

Three more island getaways

Antigua and Barbuda

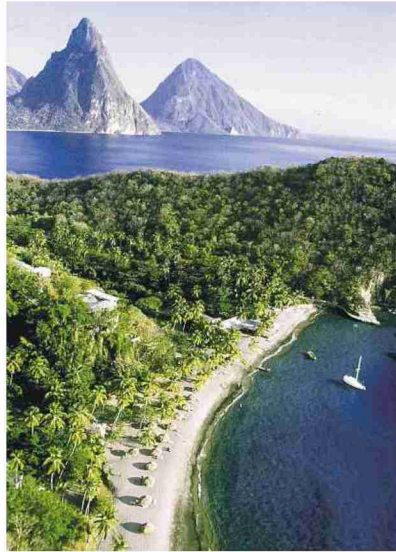
Not all of the sleepier islands in the Caribbean are small and obscure. Easy-to-reach Antigua is about 108 square miles with more than 22,000 residents in St. John's, but get outside the capital, and the vista opens to sparsely populated lowlands and rolling hills. Gorgeous beaches with powdery white sand abound, as do restored inns, luxury hotels, romantic hideaways and all-inclusive resorts. There are plenty of activities — exploring historic ports, land and water sports, night life — but chances are that if you avoid the cruise ships, you'll feel like you have the island to yourself. Looking for pearly pink beaches that are basically deserted? Check out Barbuda, the sister island to Antigua, a 90-minute ferry ride away.

INFO visitantiguabarbuda.com

St. Lucia

St. Lucia is a laid-back island where visitors can get lost in the magnificent greenery. About 27 miles by 14 miles, St. Lucia has 19,000 acres of dense tropical rain forest rife with exotic birds and rare plants, along with numerous banana plantations and two lush tropical peaks called the Pitons. St. Lucia offers a range of accommodations from idyllic retreats popular with honeymooners to full-blown resorts, particularly in the Rodney Bay area. The island also has some of the most inviting off-the-beach snorkeling in the Caribbean, along with excellent scuba diving.

INFO saintluciauk.org



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St. Lucia's 19,000 acres of rain forest sit below the volcanic Pitons peaks.

Saba

Most people haven't even heard of this 5-square-mile volcanic island, which requires a stop in St. Maarten to get there. With only 1,500 affable residents, Saba is called the Unspoiled Queen, evoking the old Caribbean with just one road and homes that are uniformly white with orange roofs and green trim. While you won't find gorgeous beaches, there is world-class scuba diving and snorkeling in the Saba National Marine Park encircling the island. There's also stunning hiking on Mount Scenery and down to Ladder Bay. For a true feeling of tranquillity and isolation, Saba can't be beat.

INFO sabatourism.com

— ALISON GREGOR

