

BEACH HOTELS

JAN/FEB

Nueva Vida de Ramiro TULUM, MEXICO No hot water, phone, Jakes TV, Internet or air conditioning. Power

comes courtesy of generators and

solar and wind energy. Yet for 14

years, Nueva Vida has been one

of the best-loved hotels in the

off-the-grid enclave of Tulum.

bordering-on-comatose vibe,

Chalk that up to the eco-resort's

fostered by an owner who insists

lazy; this is a place to do nothing."

hours surveying bone-white sands

bungalow, napping on a hammock

swimming in the limpid turquoise

from the balcony of your seaside

slung between coconut palms,

waters or lingering over a bowl

restaurant. Doing "nothing" has

never felt so rewarding. 52-984-

of sopa de lima at Casa Banana

877-8512; tulumnv.com

that guests "come here and get

So feel free to while away the

TREASURE BEACH, JAMAICA

Jakes is synonymous with

Treasure Beach, a sleepy village on Jamaica's untrammeled south coast for which the funky and fashionable boutique hotel's chilled-out, no-problem ambience is a perfect fit. Studding the compact coastal compound are eclectically decorated (think Morocco meets Mo' Bay) rooms, cottages and villas with evocative names such as Starfish, Octopussy and Cowrie. And in the open-air water'sedge Driftwood Spa, everyday cares are whisked away on every ocean breeze. 877-526-

2428; jakeshotel.com

This romantic 11-room inn, formerly a private home, sits on one

Numero Uno Guest House

OCEAN PARK, PUERTO RICO

of Puerto Rico's less traveled beaches, and although buzzy San Juan is just minutes away, guests here can hole up in blissful tranquility. Pamela's restaurant serves Caribbean fusion cuisine at interior or beachfront tables, while the second-floor deck is the perfect spot for sunset cocktails and stargazing. 866-726-5010; numero1guesthouse.com Tranquility Bay Resort

AMBERGRIS CAYE, BELIZE

In the midst of Ambergris Caye's 15,000-acre Bacalar Chico National Park, this 11-cabana retreat is just 12 miles from the tourist hub in San Pedro, yet a world apart. It'll take you at least two flights and a boat ride to get here (jet into Belize City and puddle-jump to San Pedro, then it's 30 minutes by boat), but it'll be worth it, if only for the once-in-a-lifetime chance to dive the spectacular Great Blue Hole or the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef, just five minutes away. There's also excellent snorkeling just steps from the resort's largely deserted white-sand shore, which is the perfect place to kick back with a Belikin and toast the sunset. 888-

Frenchman's Cove Resort PORT ANTONIO, JAMAICA With its sugary sands,

843-2293; tranquilitybayresort.com

lush gardens bisected by a gurgling river, and calm, bathtub-warm seas, the grounds at Frenchman's Cove have long been a CT+L favorite. Now that the 45-acre estate's hotel has reopened, we welcome the chance to extend our visits past sunset. And since there are only 16 cottages and a dozen vendors, water-sports operators

rooms, we're fairly confident that, come sunrise, the cove's tranquil atmosphere — blissfully absent of and loud music - will still prevail. 876-993-7270; frenchmanscove.com Sibonne Beach Hotel PROVO, TURKS AND CAICOS

A roost on the most

famous beach in one

of the Caribbean's

priciest destinations that doesn't

cost a king's ransom? Yes, such a

thing does exist here, at what was

the first hotel to go up on Provi-

denciales' 12-mile strand, Grace

Bay. At Sibonne, you'll be staying right on the very same beach as the (not so) poor saps in the neighboring wallet-wrenching high-rise resorts - but for about a quarter of the cost. Enjoy Grace Bay's talcum sands, turquoise waters and sophisticated yet relaxed vibe, all made even sweeter by the savings. Just promise us you'll resist the temptation to gloat. 888-570-2861; sibonne.com

Velero Beach Resort CABARETE, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC Cabarete is a watersports mecca, but you don't have to be a water-sports junkie to appreciate the charms of these boutique digs smack in the middle of the boho beach town. Twenty-two apartments and seven penthouses offer front-seat views of all the action out on the water, but seaside Bali beds, a decent restaurant and spacious, elegantly appointed suites (among Cabarete's finest) make staying put a pleasure too. 809-571-9727; velerobeach.com The Golden Lemon

DIEPPE BAY, ST. KITTS It doesn't get much more quaint than this 17th-century merchant's manse turned island inn, where seven cozy rooms feature a (you guessed it) yellow color scheme, netting-draped beds and views of the lush landscape filled with fan palms, frangipani and flamboyant trees. Less historic (though equally comfortable) is a clutch of seven modern two-bedroom villas, each with a private pool. But whether you're staying in the main house or the villa annex, the quiet black-sand beach is right outside your doorstep. Rate based on single occupancy.* 869-465-7260; goldenlemon.com Divi Dutch Village

EAGLE BEACH, ARUBA

It might be part of a hotel chain, but this all-suite low-rise is as boutique as it gets. Guests enjoy an intimate garden atmosphere and access to highly acclaimed Eagle Beach, where nonmotorized sports abound. At sunset, go next door to the beachfront Bunker Bar, a thatch-topped watering hole that's the perfect place to watch not only the sunset but also the playful antics of your fellow rum-punch-imbibing revelers. 800-367-3484; diviresorts.com