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20 Awesome Beachfront Hotels Under \$200

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A list of our favorite affordable hotels, from Mexico to Turks and Caicos.

by Sarah Greaves-Gabbadon & Debbie Snow

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A list of our favorite affordable hotels, from Mexico to Turks and Caicos:

Nueva Vida de Ramiro

Tulum, Mexico: No hot water, phone, 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. Chalk that up to the eco-resort's bordering-on-comatose vibe, fostered by an owner who insists that guests "come here and get lazy; this is a place to do nothing." So feel free to while away the hours surveying bone-white sands from the balcony of your seaside bungalow, napping on a hammock slung between coconut palms, swimming in the limpid turquoise waters or lingering over a bowl of sopa de lima at Casa Banana restaurant. Doing "nothing" has never felt so rewarding. From \$70 per night.

52-984-877-8512; tulumnv.com



Enlarge Photo

Photo by: Zach Stovall

Numero Uno Guest House

Ocean Park, Puerto Rico: This romantic 11-room inn, formerly a private home, sits on one 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. From \$89 per night.

PHOTO GALLERIES

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866-726-5010; numer1guesthouse.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 a mere 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. From \$99 per night.

888-843-2293; tranquilitybayresort.com

Frenchman's Cove Resort

Port Antonio, Jamaica: With its sugary sands, 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 rooms, we're fairly confident that, come sunrise, the cove's tranquil atmosphere — blissfully absent of vendors, water-sports operators and loud music — will still prevail. From \$100 per night.

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 Providenciales' sugary 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. From \$110 per night.

888-570-2861; sibonne.com

Velero Beach Resort

Cabarete, Dominican Republic: Cabarete is a water-sports 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. From \$114 per night.

809-571-9727; velero beach.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. From \$120 per night.

869-465-7260; goldenlemon.com


Natura Cabana



VIDEO






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Kaci Aimee Blair Kari Tyna

Cabarete, Dominican Republic: Halfway between Cabarete and Sosua, secreted in a verdant seaside garden, Natura Cabana's 11 thatch-roof cabins instantly charm with their whimsical touches, such as marble walls, bamboo furniture and shower curtains fashioned from garlands of seeds and shells. Wander through the untamed grove of almond and palm trees to discover a compact spa, a yoga pavilion and a tranquil strip of golden sand to call your own. From \$130 per night.

809-571-1507; naturacabana.com

Idle Awhile

Negril, Jamaica: Bigger isn't necessarily better on Negril's famed strip, where, despite being surrounded by large all-inclusive resorts, this boho-chic boutique still manages to hold its own. Idle Awhile's small wonders include a sun-splashed palette of vivid hues that shows up on everything from floor tiles to wall-mounted vases in the 14 rooms; a welcoming staff that makes you feel like long-lost family; and the best ackee and saltfish in town at Chill Awhile, the hotel's beachfront dining deck. From \$130 per night.

877-243-5352; idleawhile.com

Siboney Beach Club

Dickenson Bay, Antigua: Charming owner Tony Johnson and his staff make sure your stay at this homey 12-room enclave set amid frangipani, flamboyant and breadfruit trees feels like a visit with old friends. When you tire of lazing in your patio's hammock, get a massage in the peaceful Zen garden, take an early morning walk along Dickenson Bay or snorkel the reef just offshore. Dining at Coconut Grove restaurant is a simple yet elegant experience just paces from the water's edge. From \$150 per night.

800-533-0234; siboneybeachclub.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 the highly acclaimed Eagle Beach, where nonmotorized sports are plentiful. At sunset, head next door to the beachfront Bunker Bar, a thatch-topped watering hole that's the perfect place to watch not only the sunset but the playful antics of your fellow rum-punch-imbibing revelers. From \$159 per night.

800-367-3484; diviresorts.com

Chenay Bay Beach Resort

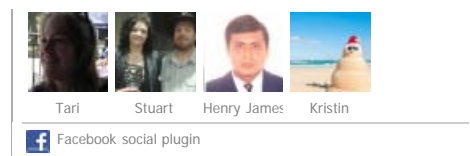
Christiansted, St. Croix: A mile-long crescent of white sand surrounds a group of gingerbread cottages set on a former sugar plantation at this family-friendly retreat. Each cottage has its own kitchenette, but if you don't feel like cooking, nearby Mahi's Seaside Seafood Bar & Grill serves three squares a day. Explore the coastline by kayak, or day-trip it to nearby Buck Island Reef National Park to discover coral reefs marked by underwater trails. From \$161 per night.

866-226-8677; chenaybay.com

Sorobon Beach Resort

Lac Bay, Bonaire: There was a time when this resort was known only to Dutch naturists, who'd come to get an all-over tan before returning to the ice and snow. Windsurfers discovered the place in the '80s, and since then, Sorobon Beach has become a favorite of super-fit kayakers, kiteboarders and windsurfers, who flaunt their physiques at the beach bars on the strand between sessions on the water. Now the longtime au naturel hotel draws active adventurers, and while you can still venture to the nudie beach, the timid can take comfort that suited-up guests are now in the majority. From \$175 per night.

011-599-717-8080; sorobonbeachresort.com



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Tres Sirenas

Rincon, Puerto Rico: Visions of mermaids may dance in your head at this beauty, where life-size wooden sirens greet you at the door and mermaid paintings and sculptures add a dash of whimsy. Each of only four rooms offers a picture-perfect view of the water, and the sound of waves lapping at the shoreline is a natural sleep machine. Gourmet breakfast, served each morning on the waterfront terrace, is an added treat. From \$180 per night.

787-823-0558; tressirenas.com

Oualie Beach Resort

Oualie Bay, Nevis: Blue-and-yellow cottages with patios front the sand at this cozy and family-friendly retreat on what many consider Nevis' best strand. Local athlete Winston Crooke runs a thriving water-sports operation next door, renting windsurfers, kayaks, Hobie cats and bicycles. Tuesday-night lobster beach barbecues pull in a good local crowd, so you can check socializing off your list too. From \$185 per night.

869-469-9735; oualiebeach.com

Las Palapas

Playa del Carmen, Mexico: Thatch roofs, Mexican-tile floors and a laid-back atmosphere attract European bohemians to this spot, where rooms in one- and two-story palapa-style buildings are surrounded by 15 acres of tropical jungle. Lazy afternoons call for a siesta in the hammock strung on your patio or a mojito at the beach bar, with your toes in the sand. When you're ready for some action, head to Avenida Quinta, at the northern end of the 13-mile playa, where a variety of bars, restaurants and shops satisfy any craving. From \$190 per night.

52-984-873-4260; laspalapas.com

Hamanasi Adventure & Dive Resort

Hopkins, Belize: If you're looking to dive Belize's spectacular Mesoamerican Barrier Reef or snorkel the waters around its many offshore islands, Hamanasi is the perfect base. Its location — near Hopkins, in a coastal forest fringed by a 12-mile beach — makes it convenient for day trips not only out to the reef and atolls but also to inland attractions, including a waterfall and a jaguar preserve. From \$195 per night.

877-552-3483; hamanasi.com

Secret Harbour

St. Thomas, USVI: Each condo in this privately owned collection has been uniquely updated, and the property now boasts new assets, including the Cruzan Beach Club, where Caribbean-Southwest fusion fare, as well as beachside service, await. Let your food digest before you hit up Aqua Action Dive Center for snorkeling or diving in the clear waters around Secret Harbour. From \$195 per night

340-775-6550; secretharbourvi.com

Carimar Beach Club

Meads Bay, Anguilla: Bougainvillea-draped terraces, tropical gardens and friendly staff are sure to impress at this villa-style 24-suite gem, where beach lovers will swoon over the prime location on the sands of Meads Bay. Restaurants are within walking distance, but many guests use of their private kitchens, all recently updated. Frequent potluck beach barbecues bring visitors and locals together. From \$199 per night.

866-270-3764; carimar.com

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