

# Serenity at Coconut Bay

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High-end accommodations at Serenity in Saint Lucia.

Departing from Saint Lucia, I was halfway through airport security when I realized I'd left my laptop in my suite. I called **Serenity at Coconut Bay**, and the woman at the front desk said she'd send a butler to find my laptop. In less than 20 minutes a taxi driver delivered it to the airport. Now, the point of this story is not to demonstrate how careless I was (extremely), but to show how responsive the staff at Serenity is (extremely).

This new 36-suite, luxury all-inclusive affiliated with **Coconut Bay Beach Resort & Spa** was previewed in "Just the Two of Us: New Couples-Only All-Inclusive Resorts" (August Recommend). Recently I returned to Saint Lucia in order to give you more details.

Whereas the larger resort's main building and long accommodations wings sprawl along the beach, Serenity is, well, a serene enclave behind the Coconut Bay Beach Resort. It has its own indoor-outdoor restaurant, two bars, 24/7 room service, unusually professional en suite spa treatments, and a palm-lined swimming pool with aqua-lounges and cabanas. Moreover, CEO Mark Adams told me, "Serenity is a place where there is no 'no.'" Good, because this boutique property is likely to be hosting a lot of honeymooners.

## Chic and Sexy

The suites, aka sanctuaries, are key. Upon arrival (transfers included), a butler takes you through your private courtyard to your room in a single-story cottage. The space feels contemporary—clean lines, subdued hues, designer blinds within double-paned glass doors, a soaking tub—but it has traditional elements, too: a vaulted ceiling, polished wood blades on the ceiling fan, and a hand-crafted

mahogany four-poster. People who admire Victorian sumptuousness may not like this look; those who find contemporary design chic and sexy will love it, as I do.

One day I heard two guests tell a manager that the bathroom shower needed better lighting. The manager said that his team is working on that. Funny thing is, I hadn't noticed the lighting because I'd never used that shower. Wait—I can explain.

My patio, enclosed by a wall with a lockable gate, had a powerful outdoor shower with cascading flowers, so why go indoors? The patio also had lights for after-dark romance, a plunge pool, lounge chairs, a shaded area with a table and chairs (and outlets and WiFi), a wet bar, a mini-fridge, an Osterizer for when you summon a mixologist, and a hammock under a palm tree. A couple in another sanctuary used their patio for entertaining in the evenings, with an assist from the room's Bluetooth Bose sound system. Most couples, though, used the patios for more intimate diversions.

## New Beach Cabanas and Turtles

Serenity guests may dine at Coconut Bay's nine restaurants, from the Jerk Tree House to the Coconut Walk Marketplace, where I saw Saint Lucia's Minister of Tourism with his wife and two children. They also enjoy free access to the bars, fitness center, pools, beach, kayaks, paddleboards, and snorkeling gear.

Serenity has added cabanas on a discrete, undeveloped stretch of the mile-long beach. "As we were building the cabanas, turtles came up to lay eggs. So... now we do turtle watching programs," says Zachary Frangos, general manager. The cabanas, aside from

offering butler service and other luxuries, give guests a prime view of the kite-surfers. Coconut Bay maintains a kitesurfing center, so if you had a more responsible correspondent, he would have taken a lesson. However, you do not.

Back at Serenity, the Greathouse restaurant features modern American and Caribbean fusion cuisines. The Greathouse has also added a 10-seat chef's table overseen by chef Debbie, a local icon who prepares sublime Saint Lucian dishes using cristophine, yucca, okra, and other island staples.

## Know this Before Booking

Serenity's suites come in three categories. The 1,250-sq.-ft. *Plunge Pool Butler Suites* don't have an outdoor shower, so I recommend the 1,500-sq.-ft. *Premium Plunge Pool Butler Suite* (\$5,541 per couple per week, high season) or the 1,900-sq.-ft. *Grande Plunge Pool Butler Suite* (\$6,297). Each sanctuary is somewhat unique, because so are people: For example, my older brother would want windows facing the sunrise (823, 824, 833, 834, 853, or 854), yet I found room 854 too bright at dawn. Adams said he may add shutters.

Rates are likely to go up, but Adams says that they'll feature value-added inclusions such as cabanas or excursions. Commissions are 10 percent and could rise to 15 percent for high producers. "We don't push guests to book direct," he added. "We're happy to send them back to the travel agent or tour operator. We owe agents a lot, and I want their clients to go back to them." ■

## Contact Information

**Serenity at Coconut Bay:** [serenityatcoconutbay.com](http://serenityatcoconutbay.com)