

# DESTINATIONS

## CARIBBEAN

ALSO IN  
DESTINATIONS

*ASIA*

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Some clients may believe the West Indies are financially out of their reach, but with a little help from you, it needn't be, writes Jo Cooke

## » COST-SAVING IN THE CARIBBEAN

**T**here is nowhere in the world quite like the Caribbean. With its warm and easy vibe, every hour feels like happy hour.

The sunsets are show-stoppers and the beaches beauty queens. It's a rare person who doesn't fantasise on a cold, rainy day about reclining beneath a swaying palm on a white-sand beach by a turquoise ocean.

With a little savvy, you can make that fantasy a reality, even if their budget is lower than a limbo dancer's pole. Here's how.

### ● STAY SAVVY

By doing your homework you can get your clients more for less. "Early bird offers can be generous, especially if clients book pre-Christmas for the following year," says Mark Duguid, vice-president commercial and product management at Kuoni.

"Many hotels offer free weddings and free nights for stays of seven nights' or more," adds Kim Valente, director at Bahamas Flavour. ▶

[travelweekly.co.uk/destinations](http://travelweekly.co.uk/destinations)

Katie Parsons, Hayes & Jarvis regional product manager for the Caribbean, suggests keeping an eye out for free resort credit. "This can be redeemed against room upgrades, spa treatments and golf, giving clients extra value for money," she says.

Sandals has extended its two for one half price sale on Sandals and Beaches resorts – book by May 27 to bag a bargain.

**Book it:** Funway offers seven nights' all-inclusive in an Eve's Honeymoon Luxury Sanctuary Concierge Room at Sandals Halcyon Beach from £1,249 per person including British Airways flights departing September 17. The price includes a saving of £2,698 per couple and \$150 in resort credit.

**sandals4agents.co.uk**  
**0844 557 0624**

**Book it:** Viceroy Anguilla's Linger Longer package is available through Elegant Resorts, which is offering seven nights for the price of six. Based on a July 20 departure, a week's B&B including flights from Gatwick and transfers starts from £2,190 – a saving of £300 per couple.

**elegantresorts.co.uk**  
**01244 897 666**

● **PICK YOUR MOMENT**

The weather can still be good, and prices at their most attractive, in low season – which is September and October in the Caribbean.

Of course this also coincides with the height of hurricane season, August to October. While



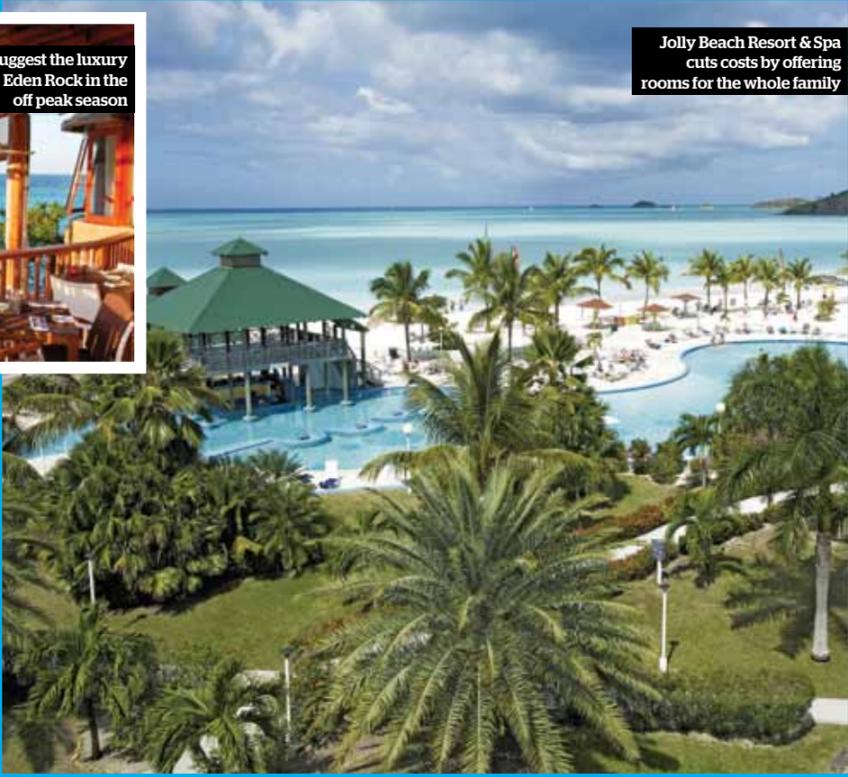
The Landings St Lucia currently has 50% off the all-inclusive supplement



Suggest the luxury Eden Rock in the off peak season



Sandals has extended its two for one offer



Jolly Beach Resort & Spa cuts costs by offering rooms for the whole family

clients need to be aware of this, hurricanes are not a given, and rarely catastrophic.

For example, Jamaica gets hit once every 10 years on average, Barbados once every 20. But if the chance of heavy weather puts them off, you can still bag a stonking deal outside these times according to Travel 2's product manager Kevin Coles.

"Flight costs and hotels in the Caribbean tend to have slightly different seasons. Flight costs are highest in the Christmas,

Easter and summer holidays, yet hotel prices are great value in the summer. Therefore, the best prices tend to be May, June and November."

It's also worth noting that some of the biggest off-season savings can be made at high-end properties. That's great news for honeymooners hankering after somewhere swish, but without a banker's bonus to fund it.

**Book it:** Seven nights' B&B at Eden Rock, St Barts, starts at £2,825 from November 17

(compared with £3,550 in peak season), with flights, transfers and extras including sunset cocktails. **abercrombiekent.co.uk** **0845 485 1146**

**Book it:** Stay seven nights for the price of five at CuisinArt Golf Resort & Spa, Anguilla, when you book with Expressions Holidays for travel between June 30 and September 30. Seven nights' B&B start from £1,700 (a saving of £370) including BA flights from London to Antigua, onward flights with Liat and private transfers.

**expressionsholidays.co.uk**  
**01752 878010**

**Book it:** Lusso Travel is offering a seven-night Family Summer Saver package at the five-star, all-suite The Landings St Lucia, from £5,830 per family of four. A saving of £2,370 comes from seven nights for the price of five, plus a 50% discount on the all-inclusive supplement for adults (children under 12 dine free). The deal is available on stays up until December 19. A treasure hunt adventure for kids on Pigeon

Island is included free of charge, and for the parents a cocktail evening and three hours of complimentary babysitting. **lussotravel.com**  
**01625 591111**

● **KEEP IT IN THE FAMILY**

With kids' clubs, water parks and beaches boasting calm, shallow waters, the West Indies is a great destination for children.

You can save clients hundreds of pounds if they're willing to share accommodation with

**FAST FACT**  
C by Caribtours is the operator's range for cost-conscious clients, with lead-ins from £945

their offspring. "As well as inter-connecting rooms many resorts in the Caribbean have large rooms making them great for families looking to cut costs," says Duguid.

Also check for special offers for children. Virgin Holidays' Caribbean and Mexico 2014 brochure, launched on May 9, features savings of £100 for kids up to the age of 16 during the summer including school holidays, and kids stay and eat free at many hotels across the Caribbean.

Look out for promotional programmes, too. The Aruba Tourism Authority's One Happy Family 2013 programme is valid from May to September at a range of hotels and attractions, and benefits on offer include free accommodation, free breakfasts, gifts, and discounts on activities and entrance fees.

**Book it:** Seven nights' all-inclusive at Jolly Beach Resort & Spa, Antigua, in a superior ocean-facing room with two queen beds costs from £4,362 for a family of four, based on two adults and two children aged two-11 sharing, (compared with £4,766 sharing two rooms) in September and including flights from Gatwick.

**kuoni.co.uk**  
**01306 747008**

● **VOTE REPUBLICAN**

"A top tip for agents looking for luxury-for-less destinations is Punta Cana in the Dominican Republic," says Parsons.

"It boasts some of the Caribbean's newest and most



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2 FOR 1  
SALE



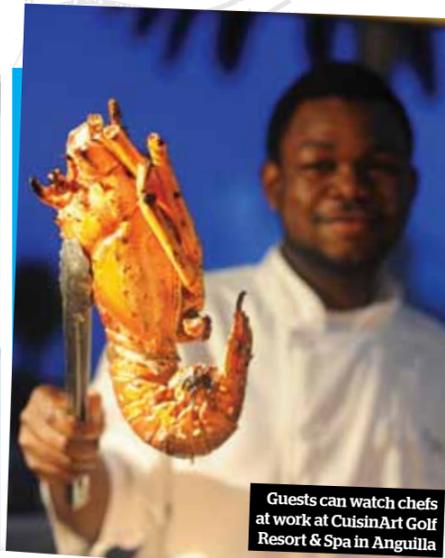
Beaches  
Resorts for Everyone by Sandals



PASSPORT CONTROL  
DEPARTURE



St Lucian by Rex's location makes it ideal to sell as room-only



Guests can watch chefs at work at CuisinArt Golf Resort & Spa in Anguilla



SuperClubs Breezes Bahamas is a great value all-inclusive



Now Larimar in the Dom Rep offers luxury for less

luxurious resorts so there's no need to compromise on quality for discerning clients working with a tighter budget. Plus the destination offers some of the best beaches in the Caribbean, rich local culture and plenty of activities such as rainforest hiking and river tubing."

**Book it:** Seven-nights' all-inclusive at the five-star Now Larimar Resort costs from £995, including flights from Gatwick and transfers departing September 4. [hayesandjarvis.co.uk/agents](http://hayesandjarvis.co.uk/agents) 0871 200 2211

● **UNLIMITED FUN**

If clients want to live it up within a budget, going all-inclusive seems like a no-brainer.

They can knock back cocktails without keeping count, dine, play and be entertained around the clock at no extra cost, and prices can start from under a grand.

"There are a wealth of excellent resorts across the region offering superb value for money," says Phil Barratt, Gold Medal assistant product manager.

**Book it:** Seven nights' all-inclusive at the four-star Barcelo Solymar in Varadero, Cuba costs from £999 including flights from Gatwick and transfers for travel from September 16 to October 24. [goldmedal.co.uk](http://goldmedal.co.uk) 0800 014 7777

**Book it:** Seven nights' all-inclusive at SuperClubs Breezes Bahamas costs from £999 including flights and transfers for travel from September to November. [bahamasflavour.co.uk](http://bahamasflavour.co.uk) 0870 0669975

● **PAY AS YOU GO**

For those who haven't got a grand to shell out, escaping to the Caribbean is still possible if clients consider going bed and breakfast or room-only.

This board basis could also work for those who aren't big drinkers, just want to just fly and flop, or love to experience the region's cuisine first-hand rather than tucking into the standard crowd-pleasers served at many an all-inclusive buffet.

Lucy Goodman, Cosmos

Holidays long-haul office, recommends Tobago: "B&B lead-in prices are lower than all-inclusive and visitors will find a range of inexpensive local restaurants." You can have a lunch of grilled fish with fries and coleslaw for about £4 in Tobago, and a dinner of creole meat or fish with rice for about £12 per head.

Travel 2's Coles says The St Lucian by Rex Resorts is ideal to sell as room-only. "It's perfectly located close to the nightlife around Rodney Bay where the choices for eating out at a reasonable price are numerous."

**Book it:** Seven nights' bed and breakfast at Toucan Inn, Crown Point, Tobago, costs from £692 with flights from Gatwick and transfers departing June 5. [cosmos.co.uk](http://cosmos.co.uk) 0871 9025838

**Book it:** Seven nights' room-only at the St Lucian by Rex Resorts costs from £899 with flights from Gatwick and transfers for departures from May 3 until July 12. [travel2.com](http://travel2.com) 0800 678 1497 TW

DESTINATIONS — CARIBBEAN

**FUN FOR FREE**

**Tobago**

Check out Sunday School, a 'lime', or street party, with steel bands and DJs held weekly at the fishing village of Buccoo.

**Saint Lucia**

Take a hike through the rainforest on marked trails that lead to waterfalls, party at the weekly fish fry at Anse La Raye, or browse the stalls at Castries Market, named one of the top 10 in the world by *National Geographic Magazine*.

**Nassau, Bahamas**

Watch the carnival parade at Marina Village on a Saturday or Wednesday. Take a wander around the Cloisters – the remains of a 14th-century French Monastery, imported stone by stone and set on a hill on Paradise Island.

**Jamaica**

Take a wander around Port Royal. Once known as Sin City, pirates including Captain Morgan played here.

**Cayman Islands**

A qualified naturalist will take visitors on free guided hikes on Cayman Brac, and on Little Cayman free iguana tours take place every Friday. Culture Shock is a new free event on the last Friday of every month, with arts, crafts, music and food.

**St Barts**

Head up to Fort Gustave (pictured), an 18th-century fort ruins, for sweeping views of the island's capital.



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FROM THE WORLD'S LEADING ALL-INCLUSIVE RESORTS



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