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DOMINICAN REPUBLIC  
ST. BARTS  
ST. LUCIA  
BERMUDA

**If you want to  
follow the sun south  
after your big day,  
here are some  
warm-weather islands  
that know how to  
treat (and spoil)  
a honeymooning  
couple.**

*Sunny*

SANCTUARY

## ST. BARTS

If your ideal honeymoon spot is a boutique hotel on a small tropical island, consider Saint-Barthélemy, aka St. Barts in the U.S. (St. Barths in France), in the French West Indies 10 minutes by air from St. Martin. With only 400-plus hotel accommodations spread over eight square miles (the largest place, Hotel Guanahani & Spa, has just 68 hillside cottages), it's a veritable boutique island.

Our first taste of the island—after flying nonstop to Saint-Martin via Jet Blue and transferring to St. Barts courtesy of Premium IV—came at Hotel Le Sereno's breezy open-air Restaurant des Pêcheurs. Here we supped on bouillabaisse (with fish flown in from Marseille), the gentle lapping of the waves on the beach broken only by the chatter of diners switching effortlessly between French and English. FYI: Le Sereno offers spa treatments (try a couple's massage by the sea after a swim) using natural Ligne St. Barths products—which, with vanilla rum, are the only things made in quantity on St. Barts.

Besides Le Sereno and Guanahani, for our euro the best hotels for honeymooners are Le Toiny, a luxe hilltop hideaway famed for its Sunday brunch; Eden Rock, a beachfront landmark with ultra-romantic suites and cuisine overseen by Jean-Georges Vongerichten; and the elegant waterside Saint-Barth Isle de France. Also worth considering are Hotel Christopher, notable for its curvaceous pool and seaside spa; and Taiwana, next to Isle de France (guests may use Isle de France's spa) and new home of the popular Italian restaurant, PaCri. Or you may rent a private villa, perhaps through St. Barth Properties.

Wherever you stay, be advised: The ruggedly beautiful island is ringed by narrow, cliff-hugging roads; hence it's smart to rent a very small car, like a Smart Car or Mini Cooper. Once you do, you're likely to find a beach to call your own; we loved days at re-

mote Gouverneur Beach and sunsets at pretty Shell Beach, steps from sandy-feet-welcome Restaurant Do Brazil.

Beyond its beachy allure, the island has a colorful history. A favorite of pirates and French fishermen, it was swapped by France's Louis XVI to Sweden's Gustav III in 1784 and declared a free port, then sold back to France in 1878 with the proviso it remain duty- and tax-free. Thus, the capital of this French island is Gustavia, where the Swedish connection endures, e.g., Gustavia's premier hotel is the Carl Gustaf, whose stylish cottages and fine-dining restaurant both overlook the harbor.

And do spend time in Gustavia—a yachter's haven, fashionista's nirvana (Stephane & Bernard is the destination for women's haute couture) and restaurant mecca. Stroll by the harbor, explore the shops, have a drink at La Route des Boucaniers and dine at Wall House, known for its French specialties (foie gras, anyone?), steaks and wine list. Both offer primo yacht- and people-watching.

Since David Rockefeller rediscovered the island in the 1950s (Columbus "discovered" it first), it's become a magnet for well-heeled Americans, European jet-setters—and honeymooners. Because it's clean and safe, relatively undeveloped and a sophisticated



Saint-Barth Isle de France: beachfront life never seemed so elegant.

French outpost in the casual Caribbean, it has broad appeal. You're likely to bump into anyone and everyone between down-home Le Select, where Jimmy Buffett wrote his classic "Cheeseburger in Paradise," and local hot spot Le T, where dancing breaks out on the tabletops in the wee hours.

Buffett says he found many of his stories and songs on St. Barts. At the same time, there's no 8-square-mile patch of earth where you'll find more glitterati in high season. Rates come down mid-October to mid-November and late winter/early spring, and those may be just the times for you and your beloved to discover St. Barts for yourselves. —Dale B. Salm

For further information, visit [saintbarth-tourisme.com](http://saintbarth-tourisme.com).