

Towards St. Barths? The hottest news on the island paradise

The favorite playground of jet-setters in the Caribbean is, in short, its hotel and gastronomic network rebuilt after Hurricane Irma - and there are great news at its most disputed addresses

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S and you plan to land in [St. Barths](#) (as Saint Barthélemy is known) in the coming months, you may still see traces of the destruction caused by Hurricane Irma, which passed in 2017 on the small island of the northern Antilles. But, fortunately, the feeling that prevails over there is that of reconstruction. This thanks to a task force that involved well-heeled habitués, government, local community and tourism industry. St. Barths is even more charming and promises a triumphant return to its paradisiacal seaside resort and favorite destination of jet-setters, fashionistas and celebrities who anchor there for privacy, days of total relaxation and first-rate service - on New Year's Eve.

Its luxury hotel chain is striding towards full reopening. Named: the new luxury resort Manapany, in the bay of l'Anse des Cayes, erected in March this year, brings ecochic concept, with organic vegetable garden, handmade furniture and panoramic tame view. On the first day of December, it is the turn of Le Sereno, one of the most disputed on the island, to return in style with its magnificent views of the Grand Cul-de-Sac, with *villas* up to 650 m² and private pool. Entirely renovated, Le Toiny resurfaces with eight new suites - totaling 22 accommodations - and a *beach club* that promises to rival St. Barths' lively afternoons.



One of the most awaited news is the return of Cheval Blanc (from the LVMH group), which will resurface with a project signed by the French designer Jacques Grange and a garden designed by the American landscape artist Madison Cox. Meanwhile, the hotel Taiwana, its neighbor, was bought by the same group and attached to the territory of the Cheval Blanc, which is thus established at the feel station of the island. For this holiday season, only half the space will be ready, but the good news is that the restaurant, considered one of the best places to see and be seen in St. Barths, will be in business.

The Eden Rock luxury resort, one of the favorites of Greta Garbo and Howard Hughes in former times and Jessica Alba and Jennifer Lopez currently, only reopens the doors next year. Your Sand Bar will be all renovated - except for the unmissable menu created by chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten, which remains. A beach bar is being built, plus a new one with sun loungers in the shade. Rooms, suites and *villas* will be renovated as well. Another icon of the island, Hotel Le Guanahani will also only be ready to welcome guests in 2019.

The gastronomy, however, goes hand in hand: most of the island's more than 60 restaurants will be open, in the case of the Italian Isola, the disputed Bonito - with its beautiful harbor views - and the Mediterranean L'Espirt. For a Caribbean night, the Rhum Room St. Barth opens its doors with distilled distilled beverages from all over America.

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The points by the sea are also already in full swing. Nikki Beach, one of the most fun restaurants on the island, had its entire structure redone, but kept its DJs and giant bottles of champagne to liven up the *sunsets* . This is also true of Shellona, at Shell Beach, which reopened in November; of Maya's in Gustàvia - be sure to sample the seafood from the menu -; and Pearl Beach (formerly La Plage). There is one though: one of St. Barths' most boisterous houses, the Eden Rock Villa Rockstar, will not be ready this season. Famous for his musical studio, the space will come back refreshed, but the new project is still kept secret. There is doubt whether the famous studio, which has already received from Rolling Stones to Bon Jovi, will return. The *villasto* rent are already running out - after all, the spirit of St.Barths is you feel literally at home.

A good option to get to St. Barths is to catch a flight from Copa Airlines, which leaves nine cities in Brazil - including Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Porto Alegre - and to call in Panama. There, traveling through the company, you can make a connection in less than an hour and you do not have to go through immigration. Prepare your Lolita Jaca caftans (one of the coolest boutiques on the island), put Ligne St. Barth's suntan oil on the nécessaire and *bon voyage* !

