of that era's architecture, although today Gustavia's seaside streets are packed with shops from the world's most luxurious retailers, including Hermès, Louis Vuitton, Bulgari, Cartier, Prada, VILEBREQUIN and the list goes on. No doubt, the high style is significantly influenced by the native French-speaking population.

Traces to this history can be found in the food, too, and I didn't once question the "wellness" of indulging in a buttery croissant each morning along with a cold-pressed juice.

### COURSE OF NATURE

With such dazzle and vibrant nightlife, many St. Barths visitors might not be game for a meditation session on Saturdays at 7 a.m. Awakening to the morning light and a waterfront view, however, made it a little easier to get myself moving.

Before leaving my turquoise cottage, I applied a



small drop of my custom blend to my temples. After a short stroll through the foliage, I found myself lounging in a small circle of other guests beside the private pool of one of the hotel's 10 signature suites.

One of my favorite parts about Le Guanahani was its chosen design motif: the Panama hat. Guests pick up on hints as soon as they enter the lobby, and they discover the versatility, the shelter, the enduring fashion and the connotation to an adventurous spirit in the hotel's two onsite restaurants, Indigo and Bartolomeo. Like the top-notch service of the hotel staff, the design concept was executed both tastefully and playfully.

The Caribbean sun was already rising and warming the air around us, while I closed my eyes and actively focused on Chaya's instructions — a tough exercise after the full sensory engagement of the past few days.

Then, when she read an excerpt from the Darshan Diary "The Rainbow Bridge," she had my full attention:

"When you pass by the side of a rosebush, the rosebush does not bother whether it likes you or not. Its fragrance is available to you as much as to anybody else. Its fragrance is available to the birds, to the animals, to the trees — and unconditionally, without any expectation in return. Its fragrance is available even when there is nobody present to enjoy it, appreciate it. It simply goes on releasing its fragrance; it is its nature. That's how love has to be: your very nature..."

[leguanahani.com](http://leguanahani.com)