

THE BEST NEW RESTAURANTS IN THE WORLD page 80

TRAVEL+ LEISURE

February 2015

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ISLANDS
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THE CARIBBEAN



A beachgoer in Aruba.

SPOTLIGHT ARUBA REDUX

Blame it on the Beach Boys: the perpetually sunny destination welcomes close to 1.5 million visitors every year—and it often gets a bad rap for being too touristy. And while the \$1 billion that's pouring into the 70-square-mile isle (an airport makeover, a redone cruise terminal) will bring even more people, its first true luxury hotel is changing the traveler profile. Located on the far, quiet end of popular Palm Beach, the **Ritz-Carlton, Aruba** (ritzcarlton.com; \$\$\$\$) is loaded with amenities: two pools, five restaurants, a 15-treatment-room spa (try the Dushi Tera salt scrub), and a flashy casino. Dine off-campus at Baby Beach, where you can fill up on johnnycakes at local favorite **Big Mama Grill** (297/568-5688; no dinner; \$). At **Zeerover** (297/584-8401; \$\$), in southern Savaneta, order the morning catch—wahoo or snapper—with plantains, *pan bati* (corn bread), and a cold Balashi brew. The capital city of Oranjestad has a new eco-friendly trolley system and 10-mile boardwalk. To see the island's sights, including the landmark California Lighthouse and the Casibari Rock Formation, book a half-day excursion with **De Palm Tours** (depalmtours.com).

SHOP THE ISLAND

BERMUDA

Caribbean in flavor, this Atlantic isle has homegrown brands worth seeking out. Established in 1928, the **Bermuda Perfumery** (bermuda-perfumery.com) is famous for its high-end fragrances. Out this spring, the Lili Bermuda Legacy Collection highlights local flowers, including Easter lily, oleander, and frangipani. + Bermuda shorts are making a comeback, popping up on the red carpet and the runways of Dior. Pick up a colorful, tailored pair with tropical-print lining from **TABS** (*below*; authenticshorts.com). + Sold exclusively at the Island Shop in Hamilton, the buttery-soft clutches from **Bermuda Born** (bermudaborn.com) are hand-stitched and embossed with crown-and-anchor logos.



ONE PLACE, FOUR WAYS BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS



THE CLASSIC RESORT
■ **Rosewood Little Dix Bay**, the Virgin Gorda escape originally founded by Laurance Rockefeller, recently converted its 10 iconic tree-house cottages into five huge suites with wraparound terraces. Two restaurants and six suites with plunge pools are being redone this year. rosewoodhotels.com. \$\$\$\$



THE PRIVATE ISLAND
■ With its seven windswept beaches and 18 airy stone cottages and villas, 850-acre **Guaña Island** draws a mix of honeymooners and high rollers in need of a quiet getaway. And for visitors who don't like too much tranquillity, there's tennis, badminton, and hiking on 26 miles of trails. guana.com. \$\$\$\$\$



THE MODERN VILLA
■ Virgin Gorda's **Oil Nut Bay** estate offers all the perks of a resort (24-hour concierge service, a beach club) but with more space and privacy. The eight sleek houses range from one to six bedrooms—big enough for multigenerational family getaways. oilnutbay.com. \$\$\$\$\$



THE CHARTER SAIL
■ The six- or eight-person catamarans from **Festiva Sailing Vacations** come with a captain and first mate, so you can set your own course through the BVI. Explore the Baths on Virgin Gorda and linger over a cocktail at Jost Van Dyke's Soggy Dollar Bar. festivasailingvacations.com; from \$1,848 per person for seven nights.