

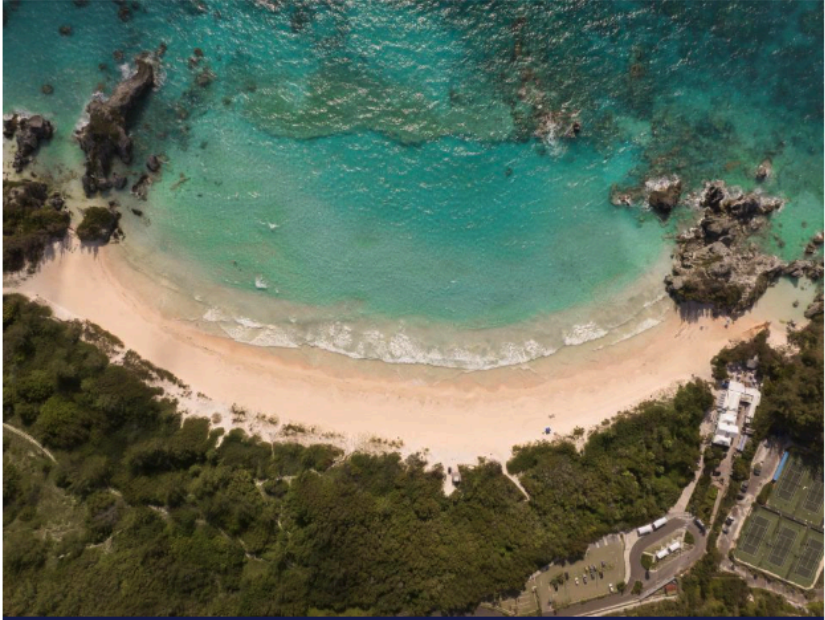
## TRAVEL

# 'You can go to heaven if you want. I'd rather stay in Bermuda'

2ND APRIL TRAVEL LEISURE LIFESTYLE TRAVEL

By Adam Jacot de Boinod

Share    [0 Comments](#)



Horseshoe Bay Beach (Image: unknown)

“Water, water everywhere!” So stunning the waters and typically rock-free with nowhere more than a mile or so from the sea. Journalists often exaggerate the colour of the sand and sea but here it’s truly beyond embellishment. It’s no surprise Condé Nast Traveler recently awarded Bermuda ‘Best Island in the Caribbean and Atlantic’.

A real paradise: dreamy, magical and mesmeric. So welcoming and clean. The vibe chilled and breezy. All my senses came alive with the beauty everywhere: with the exotic birds, the vibrant foliage, the whitest beaches by the bluest water. All brimming with bounty. And hearteningly the locals treasure the treasure that it is.

Tucked into an inlet Newstead Belmont Hills ([www.newsteadbelmonthills.com](http://www.newsteadbelmonthills.com)) overlooks the frontage of the island’s capital Hamilton as well as the extremities that curl round in the distance from where the sun rises and sets. Beyond the chic, airy glass lobby and scattered over the premises are the green, yellow and ochre waterfront residences. There’s a shuttle to both beaches and golf course and a complimentary water taxi to Hamilton. It’s a luxurious destination with an elegant setting.



Newstead Belmont Hills bedroom suite (Image: unknown)

Bermuda is a 'self-governed British Overseas Territory' and the oldest colony (since 1684). Named after a Spanish explorer, it's supposedly the inspiration for Shakespeare's *Tempest*. There's an evident pride and affection with its motherland with its black taxis and red post-boxes and telephone booths. There's a Royal Bermuda Regiment for pageants; old families like Gibbons and Tucker remain as do parish names like Somerset, Warwick and Devonshire.

I came to an extremity of the island at St George's where lies St Peter's church: the oldest in the Eastern Hemisphere. There's nothing quite like that first lazy lunch in an authentic local restaurant sitting outdoors on decking by the water beneath the sun to enjoy the 'catch of the day'. Here was mine at Wahoo's Bistro and Patio ([www.wahoos.bm](http://www.wahoos.bm)). The waiter declared "You can't go wrong with Wahoo's" How right he was!



Lunch at Wahoo's (Image: Rohan Shastri)



Everywhere the colour pink pervades; in the sand, the houses and the ephemera. It's Bermuda's signature colour: such is this play on sunset colours with its variants of peach, terracotta, salmon and blush pink. The island's also renown for its knee-length shorts which reflect the numerous pastel colours of Bermuda and which come with quite a tradition to be worn both casually and formally.

Bermuda caused me deeply to reflect as the water forever changed colour and the palm trees blew in the breeze. And at night I loved how my imagination played with the dimly-lit buildings shimmering in the light to assume so many possibilities. And all is abundant, bountiful and beautiful. Sunsets, rainbows and clear galaxies. Bungalows, beaches and boats. Corals, cays, caves and coves. And the beaches of Horseshoe Bay and Elbow Beach are sublime and divine.

There's something wonderfully authentic about family-owned hotels where they live 'in situ'. At Pompano Beach Club ([www.pompanobeachclub.com](http://www.pompanobeachclub.com)). General manager Larry Lamb sports his Bermuda shorts and long socks and, in tribute to its former days as a fishing club, each building of rooms is named after local game fish from angel fish to wahoo. And here it's all about the view over the broadest and light bluest stretch of water. And so came my therapeutic, gradual wading out 400 yards at low tide, still waist-deep, to the deeper water. Perfect for parents and their toddlers.



The coral-pink Pompano Beach Club offers a classic island retreat on Bermuda's southwest coast (Image: unknown)

For the active there's so much to do in Bermuda: horse riding along the beach, kitesurfing, snorkelling the crystal-clear waters teeming with fish and walking 'from rail to trail' along the former railway track. It's a golfer's paradise with eight courses. Boats take one out to see turtles, dolphins and, in Spring, whales. There are crystal caves to explore, cliffs to jump from and diving amongst many a sunken vessel.

How special is Cambridge Beaches Resort

([www.cambridgebeaches.com/dining](http://www.cambridgebeaches.com/dining)). Here, beyond the croquet lawn, amongst tasteful décor suggestive of a well-travelled designer is the cozy, dimly-lit, fine-dining Sunken Harbor. It's where chef James Wambui works his magical combination of acidity, sweetness and bitterness. "Food is an expression" he told me, "It's like by reading a good book you sense the soul of the writer". Indeed he's a true storyteller with his flavoursome menu reflecting the harmony between Bermuda's land and sea, its farmers and fishermen. What an amazing course was 'Harvest of the land' with its honey-roasted pumpkin, goat's milk foam, crispy sage, dates, citrus and scallion oil.



Dinner at Cambridge Beaches patio (*Image: unknown*)

Remotely tucked away nearby in western Somerset Village is Willowbank Resort ([www.willowbankresort.com](http://www.willowbankresort.com)) which declares itself a "home away from home oasis offering colour, picturesque views and seaside charm" as well as "Bermuda's best-kept secret". Certainly it's super-secluded. It was initially a Christian retreat and still has a chapel and is non-profit based. The staff are super-friendly, characterful and attentive.

It's a cottage colony with 50 bungalow-like rooms in yellow, pink and blue pastels. They are spaciouly arranged, scattered across eight of the spongiest and greenest acres of lawns. They come with either an ocean or garden view named after local flowers such as Tamarisk, Hibiscus and Frangipani. There's lots of room inside with its Queen-sized beds and the all-white interior is offset by patterned cushions and curtains offering a splash of colour. In the complex is a large grand hall with antique furniture, a piano and fireplace. A cosy seaside hotel offering me all I needed at the end of my day.

The island boasts lovely yellow-tummied great kiskadee, starlings, herons and white-tailed tropicbirds and smaller ones flit and flutter into many a breakfast room. Bermuda's awash with fish: the 'catch of the day' being red hind, rockfish, wahoo, mahi mahi, tuna, Atlantic salmon or swordfish. Indigenous too are lobsters, loquats, onions. Bermudiana is the national flower while bougainvillea, oleander and hibiscus also abound.

---

#### Read more

- **[Scotland's five best scenic lochside walks with great cafes to enjoy this spring](#)**
- **[Scotland's five best short but oh-so scenic ferry journeys to enjoy this spring](#)**

---

In easy walking distance of Hamilton's Front Street's shops and restaurants Royal Palms (**[www.royalpalms.bm](http://www.royalpalms.bm)**) proudly declares itself "a boutique 4\* hotel". Comprising two beautifully restored 19th century manor houses, it's set in a mature sub-tropical garden with a pond and stream, lots of benches, a swing and a Bermudian flagpole. The chalet-like rooms are painted Bermuda's signature pink with white shutters and have high-quality finishing, crown moulding and mahogany furniture. They're traditional and quaint, cosy and comfy.

As for the public rooms, the day's progress is met by the procession from light to dark. From the white colonial airy breakfast room, through the yellow sitting rooms past the teal-green bar to the burgundy and dark-green Ascots restaurant named after the racecourse. Opera music gently wafts across the ceiling's equine fresco. All highly civilised, homely and welcoming. Certainly it has Old World Bermudian charm and is peaceful and ideal for adults.

On my last day my boat trip lived up to Captain Ray's slogan "adventure to remember" with his Mona Lisa Cruises ([www.mlcruisesbermuda.com](http://www.mlcruisesbermuda.com)). From their bespoke trips he took me through Somerset Bridge, the world's smallest drawbridge, into the Great Sound where we cruised around the islands of Somerset and Mangrove Bay, past David Bowie's villa to the Vixon shipwreck at the tip of the Bermuda Triangle and safely back (!). A fitting finale to my stay on the island. Indeed Mark Twain said "You can go to heaven if you want. I'd rather stay in Bermuda". He has my backing.

### Fact Box

Adam had support from the Bermuda Tourism Authority [www.gotobermuda.com](http://www.gotobermuda.com). He had further support from Holiday Extras [www.holidayextras.co.uk](http://www.holidayextras.co.uk) (0800 316 5678) who offer airport lounges at all major UK airports and many international destinations). He was covered by online travel insurance specialist, CoverForYou [www.coverforyou.com](http://www.coverforyou.com), 0207 183 0885

[TRAVEL](#) [LEISURE](#) [LIFESTYLE](#) [TRAVEL](#)

Share    [0 Comments](#)