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Eco-Fabulous

GREEN TRAVEL REACHES NEW HEIGHTS OF LUXURY AT ST. BARTS' REIMAGINED HOTEL MANAPANY.

BY J.P. ANDERSON

St. Barts has long been known as the ultimate A-list island destination—from the megayachts parked in Gustavia Harbor to its celeb-studded restaurants (bonjour, Bona), opulence is oh-so-ordinary in this French *territoire*. But eco-tourism? Not so much. Until now, that is. Less than 2 miles from the glitzy St. Jean scene, in the quiet nook of Anse des Cayes, the iconic Hotel Manapany has made a thrilling return as a five-star resort that's as environmentally friendly as it is toes-in-the-sand indulgent.

An island icon since the '80s, Manapany reopened last year after a top-to-bottom refresh, and the results are stunning. Climbing the hillside from a protected beach and set among dense trees and lush foliage, the warren of 43 zinc- and wood-roofed private villas and suites offers both complete privacy and Instagram-worthy bay views. Inside, island-inspired furnishings—natural fabrics and textures, woven rope chairs, handmade teak furniture and splashes of spicy reds, yellows and blues—make for a vibe of easy, relaxed comfort, while spacious sun decks beckon for sunset-watching over a Caribbean Botticelli cocktail spiked with rum, cantaloupe liqueur and prosecco.

Perhaps most extraordinary? The Manapany experience comes at no cost to the environment. Hailed as St. Barts' first eco-resort, the five-star property more than lives up to the billing, having already snagged a 2019 eco-lodge of the year award for being green in almost every way. Manapany produces its own water via a desalination system; only electric cars are allowed on property; cleaning products are all-natural; towels are made exclusively of bamboo; solar panels are positioned throughout; and an on-site garden and orchard



From top: Hotel Manapany's deluxe Villa C made sleeps five, sand and sea beckon outside a beachfront suite. The resort's waterside pool, bar and restaurant.





From top: Rustic-chic furnishings and pops of color add to Manapany's appeal; the spa offers yoga and Pilates on the patio plus an intimate soaking pool; views of the Caribbean from an Ocean Privilège suite.

GETTING THERE

Swooping over the mountains onto the perilously short runway of Gustaf III Airport, flying into St. Barts is an experience you'll never forget. Make it even more memorable by flying in careworthy style on charter Tradewind Aviation, which has served an A-list crowd of island-hoppers since 2001 and boasts modern aircraft, VIP meet-and-greet service, 24/7 concierge support, a private lounge, and a likable soft escort through customs. Round trip from San Juan, Puerto Rico, with VIP meet-and-greet from \$800. flytradewind.com



(complete with protective mother hen and chicks wandering the property) make for a true garden-to-table dining experience at the inviting bayfront bar and restaurant, whose menu features sustainably caught lobster, mahimahi and more.

Of course, this being St. Barts, being green doesn't mean skimping on the island's indulgence factor. The waterside spa offers a decadent menu of treatments ranging from massages to body scrubs to Japanese facials—using only organic products from Dr. Hauschka, natch. You can indulge your passion for fashion at the on-site Atelier Couture, where locally based designers Cédric & Rodolphe create completely bespoke women's garments with St. Barts flair (dresses \$600 to \$10,000). And those electric cars make exploring every glamorous corner a snap. From window-shopping at Cartier and Hermès in Gustavia to discovering the island's lustrous white-sand

beaches (Saline and Gouverneur are not to be missed), our jaunty smart car, Smart Fortwo (which was so adorable we dubbed her "Chouquette" after the tiny sugar-speckled cream puffs we devoured at breakfast each morning), zipped us all around the hilly island on a single charge and conveniently plugged in right outside our villa.

That effortless mix of peak luxury and progressive green strategies makes Manapany a singular St. Barts experience, setting an ambitious new standard for sustainability on the island—and proving that eco-friendly can be St. Barts-fabulous. It's an example that B Signature Hotels & Resorts CEO Anne Jousse hopes is contagious. "I'm convinced that new property development cannot be done without taking ecology into account," she insists, adding, "We have to preserve this island, this special piece of nature, for future generations to come." Rooms \$600-\$5,000 per night, hotelmanapany-stbarth.com ■



PHOTOS COURTESY OF HOTEL MANAPANY