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CARIBBEAN Cool

From Nevis to St. Barths, discover a fresh-but-familiar wave of island-chic accommodations, underscored by these renewed LUXURY PROPERTIES

By Paul Rubio

FOUR SEASONS RESORT NEVIS

Change isn't a common thing on Nevis, a 36-square-mile, lost-in-time volcanic island of the Lesser Antilles archipelago—and that's exactly its charm. Travelers come here for a predictably great escape from the modern world and to embrace the ruin-strewn hillsides, untouched beaches, and unfussy, barefoot luxury. But despite this love affair with the Caribbean

of yesteryear, there's one major upgrade on this sleepy isle that everyone's applauding: the transformation of the iconic Four Seasons Resort Nevis.

Following a multiyear, multimillion-dollar renovation and expansion, Nevis' grand dame reemerged in December 2019, infusing a contemporary edge into its classic surroundings. What remains is the architectural and design integrity of the resort's exteriors; the cherished, low-

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RELAX AT FOUR SEASONS RESORT NEVIS' REDESIGNED GREAT HOUSE (TOP LEFT) BEFORE RETREATING TO ONE OF THE WELL-APPOINTED SUITES (ABOVE) AND ENJOYING COASTAL CUISINE AT ESQUILINA (BELOW).



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rise, plantation-style cottages have simply been refreshed to their initial grandeur. Just about everything else, however, is different. First of all, each of the 189 guest rooms and suites has been reimaged to represent different facets of Nevis, past and present. Walls are cushioned in fabrics that pay homage to the island's British influence, inspired by the rich botanical patterns of nineteenth-century England. Furnishings flaunt embroidered inlays depicting local flora and fauna, including Nevis' resident, mischievous monkeys. The soft color palette blends with the blues and greens of the shoreline, accentuating the tropical views through floor-to-ceiling glass doors.

The redesigned Great House is a feat in transitional indoor-outdoor living, with breezy interiors overlooking the resort's new centerpiece infinity-edged pool. From above, the Limin Pool creates an optical illusion of extending into the Caribbean Sea. From below, it's the perfect spot to grab a lounge, order a few

cocktails, and listen to the waves or the vibey heavy music. (Bonus: At times, this pool features an amphibious DJ and bartender, so prepare to drink and dance in the water.) Finally, look forward to new restaurants and bar concepts such as a floating pop-up bar at the tip of the Four Seasons' pier, where the panoramas are sure to set your social media on fire. Arrive hungry for meals at Mediterranean-infused Esquilina and On the Dune, where ocean-to-table and farm-to-table meet over sublime vistas. Also, don't miss the Crowned Monkey Rum Bar for pre- or post-dinner rum libations or flights that will take your palate on a journey across the Caribbean.

For those wondering what else remains of the original Four Seasons Resort Nevis, West Indian restaurant Mango is still serving its famous lobster fritters and seared local wahoo—albeit in a repositioned and expanded area. The celebrated 18-hole, par-71, Robert Trent Jones II-designed golf course is just as you remember, as are the ball-chasing green vervet monkeys. In total, the property oozes new life throughout a familiar space, achieving what every reinvented icon covets: the ultimate balance of old and new. (fourseasons.com/nevis)



LE TOINY



LE TOINY



HOTEL LE TOINY AND LE SERENO SAINT BARTHÉLEMY

While parts of St. Barths continue to recover from 2017's Hurricane Irma, the exclusive Hotel Le Toiny and Le Sereno Saint Barthélemy are officially back—and more exquisite than ever.

Ultra-private hideaway Hotel Le Toiny returns along St. Barths' less-explored Côte Sauvage (Wild Coast) with a revamp of its 14 original freestanding villas along with eight newly constructed villa suites, a beachfront pool added to the Toiny Beach Club, and a new signature restaurant, Jarad. The now 22-villa collection possesses an effortless elegance synonymous with noted British designer Bee Osborn. Suites are kitted out in light-wood furnishings and draped in soothing whites and creamy neutrals, delicately framing breathtaking views of the Caribbean Sea. Step outside onto the expansive terrace and

discover a full-sized swimming pool—each villa has its own—ideal for private languishing during your St. Barths holiday.

This study in au courant coastal excellence continues down on Toiny Bay, where a new beachfront pool and chaise lounge-lined deck complement a toes-in-the-sand beach bar and waterfront palapas. Come evening, the beach club ambience moves up to Le Toiny's hilltop reception area, where DJs spin house music, an easy-on-the-eyes crowd sips artisan cocktails like truffle-infused negronis, and award-winning chef Jarad McCarroll serves up contemporary global cuisine at his eponymous eatery.

Another favorite back on the haute hotel scene is Le Sereno Saint Barthélemy, which has reopened its all-suite enclave on Grand Cul de Sac Beach with a look similar to its pre-hurricane incarnation. The minimalism of French designer



HOTEL LE TOINY, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: THE ULTRA-PRIVATE LE TOINY BEACH; THE MOUNTAINS-MEETS-OCEAN VISTA FROM THE RESORT'S SCENIC POOL; THE SPIRIT SUITE POOL; FRESH-CAUGHT MAHI MAHI CEVICHE AT JARAD; THE SPIRIT DUPLEX SUITE.

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Christian Liaigre has been resurrected with new and restored contemporary furnishings and the addition of in-room technology. The majority of Le Sereno's 39 suites take shape as Grande Suite Plage: a two-tiered, 1,200-square-foot unit with a bedroom, sunken living room, and sundeck. As impressive as these suites are, they're crafted to highlight the azure seas and skies, with unembellished white walls that guide your eye outward.



EMILY LAB

LE SERENO, FROM LEFT: THE GRANDE SUITE PLAGE; PARMIGIANA DI MELANZANE; WATERFRONT VIEWS AT AL MARE RESTAURANT.

Between the design and subtle amenities like high-thread-count linens, toiletries specially made for the hotel, and welcome Havaianas sandals, Le Sereno truly embodies understated luxury. What's more, you'll love the stellar service and Italian flair at the resort's on-site beach club, sprawling pool deck, and new Al Mare restaurant. Prized staff from Le Sereno's sister property in Lake Como, Il Sereno Lago di Como, have crossed the Atlantic to bring their expertise to St. Barths. Part of this transplant includes the Michelin-starred culinary team led by executive chef Raffaele Lenzi, who delivers a veritable coastal Italian dining experience on this hyper-French isle.

Together, the post-hurricane reboots of Le Toiny and Le Sereno usher in a new chapter of luxury on an island where the good life just keeps getting better. (letoiny.com; serenohotels.com) ◀◀

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