



Blue Waters Resort & Spa has three main pools.

HOTEL REVIEW

Basking In Blue Waters

This Antigua resort offers a laid-back, luxurious stay

By Janice and George Mucalov

Our toes squished into powder-soft sand, and the sea — impossibly blue and calm — beckoned, “Dive right in!” Behind us, 17 acres of tropical gardens rambled around languid pools and discreet colonial-style buildings.

Surely, Blue Waters Resort & Spa has to be one of the most bewitching beach spots in the Caribbean, and it’s no wonder Prince Harry chose to stay at the property when he visited in 2016.

Family-owned Blue Waters, which is located on Antigua’s northern coast, opened in 1960. Since then, it has grown to 120 rooms, suites and villas and has won multiple awards, including the “Antigua and Barbuda’s Leading Hotel” distinction from the World Travel Awards for the past seven years.

Although Antigua and the resort were barely touched by Hurricane Irma, which badly damaged some Caribbean islands in 2017, Blue Waters recently completed a \$6 million update.

The refurbished Cove Suites are a standout. Each measures 730 square feet, and the accommodations are clustered in four separate villas. Featuring white shiplap-clad walls and flashes of ocean-hued aqua cushions and fabrics, they have separate open living areas that look out to spacious terraces with panoramic ocean views. New 50-inch-screen smart



A stay in one of the Cove Suites is a must.

televisions? Check. Nespresso coffee machines? You bet. Don’t feel like unwinding by one of the three main pools? Relax on a comfy cushioned rattan lounge around the huge infinity pool that’s exclusively for Cove Suite guests.

The Deluxe Beachfront Rooms were also spruced up — but once you’ve seen a Cove Suite, you won’t want to book clients into anything less. (Advise travelers that Cove Suites are the farthest away from the restaurants, but buggy service is available.)

With its British colonial history, Antigua is popular with visitors from the U.K. But we also bumped into Russian and American guests at Blue Waters. We noticed an equal mix of families and couples, too. The complimentary children’s club also looked fun; we spotted happy tykes being cuddled on the nature walk. Kids also get to enjoy activities such as jewelry design, ice-cream trips and tennis.

As there are no off-property restaurants nearby, clients will likely prefer the all-inclusive plan for a more carefree experience. It includes alcohol, as well as meals and afternoon tea. Three restaurants offer a la carte, three-course dinners. The Cove Restaurant — perched on a cliff above the sea — is

an alfresco, white-tablecloth affair. Think flickering candles and Caribbean-French fusion cuisine. Suggest clients order the lobster Thermidor and, for dessert, the hot chocolate fondant.

Then there’s the Caribbean-inspired Bartley’s Restaurant, one of the few air-conditioned eateries on the island. Lamb chops rubbed with spicy Caribbean cumin, anyone? The Palm Restaurant, which also serves as the breakfast and lunch venue, is more casual and offers good buffets, too.

The resort’s fitness center has brand-new, state-of-the-art Cybex gym equipment — 11 cardio machines in all, from cross-trainers to power mill climbers. Not that we were motivated to work out during our visit; the watersports looked more appealing. Clients can rent complimentary kayaks, windsurfers, stand-up paddleboards and sailboats.

But, honestly, lazing about on the beach — and, actually, there are three beaches at Blue Waters — was all we wanted to do on our too-short visit to Antigua. ●

The Details: Blue Waters Resort & Spa (www.bluewaters.net)