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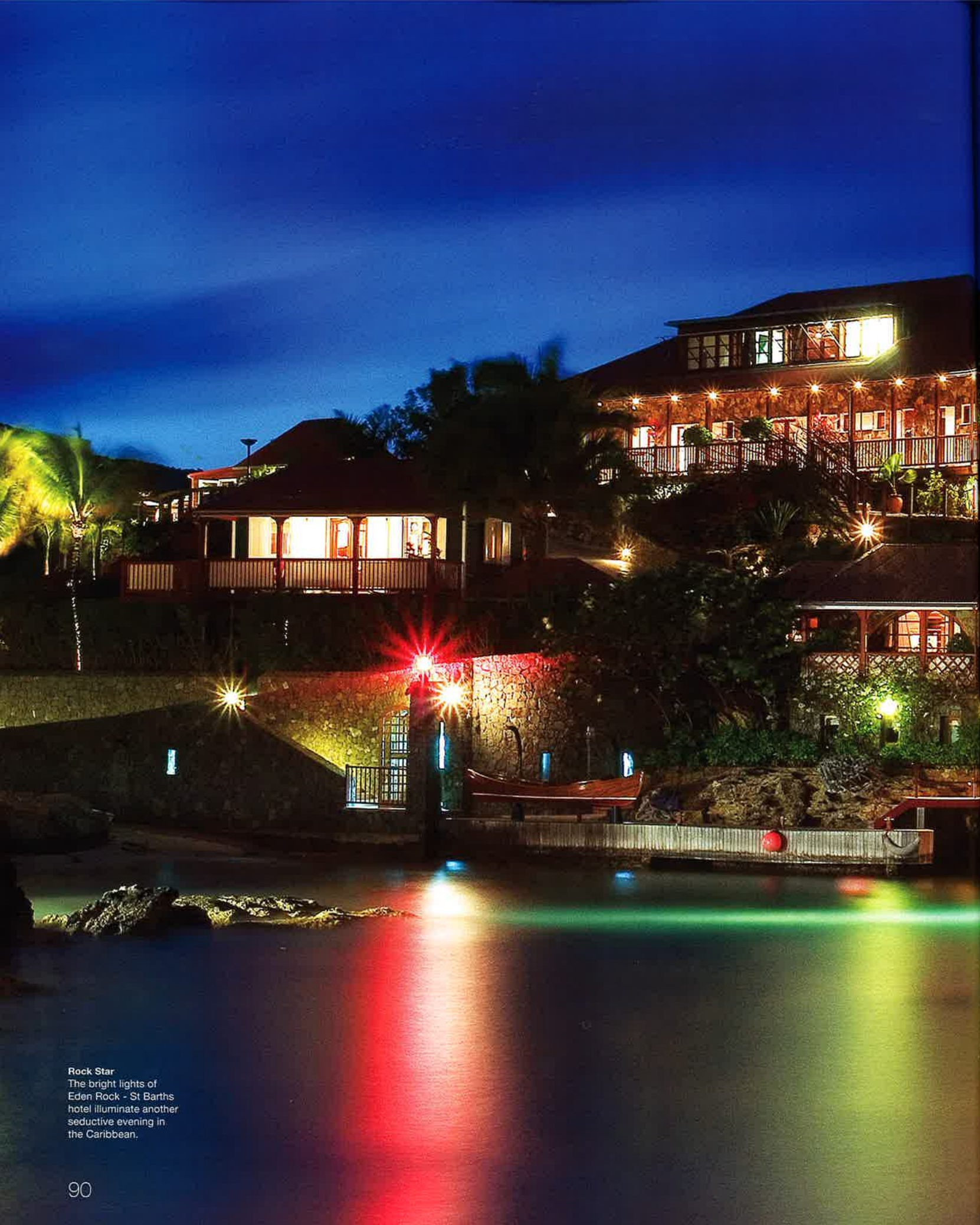


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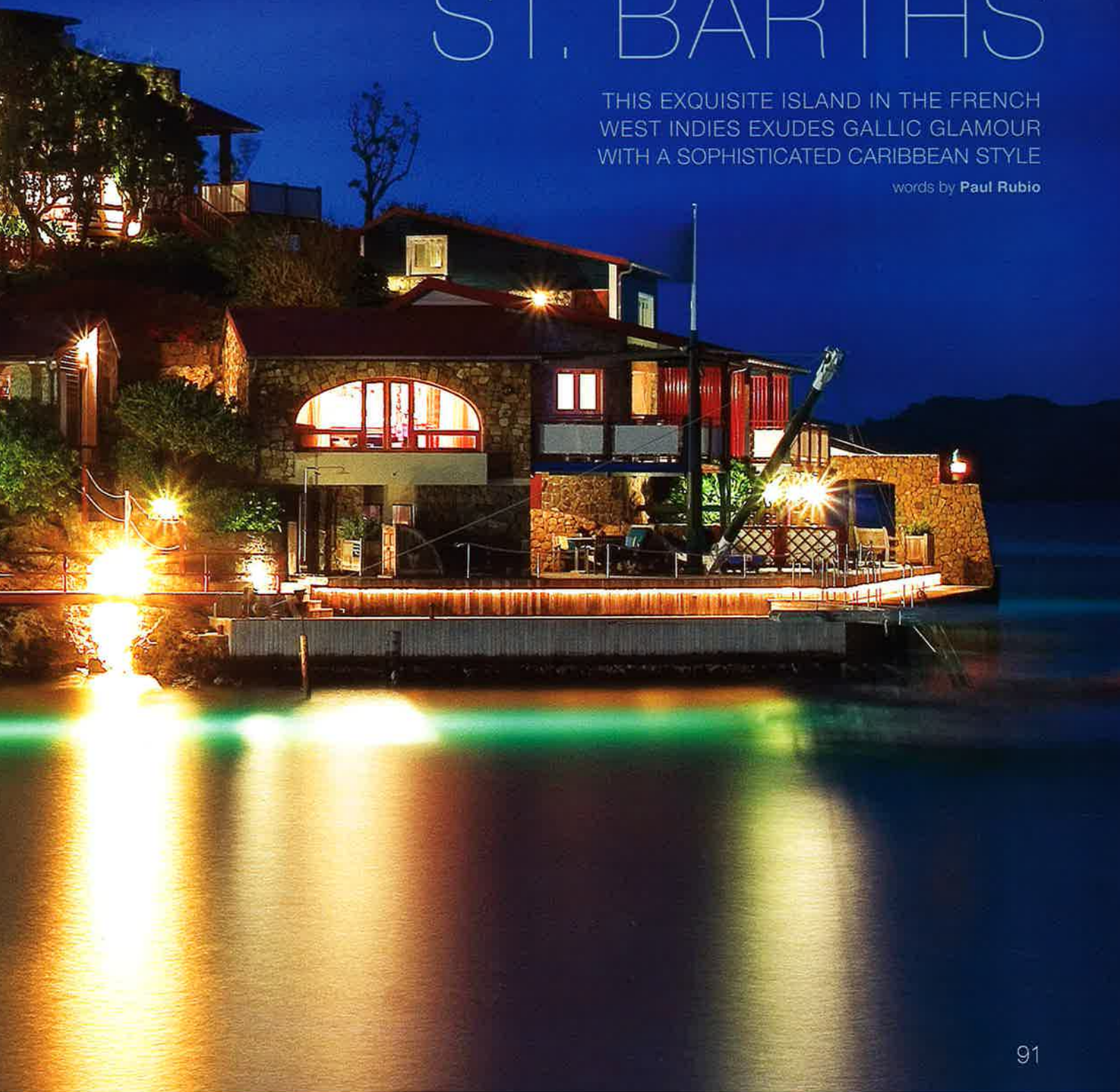
**Rock Star**  
The bright lights of  
Eden Rock - St Barth's  
hotel illuminate another  
seductive evening in  
the Caribbean.



# SEDUCED BY ST. BARTHS

THIS EXQUISITE ISLAND IN THE FRENCH  
WEST INDIES EXUDES GALLIC GLAMOUR  
WITH A SOPHISTICATED CARIBBEAN STYLE

words by **Paul Rubio**





T he mystique of St. Barths has hypnotized the world since the late 1980s when word spread of a petite, pristine island in the heart of the Caribbean Sea rivaling the style and sophistication of St. Tropez on France's Côte d'Azur. A paragon of fashion, glamour and evolving avant-garde, St. Barths presented a worldly style previously unknown to the

Caribbean along with a progressive French culture.

Fast forward to present day, this sliver of the French West Indies has solidified its status as the epicenter of Caribbean chic, where luxury is a lifestyle.

Across the 8.5 square-mile island, St. Barths devotees embrace the fashion vibe that placed it on the global map decades ago. The legends of beautiful people, fashionistas, and celebrities continue to generate a self-fulfilling prophecy, as A-listers from around the world come here to outshine one another.

The capital harbor city of Gustavia and nearby St. Jean are lined with the best name brands and boutiques; Hermès, Kristina Popovitch, and Couleurs Provence, to name a few. Dress to impress in your best tropical haute couture; the island's narrow streets and resort enclaves transform into living catwalks oceanside, poolside, portside, mountainside, and tableside.

The daily agenda on St. Barths rarely strays from high-end shopping, sun worshipping, posing, people watching, fine dining, and yachting. Typical tourist attractions don't exist nor do budget locales. People venture to St. Barths to truly, and unapologetically, delight in the good life.

Premium French products, eight stunning beaches, and contemporary architecture form the foundation of the St. Barths experience. However, the secret to the island's success is a collection of world-famous hotels, each a disparate incarnation of tropical chic. High design pools, meticulously furnished suites, and distinctive

**Garden of Eden**  
The exclusive Eden Rock - St Barths adds a flawless 24-karat luster to the island.







themes garner larger-than-life reputations and endless accolades. And thanks to renowned restaurants, public lounges, and daily beach passes, these hotels are also intricately woven into the fabric of everyday life for St. Barths denizens.

On an island where everything that glitters is gold, the Eden Rock - St Barths hotel champions a flawless 24-karat luster. A perennial playground for the rich and famous, Eden Rock sports two picture-perfect beaches, celebrity chef restaurants, and design-savvy suites. The 34 accommodations of this Relais & Chateaux property are clustered in two sections: those nestling the downy sands of St. Jean beach and those hugging the solid, quartz promontory from which the hotel gains its namesake. Each unit flaunts a singular style with French-Caribbean swagger.

Within the exclusive Eden Rock enclave, the most prized guest key unlocks the famed Villa Rockstar, a vast three-level, open-air mansion designed as a “hundred million dollar yacht on land.” No expense was spared to perfect a bold reality that surpasses the wildest spendthrift fantasies.

Villa Rockstar’s 16,000 square feet teem with extraordinary amenities, branding it one of the most coveted addresses in the world. Think a designer dining room by Xavier Lust, a hand-made Schiffini kitchen (that would make Bobby Flay jealous), a dedicated whiskey bar stocked with rare finds, a state-of-the-art gymnasium (with personal trainer on request), a professional recording studio (inclusive of the Neve







**Luxe Living**  
A bedroom at  
Villa Rockstar; a  
private pool villa,  
and fine dining  
at Le Toiny.

console used by John Lennon to record "Imagine"), and a 20-seat Cinemascope screening room.

For haute fun-in-the-sun, debut your new Emilio Pucci bikini in the swanky swimming pool, soak in the scene in your oceanfront Jacuzzi, access the beach from your doorstep, or enjoy a quiet read on your private, lounge-lined recreation area (while your dedicated butler serves up chilled champagne). Ultra-luxury also abounds in the villa's four master suites, individually named for musical greats.

When it's time to roam beyond Villa Rockstar, grab the house keys to the Mini Cooper parked in the driveway. You'll feel like a local cruising along the wonderful seascapes in the island's vehicle of choice. For a bit more adventure, rev up the villa's private Land Rover and explore more rugged, lesser known reaches.

Along the island's quiet southeastern seaboard, you'll discover St. Barths' most intimate resort, Le Toiny. Gracing a serene hillside along the côte sauvage or wild coast, Le Toiny bucks the island's see-and-be-seen mantra. The 15-villa Relais & Châteaux resort caters to jet-setters seeking an ultra-luxurious hideaway on a heavenly, tropical isle.

Of course, the "action" is never more than a 10-minute car ride away, but a vacation at Le Toiny is less about keeping up with the Joneses' and more about countless hours appreciating the ocean from your stylish swimming pool (each villa has one) and decompressing from everyday life under the al fresco shower.

The well-appointed, mahogany furnished villas exude a cozy, residential ambience, discreetly tucked into lush foliage for maximum privacy, idyllic for honeymooners and romance-seekers. When the views aren't enough, the beach itself is an easy five-minute stroll down the hill.

Over on emerald Grand Cul-de-Sac Beach, Le Sereno embraces the apex of haute minimalism over a superb all-suite enclave, designed by 'it' French designer Christian Liaigre. The majority of Le Sereno's 36 suites take shape as "Grande Suite Plage"—a 1,200 square foot unit with a two-tiered bedroom and sunken living room combination, opening onto a sun deck overlooking the beach.

Natural light illuminates the suite through floor-to-ceiling windows; the vista of sea and sky seamlessly complements the dichromatic wood flooring and furnishings, reflecting off the stark white walls and four-poster beds. Between its design and subtle amenities, featuring cool white linens made specially for the hotel and welcome Havaiana sandals, Le Sereno captures the elusive paradigm of understated luxury perfectly.

Want more? You'll enjoy excellent service at the resort's full service beach club and sprawling pool deck. On an island where attitude reigns supreme (even in the



**Ocean Views**  
Hide away from  
the world on your  
private sun terrace  
at Le Sereno.



best hotels), Le Sereno's service excellence is a refreshing reminder of true global five-star service standards.

St. Barths homeowners have adopted the island's best hotels as their own. It's not uncommon for locals to lunch at Le Sereno, lounge on the beach at Eden Rock - St Barths, and dine later at Le Toiny – even in a single day. While neophytes might find this marathon a bit much, at some point in your St. Barths sojourn, be sure to lunch on the salt-crusted, day-caught fish and purple barigoule artichoke salad at Restaurant des Pêcheurs at Le Sereno.

Alternatively, opt for a gourmet feast at Brunch du Toiny at Le Toiny's award-winning Le Gaiac restaurant. Cool down with creative cocktails, feet in the sand, at La Cabane de l'Isle at Hotel Saint-Barth Isle de France, or dine above at the resort's La Case de l'Isle, where you'll savor iced pea soup, local lobster carpaccio, and classic sole meunière in a serene beachfront setting.

Of course, foodies will want to indulge in just about everything at On the Rocks with Jean-Georges at Eden Rock - St Barths. Iconic chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten has created a worldly, beach-inspired menu with appetizers such as crispy sushi and local fish tartare, and mains like lobster in a citrus reduction and porcini-crusted salmon in leek vinaigrette.

Despite a major spike in upscale competition throughout the Caribbean, St. Barths still dominates the region as the ne plus ultra of tropical chic. On an island where even celebrities people-watch, St. Barths' larger-than-life reality lures the privileged year after year to frolic in a place where la belle vie never ends. [edenrockhotel.com](http://edenrockhotel.com), [hoteltetoiny.com](http://hoteltetoiny.com), [lesereno.com](http://lesereno.com) **OIH**



#### MARKET WATCH: ST. BARTHS

LOOKING TO BUY? WE ASKED **TOM SMYTH**, VICE PRESIDENT OF ST. BARTH PROPERTIES SOTHEBY'S INTERNATIONAL REALTY FOR HIS INSIGHT ON THE LOCAL PROPERTY MARKET.

#### Is this a good time to buy, and why?

The St. Barths market has seen a substantial increase in activity this year and all indications are this will continue into 2014. Inventory is never overly abundant but we have seen things tighten even more this year. We were fortunate the global economic crisis did not affect St. Barths in the same way it did the rest of the world, and although we did see a bit of a slowdown and some leveling of pricing, it appears prices are poised to begin a steady rise once again.

#### What are the current property trends?

Many buyers seek beachfront which is an exceptionally rare and valuable commodity in St. Barths, but it is really a matter of matching the buyer with the right opportunities. We are seeing a steady blend of those seeking "turn-key" properties with those prepared to renovate or tear down an existing home to create their own masterpiece. Our company lists the majority of available inventory that allows us to assist buyers in finding the perfect choice for their needs.

#### A signature property you are listing?

La Baie aux Fleurs is an incredible parcel of land on the Gouverneur hillside with more than nine acres stretching to the coastline (not beach), and surrounded by conservation land. Permission was recently granted for the construction of a luxury four-bedroom villa that will surely be one of the more beautiful properties on island. The setting is stunning and the year-round sunset views are unmatched. It's listed for €19,500,000 (with the permits) and the buyers can start construction at their convenience. [sothebysrealty-stbarth.com](http://sothebysrealty-stbarth.com)