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# CARIBBEAN *edge* MAGAZINE

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## Caribbean All-Inclusive Resorts

### Taking Care of All Your Needs in One Place

By K.C. Nash

An all-inclusive resort is an ideal choice if...

*Your idea of the perfect vacation is to find a beach where you can lounge the day away until you take a leisurely stroll to get lunch, and then hit the pool or get in a game of tennis before you get ready to dress for dinner.*

*You like knowing exactly what you are going to be spending and not having to budget a certain amount for restaurants, gratuities, local taxes and activities every day.*

*You'd like to sample some watersports like snorkelling, windsurfing or kayaking or play tennis every day without having to figure out where to go, how much it will cost, and exactly how to get there.*

The all-inclusive concept is simple. You pay one rate for two people staying in a room, and that rate includes all meals, drinks, watersports, activities and entertainment. You don't even need to leave the resort, unless you want to see some historic sights or shop for local handicrafts or art. It's like a cruise ship, only you have easy access to a beautiful beach, there aren't thousands of passengers to get along with, and there's no seasickness involved.

All-inclusive resorts throughout the Caribbean came about as the result of geography. Some resorts were located in remote areas or on their own island, away from towns, restaurants and entertainment. Seeing that guests would have to travel distances to get what they needed, they offered complete packages including all meals and drinks as well as watersports, tennis and other activities.

Even as more restaurants and attractions opened closer to the locations, these resorts found that their concept was a winner. Many guests liked having everything in one place and at one set price, and would return every year, requesting the same room and dates like clockwork. So the all-inclusive structure was here to stay.

Three large international chains-- **Club Med**, **Superclubs** and **Sandals** -- made the concept wildly popular in the Caribbean during the 1970s. They started out as "adults-only" resorts where you could get away from it all in a hedonistic playground run by young organizers who made sure everyone had a really (wink, wink) good time. You were freed from carrying around wallets and purses, because everything was paid for, including as much liquor as you wanted to consume.

**Club Med** has evolved from those early days, spreading to points all over the globe and offering resorts that were themed or family oriented as well as the adult-only clubs. In the Caribbean, they now operate resorts in Martinique, Guadeloupe, the Bahamas, the Dominican Republic and the Turks and Caicos. The properties include a wealth of activities, from yoga and Pilates classes to bocce ball, softball and kayaking. They also have


 
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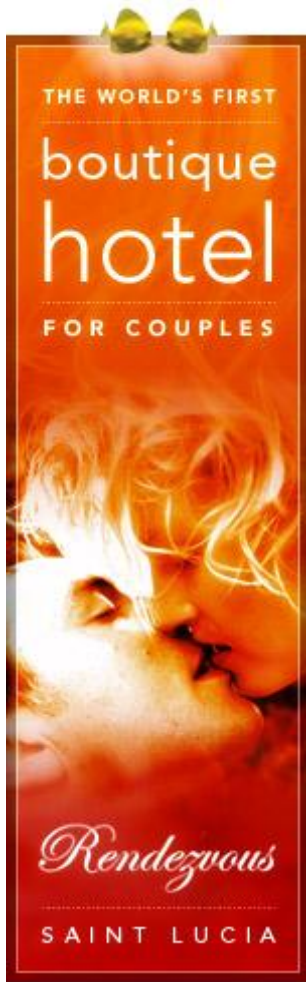
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specialized clubs for tennis, golf and scuba diving, so everyone gets to follow their bliss in their own special ways. [www.clubmed.com](http://www.clubmed.com)

**Superclubs** now has three brands under their "Super-Inclusive" concept: **Grand Lido** for couples, **Hedonism** for adults (with a few "clothing optional"), and **Breezes** for families with children 14 and under. They have resorts in Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, the Bahamas and Curacao. [www.superclubs.com](http://www.superclubs.com)

**Sandals** has adapted to the times also, keeping its couples-only resorts that appeal to honeymooners and romantics and spinning off a subsidiary titled **Beaches** to offer family resorts. They now have a total of 12 Sandals in Antigua, the Bahamas, Jamaica and St. Lucia, four Beaches resorts in Jamaica and the Turks and Caicos, and the super-luxury, couples-only Royal Plantation in Jamaica. [www.sandals.com](http://www.sandals.com)

International mega-chain **Barcelo** offers all-inclusive resorts with nine resorts in the Dominican Republic. [www.barcelo.com](http://www.barcelo.com)

The **RIU** chain also offers very large inclusions which they claim are four- and five-stars. They have hotels in the DR, Aruba, the Bahamas and Jamaica. [www.riu.com](http://www.riu.com)

*Private hotels in the Caribbean offering all-inclusive vacations include:*

### Antigua

**Curtain Bluff** – This is the granddaddy of Antigua hotels, located on the southern coast, with 73 rooms, two beaches, two restaurants, four tennis courts, and legendary service. It always ranks in the list of top five resorts in the Caribbean. Families are welcomed. [www.curtainbluff.com](http://www.curtainbluff.com)

**Galley Bay** – West Indies charm, Tahitian architecture and the natural garden setting makes this 70-room luxury resort a standout. The rooms are in suites and cottages, and 75 percent of them are on the beach. The property also includes two restaurants, two bars, tennis court, pool, fitness center and games room. Children under the age of 16 are not permitted except at Christmas. [www.galleybayresort.com](http://www.galleybayresort.com)

**Occidental Grand Pineapple Beach** – Sprawling above a 1,600-foot white sand beach is this large family-friendly resort. The property includes two pools (one adult only), four tennis courts, a fitness center, a games room, three restaurants and four bars. [www.occidentalhotels.com](http://www.occidentalhotels.com)

**Jumby Bay** – A very exclusive resort on its own island off the northern coast, this resort is known for attracting the rich and famous. Accommodations are in rooms and suites as well as villas around the island. They offer great beaches, two restaurants and a host of activities. Families are welcomed, and special programs for children are available. [www.jumbybayresort.com](http://www.jumbybayresort.com)

### British Virgin Islands

**Biras Creek, Virgin Gorda** – Reachable only by boat, this luxury 33-suite resort gives you a feeling of being totally away from the world. It has a great beach, tennis courts, a five-star restaurant, a spa and dinghys that you can use to explore a deserted beach. Children eight years and older are welcomed. [www.biras.com](http://www.biras.com)

**Bitter End Yacht Club, Virgin Gorda** – Billing itself as "a rollicking nautical village," this resort has it all for those who love boats. It goes beyond just the regular all-inclusive concept, with unlimited use of Club fleet of over 100 boats, including Lasers, Hobies, Hunters, kayaks, windsurfers and Boston Whalers as well as an Introduction to Sailing course, snorkeling trips, and sunset and dinner cruises. [www.beyc.com](http://www.beyc.com)

**Peter Island Resort** – This distinctive retreat that occupies the largest private island in the BVI features 20 coves, 1,800 acres of woodlands, five white sand beaches, tennis courts, a watersports pavilion, three restaurants, a pool, a spa and a fitness center. Families can spread out and enjoy themselves completely. [www.peterisland.com](http://www.peterisland.com)

## Dominican Republic

**Casa de Campo** – Known as the most complete resort in the Caribbean, this huge complex offers three world class golf courses, 13 tennis courts, nine restaurants, 10 bars, a stable and polo program, a Shooting Centre for wild shooting experiences, a spa, and two pools plus a fantastic beach. Families love it because they offer separate activities programs for teens, tweens, children and toddlers as well as a nannies' service.  
[www.casadecampo.com.do](http://www.casadecampo.com.do)

**Sunscape Casa del Mar** – One of three Sunscape resorts in the DR, this one is on Playa Bayahibe. With five restaurants, six bars, two pools, a state-of-the-art fitness center, spa, tennis center, bicycle center and an Explorers' Program for kids, there is enough for the entire family to do without ever leaving the compound (although dad might want to play golf at one of the Casa de Campo courses nearby). [www.sunscaperesorts.com](http://www.sunscaperesorts.com)

**Paradisus Palma Real** – This five-star resort emphasizes all-inclusive luxury, with suites including Jacuzzis, flat panel TVs, marble floors and elegant furnishings. Family concierge suites include a concierge to coordinate family activities, PlayStation in the suite, and kid-friendly appointments like robes, kid-sized towels, a minibar stocked with juices and treats, a milk and cookies turn-down service and more.  
[www.paradisuspalmareal.com](http://www.paradisuspalmareal.com)

**Grand Flamenco Puerto Plata** – This Occidental resort is surrounded by a Robert Trent Jones golf course and offers two pools, tennis courts, seven restaurants, and scuba instruction on-site. They feature special luxuries in some of the rooms, such as the Royal Club rooms with their own restaurant and pool, concierge services and private check-in.  
[www.occidentalhotels.com](http://www.occidentalhotels.com)

## Jamaica

**Couples Swept Away** – If you're looking for a romantic couples-only resort but you really want to have a lot of activities and stay physically active, this is the place for you. In addition to all meals and drinks, the package includes a free fitness evaluation and plan so you can use the many facilities--including a fully equipped gym, tennis, racketball and squash courts and nearby golf course--and take advantage of classes and instructions at no additional fees.  
[www.swept-away.com](http://www.swept-away.com)

## St. Lucia

**Rendezvous** – Styled as a "storybook escape" for couples, this stylish beach resort has 64 rooms and two restaurants, three bars, two pools, two tennis courts, an archery range, gym and spa. [www.theromanticholiday.com](http://www.theromanticholiday.com)

**The Body Holiday at Le Sport** – The emphasis here is on rejuvenation and health, with 155 "oases" or rooms, daily 50-minute health treatments, and classes in yoga and stress management as well as the usual range of watersports and activities. Le Sport is a wonderful spa and is highly recommended. [www.thebodyholiday.com](http://www.thebodyholiday.com)

## St. Thomas

**Bolongo Bay Beach Club** – This long-standing favourite in St. Thomas offers 65 beachside rooms as well as studio and 2-bedroom condominium accommodations. It's a complete resort, with a good beach, tennis courts, pool, watersports, and two seaside restaurants. For children 12 and younger, their meals are included in the rate. [www.bolongobay.com](http://www.bolongobay.com)

**Wyndham Sugar Bay** – Voted "Best All-Inclusive Resort in the Caribbean," this 294-room resort keeps everyone in the family happy, with five restaurants, three pools, a spa, a gaming center, a Kids Club, four tennis courts and all the watersports you could image. [www.wyndham.com](http://www.wyndham.com)

## St. Vincent & the Grenadines

**Petit St. Vincent Resort** – On a 113-acre island 40 miles south of St. Vincent is an intimate resort with 22 cottages and an incredible level of privacy and service. Amenities include great beaches with watersports, tennis, and hiking, and access to boats for day charters and scuba diving. Children are welcomed. [www.psvresort.com](http://www.psvresort.com)

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