



Some Like It Hot: 10 Fabulous Winter Vacations for U.S. Travelers

Planning the trip is supposed to be half of the fun, but the pressure that builds up around holiday travels — combined with price surging, an increase in hotel minimums, and diminishing airline service — can derail the joy of plotting a vacation, to say nothing for taking one. We're seeing conflicting trends for this holiday season, with some hotels and destinations already sold out because travelers booked a year ago and others still showing a surprising amount of availability. Our best travel advice might be obvious to regular Fathom readers: If you can avoid traveling between Christmas and New Year's and other big winter holidays like President's Weekend, you'll be rewarded with lower prices and more options.

If your ideal winter escape involves pools and palm trees or simply short sleeves and sunshine, these are some excellent spots to consider around the Equator in the Americas. We've put together a range of vacation homes, hotels, and resorts for travelers who are looking for ease, flexibility, natural charm, great design, and all the creature comforts — whether they are traveling alone or with a group.



Le Sereno, St. Barths

A gentle ocean breeze floats throughout the property — set on a glistening turquoise bay protected by a coral reef — reminding you to take it slow. The intimate 39-room hotel offers a glimpse into the chichi island's laid-back and wild side, with 600-feet of private beach filled with friendly turtles, and a restaurant shaded by coconut trees with a health-forward menu of detoxifying wellness elixirs, and simple, locally-inspired dishes. Despite its remoteness, the hotel brings the best of the island's arts and culinary scene to the property, with rotating artists in residence, and several gourmet cuisine festivals.

This stay is perfect for those couples with or without young children **who want beachside bliss without lifting a finger.** Travelers have to work a little harder to get to St. Barths (flying to St. Maarten and then boarding a puddle jumper). **Bonus points for the Le Sereno representatives who whisk guests through the last leg.**