

Coconut Bay Beach Resort and Spa

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A brief five-minute drive from the airport led us to the sprawling resort beautifully situated on the Atlantic Ocean. After being greeted with rum punch and welcoming smiles, we had a golf cart tour of the 85-acre property allowing us to see the nine restaurants, seven bars, and five pools, several adult only.

With a family accommodation section as well as an adult section everyone is happy. Several of the pools were adult only. One of the pools has aqua fit classes during the week and early morning yoga is in an ocean front gazebo. It's a resort to be active and enough choices to pry anyone out of their sun lounger. A kayak shack far enough down the beach has you convinced you have wandered off the property and they have kayaks and paddle boards to sign out. With snorkeling, kite surfing, a basketball court, tennis court, volleyball and a football pitch and the island's only paint ball course, there is no excuse to be idle. There are organized weekly hikes into town to the market or up Quarry Hill for a view of the islands.

An excursion desk in the lobby has lists of adventures for a day or half day outing including snorkeling from a catamaran which also includes lunch at a mountain top restaurant and a tour of the world's only drive in volcano and mud bathing in the sulphur springs. There is a day tour of the cocoa plantation which includes lunch on the property and ziplining, or you can have a day out deep sea fishing. With reasonable prices, door to door delivery, and friendly local tour guides, it's a relaxing way to see other parts of the island and meet other resort guests.

With so many restaurants, deciding where to dine can be the biggest decision during a holiday. As a few of the restaurants were reservation only, it ideal to do reservations ahead of time. Even with my long list of food allergies and intolerances they were all accommodated with personal help by chefs at every meal with aplomb. Every taste is tickled from the Coconut Walk extensive buffet restaurant to the Jerk Treehouse where you can pick up delicious Caribbean food in your bathing suit or dress to impress and at Veranda and Silk restaurants where jeans and shorts are not allowed and everything in between.

Every night features different entertainment. We arrived on Independence Day just in time to enjoy the party to celebrate 41 years of Independence. Incredibly talented dancers and fire eaters were all part of the celebration as well as authentic Caribbean food that added to the festive atmosphere. Another evening showcased the local passion for Country Western music, a legacy left by U.S. Military stationed on the island during 1940's. The resort's entertainment team wore western hats and shirts with jeans and danced along to the singer LM Stone belting out tunes from Johnny Cash, Merle Haggard and Willie Nelson.

A spa is set apart from the resort and well worth a visit for a massage, facial or mani-pedi. With the ocean view it's a pampering treat to incorporate into a holiday.

The resort is so family friendly, the separate family section sees regular clients return at the same time year after year so they can meet up with friends from other countries they met onsite. I was so impressed by the largest kid's club on island. A fifty thousand square foot space includes the club and outdoor space that includes water slides, a splash pool, outdoor playground and a lengthy lazy river that many adults enjoyed. Serenity is a new section to the resort with 36 suites all with personal plunge pools and their own butler and a private restaurant.

Weddings are a regular occurrence to accommodate small or large weddings. With 175 to 200 weddings a year, the onsite wedding planners know what they are doing and the details covered are impressive. With the wedding party and guests sailing away on a catamaran following the ceremony, any couple would love to get married in a slice of paradise.

After spending a week at the resort, it was easy to see why guests return year after year. This resort made me realize what many other resorts are missing – it's a resort with heart and a friendly communal vibe.

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