

Press Coverage 2019: The Sandpiper

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'The friendliest nation in the Caribbean!' Why Barbados is so popular with holidaymakers and which bits are best, from the celebs' favourite restaurant to the top hotels

- Barbados was a British island for almost 350 years and although independent, is still in the Commonwealth
- One of the island's most exclusive and discreet boutique hotels is The Sandpiper - set in seven acres of garden
- The Cliff is one of the most acclaimed restaurants in Barbados and is perched on a series of gentle terraces

By [FRANK MANNION FOR MAILONLINE](#)

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The island of Barbados has been beloved of the British since Captain Henry Powell first occupied it in 1625.

The intrepid adventurer claimed the island on behalf of King James I. It remained British for almost 350 years. Although independent since 1966, it is still a member of the Commonwealth.

The origin of the name Barbados reputedly comes from the Portuguese explorer, Pedro A Campos, who used the phrase 'Los Barbados' meaning 'bearded ones'.



The stunning Bottom Bay in Barbados. The island has been beloved of the British since Captain Henry Powell first occupied it in 1625

It is thought that he was referring to the roots of the bearded fig-tree indigenous to the island, or the bearded Caribs or, most improbably, to the foam spraying over the reefs, which somewhat resembles a beard.

No one is quite certain.

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Barbados has always had a distinctly British heritage and it is not hard to see why it is such a popular holiday destination.

The Bajans are the friendliest people in the Caribbean, and the island is the safest and cleanest. Cricket and polo are fixtures on the Bajan social diary, with high tea served in several hotels.



Barbados has always had a distinctly British heritage. Pictured is the promenade of the marina in the capital, Bridgetown

Place names will seem familiar - I spotted Windsor, Cambridge, Sussex and Buckingham Hill.

Cricket is played at the Kensington Oval. Even the forested highlands in the north of the island are somewhat euphemistically called Scotland.

Polo has been played in St James Parish since 1884 - Prince Harry once fell off his polo horse here. While Barbados does have strong British roots, the charming Bajans give it a local twist.

WHERE TO STAY

The Sandpiper



The Sandpiper is one of the most exclusive and discreet boutique hotels in the Caribbean. It opened in 1970



The piece de resistance at The Sandpiper is the Curlew Tree Top Suite, pictured, which is the most luxurious holiday suite in all of Barbados

The Sandpiper is one of the most exclusive and discreet boutique hotels in the Caribbean. Its 47 rooms and luxurious suites are discreetly set in seven acres of lush gardens filled with tropical flora, giving it a wonderful sense of tranquillity.

The hotel, which opened in 1970, is situated on a stunning sandy coral beach on the platinum west coast, gently lapped by turquoise waters.

Much of the Sandpiper's charm and panache can be attributed to the owners Wayne and Karen Capaldi and general manager, Russell Croney, who run it with meticulous attention to detail without sacrificing the relaxed manner of the Caribbean.



The bamboo-fronted Harold's Bar at The Sandpiper. Frank says it is a wonderful place for a sundowner, after a dip in one of the two pools



© The Sandpiper

The restaurant at The Sandpiper, pictured, is 'one of the best on the island', according to Frank

Together with the desire of their incredibly well-trained staff to pamper their guests, it was not surprising on my visit here to meet several distinguished British guests who return here year after year.

The restaurant is one of the best on the island, and is reasonably priced, with dishes prepared with a unique Caribbean flair, and with exquisite presentation. The bamboo-fronted Harold's Bar is a wonderful place for a sundowner, after a dip in one of the Sandpiper's two pools.

The piece de resistance is the Curlew Tree Top Suite, which is the most luxurious holiday suite in all of Barbados. As well as having an uninterrupted view of the sea, it has a long terrace complete with a complimentary wet bar and an open sundeck with its very own glamorous plunge pool.

Thoughtful details such as personalised headed note-paper and even a powder room for guests visiting the suite will ensure that a stay at the Sandpiper will live long in the memory.

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