







Softly lapping waves, shimmering clear water, and rustling palm trees butt against jagged mountains in the la-la land of St. Barth, a picturesque volcanic French island rising from the Caribbean just east of Puerto Rico. Ready to go? No problem—just follow our easy island guide, and get ready to press the pause button on real life.

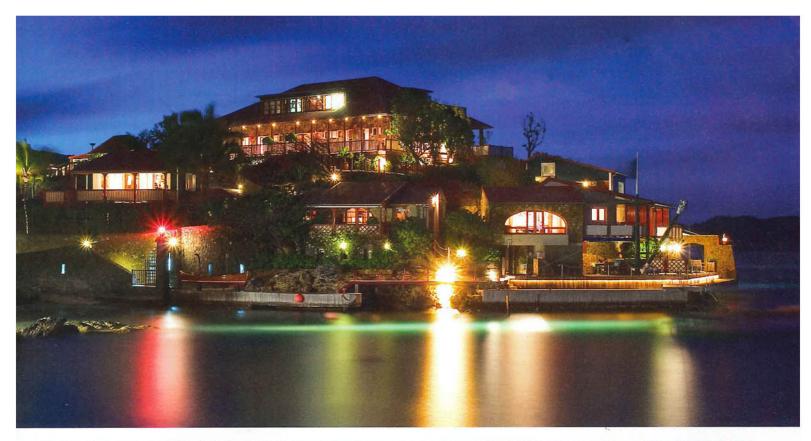
Where to stay

HOTEL GUANAHANI HOTEL & SPA, located on the north side of St. Barth, is the largest hotel on the tiny island, with an amazing tennis facility and the Spa by Clarins. Caribbean-hued cottage-style accommodations offer several options, some with private pools. Enjoy daily poolside breakfast buffets with healthy offerings like French yogurts and cheeses. Other picks: The hip, cool and contemporary LE SERENO features 36 rooms and villas with the nicest staff you'll ever

meet, and EDEN ROCK, a St. Jean Bay property that's been hot-listed as one of the top places to stay in the world and boasts some of the most spectacular views ever.

Where to play

Water sports from laid-back to adventurous abound, and St. Barth also offers top-notch spas. Don't skip either. Hike the 20-minute goat path from Petite Anse to breathtaking Colombier Beach, and snorkel the islands reefs and craggy caves to discover brilliant marine life. (Psst: We hear the best spots are around the islet of Pain de Sucre, off Gustavia Harbor, and near Coco Islet off Colombier Bay.) Don't miss Grande Saline Beach, where you'll find very few people and no buildings or hotels. Bold vacationers should definitely give wind surfing, kite boarding or paddle boarding a chance. Be sure to start or end at least one day at the spa—





clockwise Eden Rock is the perfect place to soak up the sun, take pleasure in high-end designer shopping or enjoy world class globally inspired dishes by Chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten at On the Rocks. The cottages at Hotel Guanahani's style are configured in a creole style and decorated with rare woods, pastel colors and fine cotton fabrics. Vanilla Skewered Sea Scallops is just one of the fabulous seafood dishes at Wall House. This sleek and comfortable lounge at Le Sereno is the perfect place to relax and enjoy a drink overlooking the water.

it is vacation, after all. We recommend the beachside "St. Barth Chill Out" at Le Sereno, a treatment that incorporates self-heating clam shells and cold-pressed avocado oil to release tension and stimulate metabolism.

Where to eat

Fresh seafood and light fare are signatures around the island. Try the tomato-basil quinoa and gazpacho at HOTEL LE TOINY'S brunch. On Sunday nights, LA PLAGE at Tom Beach Hotel offers an extensive barbecue, which includes mouthwatering grilled lobster and papaya salad. A mixologist prepares delicious freshly juiced nonalcoholic

beverages and raspberry-muddled mojitos. WALL HOUSE boasts the most extensive wine list on St. Barth (more than 250!) that pairs well with the French-American cuisine like mahi-mahi ceviche.

With all of its offerings, the paradise of St. Barth just may be one of our favorite places to unwind. And once you set foot on the sand, we think you'll agree.

(800) 216-3774; leguanahani.com. (888) le sereno; lesereno.com. (855) 333-6762; edenrockhotel.com. (800) 680-0832; letoiny.com. 011-590-590275313; tombeachhotel.com. 590 5 90 27 71 83; wallhouserestaurant.com