

Here are the New Hotels in St. Barts of the Moment



St. Barts is a destination that's always in style. The glamorous set—celebrities, business magnates, and the deep-pocketed in general—have gravitated to the Caribbean island and French collectivity for decades. Roman Abramovich is among the high-profile names who owns a home here, and mega-yachts filled with the likes of Bill Gates and Jeff Bezos are a mainstay presence in Gustavia Harbor, especially in the week leading up to New Year's. Regulars come for the pristine setting with nary a cruise ship in sight, uncrowded beaches, and a scene that includes buzzy beach clubs by day and hard to get into restaurants at night.

And we can't leave out the hotels, all of which are small properties and attractions in their own right, that see guests who check in year after year (or even more often than that). Their storied clientele includes everyone from Leonardo DiCaprio and Paul McCartney to Beyoncé and Miranda Kerr.

It may have enduring appeal, but St. Barts' popularity appears to have reached unprecedented levels over the last few months: According to Nils Dufau, the president of the island's tourism committee and vice president of the local government, the 500 hotel rooms in St. Barts are almost 100% booked through President's Day, and have been since the end of October. "Normally, high season starts Thanksgiving weekend, but this year, it began a month earlier. We also see a dip in visitors in early January, but that's not happening this season," he says.



Another sign of the demand: Tradewind, a boutique airline company offering both scheduled and private charter flights, which operated in St. Barts for 15 years and counts it as one of its top destinations, has seen record business in the last year. Cofounder David Zipkin says that demand is up 40% in 2021 compared to the year before and well above 2019 levels (one-way flights average \$500 per person). “This is a destination that people are eager to visit, partly because it’s so glamorous and beautiful and partly because COVID-19 cases have been very low on the island,” he says. “It feels safe.”

The pandemic didn’t get in the way of development on St. Barts, particularly on the luxury hotel front where travelers have new and exciting reasons to book a stay.

The just opened Rosewood Le Guanahani St. Barth is getting the biggest buzz. The resort first opened in 1986 but is now branded as a Rosewood. Spanning 18 acres, it’s set on a secluded peninsula and overlooks the beaches of Marechal Bay and Grand Cul-de-Sac Lagoon. The design is a collaboration between David M Schwartz Architects, behind high-profile projects such as the American Airlines Center in Dallas, and Luis Pons Design Lab. It’s heavy on three colors: turquoise, in a nod to the surrounding ocean; yellow, inspired by the sun; and lavender, evoking the South of France.



Le Guanahani has 66 rooms, all designed as residential-style freestanding spaces with either ocean or garden views, a Beach House with an ocean facing restaurant (some of the best food on the island) and cocktail lounge, and a world-class spa with an outdoor relaxation area. Guests have their pick of unique experiences such as tours of hidden beaches throughout St. Barts, guided hikes, and wellness activities like morning yoga at scenic spots.

Next up, the island's It hotel, Eden Rock - St Barths, open since the 1950s, recently debuted anew after a two-year extensive renovation following the impact of Hurricane Irma in late 2017. AD100 designer Martin Brudnizki and the locally based Architectonik St Barths worked on a redesign that includes new suites and rooms, a restaurant helmed by Jean-Georges Vongerichten that focuses on sustainability by favoring local produce and seafood, and a beach bar. A spa with treatments from skincare guru Dr. Barbara Sturm is also new, and owner Jane Matthew has expanded her art collection within the property with pieces by emerging artists via the New York Academy of Art.

Le Sereno, another choice property for the chic crowd, has new Suites Piscine—rooms with a 30-foot-long swimming pool and an expansive outdoor area with a wooden deck and Christian Liaigre furniture. They can be combined with a bungalow for larger groups.



The go-to hotel for privacy seekers, Le Toiny, reopened this fall with a surf shack, refreshed interiors by Lady Bee Osborn, and two new four-bedroom villas—including the onetime home of ballet legend Rudolf Nureyev, with moody, shipshape interiors and a waterfront terrace so broad he could practically dance on the waves. The other, called Villa Over the Ocean, is a contemporary counterpoint, with white walls and beach chic decor. It spans 7,000 square feet and has a swimming pool, tropical garden, and a deck with a gazebo and bar.



Set in the hillside, [Villa Marie Saint-Barth](#) has launched [Gyp Sea Beach Club](#). Located on the Bay of St. Jean, it has a bohemian design with oversized mismatched pillows and driftwood furniture. There's also restaurant where almost every dish is roasted and a bar with creative cocktails and a DJ spinning upbeat Caribbean music. Guests can enjoy a myriad of diversions at Gyp Sea such as morning yoga, paddling, and snorkeling.

Another hillside property, [Hôtel Barrière Le Carl Gustaf St Barth](#), is new to the hotel lineup and offers panoramic views of the port of Gustavia. It has 21 rooms, all ocean facing, and a design from French designers Gilles & Boissier that emphasizes natural materials such as wood and stone. The restaurant, Le Fouquet's Saint-Barth, is the same as the iconic brasserie in Paris and has a menu created by the legendary chef Pierre Gagnaire. His simple baked mahi-mahi on a bed of lime and tataki of red tuna are must-order dishes.

Whether St. Barts is your favorite spot to vacation or you're considering visiting for the first time, the hotels on the island offer plenty of discoveries that warrant planning a getaway. Now, which property is your top pick?