

Caribbean

The 50 best holidays in the Caribbean



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Viceroy Sugar Beach,
St Lucia (23)

New hotels

1. Amanera, Dominican Republic

Aman junkies are champing at the bit to check in to the group's latest offering, which opens on November 23. On the north coast of the Dominican Republic, overlooking the Playa Grande, this one is the first to have a golf course, albeit one designed by Robert Trent Jones that's surrounded by 2,000 acres of rainforest. Each of the 25 casitas, tricked out with infinity pools, lofty ceilings and sky-high rates that aim to blend the Caribbean vibe with Asian sensibilities, is proof that the "Dom Rep" has come a long way from its cheap-as-chips all-inclusive days.

Details: from \$850 a night (amanvillaspg.com)

2. Sugar Bay, Barbados

Opening on November 1, this new hotel in the Hastings area has a good pedigree — it's owned by the same people as the Bougainvillea, a lovely low-key hotel near Oistins. Spread over a generous five-acre site, Sugar Bay (sugarbaybarbados.com) has 138 rooms and five restaurants plus a spa. Village-style cottages are done out in light, bright colours, and there are plenty of family rooms. It's all-inclusive, but that doesn't mean cheap and cheerful; many of the restaurants are à la carte and there are no tacky wristbands.

Details: Seven nights' all inclusive starts from £1,399pp including flights (0843 2495888, hayesandjarvis.com)

3. Gansevoort, Dominican Republic

The Dom Rep's other big opening of the year is this hotel — an offshoot of the original ones in Manhattan (there's already one in the Turks & Caicos). All of them aim to offer the sort of comfort and slickness that New Yorkers expect as their right. It's small, with just 48 suites, but there is a large spa that promises treatments such as "results-oriented facials". The NY Gansevoort in the Meatpacking District was the first to have a rooftop pool; the one in the Dom Rep (gansevoorthotelgroup.com) is a three-tiered infinity number that vies for attention alongside hiking and a rather beautiful crescent beach.

Details: Caribtours has seven nights' B&B from £1,999pp including flights (020 7751 0660, caribtours.co.uk)

4. Barbuda Belle, Barbuda

A short hop from Antigua, Barbuda has a tiny population of 1,600 people. Barbuda Belle, which opened in June, is also petite, with six cottages dotted along a 17-mile beach. It's all about serenity, both for guests and the bird life — particularly the frigate birds that like to sojourn amid its famously pink sand. Most empathically geared up to honeymooners and couples (although one of the cottages has two bedrooms), it's largely powered by solar energy, while the Mangrove restaurant tries to source local food. There are sailboats to borrow and plenty of time to perfect the art of doing nothing.

Details: from \$890 a night, B&B (barbudabelle.com)

5. Paradise Beach, Nevis

This one has only seven villas, each with its own butlers and cook and fully toggled up with air conditioning, outdoor showers and general wraparound glamour. Paradise Beach (paradisebeachnevis.com) has a fun community spirit at the beach bar, and activities on offer include scuba diving.

Details: Seven nights' room only with flights starts at £3,265pp (01244 897517, elegantresorts.co.uk)

6. The Sands, Barbados

A reincarnation of the Sandy Beach hotel, The Sands is due to open in time for Easter and has some good introductory rates. Another all-inclusive that doesn't aim to overwhelm, it's right by St Lawrence Gap — Barbados's party area — filled with bars and restaurants. There are 153 rooms, including plenty of family rooms, and you can up the ante by taking a more expensive "club" option that has a stocked minibar, room service and a reserved area on the beach.

Details: Seven nights' all inclusive with flights costs from £1,355pp (0344 5573859, virginholidays.co.uk)

Best for foodies

7. El Blok, Vieques, Puerto Rico

As hipster as it gets in the Caribbean, El Blok is all curvaceous concrete that is cut through to let the elements in; sometimes rain, usually sun, which adds to the vibrant colour scheme. A couple of trendy hotels have opened on the island of Vieques in recent years, but this has the simplest vision — a blend of fantastic food in a brilliant hang-out environment that is a bit like a tropical gastropub with rooms. Even better, new flights with Norwegian from Gatwick start in November to Puerto Rico and its Caribbean-by-way-of-the-Bronx appeal, followed by a 25-minute plane hop to Vieques.

Details: Rooms cost from \$220 a night (elblok.com). Flights are from £278.20 return for November (norwegian.com)

8. Belle Mont Farm, St Kitts

Probably one of the most interesting — and innovative — hotels in the Caribbean, Belle Mont Farm (bellemontfarm.com) is all about the farm-to-table concept. On a 400-acre former sugar plantation high in the hills, it grows its own coffee, hangs "pick me" signs on fruit trees and melds an organic farm with an 18-hole golf course (opening on November 15). The 84 rooms and villas are traditional in style, but there are plenty of gadgets, including home cinemas.

Details: Caribtours has seven nights' B&B with flights from £2,429pp (020 7751 0660, caribtours.co.uk)

9. East Winds, St Lucia

East Winds has to be the poshest all-inclusive in the Caribbean (the former general manager once described it to me as a full-board hotel where drinks, including champagne, come courtesy of the management). Tucked into its own little crescent of sand not far from Rodney Bay, it's low-key to the point of invisibility. The pool is small and they've only just got round to building a spa but the food defies every all-inclusive expectation, thanks to its own organic garden and relationships forged over the decades with fishermen and local farmers. Over the years it's evolved so there are now 30 rooms and suites, the newest of which was the former holiday home of the Horlicks family (eastwinds.com).

Details: Seven nights' all inclusive with flights costs from £1,989pp (01752 880880, tropicbreeze.co.uk)

10. Hotel Mockingbird Hill, Jamaica

The notion of "scratch" cookery, where a kitchen produces everything, well, from scratch, is all the rage in the US, but the Mockingbird has been doing it for years. In Port Antonio, underneath the Blue Mountains (with its excellent coffee), this ten-room hotel, with a rather nice swimming pool, also contains the area's best restaurant that balances jerk chicken and traditional Caribbean dishes with European ones, but all cooked with finesse and care.

Details: Rooms cost from \$243 a night (hotelmockingbirdhill.com)

11. Laluna, Grenada

On the Spice Island, you'll find this small hotel with an Italian owner. Hopping on to the trend for villa/hotel combos, this mellow hotel — very much in the wafy-linen-and-morning-yoga tradition — has added seven villas, all with swimming pools and paths leading to a private beach. Less expensive, but still nice, are the original cottages with plunge pools. The restaurant at Laluna (laluna.com) is one of Grenada's best; the owner imports olives, wines and cheese from his homeland and blends it well with Grenada's strong food culture.

Details: Seven nights' room only starts from £1,599pp including flights (020 7749 9245, kenwoodtravel.co.uk)

12. Sea-U Guest House, Barbados

In Barbados's cooler, surfy Bathsheba area, this hotel doesn't cost the earth but does have great food, starting with breakfast, which includes home-made banana and coconut breads, pancakes and every type of local fruit. Dinner also concentrates on Bajan local foods — a tasting menu costs \$30 — including mahi-mahi, marlin and flying fish. There are only ten rooms, plus verandas slung with hammocks. There is no air conditioning (but enough ceiling fans and breezes) or TVs, but there are plenty of coconuts cut from the tree and an honour bar that allows you to become an amateur mixologist on the rum punch front.

Details: Rooms cost from \$127 a night (seubarbados.com)

Active holidays

13. Swim between the Virgin Islands

The antithesis of a fly'n'flop holiday, this SwimTrek trip includes an average of 6km in the water a day, swimming in the British Virgin Islands before crossing to Flanagan Island, part of the US Virgin Islands. There's a boat as back-up and experts to give advice on technique as you swim through a mix of calm and choppy waters, accompanied by turtles and shimmering fish. The holiday is based at Leverick Bay Resort on Virgin Gorda.

Details: The six-night trips run in March and April and start at £1,360pp, including accommodation, breakfast, tuition and back-up, but not flights (01273 739713, swimtrek.com)

14. Surfing in the Dominican Republic

The beach town of Cabarete in the Dominican Republic is the heart of the Caribbean's surfing culture, whether that's windsurfing or on boards. Increasingly, kitesurfing is taking hold too. There are reefs to provide flat waters and swells in the middle of the 4km bay for variety. Afterwards, there is a profusion of bars and clubs to work off your surfing high.

Details: A week's self-catering with flights starts at £825pp (01273 844919, sportif.travel)

15. Fishing in the Bahamas

A trip to the South Andros islands is bucket-list stuff for most anglers. It's the natural habitat of bonefish, which are so hard to catch they make trout and salmon look like slugs. The waters around Tiamo also have barracuda, snapper and sharks (little ones) as a sideshow. There's also superb scuba diving and it's a great deal more comfortable than a live-aboard, especially if you're with a partner who prefers squishy sunloungers and Michelin-trained chefs to fly-fishing.

Details: Seven nights' full board with flights starts at £2,215pp (01204 821855, destinology.co.uk)

16. Diving in Bonaire

The island of Bonaire in the Dutch Antilles has minimal rainfall (it's well outside the hurricane area) but waters rich in nutrients and wrecks; it's the Caribbean's first national marine park, with more than 300 varieties of fish, plus seahorses, turtles and — above water — flamingos. Most reefs are close to the shore, meaning you don't have to get there by boat.

Details: Seven nights' B&B with flights and six days' shore diving starts from £1,429pp (01353 659999, regaldive.co.uk)

17. Active Dominica

The volcanic nature of the little island of Dominica, reached with connecting flights from Antigua or Barbados, means it's good for active tourism, rather than just beach lounging. On this 11-day break, moving from lodge to lodge, you'll be able to hike to hot springs — and swim to an underground one — plus snorkel and scuba dive, bird and whale-watch, with optional mountain biking or spa activities at the end.

Details: 11 nights with flights and mixed-board accommodation and all tours costs from £2,695pp (01327 359622, motmottravel.com)

18. Sail the Windward Islands

OK, so it's not exactly active, but you can pretend on this tall ship trip around the Caribbean. The Windward Islands cruises run in the months from January to March, leaving Barbados for Saint Lucia, Dominica, Antigua, St Kitts, Iles des Saintes and Martinique.

Details: Seven nights' full board with flights starts at £2,159pp (020 7751 0660, caribtours.co.uk)

19. Cycling in Cuba

Cuba is the best Caribbean country to cycle in, with enough challenges and a fascinating — if not perfect — infrastructure. After an introduction to Havana, this week-long trip pedals off in Santa Clara and the sugar cane plantations before hugging the coastline at Cienfuegos and the Gran Parque Natural Montemar. Distances covered range from 10km to 90km a day.

Details: Seven nights' B&B with lunches costs from £1,095pp, not including flights. Bike hire is an additional £150 (0191 2651110, skedaddle.co.uk)

20. Yoga on Little Corn Island, Nicaragua

About 70 km from the coast of Nicaragua, the stylish Yemaya (littlecornhotel.com) opened in 2013 but it's still got the feel of a secret. Think pristine beaches, 16 cabanas on the beach, plus a yoga studio and a restaurant that has its own vegetable garden attached. Coconuts come straight from the tree and meditation classes are on tap — as are a steady stream of retreats throughout the year. Meanwhile, the Driftwood Beach Bar offers pleasing detox possibilities.

Details: Seven nights' B&B costs from £1,623pp including flights and complimentary yoga (020 3432 9534, journeylatinamerica.co.uk)

21. Tai chi in Tobago

If you want to get holistic in the Caribbean without spending a fortune, the small hotel of Kariwak in Tobago, close to Store Bay beach, gets rave reviews. Run by Canadian Cynthia Clovis and her Tobago-born husband Allan, it runs complimentary morning sessions in yoga, tai chi and qigong, while you can also have shiatsu, hot stone, Thai or aromatherapy massage. There are plenty of hammocks to relax in afterwards. There are just 24 simple (but air-conditioned) rooms with no TVs and one swimming pool. A large organic garden provides most of the vegetables and a properly Caribbean menu.

Details: Seven nights' room only, with flights, starts at £1,069pp (020 7359 3938, reallholidays.co.uk)

Family

22. Moon Palace, Jamaica

For on-the-go children — and adults — this hotel is perfect. Moon Palace (moonpalacejamaicagrand.com) has been given a thorough overhaul in the past few years and is stacked full of Flowriders, rope walks, swimming pools with waterways, and — somewhat controversially — resident dolphins. It's got a near-perfect position at the centre of Ocho Rios beach. There are a massive 705 rooms, including interconnecting family ones, created in two new towers. Still in its soft reopening phase, the hotel should have every gadget and gizmo powered up by Christmas.

Details: Seven nights' all-inclusive starts at £1,499pp including flights (0344 5573859, virginholidays.co.uk)

23. Viceroy Sugar Beach, St Lucia

Gwyneth Paltrow is among the many celebs to have stayed with their children at Viceroy Sugar Beach (viceroyhotelsandresorts.com), tucked beneath the Pitons in St Lucia. The resort has everything from golf buggies to smoothie bars, while the kids' club activities range from sandcastle-building to a five-day sailing course. Most of the accommodation is in villas that have their own plunge pools. The two-bedroom Residences villas are larger still, with plenty of room for infinity pools, private patios and walled gardens.

Details: Seven nights' B&B with flights for a family of four starts at £7,915 (01244 355527, iteluxurytravel.com)

24. Buccament Bay, St Vincent & the Grenadines

Opened in 2011, this expansive all-inclusive aims to keep children happy by taking their sports seriously — there's a Pat Cash Tennis Club and a Liverpool-backed football club, as well as rugby, cricket and netball (non-sporty youngsters can do performing theatre). Most families will also want to hang out on the beach, with its sand imported from Guyana. Details on buccamentbay.com.

Details: Seven nights' all-inclusive costs from £1,195pp with flights (0344 5573859, virginholidays.co.uk)

25. Club Med, Guadeloupe

You're not being cruel, you're just helping *les enfants* with their French conversation alongside activities *sportif et sociale*. Club Med does have more Anglo-minded resorts in the Bahamas and Dominican Republic — but Guadeloupe has the requisite palm-fringed, white-sand backdrop (the BBC's *Death in Paradise* was filmed here) and a tropical gendarme-et-boulangerie feel, plus it's a lot cheaper than St Barts. La Caravelle has all the activities you want — tennis, windsurfing, paddleboarding — as well as circus skills. Accommodation is deliberately kept simple; the idea is that everyone socialises, with the help of the Club Med's famous *gentils organisateurs*.

Details: Seven nights' all-inclusive with flights starts at £1,519 per adult, £875 per child (020 3642 1949, clubmed.co.uk)

26. Sail and treasure hunt around Tortola

The warm, largely sheltered waters of the British Virgin Islands are the perfect place to learn how to sail — and Sunsail has had a base in Tortola for decades. This year, a new treasure-hunt trip has been launched. Over the course of a week, families must find six treasure chests before returning to claim their prize. Bandanas and eye patches are provided for multi-generational selfie-taking purposes. Novice sailors can hire a skipper, and experienced ones can pilot themselves on either a yacht or a catamaran.

Details: From £1,458 for a charter for two adults and two children, not including flights, or from £2,358 including a skipper (020 3811 1613, sunsail.com)

27. Family Cuba

The Caribbean's last remaining communist outpost will change rapidly next year as it continues to open up to American visitors. Ensure that your children can bore their peers for decades by taking them there before the chain hotels, cruise excursions and Starbucks take hold. On this 15-day family trip with Explore, you'll tour Havana in a classic American car, visit the Bay of Pigs, explore the jungle swimming pools of the Escambray Mountains and get some beach time at the Playa Ancon.

Details: Fifteen days' mixed board, with flights and transport costs from £2,011pp (01252 883 928, explore.co.uk)

28. Pirates Week, Cayman Islands

The most family-friendly of all the Caribbean's festivals is Pirates Week (November 12-22, piratesweekfestival.com). George Town, the capital, is awash with cutlasses and costumes, treasure hunts and a mock invasion, followed by a noisy trial of the brigands — accompanied by music, jerk chicken and fireworks. New this year is the, er, Pirate's Week Golf Classic.

Details: Seven nights' B&B at the Sunshine Suites Resort costs from £1,517pp including flights (01306 855003, kuoni.co.uk)

Culture and nature

29. Birdwatching in Trinidad

The Asa Wright Nature Centre in Trinidad, set up to protect the Arima Valley, is a legend in birdwatching circles, with crested oropendola, toucans, scarlet ibis plus one of the few breeding colonies of the oilbird, and an onslaught of hummingbird activity. You can visit by day but there's also a lodge for overnight stays, though it's far from luxurious (twin beds and ceiling fans). There's an 8-day stay here as part of Naturetrek's two-week birdwatching holiday in Trinidad and the neighbouring island of Tobago for a little beach time.

Details: 14 days' full board with flights starts at £3,895pp (01962 733051, naturetrek.co.uk)

30. Turtles in Jamaica

For a classic stay in Jamaica, with additional turtles, look no further than Jamaica Inn. Marilyn Monroe and Arthur Miller honeymooned here, Noël Coward and Ian Fleming were regulars. With its white linen-covered wing armchairs, croquet lawn, this is a pristine, perfectly honed hotel that happens to have one of the Caribbean's most spectacular beaches as its private domain. See turtles hatch here in August, September and October.

Details: Seven nights' B&B costs from £1,520pp including flights (020 8682 5020, scottdunn.com)

31. Jazz in St Lucia

Next year's jazz festival in St Lucia (stluciajazz.org) from April 29 to May 8 promises to be better than usual, as it's the 25th anniversary. Past performers have included Courtney Pine, Herbie Hancock and Amy Winehouse (who showed a marked reluctance to leave). Early signings for next year include Robin Thicke, Flo Rida and Jimmy Cliff.

Details: Seven nights' B&B at the Blu, Saint Lucia costs from £799pp with flights. Bookings must be made by December 31 for travel from April 20 to May 30 (0845 543 6615, travelbag.co.uk)

32. Festivals in Jamaica

Think Hay-on-Wye with swaying palms plus Shakespeare performed in a Jamaican patois and plenty of reggae. Run biannually, Calabash (calabashfestival.org) has seen appearances from Zadie Smith and Salman Rushdie. Next year it'll take place from June 3 to 5 at Jake's on Treasure Beach Jamaica. Or visit in July for the Reggae Sumfest, a music festival in Montego Bay geared around a huge beach party.

Details: Seven nights' room only at Jakes for Calabash with flights costs from £1,093pp (01752 880880, tropicbreeze.co.uk). Seven nights' all inclusive at the Jewel Dunn's River Beach Resort for Reggae Sumfest starts at £1,619pp with flights (ba.com)

33. Junkanoo, Bahamas

The biggest knees-up in the Bahamas takes place on Boxing Day and New Year's Day (with a newer one taking place in the summer) in a festival that is thought to have links back to the slave trade — and roots even further back. Largely based on Nassau, Junkanoo (bahamasjunkanooocarnival.com) is a glorious mash-up of parades, dancing (some troupes are 1,000-strong) and night-long partying.

Details: Seven nights' room only over New Year, with flights, starts at £1,705pp (01733 224808, thomascook.com)

34. The best of Haiti

On an island shared by the Dominican Republic, Haiti has seen Spanish-led conquests, French colonialism, slave rebellions, dictatorships and Sean Penn's rescue efforts after the 2010 earthquake; a history like no other Caribbean country. Its tourist industry is nascent but this trip with Exodus picks out the best, from the 19th-century Citadelle Laferrière to voodoo ceremonies, visits to a rum distillery, beach time and snorkelling.

Details: A 10-day trip with mixed board and flights costs from £2,449pp (0845 287 2137, exodus.co.uk)

35. Homestays in Cuba

This "value" holiday from Journey Latin America delves into a country undergoing a rapid transformation, with homestays for most accommodation and visits to tobacco plantations and *paladars* — restaurants run from private homes — alongside travel by public transport.

Details: 12 days' B&B costs from £1,494pp including flights (020 8600 1881, journeylatinamerica.co.uk)

Off the beaten track

36. Anegada Beach Club, Anegada

Reached via an international flight to Antigua, little plane to Tortola and then a ferry, Anegada, the most northerly island in the BVIs, isn't the easiest to get to, but that adds to the edge-of-the-world feeling. Now it's embraced glamping, with luxurious tents, showers and four-poster beds. All have ocean views, and some are right on the beach. It's not cheap or hugely luxurious, but it's a place to kick back, kitesurf, explore the island on scooters and tuck into freshly caught conch and lobster at the beach bar.

Details: Rooms are from \$275 a night (anegadabeachclub.com)

37. Palm Island, the Grenadines

Here, you'll get all the serenity that a private island affords, but at reasonable prices — especially given its all-inclusive nature. At the southernmost tip of the Grenadines, the island (palmislandresortgrenadines.com) has plenty of golden sand. The 43 rooms — mostly in cottages dotted around the turtle-shaped island — come in plenty of sizes and shapes. Getting here involves a flight to Barbados, followed by another to Union and then a motor launch to the island.

Details: A seven-night all-inclusive break, including flights, starts from £1,699 (020 7749 9220, kenwoodtravel.co.uk)

38. Staniel Cay Yacht Club, Bahamas

This is a club anyone can join, though you need to get to the Exuma island chain first. The most enjoyable way is by light aircraft from Fort Lauderdale; there are regular flights to Staniel Cay (population 80) — a magical enclave with swimming pigs and manta rays. There are 14 rainbow-hued cottages built on stilts over the water, and you get your own skiff to explore the deserted islands. General etiquette dictates that should you find someone on your chosen island, you should move onto the next. There are plenty to spare.

Details: from \$200pp per night, including meals, boat, snorkelling gear, paddleboards and kayaks (stanielcay.com)

39. Malliouhana Hotel & Spa, Anguilla

After a £80-million refurbishment, Malliouhana (malliouhana.aubergeresorts.com) was barely recognised when it reopened last year. The number of rooms has been slashed from 55 to 44 to make them lighter and brighter. They have truly spectacular bathrooms and all come with ocean views and terraces. The restaurant has been thoroughly revamped and there's a new two-tier swimming pool. However, perched on a small cliff, the Sunset Bar has survived, with more than 40 types of rum in place. Sand snobs will be in heaven — paths lead down to the particularly fine, white strands of Meads Bay. There are no direct flights from the UK; most people arrive via Antigua.

Details: Seven nights' B&B with flights costs from £2,699pp (01244 355527, itluxurytravel.co.uk)

For bargain hunters

40. Jack Sprat Shack, Jamaica

With bunk beds and bottom-rung prices, this is as close to trendy European hostels as you'll find in Caribbean. On Jamaica's Treasure Beach, and run by the people behind the Jack Sprat restaurant, it has a handful of private en suite rooms as well as 42 bunk beds. There's a kitchen and hangout space, but you'll probably head to the beach.

Details: Doubles start from \$90 a night (jackspratshack.com)

41. Martinique for mortals

The island of Martinique is a bit of a celeb haven, with a price tag to match, but Airbnb is doing its bit to make it more affordable and accessible. La Trinité is one of the most charming villages on the island, with restaurants and a real sense of life . . . but no major hotel. However, Airbnb has a stylish apartment there, in the family home of the Anglo-French Milienne family. A nature reserve is on their doorstep for trekking purposes, while the name — Surfers Paradise — also gives another strong clue to its allure.

Details: Rooms are from £38 a night for two (airbnb.com). Flights are via Paris and cost from £501 with lastminute.com

42. Villas in Barbados

Barbados gets plenty of flights from the UK, which is one reason why it's a sensible and more budget-minded destination for a villa holiday than one of the more remote island groups — as long as you choose wisely. Arcadia Villa on exceedingly pretty Worthing Beach has three bedrooms, a terrace leading out to the beach plus shops and restaurants within walking distance. Or stay in one of 24 new three-bedroom villas with private plunge pools opening next month at Battaleys Mews in Mullins.

Details: A week's self-catering at Arcadia Villa starts at £999pp, including flights and based on six sharing (020 7112 0019, fleewinter.com). A week's self-catering at Battaleys Mews (battaleysmews.com) starts at £300pp based on six sharing. BA flights cost from £610pp

43. Grenada at 40 per cent off

Book by October 31 and you can save up to 40 per cent off a stay at the True Blue Bay Boutique Resort in Grenada, for travel until March 31 and between May 15 and July 31. All 48 rooms at the colourful, family-run hotel have large balconies or verandahs with views of the sparkling waters of True Blue Bay. There are free yoga classes, rum tastings and cookery demonstrations.

Details: Seven nights' B&B costs from £925pp with flights (020 7751 0660, caribtours.co.uk)

44. Treehouses in Tobago

There are just 14 self-catering treehouse-style lodges at the eco-lodge Castara Retreats on Tobago's unspoilt north west coast. It's a great place to stay and explore the island's rainforest and beaches — Castara Beach is a four-minute walk from the treehouses. The resort also has a restaurant and yoga classes and can arrange fishing trips, rainforest treks or stand-up paddle boarding under the stars.

Details: A one-bedroom treehouse for two is from £91 a night, B&B. A week's room only costs from £525. (07841 645238, castararetreats.com). Flights with BA start at £489 return

45. French resort in Guadeloupe

Fans of France's Pierre & Vacances self-catering resorts can have the same experience in the Caribbean sunshine at Sainte-Anne in Guadeloupe. The club village has just been upgraded, with the beach expanded and a new beach club and restaurants. Try jet-skiing, stand-up paddle boarding, surfing and kayaking in the new nautical centre. If you'd prefer somewhere a little more upmarket than the standard village apartments, Les Tamarins residence has just been renovated. Both Sainte-Anne and Les Tamarins share a complimentary kids' club, and there are on-site restaurants.

Details: A week for three in a studio apartment at Sainte-Anne costs from £385 (pierreetvacances.co.uk). At Les Tamarins, a week for three costs from £459. Flights with Air France to Pointe-a-Pitre, 25 minutes away, cost from £506.

Twin centres and island hopping

46. Miami and the Caribbean

It's easy to forget how close the Caribbean is to the US — and particularly Miami. Little Havana in the Florida city gives you a clue — although you can't (yet) fly all that easily from Cuba to Miami (expect that to change next year). Meanwhile, go from cutting-edge clubbing in Miami to downing Red Stripe in Montego Bay in a couple of hours — two very different long-haul destinations for the price of one.

Details: Three nights' B&B in Miami, followed by five nights' all inclusive in Jamaica starts at £1,259pp (020 7001 4112, travelbag.co.uk)

47. Antigua, Nevis and the BVIs

Combine the colonial island of Antigua, the sleepy island of Nevis, and a boutique beach resort on Guana Island in the British Virgin Islands on this luxury island-hopping trip. In Antigua, stay at the 28-room The Inn at English Harbour, followed by time on Nevis at Montpelier Plantation, a converted sugar plantation in the foothills of Nevis Peak. Finally, check into a cottage on Guana Island, with its pristine beaches and 12 miles of hiking trails.

Details: 14 nights cost from £3,799pp with flights and transfers, half-board in Antigua and Nevis and all inclusive at Guana Island (01494 678400, turquoiseolidays.co.uk)

48. Twin islands in Belize

You don't think of Belize when you think of the Caribbean, but this twin centre packs a lot of punch. First, stay at Victoria House on Ambergris Caye, with its sandy main street and boat trips to Shark Ray Alley for guaranteed encounters with nurse sharks and large stingrays. Then take it easy on idyllic South Water Caye at Pelican Beach Resort, with its pair of resident ospreys, kayaking and great snorkelling off the white sand beach.

Details: 11 nights costs from £2,596pp, comprising five nights' B&B at Ambergris Caye and five nights' full board at Pelican Beach Resort. The price includes flights via Miami and an overnight stay there (01803 866965, reefandrainforest.co.uk)

49. Three islands on a shoestring

It's rare to find a week in the Caribbean for under £1,000, so to get a 10-night trip to Antigua, Tobago and St Lucia from £1,299pp sounds like an incredible bargain. Spend three nights' B&B at Sugar Ridge in Antigua and three nights at Magdalena Grand Beach Resort in Tobago, B&B. Follow that up with four nights' room-only at the Windjammer Landing Villa Beach Resort in St Lucia.

Details: Ten nights, with flights and transfers, costs from £1,299pp (01293 735831, hayesandjarvis.com)

50. Barbados, Grenada and Bequia

Spend three nights living it up in Barbados, with its exclusive hotels, upscale restaurants and beachside bars, before heading on to laid-back Grenada with its lush rainforest, waterfalls and historic cocoa and nutmeg plantations. Follow that with a week on the largely undiscovered island of Bequia in the Grenadines where the beaches are often deserted, even in peak season.

Details: Two weeks, with three nights' room-only at Little Arches Boutique Hotel in Barbados, three nights' room-only at Blue Horizons Garden Resort in Grenada and seven nights' B&B at the Bequia Beach Hotel, costs from £2,330pp for travel from now until April, including flights and transfers (01993 838250, audleytravel.com)