



A room on St. Lucia for \$55 a night? Your own private cottage in Barbados for \$180? No, it's not too good to be true. T+L dispatched our experts from Jamaica to Curaçao to create the ultimate resort finder. Here, 26 stylish places to stay for less than \$250 a night. **PLUS** Money-saving tips, advice for exploring the islands, and all the latest news.

A canopy bed in a premium villa at Jamaica's Rockhouse. Opposite: The pool at Bravo Beach Hotel, in Vieques, Puerto Rico.



# Affordable Caribbean

## AFFORDABLE CARIBBEAN

The feel is elegant yet simple: crisp, spare interiors are punctuated by handcrafted teak beds; barefoot guests gather at the bar beside the pool to sample bottles from the island's best wine cellar. Nothing is more than a few steps from the beach, which draws in-the-know snorkelers for its exceptional reef. **T+L TIP** Book a coconut body scrub or an outdoor massage at the hotel's new spa (*treatments from \$75*).

### ST. BART'S

**\$230** Think you can't do St. Bart's affordably? Think again. The **Hôtel Baie des Aniges** (*Flamands*; 590-590/276-361; *hotelbaiedesanges.fr*), on the northwestern corner of the island, has 10 airy white-on-white rooms that overlook Flamands Bay. St. Bart's is all about the people-watching, and there's plenty of it here: the property shares its sands with the tony Hotel St.-Barth Isle de France. Do yourself a favor and try the Creole cod fritters or the grilled spiny lobster at **La Langouste** (590-590/276-361; *dinner for two \$42*), the hotel's casual restaurant, with one of the best-priced menus on the island. **T+L TIP** Pick up snorkeling gear at **Marine Service** (*Quai du Yacht Club, Gustavia*; 590-590/277-034; *daily rentals from \$20*) and head to secluded Gouverneur Beach, where you'll spot angelfish, sergeant majors, sea turtles, and the occasional nurse shark.

**\$178** If you're looking for a deal that doesn't sacrifice style, check in to the eight-suite **Normandie Hotel** (*Lorient*; 590-590/276-166; *normandiehôtelstbarts.com*). Inspired by the luxury liner *Normandie*, the look is old-world nautical chic: wood and metal furniture; portholed doors; leather lounge chairs in the bar. If Lorient Beach were not a two-minute walk away, you might never leave the confines of the wooden deck surrounding the pool. **T+L TIP** For a beach picnic, stock up on French delicacies—*jambon cru*; *pork rillettes*; *Camembert*—at **Le Minimart** (*Lorient*; 590-590/276-502).

### ST. KITTS

**\$245** The **Golden Lemon Inn & Villas** (869/465-7260; *goldenlemon.com*) was one of the Caribbean's first boutique hotels, opened by Arthur Leaman in 1963 in a lush garden on the black-sand shores of Dieppe Bay. Set in a 17th-century great house, this little gem has tons of personality thanks to the owner, who has decorated the place with a collection of antiques: ma-

hogany sideboards repurposed for bathroom sinks; bedside tables; four-poster beds; carved armoires. The seven rooms in the great house are charming, but the villas are the ones to book, with their soaring, 25-foot-high ceilings, sunken baths, and private plunge pools. Don't miss the rum-braised beef stew and grilled lobster, served poolside by candlelight at the property's restaurant. And expect total relaxation. There are no TV's or radios—just plenty of black sand and coral reefs. **T+L TIP** Book an island tour on the **St. Kitts Scenic Railway** (869/465-7263; *stkitsscenicrailway.com*; *tours from \$89*), which takes you through tiny villages and pineapple fields and close to an ancient hilltop fortress.

### ST. LUCIA

**\$55** On the northern coast of the island, just off Reduit Beach, **Coco Palm** (758/456-2800; *coco-resorts.com*) is perfectly located, not only for easy beach access but also for checking out the boutiques and restaurants in neighboring Rodney Bay Village. The 101-room hotel is a pastel pastiche of Creole style (French-colonial beds; claw-foot bathtubs). At the casual Ti Banane Bistro, which serves some of the best rum cocktails on St. Lucia, a sarong is as dressy as it gets for dinner. **T+L TIP** Take a day trip to Soufrière, in the southern part of the island, and soak in the mineral springs at **Diamond Botanical Garden and Waterfalls** (758/452-4759; *diamondstlucia.com*). These are the same warm springs that refreshed Louis XVI's troops when they were stationed in St. Lucia in 1784.

**\$80** Escape the fast-developing north and head to the empty beaches and forests in St. Lucia's serene southern half. Here you'll find the 18th-century **Balenbouche Estate** (*Choiseu*; 758/455-1244; *balenbouche.com*; *three-night minimum*), a former sugarcane plantation now owned by the Lawaetz family, who live in the plantation house and rent out four sweet cottages. The Frangipani guest house was constructed with 100-year-old wood from two houses in the nearby community of Fond St.-Jacques and has French doors framed by organza curtains, a veranda, and a shower made of river stones. **T+L TIP** Anitanja Lawaetz, the family's youngest daughter, has an on-site jewelry workshop. Her pieces—strands and clusters of seeds, shells, and stones—are a rare departure from the region's usual shell souvenirs.

### ST. VINCENT & THE GRENADINES

**\$228** **BEQUIA** In the early 1960's, American expat Tom Johnston fell in love with the laid-back pace of Bequia. He soon began work on his legacy, Moonhole, an eclectic group of houses near secluded Moonhole Beach, on the island's southwestern tip. Now you can rent his two-bedroom **Burke House** (*no phone*; *burke-house.com*; *seven-night minimum*), a quirky stone-and-timber cottage with a whalebone chair and a four-poster king-size bed made of blue mahoe wood. Take in ocean vistas from both patios or from your bedroom, which has side-by-side picture windows that look out on neighboring islands. **T+L TIP** Make a day trip to the homegrown **Oldhegg Turtle Sanctuary** (*Park Bay*; 784/532-8013; *turtles.bequia.net*), built and operated with astounding dedication by local fisherman Orton "Brother" King.

### TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

**\$130** **TRINIDAD** The village of Grande Rivière, on the island's northern coast, is an amped-up version of Oahu's North Shore, with surfers, jungle trails, and the most active site for nesting leatherback turtles in the Western Hemisphere. The **Acajou Hotel** (209 *Paria Main Rd.*; 868/670-3771; *acajoutrinidad.com*) has six Indonesian-style cottages with bamboo furnishings, muslin-draped beds, and spacious porches with lounge chairs. Dinner—grilled red snapper with lemongrass and coconut milk-poached kingfish—is served in an open-air pavilion, with the sound of tree frogs humming in the distance. **T+L TIP** At night between March and September, the beach at Grande Rivière is the best place on the island to see the giant turtles clambering out of the surf to lay their eggs in the sand.

**\$185** **TOBAGO** The sister island to Trinidad is focusing more on eco-tourism lately, but it hasn't forgotten its star-studded past. Since the 1950's, the 55-room **Blue Haven Hotel** (*Bacolet Bay, Scarborough*; 868/660-7400; *bluehavenhotel.com*), set on a 15-acre peninsula overlooking a pocket-size beach, has drawn celebrities—Robert Mitchum; Rita Hayworth; Deborah Kerr. It's easy to understand why this place captivated the old-school Hollywood set when you see the rooms, decorated with four-poster beds, mahogany chaise longues, and wooden chairs on sea-facing balconies. **T+L TIP** Just offshore are the enormous brain coral heads of Angel Reef, which »