

AVENTURA™



Matt Passmore

The Glades star hangs in Miami (and lives in Hallandale!)

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True Blood star Janina Gavankar in Fall's Hottest Fashions

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50 Cool Things to Give & Get This Season

Plus:

Ski or Surf: What's Your Travel Pleasure?

Surf & Turf

By land or by sea, happiness can be found in the form of a magical getaway.

LOVE THE SAND AND SURF OF THE CARIBBEAN? HÔTEL LE TOINY IN ST. BART'S AWAITS.

THERE IS A REASON WHY THE WORLD'S MOST PRIVILEGED TRAVELERS choose St. Barthelemy again and again as a place to get away, relax and immerse themselves in paradise. The tiny island in the French West Indies is 8.1 square miles of rising, winding hills, aqua waters, lush foliage and French joie de vivre. And nestled at the easternmost tip of the island is the gem known as Hôtel Le Toiny. Managed by husband and wife team Guy and Dagnar Lombard, the cluster of 15 villa self-contained villa suites, each with a breathtaking view of the ocean, expansive private terrace, and private heated swimming pool, set on 38 acres on Anse de Toiny is a must for the bucket list of anyone who appreciates a perfect vacation. Located in an area on the island that is still undeveloped, the landscape around Hôtel Le Toiny is perfectly preserved with natural vegetation, including St. Bart's rare Caïac trees and cacti.





Originally opened on November 1, 1992, Le Toiny was built by local French architect Claude Pitoors, whose design was heavily influenced by the old plantation houses of the French Caribbean. The original owners of the hotel sold it in late 2006 to a group of investors, and in 2008, Hôtel Le Toiny underwent a multimillion-dollar renovation that saw the addition of a Serenity Spa Cottage and a fitness center in addition to the complete refurbishment of all Villa Suites.

There is no one single thing that strikes you as you enter your own little haven, but several all at once—the natural light flowing through the cottage, the fantastic sea views and perhaps most notably, the realization that you have all of this magnificence to yourself and your travel companion. Each villa has beach chairs and umbrellas on hand that you can tote along with you to any of the island's renowned beaches, and you should do that, for sure—but the atmosphere at Le Toiny is such that you may prefer to do nothing but luxuriate in its ambiance. Elegant four-poster canopy beds invite one in to take an immediate post-flight nap, especially once the mosquito netting has been let down to create a heavenly shroud.

Each of the fourteen one-bedroom Villa Suites and one Junior Suite is completely secluded, offering the perfect

mix of privacy and luxury, and offers sparkling views of the Caribbean, and includes an expansive terrace with a private pool, chaise lounges, and a table and chairs where you can enjoy breakfast alfresco in the morning or cocktails in the afternoon.

Since the climate in St. Bart's is a dry, tropical one, the weather is hot year round with little variation in the temperature, which hovers near 80 degrees Fahrenheit in the winter and rises somewhat in the summer, so swimming is always a popular activity. On the rare occasions when a shower sweeps in, the villa is a cozy place to nestle in and wait it out in front of the 40-inch plasma TV (there's a full DVD library courtesy of Hôtel Le Toiny, along with an iPod station and music library). Or you can take advantage of the Serenity Spa Cottage, a intimate treatment room where, if it's possible to become any more relaxed, you can do so by indulging in a facial or massage (treatments are available in your suite, as well).

When you're not in your villa, you'll find yourself wanting to spend a lot of time at Le Toiny's signature open-air Restaurant Le Gaïac. While the cuisine is undoubtedly the star here, the ambiance and service add immeasurably to the dining experience. Views



OPPOSITE: The quaint front entrance of Hôtel Le Toiny.

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: A gentleman enjoys the royal treatment in the Serenity Spa Cottage; the private pool and patio behind one of the villa suites; a view of the villa suite's interiors; one of the many tempting offerings from Chef Stéphane Mazières at the hotel's Le Gaïac restaurant.

overlook the hotel's infinity pool and the Caribbean Sea, with the silhouette of the hilly terrain rising up beyond, backlit most nights by the glow of the moon. Named for St. Bart's native Gaïac tree—one of which adorns the entrance to the hotel and which plays a vital role in the construction of traditional St. Bart's homes and boats—Le Gaïac is helmed by Executive Chef Stéphane Mazières, who has created a menu that puts an inventive spin on traditional French dishes of the island. Each dish can be masterfully paired with one of the 250 wines featured on Le Gaïac's wine list. There are no marginal offerings here, from the amuse bouches to the appetizers to main courses and desserts. Sunday brunch, an island event that draws locals and requires reservations, and comprises a spread of seafood, salads, pastas and desserts so fresh and tempting, you'll indulge to the point where you probably won't be able to eat another meal until the following day. You can even have the restaurant pack you a picnic lunch to take with you to the beach, so after a dip in the crystal clear waters you can fortify yourself with a lobster salad sandwich like no other you have ever tried. It may be just a sandwich, but it's like every other experience at Hôtel Le Toiny—sublime, unmatched, and leaving you wanting more.

TravelInfo

Getting there:

Princess Juliana International Airport (SXM) located on St. Martin is the main gateway to St. Bart's. Connections are made with inter-island carriers to St. Bart's Airport (SBH). The flight is 15 minutes. St. Bart's is also accessible by a 45- to 90-minute ferryboat ride from St. Martin.

Hôtel Le Toiny:

You can book online through letoiny.com or email reservations@letoiny.com or by calling toll-free 800.680.0832. Transfer to and from the airport are complimentary courtesy of the hotel and its wonderful driver David.