October 2015

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Luxury & Spa Vacations
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If all the independently owned, ultra-upmarket all-inclusives have splendid beaches, designer decor, and chefs who can crank out foie gras foam in their sleep, how can a resort distinguish itself from the pack, even if it is a small pack? By amping up its wellness programs, from spa treatments to exercise regimens to serving organic food. Here’s how a half dozen great all-inclusives exhibit their wellness bona fides (all rates are per night for one couple, high season).

You’ll be hearing more about Buccament Bay Resort, on St. Vincent, when the long-delayed $250 million SVG airport finally opens; its debut has been pushed back to late 2015. Buccament Bay’s ESPA spa, which opened in 2010, offers a variety of body and beauty treatments indoors and outdoors. Notably, five of those treatments are specifically for men. The fitness center features the latest Technogym equipment and Active Wellness TV touch screens. It’s reasonable to expect that rates will go up appreciably once the new airport starts luring new visitors to St. Vincent and the Grenadines; meanwhile, a 1-bedroom Garden View Villa in high season costs $1,501.50 per couple, and that includes taxes and fees.

When I first stayed at Curtain Bluff the focus was on family, fine wine and tennis. This Antigua classic continues to excel there, but in recent years it has also expanded the massage and beauty salon menu at its spa, radically upgraded its fitness facility, and ramped up its water aerobics, yoga, muscle toning, and Pilates classes. This year it also debuted a Living Well package featuring Adam Rosante, founder of The People’s Bootcamp and author of “The 30-Second Body.” (Just 30 seconds? Sign me up.)
The Jan. 16-21 *Living Well* program costs $6,750 per couple, plus 22.5 percent taxes and gratuities. Regular high-season rates start at $1,330 plus taxes and gratuities.

Inspired by its *Gauguin Cottages*, *Galley Bay Resort & Spa’s Indulge Spa* is especially focused on couples treatments, with three couples treatment rooms, one air-conditioned and two open air; in-room treatments are also popular. The website’s blurb about this Antigua resort’s Cybex showcase of a fitness center says, “There’s no reason to take a vacation from your exercise regimen,” and that’s true, but you still might want to remind clients that the third word in that sentence is “reason,” not “excuse.” High-season rack rates start at $1,140, including tax and service fees.

“Healthy living and the restoration of mind, body and soul” are guiding principles at *Hermitage Bay*, the third of Antigua’s high-end, independent all-inclusives. The Fitness Centre features Technogym and Jordan Smith hardware, and scheduled classes include yoga, Pilates and meditation. The pièce de résistance is the hillside spa, with its flowers, views, Chakra-conscious healing rituals, and use of music and aromatherapy to melt away stress. Rates from $1,385 plus $342.70 for taxes and fees.

Occupying its own island at the south end of the Grenadines, *Petit St. Vincent* would be restorative even if it had no spa, but it does. At four open-air spaces with hummingbird-friendly foliage (or in a couple’s cottage), the signature treatment is a 150-minute couples treatment featuring a foot massage, exfoliating scrub, Balinese massage, and a facial or manicure for the lady, and reflexology or a pedicure for the gentleman. There’s a relaxation deck for meditating, and two open-air pavilions for yoga, with or without an instructor. A 1-bedroom cottage costs $1,400; note that this all-inclusive’s rates do not cover alcoholic beverages, and that’s actually a plus for light drinkers.

One of the best massages I’ve ever gotten in the Caribbean was at *Spice Island Beach Resort’s Janissa’s Spa*, which star architect Kobi Karp has now given a new look, replete with gardens, an outdoor relaxation lounge, and a reflection pool. Grenada being the Spice Island, many of Janissa’s Spa’s massage, wrap and beauty treatments employ local nutmeg, orange zest, and other natural, aromatic ingredients. Rates from $1,387, including taxes and fees; additionally, Spice Island Beach Resort offers a variety of wellness packages.

contact information
Buccament Bay Resort: buccamentbay.com or booking.com
Curtain Bluff: curtainbluff.com or curtainbluff.com/take.html
Galley Bay Resort & Spa: gallebayresort.com
Hermitage Bay: hermitagebay.com
Petit St. Vincent: petitstvincent.com
Spice Island Beach Resort: spiceislandbeachresort.com

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Clockwise from left: Entrance to the spa at Hermitage Bay and beachside yoga at Galley Bay Resort & Spa, both in Antigua; and relaxing at the spa at Petit St. Vincent.

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