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## St. Kitts & Nevis

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## The Plantation Inns of St. Kitts and Nevis

**While many Caribbean islands boast of large resort complexes and glitzy hotels, St. Kitts and Nevis take a smaller, gentler approach with their plantation inns.**

By K.C. Nash

Built around existing historical structures of the old sugar plantations, these intimate boutique hotels offer serene retreats from the bustle of life. You get to know the owners, managers and staff on a personal level, and the rooms feature antique furnishings as well as some modern conveniences to make your stay comfortable and memorable. So if in your search for an ideal vacation you find yourself using terms like "idyllic," "romantic" or "quiet natural beauty," be sure to check out the inns below.

### Ottley's Plantation, St. Kitts

This family-owned hotel on the edge of the rainforest offers 24 rooms in either the 18th Century Great House, small cottages or the 2-bedroom Grand Villa. Some of the cottages and the villa bedrooms have private plunge pools. The rooms are decorated in English colonial style with wicker and carved mahogany furniture, and include ceiling fans, air conditioning, safes, coffee makers and mini-bar refrigerators. Televisions--which can wreck the serenity and ambiance--are not the norm, but can be put in the rooms upon request. The Royal Palm Restaurant has received accolades for its gourmet offerings and low-key elegance, and serves breakfast, lunch, dinner and a renowned Sunday Champagne Brunch. One of the newer additions is the Mango Orchard Spa, a cottage and open-air gazebo perched at the edge of a Mt. Liamuiga rainforest ravine offering a full range of massages and treatments. With its 35 acres of lush gardens and panoramic views to the ocean, this inn is a favourite of brides, and the hotel offers full support services and assistance with wedding plans. [www.ottleys.com](http://www.ottleys.com)

### Rawlins Plantation, St. Kitts

On the drive through miles of sugar cane fields, you wonder if you are wandering into another century. Then your driver turns down a single-lane road that leads to a neatly manicured lawn rising to a 17th century plantation great house, and you know you've arrived at Rawlins. The rooms are in small cottages scattered among landscaped gardens, and include cottage rooms, cottage suites, two-bedroom cottages and the delightful Honeymoon Sugar Mill Suite. All are furnished with British colonial antique furniture and have great views to the ocean (including vistas of neighboring islands Saba and St. Eustatius), or to the mountains of Liamuiga. Rooms are cooled by ceiling fans, and the windows are wood shuttered, which makes the gauzy mosquito netting an important accessory--and you are warned to be sure to close and lock the shutters at night, lest a passing monkey decides to investigate what he might find of interest in your room. Over the next few years, owners Kai-Karim Mohammed and Kevin Horstwood have plans to add a number of 2-bedroom villas, but have devised a way to do this with



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minimal impact to the serenity of the resort. A golf course is being constructed nearby at another resort, so this will expand the recreation options at the northern end of the island. [www.rawlinplantation.com](http://www.rawlinplantation.com)

### Nisbet Plantation Beach Club, Nevis

Just a short ferry ride from St. Kitts is the lovely, relatively unspoiled island of Nevis. Small boutique hotels and plantation inns are the norm here, with the notable exception being the 196-room Four Seasons Resort. Nisbet Plantation is one of the best of these small hotels, and the only one with a beachfront. It has been cited many times by Conde Nast Traveler magazine as one of the best resorts in the Caribbean. Recently refurbished, the great house (former home to Fanny Nisbet, wife of noted historical figure Admiral Horatio Nelson) features an elegant dining room and large salon, and overlooks the grassy "Avenue of the Palms" promenade down to the sea. Also recently added was The Palms Spa in a small cottage adjoining the great house. The 16 guest cottages are situated on either side of the promenade and most offer ocean views. The 36 rooms are done in bright tropical colors, and include coffee makers, small refrigerators, air conditioning and in-room safes. On the property are two beachside restaurants and a large swimming pool and hot tub, making it an ideal resort for families and those not wanting to wander out too much. In fact, they recently added the "Totally Royal Escape" all-inclusive package to take advantage of this. [www.nisbetplantation.com](http://www.nisbetplantation.com)



### Hermitage Plantation Inn, Nevis

The orchard-like setting of this plantation inn at the edge of the rainforest makes you feel like you are worlds away from civilization, and the rooms filled with antiques and the wonderful hospitality of the Lupinacci family only magnify that effect. At the center of the property is the 340-year old Great House, which offers a salon, library, bar and terrace restaurant, creating the social heart of the resort. Guest cottages are scattered around this center, and rooms sport names such as Treetops Up, Twin Gables, Pink House, Blue House, and Goosepen Cottage. In addition, a replica of a Nevisian manor house complete with sitting room, dining room with seating for 10, full kitchen, two master suites, an additional small bedroom, and its own private pool and garden is available for a family or group travelling together. All bedrooms have antique canopy beds enveloped in mosquito netting, making you feel like you've stepped back in time. The netting is important, since the rooms are not screened from the outside. At an elevation of 800 feet, the resort is comfortably cool at night so you won't notice the lack of air conditioning as you fall asleep listening to the night sounds of the rainforest. Also on the grounds are a tennis court, a pool and a riding stable, so you have a choice of activities. Or you can choose to just lay back in the hammock on your private verandah, allowing the gentle trade winds to rock you to sleep. [www.hermitagenevis.com](http://www.hermitagenevis.com)

### Montpelier Plantation Inn, Nevis

In 2003 this inn underwent a major renovation, and today stands as one of the jewels of Nevis. Situated on 30 acres overlooking Charlestown and St. Kitts, the resort offers only 17 rooms, keeping the feel very intimate. Each room has a private verandah, offer views of the sea and are air conditioned, and the rate includes a full breakfast and afternoon tea. The deluxe rooms feature canopy or four-poster beds, continuing the historic feel of the property. The inn has its own private beach as well as a freshwater pool and tennis court. But what most people come to Montpelier for is the outstanding classic cuisine served on the terrace. Many of the dishes feature foods grown right on the property, or gathered from nearby farms and fishermen. If you are truly lucky, you may score reservations in the Sugar Mill dining room, which only seats 12 and has one sitting a night. They offer a number of packages that include dinners, and even a unique Babymoon Package for the pregnant couple that includes a pre-natal massage and gift certificate for baby clothing or supplies. [www.montpeliernevis.com](http://www.montpeliernevis.com)