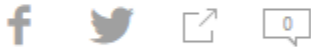




Plenty of sunshine for Caribbean travelers

TRAVEL By Elaine Glusac - The New York Times



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Hurricanes Irma and Maria devastated many islands in the Caribbean region, including Puerto Rico, the British and U.S. Virgin Islands, Dominica and St. Martin. They also battered Anguilla, St. Barts, the Turks and Caicos and others.

But many islands, including Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao in the southern Caribbean, and the central Cayman Islands and Jamaica were unaffected, prompting tourism officials to their bullhorns.

“Over 70 percent of the Caribbean was not affected by the hurricanes,” said Frank Comito, the chief executive and director general of the Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association, which has established CaribbeanTravelUpdate.com to track updates by island. “Most of the region is open for business and doing fine.”

Among hotels and attractions most affected, many will take a year or more to reopen. The following list represents new resort openings and reopenings, yacht charters and guided trips available to sun-seeking travelers this winter.

Anguilla

Though Anguilla was severely hit by Hurricane Irma, the boutique Frangipani Beach Resort has announced it will reopen its 19 rooms in December with new roofing, windows, doors and furniture. Its four-bedroom villa will reopen in February. Rooms from \$450; frangipaniresort.com.

Antigua

The 72-room Curtain Bluff was closed for a six-month, \$13-million renovation when Irma arrived in the Caribbean and has just reopened with redecorated rooms, redesigned public spaces and the addition of private pools at its four signature suites. Rooms from \$800, all-inclusive; curtainbluff.com. The Moorings, a charter yacht company, has announced it will begin charter operations on Antigua this month with unmanned and crewed boats for rent.

Bahamas

The \$4.2-billion Baha Mar resort on Nassau debuted last spring with the opening of one of three hotels planned, the 1,800-room Grand Hyatt Baha Mar, as well as an 18-hole Jack Nicklaus Signature golf course, a 100,000-square-foot casino and a 24-treatment-room Espa spa. This month, the SLS Baha Mar is set to join the development with 299 rooms, three chef-driven restaurants and the first rooftop bar on the island. Rooms from \$325; slsbahamar.com.

Barbados

Nikki Beach, the global chain of party-throwing beach clubs, will expand this December with a club location in Barbados. Located at the Port Ferdinand development, the oceanfront Nikki Beach Barbados will include a swimming pool, a poolside runway for fashion shows and an open-air restaurant with seating for 200. Information: Portferdinand.com.

Dominica

While tourism recovers on Dominica, a popular Caribbean destination for adventure seekers, Natural World Safaris will focus on one of its offshore attractions, the annual return of sperm whales. Patrick Dykstra, a photographer for the BBC, will guide the seven-day trips with six departures, January through March. A portion of the proceeds will go to disaster relief. Trips start at \$7,500 a person; naturalworldsafaris.com.

Grenada

Channeling the modern beach retreat vibe of St. Barts, the new Silversands Grenada resort will open on Grand Anse Beach in March. The art-filled, minimalist luxury resort will encompass 43 suites, a 100-meter pool, two restaurants and a spa. Another nine villas are available for sale. Rooms from \$800; silversandsgrenada.com. Also on Grand Anse Beach, Mount Cinnamon Resort & Beach Club recently added eight new suites for a total of 28 rooms and villas. Named the Cinnamon Suites, the new accommodations include sitting areas adjacent to patios and wireless sound systems. The spa newly offers daily yoga classes. Rooms from \$285, including breakfast; mountcinnamongrenadahotel.com.

Jamaica

Already partially open, the Jewel Grande Montego Bay Resort & Spa on the north coast of Jamaica will wrap up construction in early 2018, offering 217 butler-served suites and villas. Amenities include two pools, a 30,000-square-foot spa with 14 treatment rooms and 12 restaurants and bars that run the gamut from Jamaican-accented French to Asian fusion. Rooms from \$553, all-inclusive; jewelgrande.com.

Martinique

Originally opened in 1945, the historic hotel Diamant Les Bains is being rebuilt and set to reopen in December with 33 contemporary studios, each with their own kitchenettes, and five bungalow suites. Plans include a new swimming pool and a beachside bar and restaurant. Rooms from 75 euros; diamantlesbains.fr.

Puerto Rico

The folks behind New York's Serafina Restaurant group say they remain on track to open the Serafina Beach Hotel in San Juan in March. In the upscale Condado district, the stylish 96-room hotel will offer an Italian seafood restaurant, a poolside lounge and a bar that specializes in piña coladas, which were invented in Puerto Rico. Rooms from \$225; serafinabeachhotel.com.

St. Barts

A number of prominent hotels, including Eden Rock and Hotel Le Toiny, will remain closed this season. Others have announced their reopening, ranging from the relatively affordable Le Village St Barts Hotel, in November (rooms from 175 euros, or about \$203; levillagestbarth.com), to the high-end Villa Marie Saint-Barth coming in March (rooms from 400 euros; saint-barth.villamarie.fr). St. Barth Properties, which represents more than 200 private homes, says half its villa portfolio will be available by the end of December.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines

Mandarin Oriental has taken over management of one of the most exclusive resorts in the Caribbean, the Pink Sands Club, Canouan. Though the resort has only 26 suites and six villas, amenities abound, including a nine-treatment palapa spa, three tennis courts, an 18-hole golf course and five food and beverage options. Rooms from \$1,400; mandarinoriental.com.

St. Kitts and Nevis

The long-anticipated Park Hyatt St. Kitts opened Nov. 1 with a new spa from the Tucson-based Miraval Life in Balance Spa. The 126-room resort has two swimming pools, including one for adults, and three restaurants. The nearly 38,000-square-foot spa will house nine treatment rooms and a yoga and meditation area within a replica sugar mill. Rooms from \$450; stkitts.park.hyatt.com. Across the channel on Nevis, Paradise Beach Resort, with seven villas, plans to expand with five more beach houses in December. The new two-bedroom units, raised on stilts above the resort's private beach, will have blue-tiled plunge pools, wraparound porches and ship bells that guests ring to call for a concierge. Rates start at \$1,495; paradisebeachnevis.com.

Turks and Caicos

About 40 miles from the main island of Providenciales, South Caicos was hit hard by Hurricane Irma, but its new Sailrock Resort, which opened last January, is set to reopen Dec. 16. Additions include a second restaurant and a new spa. Scuba diving, snorkeling and kayaking are big draws in the area and operators report that the reefs and mangroves are healthy. Rooms from \$750; sailrockresort.com. On Providenciales, the Shore Club, which opened last December, experienced no major damage and has reopened its 106 suites. Four pools include those devoted to adults and to lap swimming, and five culinary concepts include a fine dining restaurant and a craft cocktail bar. Rooms from \$699, with breakfast; theshoreclubtc.com.