

VANITY FAIR



WHEN JACKIE KENNEDY FELL IN LOVE

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"A hard beginning maketh a good ending."
-JOHN HEYWOOD

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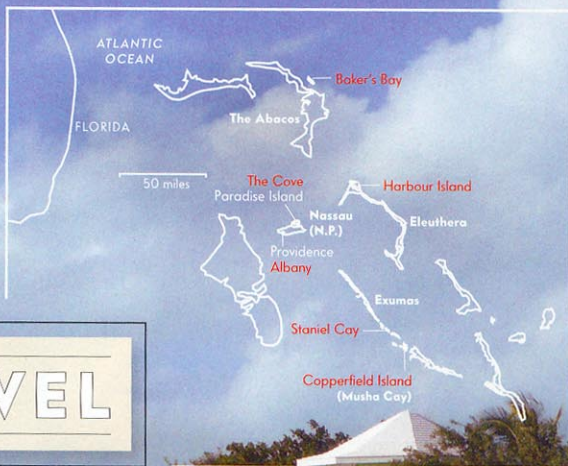
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Bahamas Bliss

Daydreaming about swimming and snorkeling in one of the world's largest barrier reefs? What about catching fish for dinner, shopping at high-end boutiques for embroidered caftans, curling up on a chaise and watching a favorite old movie in a private outdoor theater, or playing golf on an Ernie Els-designed golf course amid bougainvillea blooms and fresh salt air? If so, the Bahamian archipelago, which is made up of 700 tiny islands, is for you. Whether you're looking to rent a private island, check into a five-star resort, or buy a piece of oceanfront property in one of several exclusive new developments, the Bahamas has it all. Herewith, the hottest spots... —PUNCH HUTTON



TRAVEL



Staniel Cay Yacht Club's marina and waterfront cottages. Inset, Martine Beswick and Sean Connery in *Thunderball*, 1965.

HANG OUT WITH THE LOCALS

STANIEL CAY (stanielcay.com)

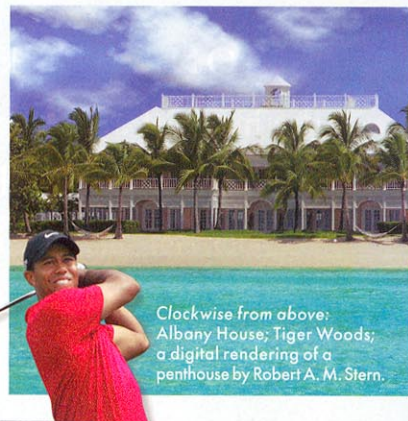
ACCOMMODATIONS: Quaint oceanfront cottages of the Staniel Cay Yacht Club, starting at \$162. **HOW BIG IS THE ISLAND?** Less than two square miles. **DINING:** The bar and restaurant of the yacht club are where the Exumas social scene converges. The catch of the day is really the catch of the day, and they serve real down-home dishes such as Bahamian spiny lobster and burgers. **WATER SPORTS:** Snorkeling, fishing, kayaking, swimming with sharks, sailboat racing, and scuba diving. **FUN FACT:** The James Bond films *Thunderball* and *Never Say Never Again* were filmed at Thunderball Cave, a natural fishbowl. **PRIVACY FACTOR:** Low, but it's not easy to get to, so it's far from touristy.

AT PLAY IN AN ELEGANT UTOPIA

ALBANY (albanybahamas.com)

Albany is a new, 565-acre luxury oceanfront resort community currently being built on New Providence Island; set to open early 2010.

ACCOMMODATIONS: A world-renowned group of architects, including Robert A. M. Stern, Charles Gwathmey, and Robert Siegel, has been commissioned to design a boutique hotel, custom homes, and grand marina residences. **DINING:** Five restaurants, including one with a five-star rating. **SPA:** Full service. **WATER SPORTS:** A 16-acre inland marina allows for everything from sailing and scuba diving to deep-sea fishing. **ON-LAND FUN:** Boxing facility, kids' clubhouse with water park, equestrian center, tennis courts, and 18-hole championship golf course designed by Ernie Els. **FUN FACTS:** Albany House, the newly renovated clubhouse, is where James Bond seduced a villain's wife in *Casino Royale*, 2006. Tiger Woods and Els are two of the resort's developers.



Clockwise from above: Albany House; Tiger Woods; a digital rendering of a penthouse by Robert A. M. Stern.



David Copperfield

RENT THE ENTIRE ISLAND CHAIN

THE ISLANDS OF COPPERFIELD BAY Formerly known as Musha Cay (mushacay.com)

OWNED BY: David Copperfield. **ISLAND RENTAL FEE:** \$32,250 per day (includes a staff of 30). **ACCOMMODATIONS:** Five guesthouses. **HOW BIG ARE THE ISLANDS?** Just over 700 acres. **DINING:** Private chefs. **SPA SERVICES:** Massage therapist, yoga, and Pilates instructors. **WATER SPORTS:** Sunfish sailboats, windsurfing, fishing, a water trampoline,



scuba diving, WaveRunners, a catamaran, and four other boats at guests' disposal. **ON-LAND FUN:** Tennis, volleyball, and badminton courts; karaoke machines; fireworks and treasure hunts. **PRIVACY FACTOR:** Total. **FUN FACTS:** There is an outdoor movie theater, and you can play on Houdini's personal championship billiards table. **GUESTS HAVE INCLUDED:** Oprah Winfrey, Robin Williams, and Tim McGraw.



From left: Bluepoint, one of the guesthouses on Copperfield Island with its own private beach; Oprah Winfrey; Robin Williams.

FANFAIR



Far left, a 1960s postcard; left, a Harbour Island guesthouse.



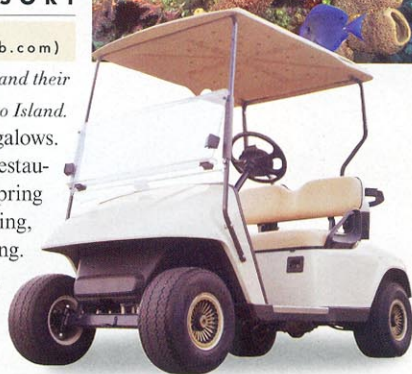
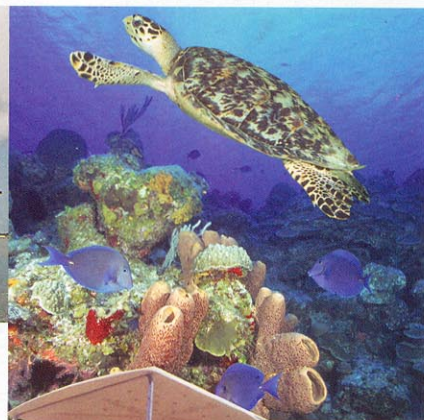
OLD-SCHOOL ISLAND LIVING

HARBOUR ISLAND (harbourislandguide.com)

ACCOMMODATIONS: The Landing, Rock House, Dunmore Beach Club, Pink Sands. **DINING:** Arthur's Bakery for breakfast, Sip Sip for lunch, the Landing and Rock House. Local fare at Ma Ruby's. **WATER SPORTS:** Snorkeling, sea kayaking, Jet Skiing, waterskiing, deep-sea fishing, and underwater scooters. **ON-LAND FUN:** Tennis and seaside horseback riding. Shopping at Miss Mae's Fine Things. **PRIVACY FACTOR:** The odds that you'll run into people you know are high. **FUN FACTS:** Pink beaches. Golf carts are the primary mode of transportation. **HARBOUR ISLAND RESIDENTS INCLUDE:** Elle Macpherson, Robert Miller, Diane von Furstenberg.



Clockwise from left: a yacht; a sea turtle; a golf cart.



REMOTE, LUXURY RESORT

BAKER'S BAY (bakersbayclub.com)

Baker's Bay Golf and Ocean Club is a 585-acre private club for members and their guests that is currently being developed. It's located 10 miles off Abaco Island.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Oceanfront home sites, island cottages, and colorful beach bungalows. Club members can buy or rent them. **DINING:** Two private clubhouses offer fine-dining restaurants. There will be more restaurants and bars in the Marina Village, due to open in spring 2010. **SPAS:** Two. **PRIVACY:** Exclusive. **WATER SPORTS:** Outrigger-canoe paddling, sailing, surfing, kiteboarding, fly-fishing, lobster diving, bonefishing, and deep-sea sport fishing. **ON-LAND FUN:** Play the 18-hole championship, Tom Fazio-designed golf course. Mountain biking. **FUN FACTS:** You can snorkel or scuba off the shores of Baker's Bay, home to the third-largest reef in the world. There are turtle habitats along the beachfront. And this is a golf-cart-only property.



GETTING AWAY BUT STAYING CONNECTED

THE COVE (thecoveatlantis.com)

The Cove is a sophisticated and intimate enclave within the Atlantis resort world. **ACCOMMODATIONS:** 600 suites with balconies, and panoramic water views. **DINING:** Three restaurants—Mediterranean, burgers and salads, and Bobby Flay's Mesa Grill. **SPA:** The Mandara Spa Atlantis fuses Balinese techniques with indigenous Bahamian healing elements. **WATER SPORTS:** Swim in Dolphin Cay, a 14-acre lagoon, which is home to 16 dolphins orphaned by Hurricane Katrina. **ON-LAND FUN:** Book a private beachside cabana. There are craps and blackjack tables at Cain, the adults-only pool. Nearby Atlantis has one of the world's largest open-air reconstructed marine habitats. **PRIVACY FACTOR:** Not much. **FUN FACT:** *Vivre*, the posh catalogue, opened its flagship store, Escape, here. You can also go to Atlantis for an afternoon filled with concerts, water slides, and fab shopping including Cartier, Gucci, and Bulgari.

Clockwise from above: the Cove Atlantis; Anya Hindmarch cover-up from the Escape by Vivre boutique; blackjack cards.



destination: **Bahamas** month: **NOVEMBER** year: **2008**

The Bahamas are a three-hour flight from New York City or a 30-minute jump from Miami into Nassau International Airport (there are also numerous other airports in the archipelago). **Delta, US Airways, JetBlue, Bahamas Airways,** and their final destination. Most people agree: if you can afford it, chartering a yacht through the various Bahamian islands is the best way to take your holiday (bahamasboat.com). **GOOD TO KNOW:** Bahamas currency is equivalent to American dollars. Bring cash—many of the smaller islands don't have A.T.M.'s. **NO WAITING IN LINE:** American visitors departing the Bahamas go through U.S. customs on the island side.