

Carlisle Bay  
ANTIGUA



DEBBIE SNOW, OPPOSITE; ZACH STOVALL

Banyan Tree  
MEXICO



# LUXURY REDEFINED

Some of us have champagne wishes and caviar dreams — and there's nothing wrong with that. But for others, a few days of peace and quiet, a fabulous meal or ample room to roam are the ultimate indulgence. Whether you're high-maintenance or easygoing, these five resorts have what it takes to make you feel pampered.

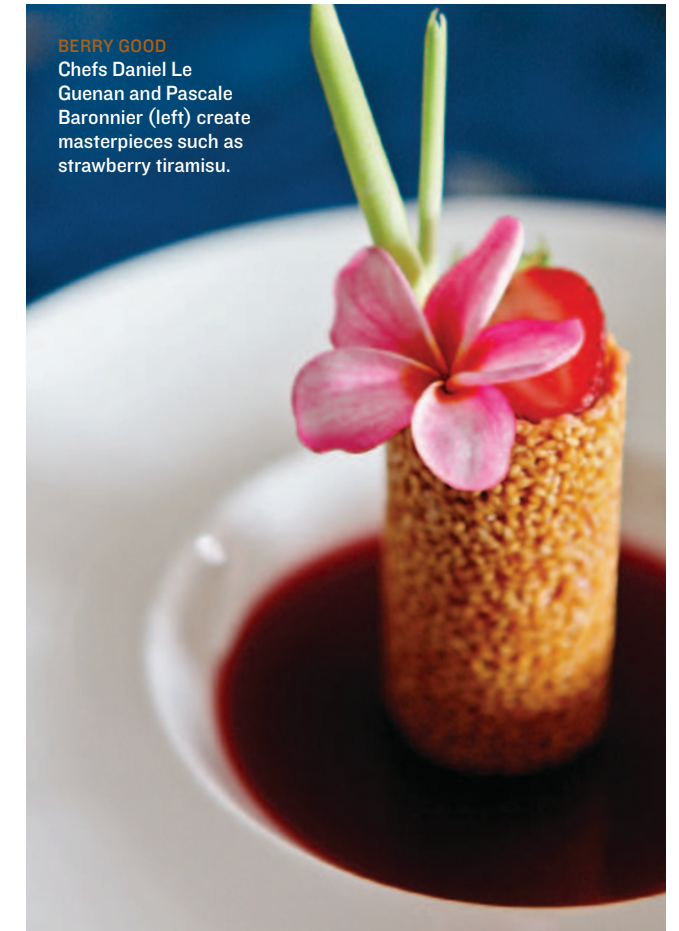


EDIBLE ART The delicate flavor of Valencia-style clam risotto is belied by the bold saffron hue of arborio rice.

ZACH STOWALL



**BERRY GOOD**  
Chefs Daniel Le Guenan and Pascale Baronnier (left) create masterpieces such as strawberry tiramisu.



## ~ INDULGENCE ~

“TONIGHT IS ABOUT FOOD, WINE AND FUN,” DECLARES THE SOMMELIER. AND WITH THAT, SIX slightly sunburned diners are off to an effervescent start, quaffing flutes of Louis Roederer Brut Premier Champagne paired with foie gras *en papillote*. The presentation is novel (enveloped in cellophane, an island in a sea of vegetable consommé), and as we unveil the French delicacy, there’s a collective murmur of appreciation. Even the cardiologist in our group sighs with pleasure as the liver yields its creamy richness, tempered by the grapefruit and lemon notes of the sparkling white. CuisinArt Resort & Spa is owned by the kitchen-appliance company, so the focus on food comes standard. A hydroponic farm yields produce for Santorini, where an intimate six-course chef’s-table dinner (\$175) is served in a candlelit salon. As the evening progresses, we three Italians, two Jamaicans and a Southern-fried American discuss everything from favorite destinations to first loves, conversation stimulated by the procession of culinary delights. The subtle flavors of clam risotto are enhanced by a 2006 St. Supery sauvignon blanc. Perfectly roasted asparagus and Parma ham accompany striped bass. And the fresh-basil sorbet is simply sublime. Then there’s the fillet, served with a 2004 Antinori Tignanello with aromas of cherry and blackcurrant that are the perfect complement. And for dessert, strawberry tiramisu, which vanishes from my plate. By the end of the meal, we all part as friends, exchanging promises to keep in touch. And the guilt I feel for breaking my diet is far outweighed by my happiness that I’ve worn an elastic-waist dress. — SARAH GREAVES-GABBADON

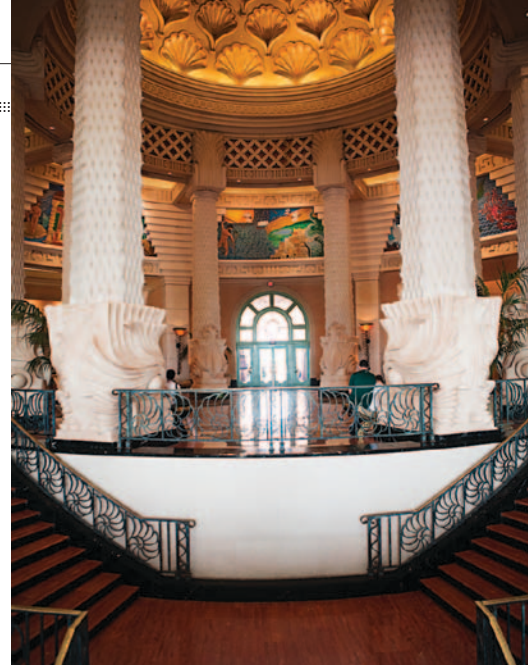
### MORE

**Sweetfield Manor, Barbados**  
Breakfasts at this B&B are multicourse spreads that may include grapefruit meringue, boiled eggs marinated in soy and oolong tea, and banana French toast with rum sauce. A parting gift of homemade banana bread ensures guests a sweet homeward journey. *From \$250. 246-429-8356; sweetfieldmanor.com*

**Four Seasons Resort Nevis**  
The diversity of dining at this tony resort in one of the Caribbean’s lesser-traveled destinations may surprise you. We loved the seared tuna at Mango and are still raving about the pasta at Italian eatery Neve. *From \$345. 800-819-5053; fourseasons.com*

**Excellence Playa Mujeres, Mexico**  
Temptations at this Cancun all-inc, which has eight restaurants and 11 bars, range from salt-encrusted whole fish at Mediterranean Barcelona to ginger-and-green-tea ice cream at Pan-Asian Spice to rich Maya coffee presented with flourish at Agave. *From \$225 per person. 866-540-2585; excellence-resorts.com*

★★★★★  
CuisinArt Resort  
& Spa  
FROM \$440  
800-943-3210  
CUISINARTRESORT.COM



# ~ CHOICE ~

IT'S SAID THAT WE'RE THE SUM OF THE CHOICES WE MAKE IN LIFE. IF THAT'S true, then I'm a lazy-river-riding, spa-going, luxury-shopping, reef-gawking kinda woman. At least that's who I am when I'm at The Cove. On a recent quickie visit to this resort within a resort at Paradise Island's sprawling Atlantis, time in my room was spent only to shower, dress or sleep. In the morning, I was one of the first riders on The Current, the mile-long not-so-lazy river that winds through the massive Aquaventure water park. Next stop: Cain at the Cove, a slick adults-only pool where butlers service plush cabanas and you dare not rise from your lounge chair unless you're in swimsuit-model shape. It felt as if I covered each of Atlantis' 171 acres, stopping to feed hungry hawksbill turtles and survey the impressive predator lagoon, grateful for the thick plexiglass between me and the boldly staring blacknose sharks. I tried my luck in the casino and then shuttled over to Marina Village for some power shopping, followed by wistful browsing at the Crystal Court, where Versace, Cartier and Ferragamo competed for my meager winnings. Late afternoon I passed a dreamy 50 minutes at the spa, where a Balinese massage put me into such a blissful stupor that I almost missed my reservation at Nobu's Atlantis outpost. Sitting over an artfully arranged platter of *unagi*, I lamented the fact that there was still so much left to do. When would I possibly fit in the rock climbing, water-slide riding and swimming with sea lions I'd planned? What about the trivia competition at the Royal Towers? Walking with sharks in the Mayan Temple? After a day of countless options, it seemed I still had one final choice to make: when to return. — SARAH GREAVES-GABBADON

★★★★★  
**The Cove**  
 Atlantis  
 FROM \$590  
 888-877-7525  
 ATLANTIS.COM

LUXURY YOUR WAY

## I'm a lazy-river-riding, spa-going, luxury-shopping, reef-gawking kinda woman. At least that's who I am when I'm at The Cove.



### MORE

**Half Moon, Jamaica** Your daily agenda at this do-it-all-and-then-some resort just east of Montego Bay might include horseback riding; 18 holes of golf on a championship course; water skiing, windsurfing and kayaking; swimming in one of 54 pools; yoga, spinning and Pilates classes; tennis lessons; and beach volleyball. We're completely exhausted just thinking about it. *From \$250. 877-956-7625; halfmoon.com*

**Peter Island, BVI** We're happy enough to vacation at a resort with one white-sand beach, but this romantic private-island retreat fulfills all our fantasies with not one but, count 'em, five sandy strips. Spread your towel on Honeymoon Beach, White Bay, Deadman's Beach, Little Deadman's Beach or Big Reef Bay, and soak up the sun. *From \$690. 800-346-4451; peterisland.com*

**El Conquistador Resort, Puerto Rico** If you're vacationing here with the kids or grandkids and they ask you what there is to do today, here's what you can tell them: tubing and sliding at Coqui Water Park, horseback riding or iguana spotting on 100-acre Palomino Island, teen treatments at the Golden Door Spa, or activities at Camp Coqui kids club. Or they could just stay in the room and, you know, read a book. *From \$199. 888-543-1282; elconresort.com*