

# LIVING THE *Island Life*

Beaches, Bond and bucolic beauty in the Bahamas

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Made up of more than 700 islands, cays, and islets in the Atlantic Ocean, the Bahamas is synonymous with paradise thanks to its pristine beaches and crystal-clear seas. Long favoured by celebrities and filmmakers, Nassau, on New Providence island, is the Bahamian capital and a popular spot for those looking for some tropical R&R.



## SLS BAHAMAS

Comprised of three properties on Nassau's Cable Beach, the Baha Mar complex looms large on Nassau and collectively welcomes thousands of guests every week. With a collection of lounges, bars and restaurants, a Jack Nicklaus Signature golf course, an ESPA spa, shopping, a casino and several pools, Baha Mar is popular with

everyone from families to those celebrating something special.

One of the three properties, SLS has only recently opened. The open plan lobby is welcoming and comfortable, and Monkey Bar, the property's lobby bar, is a great place for a pre-dinner drink. Follow this with a sunset drink at Skybar, the only rooftop lounge on New Providence. While children are welcome at Baha Mar, Privilege Pool at SLS offers an adults-only enclave with cabanas, cocktails and light dishes that are served by your dedicated pool concierge.

SLS has some great drinking and dining options. Katsuya offers sushi, sashimi platters and a range of specialty cocktails; Cleo Mediterraneo is the property's Mediterranean-inspired restaurant that blends local ingredients with traditional dishes; and Fi'lia, from James Beard Award-Winning Chef Michael Schwartz, offers Italian dishes that are simply prepared with fresh ingredients and includes handmade breads and pasta.

The rooms are calming thanks to a neutral colour palette using white to highlight room accents. Ocean View rooms with balconies mean relaxing with coffee and admiring the azure water before rushing to the beach is a perfectly acceptable way to spend an hour or so after waking. If you need more space, the two-bedroom residences might be the way to go.  
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## ROSEWOOD BAHAMAS

The undisputed jewel in the Baha Mar crown is Rosewood. Chic, elegant and luxurious, the property is also warm and inviting, which follows the company's 'A Sense of Place' philosophy. An area that is much more welcoming than conventional lobbies, it connects to the Library, a room with high ceilings, grand bookcases, and comfortable places to relax and enjoy afternoon tea, specialty coffees, and cocktails.

Designed to make guests feel as if they are at their own beachfront holiday home, the 237-room property, all of which feature private balconies, artworks by Bahamian artists and accent pieces made from rattan, rope and grasscloth to offer a local aesthetic. Rooms are decorated in shades of blue, coral and lavender that give an airy feel that mirrors the island's beautiful waters. There are four villas, one six-bedroom and three three-bedroom, that have private plunge pools.

Elsewhere in the property, there is Sense, A Rosewood Spa, two pools with luxury cabanas, access to the aforementioned Jack Nicklaus golf Course and tennis courts.

F&B at Rosewood is, as anyone who has visited one of the brand's properties will know, very good. Taking cues from local culture and history, Commonwealth is a

farm-to-table restaurant that offers dishes from half a dozen Commonwealth countries, so expect mulligatawny soup, fish and chips, and confit duck poutine, in addition to dishes like Bahamian conch chowder. There is also outdoor seating for balmy evenings and the Rum Room for private gatherings. Both pre- and post-dinner drinks can and should be enjoyed at Manor Bar,

a sophisticated spot with lovely cocktails.

There is also a poolside restaurant, Costa, which offers coastal cuisine with a twist of Mexico as well as mezcals, tequilas and craft cocktails. Sociable types will enjoy the communal cabanas at Costa which encourage convivial conversation with other guests.

[www.rosewoodhotels.com](http://www.rosewoodhotels.com)



## ATLANTIS PARADISE ISLAND

Just 10 km away from Rosewood is the paradise island that is home to the sprawling Atlantis complex. The 20-year-old resort was conceived as a dynamic destination that aimed to bring together nature and engineering.

Offering five distinct properties, the Royal which contains the Bridge Suite, an ode to opulence that has, among other features, a grand piano in the living room, a 22kt gold chandelier in the dining room and a permanent staff of seven butlers and attendants, if you like that kind of thing. The Cove and The Reef are the luxury properties at Atlantis with the former having 600 suites designed by acclaimed interior architect Jeffrey Beers.

While The Cove and The Reef offer a haven for those who want to leave the kids at home (or don't have children at all), there is plenty for families to do. The resort is built around Aquaventure, a 141-acre waterpark that has 18 water slides, two mile-long river rides, 20 swimming areas and 11 swimming

pools. It is also home to the largest open-air marine habitat in the world with over 50,000 marine animals from 250 species.

Visitors with a penchant for conservation will be happy to hear that in 2007, the company founded the Atlantis Blue Project Foundation, a non-profit with a mission to save sea species and their habitats throughout the Bahamas and the surrounding

Caribbean seas by funding scientific research, conservation programmes and community outreach efforts.

With 21 restaurants, 19 bars and lounges, a golf course, tennis courts, a 141-acre water park, the world's largest open-air marine habitat, and the award-winning Mandara Spa, Atlantis just about has it all. [www.atlantisbahamas.com](http://www.atlantisbahamas.com)



THIS PAGE: Atlantis Paradise Island comprises five properties, all with spacious rooms. OPPOSITE PAGE: Revel in bona fide, five-star luxury at The Ocean Club, A Four Seasons Resort



## THE OCEAN CLUB, A FOUR SEASONS RESORT

Paradise Island has been the backdrop for several movies including the Beatles' film *Help!* (at least partially) and the James Bond films *Thunderball* and *Casino Royale*, which brings us to The Ocean Club, which co-starred alongside Daniel Craig in a key sequence in that film.

A haven of bona fide, five-star luxury, the Four Seasons Resort is the jewel in the crown of New Providence Island and one of the most luxurious properties in the entire Bahamas, welcoming everyone from rock stars taking a break from touring to the world's greatest secret agent.

With a history stretching back to 1939, when Swedish industrialist Axel Wenner-Gren spotted the island (then called Hog Island) from his yacht and transformed it into an estate with gardens inspired by the Palace of Versailles over the course of more than 20 years, to the early 60s when the island was sold to Huntington Hartford II who renamed the island and set about creating the original Ocean Club. In 1962, the Ocean Club opened as a luxurious 52-room hotel

with an 18-hole golf course. His creation also included the Cloisters, the remains of a 12th-century French Augustinian monastery, originally purchased by William Randolph Hearst in the 1920s. Further enhancements were added in 2000.

Four Seasons took over management of the property as of November 30, 2017. With 107 rooms spread across the low-rise two buildings on 35 acres of lawns and gardens, the property is reminiscent of a private estate. The Crescent Wing and the Hartford Wing are similarly decorated with rich wood, fine linens with contemporary art on the walls and accents that bring the outside inside. There are also Garden Cottages that are idea for families and Villa Residences (one three-bedroom and one four-bedroom). Nostalgic travellers might want to consider a room in the Hartford Wing as that is where the original rooms of the Ocean Club are now located.

Dining is a pleasure thanks to Michelin-starred chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten's Dune. A menu of French-Asian dishes with plenty of seafood naturally, and a few Bahamian touches, makes for a superb

meal. Dune's open-air terrace is the perfect setting to enjoy the beautiful Bahamian sunsets. More casual fare can be found at poolside restaurant Ocean.

For a truly indulgent day, make an appointment at the spa. Depending on how active (or not) you have been, there are treatments that will cure what ails you. The Coconut Poultice massage includes being drizzled in frangipani monoi oil, while the hot stone massage is great for working tense muscles into submission.

A few final thoughts. The Ocean Club has bicycles that can be borrowed by guests and offer a great way to get around the property and neighbouring areas. The five-mile stretch of white sand the property sits on offers plenty of opportunities for recreation, but it is also perfect for relaxing on a lounger. James Bond fans will want to watch *Casino Royale* before their visit (or during) and retrace Bond's steps. Manage your expectations, however, as janitor cupboards can double as security rooms and the 'casino' is actually the very pleasant lounge area.

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