

# BRIDAL GUIDE



November/December 2016

450+  
Inspiring  
Ideas

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love  
your  
dress

Hottest New Styles  
+ Perfect Accessories

CARIBBEAN

# MOUNTAIN HIGH

TAKE YOUR ROMANCE TO  
NEW HEIGHTS AT THESE  
GORGEOUS HILLSIDE  
HIDEAWAYS ACROSS THE  
CARIBBEAN. BY SHEA PETERS

Sweet sailing in St. Lucia.

PHOTOGRAPHER: ST. LUCIA TOURIST BOARD



A guest house at Belle Moul Farm in Kittitian Hill.

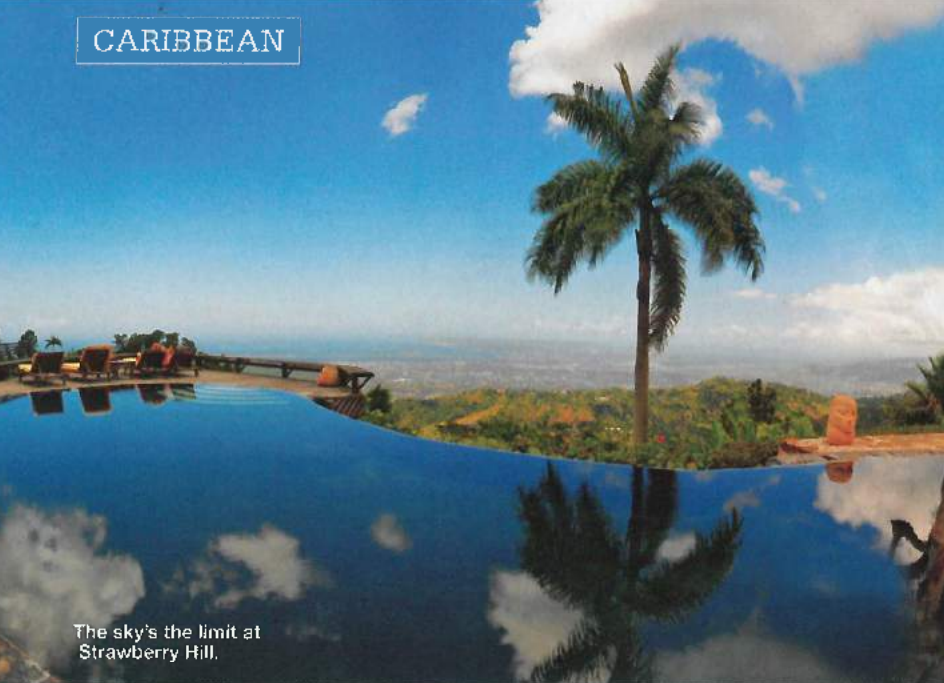
Sometimes the best way to appreciate the glory of the Caribbean islands and their spectacular tropical beauty is from up on high. Staying at a mountaintop resort can be an intimate experience like no other, and oh, those views! We're not saying you should give up the beach or the warm Caribbean surf entirely, but here are four fantasy islands where you can find the ultimate escape at a higher elevation.

## ST. KITTS

St. Kitts and its twin island Nevis are beautifully picturesque Leeward Islands just three hours from Miami. With the Caribbean to the west and the Atlantic Ocean to the east, not only do you get cooling trade winds, but sandy beaches of grey and black, plus pristine coral reefs and untouched diving sites. The island also carefully protects its tropical mountain =>

The Antiguan hills from Sugar Ridge.





The sky's the limit at Strawberry Hill.



A pair of frigate birds on Antigua.



Ziplining in Jamaica.



Room with a Caribbean view at Kittitian Hill.



A guest room at Sugar Ridge.

landscape, with over a quarter of the land set aside as a national park. In fact, the Brimstone Hill Fortress National Park is a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site. Climb to Sofa Rock, the top of a dormant volcano, and you'll be able to see clear across to St. Barths, St. Martin, St. Eustatius and Saba.

**WHERE TO STAY:** **Kittitian Hill** is a sustainable community on the slopes of Mount Liamuiga that includes Belle Mont Farm, a 400-acre organic farm and hotel with 84 rooms and guest houses, all of which have verandas on two sides, plus a porch or a pool deck where you can sit and savor the view of the blue Caribbean and neighboring islands. The Mango Walk Spa was built around a grove of ancient mango trees and features treatments made from local ingredients, and the 18-hole golf course is planted with fruit trees and organic crops. The Village at the heart of the development has markets, food stalls, art galleries, a film school and writers in residence, with plans to add annual film and literary festivals. *Room rates start at \$450 a night; kittitianhill.com.*

## ANTIGUA

Another pair of islands, Antigua and its less populous sister, Barbuda, are also part of the Leeward Islands in the Eastern Caribbean. Antigua is known for its beautiful beaches, but it's also home to

the green Shekerley Mountains, whose steep-sided valleys are covered in lush vegetation and are a great destination for biking, hiking and birdwatching. The highest peak is Mount Obama, named after the 44th president of the United States. Rich in biodiversity, it offers opportunities to view close to 300 species of plants and animals. On a clear day, hikers have views of Guadeloupe, Montserrat and even St. Kitts.

**WHERE TO STAY:** **Sugar Ridge** is where mountain lovers stay when they visit this slice of paradise. A family-owned boutique hotel, the 60 rooms are built into the hillside with wide open-air verandas and 180-views of the green hills and turquoise waters below.

You can always hop on the shuttle down to the beach to get some sand and sun, but you might find dragging yourself away from the elevated infinity pool difficult, especially at the magic sunset hour. *Room rates start at \$306 a night, breakfast included; sugarridgeantigua.com.*

## ST. LUCIA

One of the most beautiful Caribbean islands, St. Lucia is a dream locale for lovers. With the iconic Gros and Petite Piton mountains, rainforested slopes, gorgeous beaches and azure waters, the island is a honeymooners' paradise, where those seeking a true escape will



The Pitons as seen from a Ladera suite.

find nirvana. Active travelers can go mountain biking, ziplining and hiking in the jungle, and the hot springs and volcanic mud at the crater at Sulfur Springs Park are considered naturally healing, plus a super fun adventure.

**WHERE TO STAY:** St. Lucia is great from any angle, but **Ladera**, located almost 1,000 feet above the sea on the Soufrière volcano, has simply the best views going. The 32 open-air suites are perched high on the slopes with just three walls, the better to expose the awe-inspiring visions of the Pitons and the turquoise Caribbean, but still allow couples to have complete privacy. Each suite has a rock-hewn plunge pool and a star chart to aid nighttime sky gazing. The Dashesne restaurant prides itself in serving guests authentic St. Lucian dishes made from produce and ingredients supplied by local farmers and neighboring plantations. The resort also makes some of the best chocolate in the Caribbean, perfect for a treat at turn down. *Room rates start at \$750 a night; ladera.com.*

## JAMAICA

Jamaica is the crown jewel of the Caribbean, the island of legendary music, must-have food, hospitality beyond measure and the mythical Blue Mountains. The longest range in the country, they dominate the eastern portion of the island and spread across four par-

ishes. The region also produces some of the world's best coffee. Blue Mountain coffee, cultivated between 2,000 and 5,000 feet, demands premium prices and is as endemic to Jamaica as the Champagne and Bordeaux regions are to France. Also native to the mountains is the world's second largest butterfly, the Jamaican giant swallowtail, which only feeds on plants growing here. Hiking trails, waterfalls, hidden villages—all make the peaks a global destination for nature lovers and adventure seekers.

**WHERE TO STAY:** The sweet name of **Strawberry Hill** came from Horace Walpole, the eccentric 18th-century British lord whose fantastical home in Twickenham just outside London is called Strawberry Hill House, and who apparently found the elevation was perfect for growing strawberries. Currently owned by Chris Blackwell, the founder of Island Records, the resort has been a hilltop retreat for musicians like Bob Marley, and the 12 airy cottages are the perfect place for loved-up pairs to hide away. The spa and yoga pavilion overlook the misty mountains, and a guided hike leaves at 2:00 a.m. to catch the sunrise from Blue Mountain Peak, the tallest in the range. The resort's location near Kingston means you can hit the Bob Marley Museum and Trench Town Cultural Yard, plus get your fill of authentic Jerk cuisine. *Room rates start at \$295 a night; strawberryhillhotel.com.* ■

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