

AFAR

Where to Go This Winter in the Caribbean

By Annie Fitzsimmons

Dec 8, 2020



Courtesy of Beach Enclave Turks & Caicos

Beach Enclave Turks & Caicos will debut 10 new beachfront villas in January.

The Caribbean islands are forever a reliable destination for a quick warm-weather escape.

Few places have made me feel as content as the Caribbean islands I've visited, like Nevis and St. Bart's. Is it that I feel like a happier, warmer version of myself? Or that I actually slow down long enough to savor a cocktail and a beach sunset or talking to the locals? The Caribbean has endless appeal, and this year is no different, though it requires testing and distancing (easier to do in a sparsely populated island environment).

We talked to travel experts to whittle down a list of some of the dreamiest places to go and most luxurious places to stay, whether it's a week or longer: You can apply to [stay for up to a year](#) in Anguilla, and the same in [Barbados](#).

All of these islands require negative COVID tests before you fly, and some require a second negative test upon arrival, among other travel requirements and restrictions. Please check current travel restrictions with local authorities or your travel advisor.

Jamaica

Why we love it: *Jamaica has kept its distinctive and soulful culture, with a musical and food heritage unlike any other island. The hotels range from toes-in-the-sand laid-back to super-luxe.*

“There is such a legacy with the hotels on Jamaica,” says Katie Cadar, director of leisure sales at [TravelStore](#). “Picture Noel Coward leaning on the bar, or JFK and Jackie, or Paul McCartney.”

And James Bond, too. Or at least Ian Fleming, his creator, whose home-turned-resort, GoldenEye, will help to celebrate the release of the 25th Bond film in April 2021. You can even book Fleming’s [original five-bedroom home](#), which includes his writing desk. He created the Bond character while visiting Jamaica, once saying, “Would these books have been born if I had not been living in the gorgeous vacuum of a Jamaican holiday? I doubt it.”

The 132-room (including 27 private villas) [Round Hill Hotel and Villas](#) also brings the glamour. “There is a casual elegance, and I love the green striped awnings and black-and-white checkerboard floors,” says Cadar. “I always picture a British actor in a white suit and straw hat standing by the beach bar, or heading into afternoon tea. You have to appreciate the history of Round Hill and the many guests who have owned villas or chosen to stay there.” This is where John and Jackie Kennedy spent part of their honeymoon and where Ralph Lauren played a big part in design (and owns property).

For something smaller, but no less chic, try [Strawberry Hill](#), a 12-cottage mountaintop retreat owned by Chris Blackwell, the founder of iconic Island Records, which has supported Jamaican music and artists, including Bob Marley (who spent time here in the 1970s), but also famous heavy hitters like U2, Queen, Cat Stevens, Leona Lewis, and many more. Here, it’s more about mountain air, wildlife viewing, and hiking trails rather than beach vibes.



Photo by Island Outpost

Strawberry Hill is a refreshingly different and chic mountain retreat in Jamaica.
