



Petit St. Vincent  
PRIVATE ISLAND

**Town & Country**  
**Date:** 15.11.2018  
**Circulation:** 60,000  
**AVE:** £13,400

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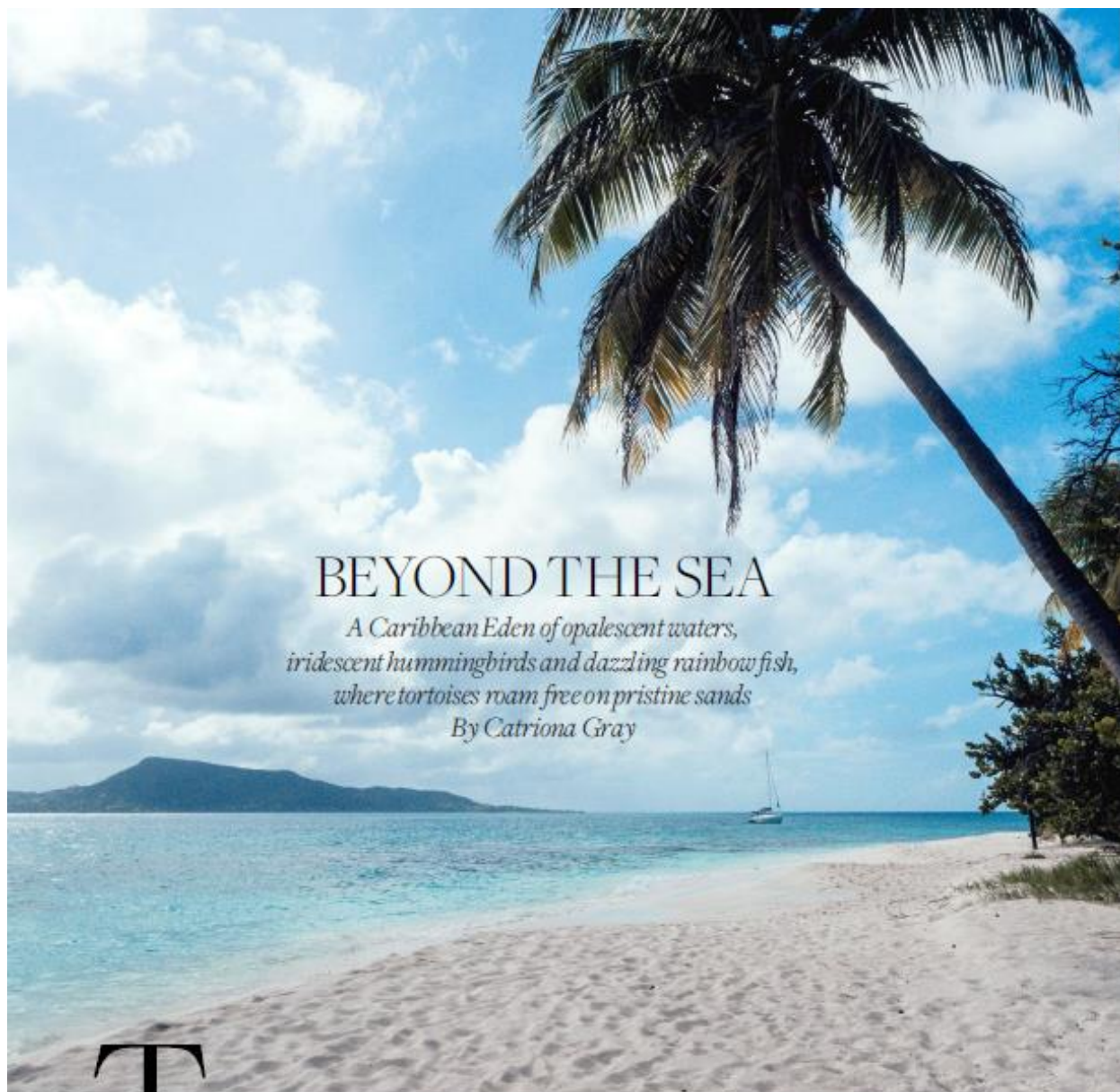
THE  
WINTER  
SEASON

EAT, DRINK & BE MERRY *Candlelit suppers, midnight martinis  
& a Christmas cake by Meghan & Harry's wedding baker*



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## BEYOND THE SEA

*A Caribbean Eden of opalescent waters,  
iridescent hummingbirds and dazzling rainbow fish,  
where tortoises roam free on pristine sands*

*By Catriona Gray*

**T**here is only one way to make the final leg of the journey to Petit St Vincent, and that is by boat. As you speed across the turquoise waves that sparkle intensely in the sunlight, the scene is so far removed from the humdrum and the everyday that you feel as if you've stepped into a parallel universe. Located in the Grenadines, just south of Mustique and north of Grenada, Petit St Vincent is the quintessential desert island, the sort you dream up when reading *Robinson Crusoe*, where coconuts hang from palm-trees and swathes of golden beach stretch into the distance, with barely another soul to be seen.

The present owners, Phil Stephenson and Robin Pateron, are two friends who, by complete coincidence, each

sailed past the island and fell in love with it at first sight, then subsequently clubbed together to purchase it in 2010. The tiny resort had been running since the 1960s, but they embarked upon a campaign to modernise and improve it, renovating the 22 self-contained cottages and villas, and introducing a new bar and restaurant along with a hillside spa.

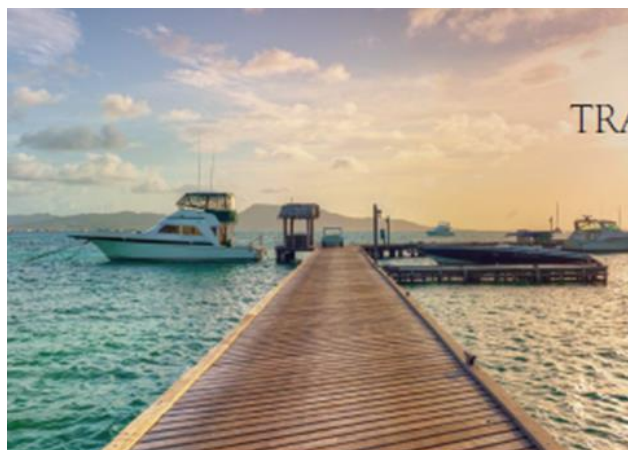
Part of its charm comes from the verdant undulating terrain that rises to a gentle peak. Jewel-toned hummingbirds flutter through the undergrowth, the occasional goat grazes next to the staff





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TRAVEL



cottages, and you are almost guaranteed to spot a tortoise waddling solemnly along the sands, as this native species has been reintroduced by the resort over the past few years. Venture into the sea on a snorkelling expedition and there's a whole world of marine life to be discovered, from delicate corals to shoals of brightly coloured fish. The more intrepid guests can take a yacht out to hunt for Spanish mackerel, mahi-mahi and yellowfin tuna, and if you're lucky enough to catch something, you can roast it for an impromptu feast while you're still onboard. If that's not to your taste, you can opt to be dropped off on one of the many tiny sandy atolls with a picnic lunch, and be picked up again several hours later. It's hard to imagine a more romantic experience than the feeling of being temporarily cast away, albeit with the reassurance of a rescue before the champagne runs out.



Back at the resort, there is no shortage of dining options either – overlooking the harbour is an open-air restaurant that is framed by frangipani and hibiscus heavy with lush flowers that smell divine in the warm evening breeze. The ever-changing menu is largely created with produce from Petit St Vincent's farm, including tropical fruit, vegetables and free-range eggs from its brood of chickens. You can enjoy your dinner in the comfort of your own cottage or, better still, have a private banquet on the shoreline at sunset.

The Beach Restaurant is the place to go for informal meals – you can dine with your toes in the sand, looking out at the sea, with almond- and palm-trees rustling softly while you sit at the wooden tables. It serves plates of char-grilled fish and Mediterranean-inspired salads, and if you arrive during lobster season, which runs from November to the end of April, you can indulge in a near-constant supply of freshly grilled crustaceans, plucked straight from a saltwater pool and cooked outdoors on the barbecue.

There is only one thing that might cause distress, and that is the complete lack of Wi-Fi. Petit St Vincent deliberately keeps all the rooms free from every form of modern technology, so there's not a screen to be seen. Those absolutely determined to check their email must use the tiny patch of reception outside the manager's office – everything

is constructed to make you switch off and unwind. You won't even find a phone in the bedroom. Instead there is a flagpole and a pulley system, so you can raise a red flag if you don't want to be disturbed, or wave a yellow one for room service – a rather piratical touch that adds to the sense of having escaped reality altogether. As you step onto the return boat at the end of your stay, you might experience

a sudden longing to be shipwrecked – purely so you could swim back to this sun-kissed paradise. □

*Seven nights at Petit St Vincent, from £4,015 a person full board, including flights, based on two people sharing a one-bed cottage, with Elegant Resorts (01244 897294; [www.elegantresorts.co.uk](http://www.elegantresorts.co.uk)).*



PHOTOGRAPH BY TAYLOR FULLER, MIKE TOY