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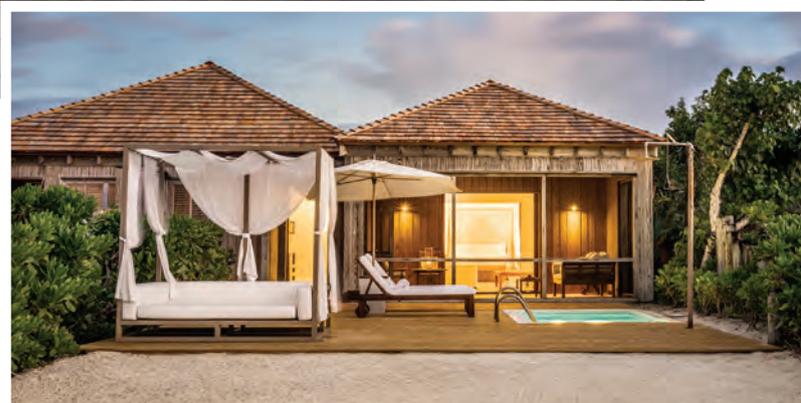
*Discover private island bliss at COMO PARROT CAY
in the nearby Turks and Caicos*

By Paul Rubio



MARTIN MORRELL

In the age of COVID-19, travel to private islands feels more relevant than ever. Fortunately for Floridians, one of the world's best, Como Parrot Cay, lies within easy reach—a 90-minute flight plus a 20-minute boat ride, to be precise. The 1,000-acre island is the crown jewel of the Turks and Caicos, an island chain famed for its sparkling turquoise waters, sugary sands, and virgin limestone terrain. In the apex of this natural beauty, Parrot Cay entices as a timeless tropical hideaway, at once fitting for multigenerational families and today's style set.



ESCAPE



MARTIN MORRELL



SCENES FROM COMO PARROT CAY, CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT: UNDERSTATED DESIGN PERMEATES THE ACCOMMODATIONS INSIDE AND OUT; YOGA ON A SANDBAR; COCKTAILS ON THE BEACH; A STUNNING SUNSET POOLSIDE.



frames the unspoiled brilliance that lies beyond.

Outdoors, discover the undulating, shallow mounds of fine white sand that sculpt some two miles of beach along Parrot Cay's western Atlantic reaches. Witness mesmerizing spectacles of surf and sand as the ombré waters appear to dance beneath sun and clouds. On the island's opposite end, wild expanses of mangroves and native shrub vegetation dominate, comprising a wetlands reserve. Come dusk, the sky erupts in brushstrokes of cotton-candy pink and blue, vivid magenta, and fiery orange.

Amenities for appreciating these surrounds speak to couples, friends, and family alike. An adults-only beachfront infinity pool welcomes the lion's share of see-and-be-seen romantics and traveling besties; a sleek setup features umbrella-capped lounge beds, the Como Beach Club (with tiers of cozy couches overlooking the ocean), a DJ hut, and a wooden staircase that connects the chic scene to the shoreline. Nearby, a second sprawling infinity pool embraces all ages—though families with small children typically opt for accommodations with a private pool. Below these splash pads is a small hub for coordinating water activities and rentals, such as stand-up paddleboards, single or double



KEN HAYDEN PHOTOGRAPHY

The resort's broad appeal begins with its diversity in accommodations, from ocean-facing rooms among low-rise hillside structures to celebrity-owned, multi-bedroom beachfront estates (integrated into Parrot Cay's rental pool). In between is a selection of beach houses and villas, which, similar to their peers, personify beachfront minimalism, dressed in white voile draping and teak wood furnishings. The simple but powerful aesthetic eschews trends for an understated look that both complements and



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CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: COMO SHAMBHALA RETREAT; A LIVING ROOM AT WYMARA VILLAS; THE MAIN POOL AND ZEST RESTAURANT AT WYMARA RESORT; AN OVERWATER PLATFORM AT WYMARA VILLAS.



kayaks, and Hobie Cat Wave catamarans. Or try something unique to this stretch of the Caribbean and amble toward the island's north to traverse shallows and sandbars that extend into the middle of the ocean, fostering a sensation of walking on water.

Back on land, Play by Como is a staffed center where parents and grandparents can comfortably drop off children (ages 4 to 12) to engage in games (cricket, anyone?) and artistic activities. This gives grown-ups an opportunity to join fellow islanders for mental and physical rejuvenation at the hilltop Como Shambhala Retreat, Parrot Cay's branded wellness concept. Work out in the state-of-the-art fitness pavilion or join one of the daily complimentary yoga or Pilates classes. Afterward, relax in the Asian-inspired spa, where Balinese and Thai therapists soothe body and soul through time-honored treatments.

The Como Shambhala concept extends to the food and drink offerings on property, with a vitamin-rich, clean-eating menu that supplements options at Italian-inspired Terrace, Asian restaurant Lotus, and the Como Beach Club. Any meal or menu can be enjoyed in the comfort of your room, house, or estate if feasting among others proves unappealing. Like all experiences here, dining is executed at your own pace. It underscores the power of choice—a factor that makes current travel to Parrot Cay more applicable than ever. You can cast away without ever seeing another soul, or choose to socialize among jet setters, all of whom have been tested before arrival (and will do so again, on-site and at no cost, prior to leaving the island.) Suffice it to say that, even during a pandemic, the private island fantasy of Como Parrot Cay feels uncompromised and surfaces as the proximate promised land a mere two hours from South Florida. (comohotels.com/parrotcay)



PROVO PERFECTION

It may not be a private island, but the Turks and Caicos' principal resort island of Providenciales (affectionately referred to as Provo) fulfills tropical dreams all its own—and none are more extraordinary than those to be had at Wymara Villas Turks and Caicos. This collection of seven four- and five-bedroom waterfront estates wows through contemporary high design rife with transitional indoor-outdoor spaces, full kitchens, cantilevered firepits, Maldivian-style overwater plat-

forms, and a duo of perfectly positioned swimming pools (so that at all times, poolside sun or shade is available). Villa guests have free rein over the greater Wymara Resort, a 91-key stunner on Grace Bay Beach with all the excess of a high-end property and more, including a 7,000-square-foot mosaic-tiled swimming pool, rosé-themed Pink Bar, and signature restaurants Stelle and Zest. (wymararesortandvillas.com) ◀◀



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