

CUBA
BEYOND
HAVANA
P. 34

WHERE TO GO IN

August

ARUBA

What hurricane season?
Tans are guaranteed on
One Happy Island.
P. 24

November

MAUI

A five-course foraging
dinner awaits on the third
Thursday of each month.
P. 44

February

FLORIDA

Find low-season deals
on Amelia Island.
P. 28

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01 THE ABACOS, BAHAMAS

► “The Abacos used to be the Wild West of the Caribbean,” says Austin Smith, who moved from Florida in 1989 to a 300-acre cay dubbed Lubbers Quarters. “It was like being a pioneer, but instead of arriving in covered wagons, we sailed in boats.” As an 18-year-old captain, Smith was running dive trips for educational groups that visited the Abacos to study its ocean life and coral reefs. A few years later, he met Amy, a marine-biology student from Georgia. “We fell in love in three days,” says Smith, who courted her to stay full time and eventually opened Lubbers’ Landing, a boutique eco-resort with three secluded cottages. “Without her, I would

not have endured living on what was then a lonely rock in the sea of Abaco,” says Smith.

At the time, the island had no power or running water, which is a big difference from the Abacos of today. Chiefly because of its proximity to the U.S. — a mere one-hour flight from West Palm Beach, Florida — the islands are now a haven for Americans looking for a second home or a full relocation from the States.

Retired businessman Alan Terry moved to Tilloo Cay with

his wife, Robyn, in 2015 but has been visiting since the 1960s. “Back then, the Bahamas were dominated by boaters from the U.S. — arriving any other way was impossible,” says Terry. “Today, the expat community has grown dramatically because there are so many options to fly directly into Marsh Harbour.”

And thanks to Smith’s latest project, owning a slice of paradise just got easier. In May 2016, he launched Lubbers’ Quarters, 12 two- and three- bedroom fractional-ownership cottages available to buyers for 13 weeks each year. For \$165,000, cottages include 25 percent home ownership and a 23-foot boat to explore the archipelago. “It’s carefree home ownership at its best,” says Smith, who also developed a mobile app called Island Compass, which lets boaters identify points of interest on a smartphone without incurring costly roaming charges. “We’re building our resort by giving people a great deal on a house,” says Smith. “It’s a win-win.”

Facts of Life

POPULATION 13,170
LANGUAGE SPOKEN
English
**AVERAGE RENT FOR
A ONE-BEDROOM
APARTMENT** \$925
**STARTING HOME
PRICE** \$150,000
**COST OF A GALLON
OF MILK** \$12



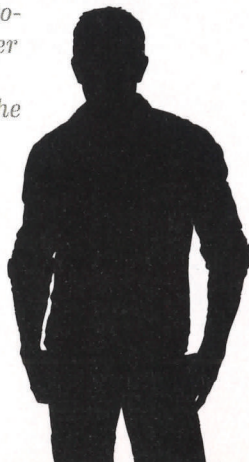
01

ISLAND LIFE FAQ

Q. How do I move my pets to the island?

A. The process for importing four-legged friends can be a lengthy one, so start planning at least six months in advance. Research your

destination’s quarantine policy, and make sure your pet’s vaccinations are up-to-date. Find an airline or a charter flight that allows hand-carried pets, or will transport them in the plane’s cargo area. Or opt for a service that will handle all the details, such as Island Pet Movers in Hawaii. They’re familiar with the policies, ensuring a smooth transition.



FROM LEFT: COURTESY THE SMITHS; RICHARD ELLIS/ALAMY; SHUTTER-STOCK; HEMIS/ALAMY; MICHAEL VENTURA/ALAMY; PETER ETCHHELLS/ALAMY

02

MARTINIQUE

► Spend a few days in Martinique, and you’d think you were in a tropical version of Marseille. After all, the French island is home to one of the region’s largest Francophone populations, including a burgeoning expat community from mainland France who’ve relocated for the locale’s black-sand beaches, lush rainforests and Caribbean *joie de vivre*. The “Paris of the Antilles” also attracts folks from the U.S. who come to teach English — expats like Hayley Hund, who moved from Leavenworth, Kansas, in 2014 to work as an English teaching assistant. “It’s important to live like the Martiniquais,” says

Hund, who enjoys practicing her Creole and eating anything au gratin. “The lifestyle has taught me to leave my watch at home and let my day develop at its own pace. As the locals like to say, ‘Il n’y a pas d’heures précises,’ or ‘there are no fixed times.’”

Facts of Life

POPULATION 13,170
LANGUAGE SPOKEN
English
**AVERAGE RENT FOR
A ONE-BEDROOM
APARTMENT** \$925
**STARTING HOME
PRICE** \$170,000
**COST OF A GALLON
OF MILK** \$12



03

ST. KITTS

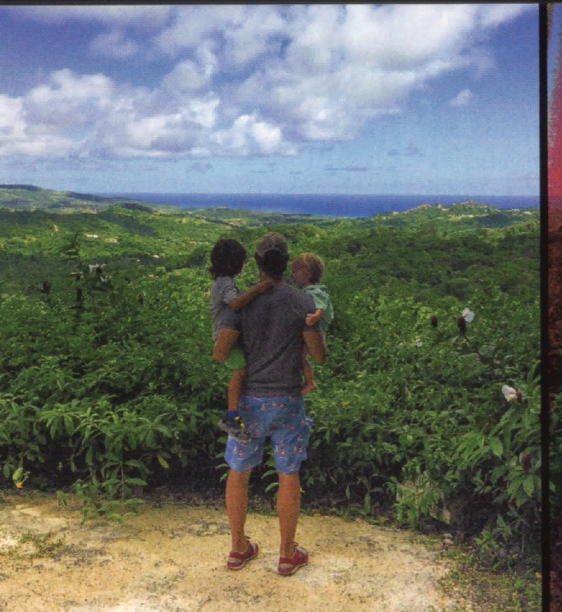
► A sunny home with a new passport to boot? In St. Kitts, it’s as easy as writing a check. The destination is one of a handful of countries that offer a citizenship-by-investment program, in which \$250,000 plus the cost of a home buys you Kittitian citizenship. Or simply join the workforce. At Ross University — an accredited veterinary school that draws students from the U.S. and Canada — faculty positions are often available. Opportunities can also be found in construction, engineering and real estate, plus hospitality jobs at new

hotels. “Several resorts are scheduled to open in the next few years,” says Derek Wales, a Massachusetts native who followed his girlfriend to St. Kitts in 2014 when she decided to attend Ross University, “so now is a great time to send in your résumé.”

Facts of Life

POPULATION 40,000
LANGUAGE SPOKEN
English
**AVERAGE RENT FOR
A ONE-BEDROOM
APARTMENT** \$1,025
**STARTING HOME
PRICE** \$350,000
**COST OF A GALLON
OF MILK** \$11.50





WHY I STAYED IN ...

BARBADOS

► “It was the perfect time to try something unorthodox — our two kids weren’t settled in a school routine, and I was leaving my position at work. My husband, Kyle, and I lived in New York, but we wanted a healthier, more nurturing and less stressful life with a warmer climate. We also needed nonstop flights to New York because he often travels back for work.”

“We fell in love with Barbados immediately. We watch amazing tangerine sunsets from our house on the west coast, explore man-made coral statues on Batts Rock Beach and swim in the secluded Animal Flower Cave after enjoying rotis and rum punch at its oceanfront restaurant. What’s not to love?”

“The kids start school in September, and we just signed another two-year lease. Why? Because our boys are exploring nature, learning about the ocean and the importance of being outdoors — and they’re doing it all in shorts and flip-flops. We eat better. We’re living healthier, more fulfilling lives. We really couldn’t ask for more.”

— MARYAM TAYLOR, AS TOLD TO DAVID LAHUTA

COURTESY MARYAM TAYLOR (6); OPPOSITE, SHUTTERSTOCK (3)

04

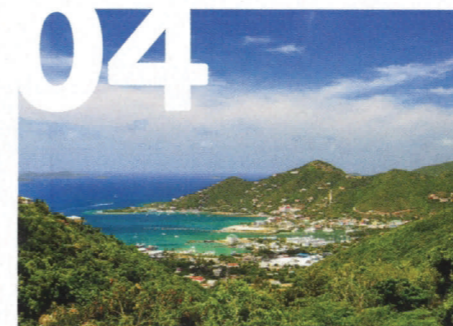
VIRGIN GORDA, BVI

► “I love watching visitors react to our version of reality,” says Cassie Mitchell, who moved to Virgin Gorda from Royal Oak, Michigan, in 2012 to pursue a career in guest services. “It reaffirms why I’m here in the first place.” Of course, the BVI reality takes many forms. For her friend Scott Allerton, a Florida native who opened Carib Kiteboarding in 2003, it’s teaching visitors the sport. “My office is the ocean,” says Allerton, who has taught more than 1,000 people on Virgin Gorda’s Eustatia Sound, ideally suited for kiteboarding thanks to its consistent side-shore breezes. On tiny Virgin Gorda, it’s small-

town living at its sunniest: Grocery runs require boats, clocks give way to island time, and virtually everyone knows your name. “All of us expats share three traits that allow us to survive here,” says Mitchell. “Kindness, patience and optimism.”

Facts of Life

POPULATION 29,151
LANGUAGE SPOKEN English
AVERAGE RENT FOR A ONE-BEDROOM APARTMENT \$1,200
STARTING HOME PRICE \$275,000
COST OF A GALLON OF MILK \$10.55



“Respect and courtesy are the foundations of Cayman culture. Always say ‘please’ and ‘thank you’ in common conversation, and never walk into a room or down the street without saying ‘good morning,’ ‘good afternoon’ or ‘good evening.’ Elders appreciate being addressed as ‘miss’ or ‘mister,’ and a smile says a thousand words.” — JENNIFER SMITH



05 GRAND CAYMAN

► When Jennifer Smith visited Grand Cayman on a Caribbean cruise in 2008, she never imagined she’d be living there with her husband two years later. “We realized Grand Cayman was very different from the other islands,” says Smith, who works as a controller for a real-estate developer and writes a blog called Offshore CPA, which offers tips for relocating expats. “We immediately fell in love with it.” So on their return to New Jersey, the pair researched the local job market and landed positions at two accounting firms — Grand Cayman is home to one of the world’s largest banking jurisdictions, with plenty of opportunities for finance-minded expats. Now, six years into their island experiment, the pair has doubled down by opening an escape-room business, Locked Inn, aimed at both tourists and locals. “It helped us plug into the community,” says Smith, “which is good, because we see Grand Cayman as our long-term home.”

But don’t go buying a one-way ticket just yet. Anyone who wants to move there must have a valid work permit before he or she arrives, so it’s important to solidify employment before taking the plunge. Fortunately for those looking for a career move, there are many options beyond banking. New Yorker Chantelle Cooper moved to Grand Cayman in September 2009 after accepting a job as a yoga instructor. “I love being outside all year long, and my feet are happy to never wear socks,” says Cooper, who recommends reading the Cayman New Resident guide when relocating and engaging in Caymanian

customs, like weaving purses from the silver thatch palm. And while the length of their work permits governs most expats’ time — a minimum of two years in most cases — some Americans have the chance to stay permanently. Wisconsinite Kim Kadiyala met her Caymanian husband in Chicago, moved near his family in Grand Cayman and now spends weekends at places like Starfish Point, a quiet beach on the island’s northern shore. Says Kadiyala, “I don’t think I’ll ever live in another place as beautiful as this.”

TIPS FROM AN EXPAT



Facts of Life

POPULATION 60,413
LANGUAGE SPOKEN English
AVERAGE RENT FOR A ONE-BEDROOM APARTMENT \$874
STARTING HOME PRICE \$150,000
COST OF A GALLON OF MILK \$6.51