

TURKS & CAICOS ISLANDS

Beautiful by Nature



Water, water everywhere! Whether the shimmering turquoise sea that surrounds the Turks & Caicos Islands or the refreshing waters of the pool at your oceanfront resort, you'll find it hard to stay dry during a visit here.

It's in the Water...

Rarely do visitors leave the Turks & Caicos Islands without the sea's siren song calling them back. Some claim hypnotism by the panorama of ocean blue that surrounds them from the moment they approach — a kaleidoscope of shimmering shades that changes with the sun, tide, water depth and sky. Others are mesmerized by the long stretches of quiet beach, the sand soft as silk, ivory and pristine. Sunny days melt together as the gentle tradewinds slip past; a

commodations are among the best in the region.

Although the chain includes 40 islands and cays, only 10 are currently inhabited and the 37-square-mile island of Providenciales remains the focus of most visitor activity. (There is a Carnival cruise ship port on Grand Turk, though, which will draw nearly 1 million day visitors this year.) "Provo's" beautiful north shore beaches are the site for most of the island's upscale resort condominiums, with activity centered around Grace Bay Beach, ranked among the world's finest. This is the land of sheer indulgence, with each property striving to outdo the next. Here you'll find an astonishing choice of restaurants, superb spas, several shopping plazas and a lively casino. Nightlife in the Islands, though, is low-key, with most entertainment focused around local bands or singers performing at the resorts or bars. But thanks to the lack of bright "city lights," stargazing is extraordinary!

Scuba diving was one of the country's original attractions — its robust reefs (most protected in national marine parks) still attract divers in the know, especially on Grand Turk and Salt Cay, where jaw-dropping walls are minutes from shore and resorts cater to divers. But there's no excuse not to get wet anywhere in TCI: snorkeling, sailing, fishing, parasailing, kayaking and jet skiing are all popular, as are day trips to deserted cays, where you'll share space with only sun, sand and sea



With miles of pristine, white sand beaches to explore, family time is fun time!

(and the occasional iguana).

Although it's hard to imagine anyone straying far from shore, there is a championship 18-hole golf course, tennis, bicycling and fitness centers to keep landlubbers out of trouble. It's easy to get around the paved roads via rental car or taxi and well worth investigating the far corners of Provo: Chalk Sound's otherworldly colors and 365+ small cays, the world's first commercial Conch Farm at Leeward and Blue Hills' unalloyed Caribbean charm and tasty local fare.

But the soul of Turks & Caicos has more depth than

Drinks and dining to the show of a seaside sunset is an unforgettable delight.



glamorous Provo would let on. Its rich history, steeped in pirates, salt and cotton, and the treasures that support the tag "Beautiful by Nature," are best experienced by a trip to one of the out-Islands. A reliable ferry service from Providenciales makes it easy to explore Caicos Islands' attractions, including the "Garden Island" of North Caicos' flamingo pond and restored Loyalist plantation and Middle Caicos' stunning Mudjin Harbour, labyrinth cave system and local handcrafts. A short flight to the Salt Islands reveals the vast salinas and remnants of the salt industry, along with the picturesque fishing village of Cockburn Harbor in South Caicos; historic Bermudian-influenced Cockburn Town on Grand Turk and the superb scuba diving and whale watching on tiny Salt Cay.

But it all comes back to the water . . . and the turquoise hues reflected in visitors' eyes as they lounge on the beach, exhaling cares, inhaling the elixir that is the Turks & Caicos Islands.

For more information, please visit the official site of the Turks & Caicos Tourist Board at www.turksandcaicostourism.com.



Snorkeling in the Islands' bountiful waters is a way to discover a trove of treasures.

span of time that seems like a dream . . . was there something in the water?

I know from experience. I came to the Turks & Caicos as a tourist in 1988 and in a series of blessed opportunities, have been working as a magazine editor here since 1993. There are still days I pinch myself into reality. I'm often surprised that the country hasn't been inundated with visitors. Less than 90 minutes by air from Miami, with English the native language and the US dollar as currency, this British Overseas Dependent Territory is an oasis of simplicity and peace (not a stoplight or fast food franchise to be found). And because most development has taken place in this millennium, the 9,000 or so native "Belongers" remain down-home friendly while ac-

What's New

Run Away to Romantic Parrot Cay

Parrot Cay, a 1,000-acre private island nestled among the Caicos Cays, is an easy flight from numerous US airports. Lining the cay's pristine sugar-sand beaches are white-and-teak beach villas with ink-blue infinity pools — where celebrities come to disappear. The award-winning COMO Shambhala Retreat features yoga, massage and Dr. Perricone's famous anti-aging facials. This fall, the resort is offering its "Romantic Runaway" package: three nights for two with a massage and Champagne breakfast at \$2,864. Start dreaming at www.parrotcay.como.bz

25% Savings at Ocean Club Resorts

The sister 4-Star resorts, **Ocean Club** and **Ocean Club West**, sit on the powder-soft sands of legendary Grace Bay Beach. Through December 20, all suites are discounted 25% (now from \$146/night). Studio deluxe, Junior, one-, two- and three-bedroom units all include fully equipped kitchens. Shared by the resorts are: three pools, fitness center and spa, three tennis courts, dive shop and three restaurants, with Provo's 18-hole championship golf course nearby. And, when you stay at either resort, you're a guest of both. Visit oceanclubresorts.com or call 1-800-457-8787.

Royal Deal from 35% off Regular Rates for Fall

With the white sands of Grace Bay Beach at your door, **Royal West Indies Resort** is surprisingly affordable and intimate. Oversized studio, one- and two-bedroom suites are appointed in classic Caribbean Colonial style with spacious indoor-outdoor living space and convenient kitchen areas. Enjoy our popular restaurant, in suite spa services, tour desk, concierge and bonuses like free watersports equipment, bicycles and Internet access. Within walking distance are dining, shopping, a casino, pubs, a golf course and miles of uncrowded beaches. Call 1-800-332-4203 or 649-946-5004 or visit www.royalwestindies.com.

Gansevoort Blends "Hip Hotel" with Sensual Island Vibe

Caribbean cool meets urban chic at the **Gansevoort Turks + Caicos**, a sleek boutique hotel on beautiful Grace Bay Beach, recently named one of the top ten trendiest resorts in the world. You'll savor soothing ocean views from any of our 91 guest rooms, including 32 suites and 4 penthouses. Laze and lounge by our 7,000 sq. ft., infinity edge pool. Heal your core at our award winning exhale® spa. Wine and dine to the rhythm of electric grooves and gentle tradewinds at **Bagatelle Bistrot + Beach Lounge**. Fall specials include a "Stay Seven Nights Get a Fourth Night Free" promotion (along with a resort credit of up to \$300 for stays of seven nights or more) for new bookings from November 1 to December 19, 2010. Visit www.gansevoortturksandcaicos.com or call 1-888-844-5986.

Shaking off the Sand, Settling into Comfort

It's hard to imagine that less than 25 years ago, there were only a handful of spots for a Turks & Caicos visitor to settle their suitcase. Yet just as Columbus landed on Grand Turk's Guanahani Beach during his maiden voyage to the New World, so visitors, investors and developers discovered the Islands in the mid-1990s and the number and quality of tourism-related services have snowballed ever since.

lodging options. Besides the prolific condo-resorts, there are still small out-island guesthouses with unalloyed Caribbean charm. You can find a couple-sized cottage or family-friendly villa. All-inclusive options make it easy to keep the kids entertained or offer meet and mingle for a single. There are affordable hotels with casual comfort, economical resorts for "do-it-yourselfers," places that encourage camaraderie and others that secure seclusion. You can even stay on a private island where celebrity sightings are common and luxury complements sun, sand and sea.

CONDO SUITES

Condominium resorts hold court on Providenciales' beautiful beachfront. Guests rent fully furnished suites sized to their needs and enjoy all the amenities of a luxurious resort hotel. Practically *de rigueur* these days

are panoramic ocean views from vast terraces, gourmet kitchens, Jacuzzi tubs and linens with a triple digit thread count. On-site you'll find seaside infinity pools,

world-class spas, gourmet cuisine and the latest in digital technology.

Ocean Club Resort can boast of being among the first condo-resorts on Grace Bay Beach. It has since expanded to a second site nearby, **Ocean Club West**. When you stay at one, you're a guest at both, able to enjoy via complementary shuttle all the facilities, amenities and dining delights of both resorts, including three restaurants, three pools, three lighted tennis courts and, at each property, a spa, fitness center, dive shop and watersports rentals. **Ocean Club Resorts** (www.oceanclubresorts.com) have a long history of careful, attentive service in a casual, convivial atmosphere. Through December 20, all suites are discounted 25%.

Royal West Indies Resort (www.royalwestindies.com) offers affordable suites in classic Caribbean Colonial style with ocean views along Grace Bay Beach or nestled within luxuriant botanical gardens. Its central pool/patio embraces the Mango Reef restaurant and bar, a popular gathering spot for residents and visitors. The property is close to the golf course and casino and a popular venue for island weddings and honeymoons. Royal deals from 35% off this Fall.

The Sands at Grace Bay (www.thesandstc.com) offers "unspoiled, uncommon, unpretentious" accommodations combined with friendly service well-honed over the last dozen years. Floor-to-ceiling windows and sliding doors open to spectacular Grace Bay views and

Getting Here

The Turks & Caicos Islands conveniently lie some 575 miles southeast of Miami, with all of the major international carriers arriving and departing from the Providenciales International Airport. A \$70 million airport expansion/renovation is currently underway to accommodate larger aircraft from Europe and Asia and to reduce congestion during peak season weekends.

American Airlines (www.aa.com) offers three flights daily from Miami (only 90 minutes on a 757), a non-stop daily flight from New York/JFK and Saturday flights from Boston and Dallas.

U.S. Airways offers daily service from Charlotte and weekend flights from Boston and Philadelphia (www.usairways.com), while Delta Airlines travels from its Atlanta gateway daily (www.deltaairlines.com).

Effective February 17, 2011, JetBlue (www.jetblue.com) plans to launch daily service to Providenciales from New York/JFK and seasonal (November to April) Saturday-only service from Boston.

All visitors must provide a current passport, with a valid onward or return ticket.

STAYING HERE

In spite of the TCI's decidedly upmarket inclination, visitors will find a variety of

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At Providenciales' Grace Bay beachfront resorts, sheer indulgence is the norm, not the exception.

suites are spacious and airy. This Fall The Sands partnered with leading dive operator Ocean Vibes to offer guests an opportunity to earn their PADI Open Water Diver Certification in just four days, through a "Diving for Dummies" package, with rates starting at only \$925 per person for six days/five nights. The package includes accommodations, transfers to the dive facility, and all training sessions, equipment and classroom materials. (Travel must be completed by December 20, 2010.)

Christmas is coming early at nearby **Alexandra Resort** (www.alexandrasort.com), offering guests a seventh night free at this Grace Bay beachfront resort community. Travel must be between December 20, 2010 and April 9, 2011 for a studio or one bedroom oceanview suite, and is available first-come, first served! The Alexandra Resort offers visitors two restaurants, a swim-up bar, beach bar, free-form pool, tennis courts, on-site spa and fitness center. Accommodations are beautifully appointed, air-conditioned with private balcony, TV/DVD player, complimentary Wi-Fi access and in-room safe. Studios offer a kitchenette with refrigerator and microwave; one bedroom suites include a full kitchen with dishwasher, washer/dryer and all the comforts of home.

LeVeLe (www.leveleresort.com) is a beachfront boutique property, with only 22 ultra spacious one, two and three bedroom condominium suites. All boast private balconies and sleek, modern style inside and out, promising a peaceful intimacy for guests. Nestled in the courtyard with a breathtaking view of the ocean is the freshwater, infinity-edge pool. Amenities also include in-

suite spa services and complimentary fitness center and bicycles, with wireless Internet access throughout. To December 22, 2010, you can enjoy two extra nights free when you stay three consecutive nights or more, plus a 10% discount on all room rates and free airport transfers when you book directly through the resort.

Bookending Grace Bay Beach's quiet western end is

when guests can receive their fifth night free or get two nights free with a seven-night stay. (This offer is available all through November.) In addition, guests will get free passes to the Turks & Caicos Conch Festival on November 27. In December (through the 20th), the offer extends to a free night after just three paid nights, along with a seventh night free. Bonus travel rewards include daily Euro-



From a seaside hammock, contemplate the ever-changing colors of TCI's lovely ocean.

the appropriately named **West Bay Club** (www.thewestbayclub.com). This upscale resort features large, luxuriously appointed oceanfront suites with spacious living areas, full kitchens or kitchenettes and outdoor terraces to enjoy direct ocean views and cooling breezes. Amenities include a poolside restaurant and bar, free use of the eight-person Hobie Cat, a well-equipped fitness center, wireless Internet, use of a free cell phone during your stay, a complimentary manager's reception and a kitchen stock-up service prior to your arrival. Travelers looking for an ideal Thanksgiving break can take advantage of great savings from November 21 - 28, 2010,

pean breakfasts and free car rental for a day, a spa treatment, a scuba experience or a professional photo shoot on the beach. (See web site for details.)

Just down the beach is the chic, sleek and vibrant **Gansevoort Turks + Caicos** (www.gansevoortturksandcaicos.com), TCI's most "happening" resort. Celebrity sightings are common around the centerpiece infinity pool, with its trademark palm-shaded floating islands and striking ocean backdrop. Suite interiors are minimalist without being stark, boast magnificent sea views and include every amenity. On-site is the exhale® spa, with a full range of treatments and fitness programs to ensure mind-body wellness in paradise. Rich in urban sophistication and laid-back island charm is the Bagatelle Bistrot and Beach Lounge, where French Mediterranean fusion cuisine is enhanced with local fresh seafood. The Gansevoort's Fall specials include a

Continued on next page

Check these WEBSites for more information & vacation deals:

Turks & Caicos Tourist Board	www.turksandcaicostourism.com
Bohio Dive Resort	www.bohioresort.com
Comfort Suites Turks & Caicos	www.comfortsuitestci.com
Gansevoort Turks + Caicos	www.gansevoorttc.com
LeVeLe Resort	www.leveleresort.com
Ocean Club Resorts	www.oceanclubresorts.com
Osprey Beach Hotel	www.ospreybeachhotel.com
Parrot Cay	www.parrotcay.com.bz
Royal West Indies	www.royalwestindies.com
TCInvest	www.tcinvest.tc
The Alexandra Resort	www.alexandrasort.com
The Sands at Grace Bay	www.thesandstc.com
West Bay Club, Turks and Caicos	www.thewestbayclub.com
Furey and Associates	FureyandAssociates.com



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Come Out of Your Shell!

TCI Conch Festival Features Food and Fun

Marta Morton (www.harbourclubillas.com)



The annual TCI Conch Festival celebrates the country's #1 (and most tasty!) export.

Yes, there is edible meat inside those pearly pink shells. Conch has been a staple protein source in the Turks & Caicos Islands since the days of the Lucayan Indians. Local fishermen continue to harvest conch from the surrounding waters and it remains the country's number one export. Providenciales is home to the world's first commercial conch farm and on Grand Turk, visitors to Conch World can learn more about the tasty mollusk.

The eighth annual TCI Conch Festival on November 26-28, 2010 celebrates the country's most famous delicacy with a weekend of culturally rich activities. The main event on Saturday afternoon takes place in "Provo's" colorful Blue Hills settlement, with a "conch-etition" pitting 25 of the island's best chefs against each other. A panel of experts and festival attendees taste and select winners of Best Conch Salad, Best Conch Chowder, Best Specialty Conch, Best Presentation and Best in Show. A \$25 ticket gives festival-goers a chance to sample all the dishes entered and cast a vote for Best in Show.

Other activities include the annual Mojito-making contest sponsored by Bacardi, where the Islands' best bartenders display creative twists on the classic Cuban cocktail. There will also be a TCI Junkanoo, performances by local musicians and competitions for conch blowing, conch knocking and a conch hunt in the sea.

Other festival events include local jazz, wine and gourmet "conch-iliious" dining at The Somerset resort on Friday night and a charity road race on Sunday morning.

For more information, visit www.conchfestival.com.



This shaggy costume and mask reflect the authentic tradition of TCI's "massin" celebration.

GET FESTIVE with Maskanoo

Lively Event Combines Culture with Fun

The extravagant costumes and brass band, drum-thumping, whistle-blowing sounds of Junkanoo are typically associated with the winter holidays in the Caribbean. Yet I was intrigued to learn that something quite different takes place in the Turks & Caicos Islands.

"Masquerade" is a TCI tradition said to have originated with the slaves brought to the salt-producing islands of Salt Cay, South Caicos and Grand Turk by Bermudian salt-rakers as early as 1678. "Massin" was a much-anticipated event, in which Masqueraders wore homemade costumes

of a mask, straw hat or headdress and a colorful, shaggy mixture of mis-matched paper or cloth strips attached to an old pair of pants and shirt. Common embellishments included wearing an elaborate "doll-baby house" on your head or a set of cow horns, with a "reel-a-tail" made from empty thread spools. In the early morning hours, revelers went from house to house serenading friends and family, accompanied by lively sounds of a traditional ripsaw band, in which a carpenter's saw scraped with a nail provides the signature sound.

To showcase TCI's cultural heritage and share this festive tradition with visitors, the first-ever Maskanoo is planned for December 26, 2010. Starting at 5 PM and running to midnight, Grace Bay Road between Regent Village and Saltmills Plaza will be rich with the sounds and colors of grand Maskanoo parades. Performances by local bands and DJs will complement traditional ripsaw music — the syncopated sounds of

Tropical Imaging (www.tropicalimaging.com)



Be prepared for the rich sounds of local bands during the grand Maskanoo parades.

drumbeats, saw, box guitars, harmonicas, whistles, cowbells and horns that have everyone writhing to the beat!

You can sample local food and drink, including conch fritters, chicken souse and peas 'n' rice, along the route, with local arts and crafts on display. The finale will include an exciting fireworks show on Grace Bay Beach!

For more information, visit the official site of the Turks & Caicos Tourist Board (www.turksandcaicostourism.com).



Sample frosty local cocktails at the Maskanoo festivities.

Shaking Off The Sand

Continued from page 2

"Stay Seven Nights Get the 4th Night Free" promotion (along with a resort credit of up to \$300) for new bookings from November 1 to December 19, 2010.

ON A BUDGET?

With Grace Bay Beach just across the street and Ports of Call Shopping Village adjacent, **Comfort Suites Turks & Caicos** (www.comfortsuitestci.com) is an affordable option for vacationers and business travelers who don't want to sacrifice amenities. Even more enticing are this Fall's deep discounts and value added promotions. A 20% discount is offered for Fall 2010 travel until December 18, 2010, with discounted rates starting at \$95 per night for spacious junior suites, featuring king or two double beds, flat screen TVs, sitting area with sofa bed, refrigerator, coffeemaker, in-room safe, complimentary WiFi and Continental breakfast daily. Additionally, the resort offers \$25 in beverage credits at the lively pool bar for four, five and six-night stays and \$50 in beverage credits for stays of seven nights or longer. Besides a designated area on the beach for guests with shades and lounges, Comfort Suites' palm shaded pool deck is an oasis at the heart of the resort.

PRIVATE ISLANDS

The Turks & Caicos boast several private island hideaways, which typically include a melange of private homes and resort accommodations, including beachfront villas and fully furnished suites. Since access is restricted via private airstrip or dedicated boat transfers, they offer the ultimate in peace, privacy and security.

Parrot Cay (www.parrotcay.como.bz) is one such private island in the chain of

Caicos Cays, accessible via a gorgeous 35 minute sea journey from a private dock at Provo's Leeward Going Through. The main resort includes 45 rooms and suites, with four poster beds and private sun decks, while the 12 stand-alone beach villas include private pools and butlers. (Also available are large, privately owned homes for rent.) The cay, a pirate's hide-out in the early 1700s, is traced with sheer



World-class spas make pampering a natural part of your holiday.

white sand beach, shimmering turquoise waters and exquisite snorkeling, while the east exposure boasts a tranquil mangrove shoreline and excellent fishing. On site is the world-renowned COMO Shambhala Retreat featuring Asian-inspired holistic therapies, with nine treatment rooms, including private cottages and pavilions, overlooking the peaceful wetlands, rich with birdlife. Guests end to congregate around the 5,500 sq. ft. infinity pool and Lotus Pool Bar; dining is a healthy pleasure at the poolside eatery or Mediterranean-inspired Terrace restaurant.

OUT ISLANDS

Journeying "off the beaten path" to North, Middle or South

Caicos or Salt Cay will allow you to experience undistilled Turks & Caicos at its best. Here, you will find small, laid-back guesthouses typically run by the local owners. Besides simplicity and tranquility, be prepared to experience the country from an Islander's perspective. For more information on these properties, visit the official site of the Turks & Caicos Tourist Board (www.turksandcaicostourism.com).

One thing hasn't changed as the Turks & Caicos expands its lodging options: the endemic good nature, ready smile and easy style of Turks & Caicos Islanders that charmed its original visitors continues and extends to the new generation of multi-national service staff. Providing a personal touch, attending to individual needs and doing whatever it takes to ensure a satisfying holiday remain the goals of everyone in the hospitality industry.



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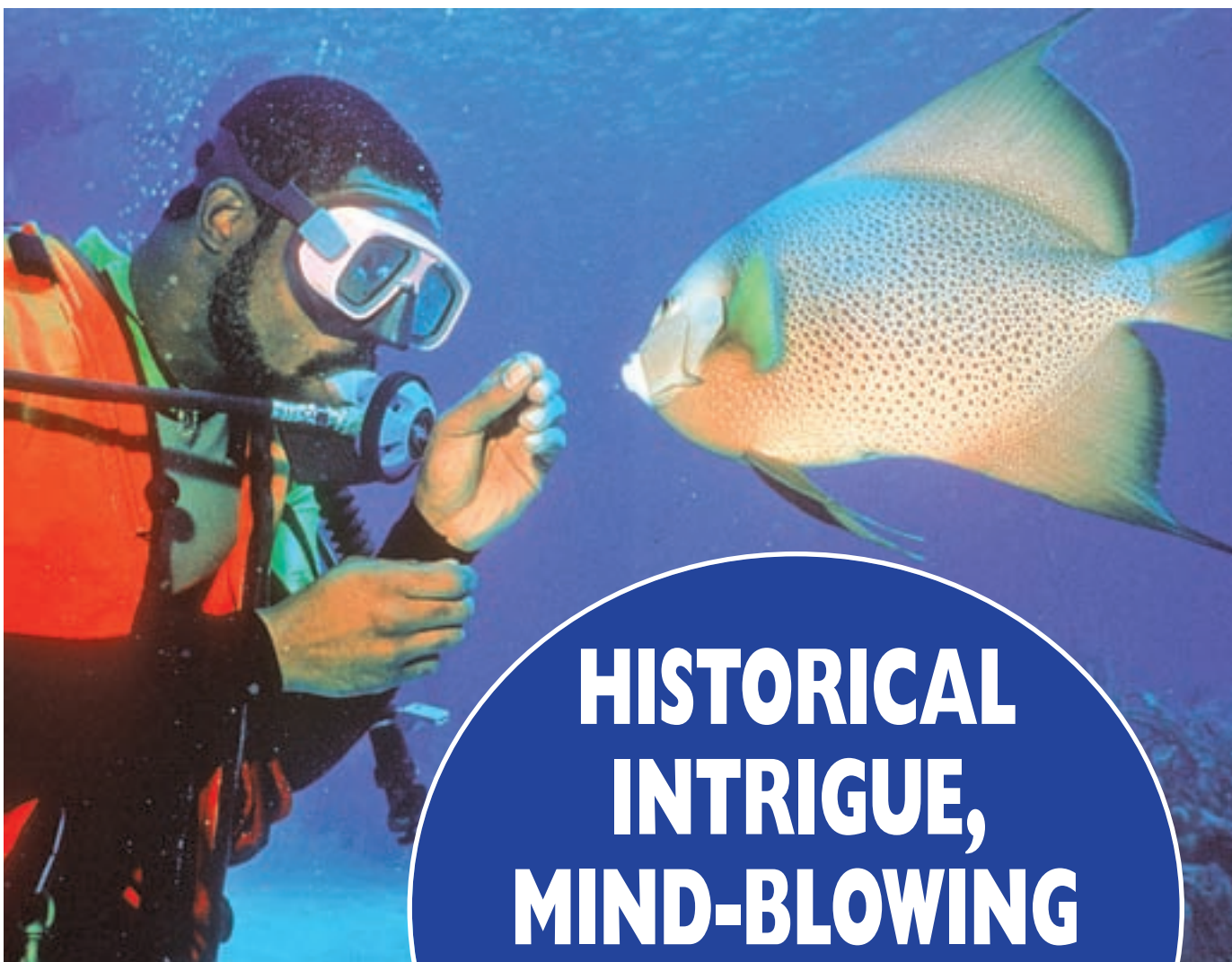
SERENITY FOUND

Far from the anxieties of work exists a place where you can forget the world you've left behind. Its name is Parrot Cay, a private island in the Turks and Caicos where endless sand merges with cobalt water in empty vistas as far as the eye can see. This is a place where a knowing few escape to the Caribbean sun, with Asian-style service, an award-winning holistic spa, world-class yoga and exquisite, healthful cuisine. From your beach house we urge you to dip a toe in the water of paradise found—a land of lost content where you can fall in love all over again.



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Close encounters with the marine world are common when scuba diving on Grand Turk's renowned walls and reefs.

HISTORICAL INTRIGUE, MIND-BLOWING DIVING

GRAND TURK IS THE
PLACE FOR BOTH

A trip to Turks & Caicos Islands' capital feels like you've stepped onto a movie set. (It's true, Grand Turk has been the site of several films.) It's a drama scripted in the days of sea captains and salt rakers, who built from salvaged ship parts many of the historic buildings in Cockburn Town today. Stone walls, ornamental gateposts, shady verandas and shutter-lined windows recall the Bermudian Colonial era when the island was a major salt-producing center.

Visitors fly via domestic plane from Provo (Air Turks & Caicos, www.airturksandcaicos.com) to JAGS McCartney International Airport, its sleek style mirroring Grand Turk's former cutting edge status as a US Navy and Air Force base in the era of the Cold War and space exploration. (Look for a replica of John Glenn's Friendship 7 space capsule outside the airport.)

Most visitors come for the diving, which has achieved legendary status among aficionados of the rare and wonderful. Sites within the Columbus Landfall National Park include mind-blowing walls less than 1/4 mile from shore and visits to the reefs by such rare creatures as sea horses and frogfish. Several long-established operators offer the full range of dive services; all friendly and personalized, with small groups the norm.

Both Grand Turk and Salt Cay are a good base for whale-watching from January to March, as humpback whales migrate through the Columbus Passage.

Bohio Dive Resort (www.bohioresort.com), nestled among the palms and casuarina trees on Guanahani Beach, of-

fers great value in accommodations, with charming, modern rooms and suites providing uninterrupted ocean views, just steps from the beach. Best of all, everything you need to enjoy your holiday is available in one idyllic spot. Bohio features on-site dive services (with diving right off the beach or minutes away by boat), beachfront bars, a world-class restaurant, spa services and as much sun and sea as you can cope with — all in a friendly atmosphere with caring service typically provided by on-site owners, Kelly and Gerhard.

All-inclusive packages include seven nights in a beachfront room, five days of two-tank boat dives, breakfast and lunch daily in the **Guanahani Restaurant**, inter-island flights and airport transfers.

The **Osprey Beach Hotel** (www.ospreybeachhotel.com) is located in the heart of Grand Turk's picturesque historic district, yet is also directly on the beach. Spacious, well-appointed rooms and suites boast breathtaking views of the western shore or colorful tropical courtyard, while from ground floor patios you step right on the sand. The popular **Birdcage Bar and Restaurant** offers drinks and dining around a lovely pool, with spectacular sunsets on the ocean horizon. Wednesdays and Saturdays are the famous BBQ nights with live music from island legend Mitch and the High

Tide Band. With reasonable December 2010 rates from \$175 + tax per night for a beachfront king room, the Osprey Beach is an affordable getaway. They also book scuba diving packages with all three Grand Turk dive shops starting at just \$75/day. Whether you travel via taxi, rental car, golf cart or bicycle, no

encounter with live conch, and the chance to learn about conch lore, history and farming in the undersea pastures. Put your appetite to the test at the Conch Café & Bar, featuring a selection of local conch and fish fare; the Pink Pearl Gift Shop sells "all things conch and more."

Stamp collectors never miss a stop at the Philatelic Bureau, as the Islands are known for their colorful and unusual issues.



Grand Turk's pristine underwater walls are a very short boat ride from shore.

trip around Grand Turk is complete without viewing the historic salinas just east of town (a common hangout for flamingos) or visiting the intriguing National Museum (www.tcmuseum.org). It is housed in 150+ year old Guinep Lodge, with well-done exhibits telling the tale of the Islands from their Lucayan roots through to modern times.

Another must-see is Conch World (www.conchworld.com), an exhibition of the country's famous Queen Conch. It includes conch-tastings (see why conch is called TCI "Viagra"), a close

The five year old Carnival Cruise Line's cruise ship terminal (www.grandturkcc.com) at Grand Turk's southwestern end dwarfs the scale of the small island, especially when a massive ship is docked at port and thousands are disembarking. The cruise center's 13-acre recreation complex includes a white sand beach, huge swimming pool, FlowRider surfing ride, 45,000 square feet of duty-free shopping and the Caribbean's largest "Margaritaville" themed bar and restaurant. Also on offer are nearly 20 shore excursions, ranging from bus tours to the restored prison and 1852 lighthouse, to beach horseback riding, snorkeling, kayaking and trips to Gibb's Cay to swim with friendly stingrays.

Beyond the Fruits of the Sea

TCI dining serves a gastronomic surprise



You'll be pleased at the variety and sophistication of Turks & Caicos dining choices and venues.

If you expect an ocean-encircled island chain to have little on the menu but the fruits of the sea, Turks & Caicos restaurants will serve up a gastronomic surprise! As cosmopolitan as their chefs, you'll find eateries offering specialties from around the globe. And with fresh seafood a given, expect nothing less than an innovative rendition of the catch of the day.

Conch, lobster and scalefish such as grouper or snapper are about the only indigenous foodstuffs in the Turks & Caicos Islands. Of course, Islanders "back in the days" grew field corn (for grits), vegetables and tropical fruits to feed their families, but most basic and all exotic ingredients must be imported from overseas.

This makes the variety of menu options available, especially among Providenciales' 70+ eateries, all the more amazing. Selections in the upscale dining rooms rival those anywhere in the world, with an international array of top chefs interweaving Caribbean-based ingredients and flavors with those of other nations, creating a true "TCI fusion" cuisine.

For instance, at the popular **Mango Reef Restaurant** (www.mangoreef.com), guests at the Royal West Indies Resort and residents alike enjoy fare that combines Caribbean, European and Asian styles in a casual poolside location. The comfortable bar is the ideal place to catch up on local gossip. Look for the three course, fixed price menu which highlights fresh local lobster in a Thai-influenced curry and ends with a French *corolle* (filled tart shell) for dessert.

Guests staying at either of the Ocean Club Resorts (www.oceanclubresorts.com) have three restaurants to choose from. **Opus** is the elegant option, where local conch appears as conch ceviche, lobster is served grilled with habanero butter and sizzling steaks come in a cognac mushroom sauce. As in many TCI establishments, Opus has a wine cellar to rival any metropolis, and serves a variety of wines by the glass around its beautiful mahogany bar. The **Seaside Café and Cabana Bar & Grille** are Ocean Club Resorts' casual ocean/beachfront venues, serving breakfast, lunch and light dinners, with special menus for kids. Favorites include a trio platter of conch fritters, cracked conch and fish fingers, fresh local conch

salad, fish tacos and signature hamburgers.

The **Bagatelle Bistrot + Beach Lounge** (www.gansevoortturksandcaicos.com), at the über chic Gansevoort Turks + Caicos, is the place to see and be seen, whether at an intimate gourmet dinner by the pool or in air-conditioned comfort at the sleek indoor dining room. Chef Antoine Harding works magic on local conch, lobster and fresh grouper, snapper and mahi mahi in his innovative French-Mediterranean fusion cuisine. The superb breakfast buffet is complimentary to hotel guests. Salads, light grilled items, bar snacks (including an assortment of French meats, cheeses and dried fruit) and frosty beverages are available at the Beach Bar + Grill during the day.

You can't get much closer to the beach than the venerable **Hemingway's** restaurant and bar (www.thesandstc.com) at The Sands Resort. Watching the sunset from the covered oceanfront dining room or outdoor dune deck as glowing tiki lanterns light your table adds a romantic ingredient to any holiday. Here, Caribbean-prepared seafood, especially fresh grouper, is a specialty, although the famous "Papa Burger" and jerk chicken vie for the top spot at lunch.

Breakfast at the **Atlantic Bar & Grill** (www.thewestbayclub.com) at The West Bay Club, features a unique blend of coffee specially roasted for the resort, adding to the beautiful poolside dining area to make it a pleasure to rise and shine. Seafood figures prominently on the casual lunch and more sophisticated dinner menus, including innovative items such as a conch in a blanket pastry appetizer, fish fajitas and wasabi crusted tuna, all created by an international team of chefs working the open air grill and kitchen.

At the **Alexandra Resort** (www.alexandraresort.com), the Sunset Dining Deck is a popular spot to enjoy lunch (don't miss the conch chowder), afternoon cocktails and watch the sun sink into Grace Bay. Each Monday, the restaurant hosts the wildly popular Caribbean Cookout, featuring seafood, grilled chicken and jerk pork, along with a complimentary rum punch or house drink, all seasoned with a dash of live Caribbean music.

Whether during your holiday or carried back home, be sure to sample local Bambarra Rum, "the spirit of the Turks & Caicos." It's a basic ingredient in most bartenders' exotic specialty drinks. Beer drinkers can whet their whistle with the libations of the local Turks Head Brewery. Connoisseurs appreciate Turks Select Cigars, a natural-wrapped premium cigar created just for the Islands.

Want to "go native" for a meal or two? A popular pleasure is fresh-from-the-shell conch salad served from seaside huts on the beach. In one of dozens of local restaurants (ask your taxi driver or hotel staff), you'll find conch 'n' grits, pea soup 'n' dough, minced lobster, boiled grouper and johnnycake, steamed fish and chicken or pork souse — all typically sided with piles of peas 'n' rice, macaroni and cheese and fried plantain. In season, you can buy fresh avocados, mangos and other tropical fruits from roadside stands.

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Yes, fishing is truly exciting in the TCI's bountiful waters, although not every catch may be this big!

Keeping Busy in Paradise

SUN, SAND AND SEA

No doubt, the sand and sea are the focus of most Turks & Caicos visitors' plans — whether active and exciting (snorkeling, scuba diving, parasailing, wind surfing, fishing, sailing, boating or jet skiing), or calm and relaxing (dozing in a beach lounge with frosty glass at hand).

And speaking of beaches... Grace Bay Beach, a glorious span of ivory sand stretching along Provo's north shore, is the country's most famous, consistently ranked among the best in the world by travel writers and visitors alike. It seems to have that perfect combination of sugary sand, expansive vistas and sun-flavored sea breezes, besides remaining relatively uncrowded. Many of the resorts are here, each with their own oasis of lounge chairs, beach umbrellas and water play toys. (These days, amenities also include chilled towels, rum punch and waiter-served sorbet.) This

beach is part of the Princess Alexandra National Park, which extends east all the way to the Caicos Cays.

Snorkeling and scuba diving in the Islands' calm, clear waters are especially popular. There are easily accessible snorkeling sites



At Gibb's Cay, divers can swim with friendly manta rays.

along Providenciales' protected north shore (Coral Gardens Reef is marked with an underwater trail) with fairyland coral formations and the bustle of marine life from grouper to goby.

The Turks & Caicos continues to be on the "A list" for diving with an intoxicating liquid blend of dramatic deep water walls and healthy reefs, populated with a thriving assortment of marine creatures, including ever-popular pelagics. Visibility hovers in the 60 to 120 foot range; water temperatures from 75 to 88°F. Dive sites are never more than a short boat trip away and experienced dive operators typically keep groups small and personal, with

an emphasis on eco-education.

Must-dos on Providenciales include the walls at Northwest Point and West Caicos, where the ocean floor makes the plunge from double digits into bottomless blue. Suspenseful swim-throughs, psychedelic sponges, black coral trees and regular encounters with rays, sharks and turtles are part of a typical trip. For a change of scene, there are the sites within the Princess Alexandra National Park, featuring shallower reefs rich in soft corals, sponges and a collegiate of fish. Of special interest is Provo's exciting and pristine "South Side," including French Cay and Molasses Reef.

Are there young children in your family? A semi-submarine or glass-bottom boat tour is your solution. The semi-sub features an air-conditioned undersea viewing chamber that introduces you to the reef at eye level, while the glass-bottom boat reveals a fish-eye's view — without getting wet. You can also investigate SNUBA, a family-friendly alternative that lets you breathe underwater without carrying a tank on your back.

There's something magical about skimming over the sea by boat, whether wind or motor driven. Public and private sailing

and motorboat charters offer trips from two hours to all day, featuring snorkeling, shelling and iguana island stops, fresh-caught beach lunches of lobster (in season) and conch salad, and even romantic sunset and gourmet dinner cruises.

If you like to chart your own course, rent a sportboat (with or without captain) or personal wave runner. These let you explore the shoreline, discover a private beach or explore a tiny cay at your leisure. Closer to home, many resorts keep sunfish, hobie cats, kayaks and other water toys parked on the beach for guests.

Fishing of any kind is truly FUN in the Turks & Caicos Islands. With the surrounding waters replete with reef and game fish, endless waits for an elusive "nibble" are rare and plentiful catches the norm. Fishing charter captains are eager to share their

best spots and it won't be long before you're pulling in hungry snapper, grouper, yellowfin and other browsers. Bonefishing on the expansive flats of the Caicos Banks (from Providenciales to



Many T&C resorts have tennis courts.

South Caicos) or near shore shallows is legendary. Anglers lure these skittery slices of silver by spin casting or fly rod and rarely end the day without a fight at hand.

Summertime attracts a different school of angler — those seeking the blue water thrills of billfishing. TCI waters are notable for the number and size of blue marlin and the annual Caicos Classic billfish tournament (www.caicosclassic.com) on Providenciales, scheduled for

July 8-13, 2011 and Game Fishing Tournament in Grand Turk, held in June, draw sportsfishers from near and far. Deep sea fishing charters ranging from half day trips for beginners and families to full day events for those who take their fishing seriously are easily "hooked up."

The Islands' sporting life is no longer confined to activities that get you wet. Golfers flock to the challenging, tradewind-swept 18 championship holes at the Provo Golf & Country Club. Most resorts have private, lit tennis courts and the Provo Tennis Club is open to guests. With most of Providenciales' main roads now paved, bicycling is a pleasant way to see the island. Fulfilling many a fantasy of young and old is the chance to enjoy the beach from the back of a horse, with side trips through the less-travelled island interior.

For more information, visit the official site of the Turks & Caicos Tourist Board (www.turksandcaicoistourism.com).

Walking Down the "Isle" in Turks & Caicos

WEDDING & HONEYMOON COMBINED

Every year, more couples are fulfilling the fantasy of combining wedding and honeymoon into the vacation of a lifetime in the Turks & Caicos Islands.

The Islands offer a huge choice of locations offering dream-like beauty. Imagine a beachfront ceremony with the shimmering silk of turquoise sea as your stage; a trail of footprints in soft sand tracing your wedding march and the setting sun's glow reflected in your rings. Or, picture your near and dear gathered under a gazebo or by the pool surrounded by the luxuriant tropical gardens of a typical Turks & Caicos resort, hotel or villa.

For the ultimate in privacy, sail the wedding party to an uninhabited cay or private island outpost. Other exotic (and utterly possible) sites include boat docks, private yachts or charter sailboats, jacuzzis and even underwater, garbed in scuba gear and using hand signals to say "I do." Of course, traditional church weddings are always an option too!

Because of the popularity of on-island visitors' marriages, a bouquet of service providers has blossomed to help a budding commitment be as trouble-free as possible. Wedding coordinators will assist from the pre-trip planning stages through to "I do" and the celebration afterwards. They can call on the services of local florists, bakers, hair

stylists, make-up artists, photographers, limousine chauffeurs, restaurateurs, caterers and entertainers to make it a truly "TCI" event.

Resorts and hotels are also well-rehearsed in host-

Let the island trade-winds refresh your imagination. Why not have the bridal shower at one of the country's world-class spas, with a facial or nail treatment for each guest?



The Turks & Caicos offers dozens of beautiful and distinctive places to say "I do" . . . and enjoy the honeymoon afterwards.

ing weddings, whether small or grand, homespun or celebrity. Many offer wedding packages and can handle as much of the preparation as you care to delegate. These include: Gansevoort Turks + Caicos (www.gansevoortturksandcaicos.com), which offers the opportunity to work with celebrity party planner David Tutera; Ocean Club Resorts (www.oceanclubresorts.com); Royal West Indies (www.royalwestindies.com). For the ultimate splurge, you can even "buy-out" the entire private island of Parrot Cay (www.parrotcay.com.bz), pending availability, of course.

A day of deep sea fishing with the guys makes a great bachelor's party for the groom. Hold the rehearsal dinner on a sailboat at sunset. Let a local band "rake 'n' scrape" the night away at your post-nuptial party.

Legally speaking, it's simple and straightforward to get married in the TCI, with local marriage officers available. Most importantly, you must be resident in the Islands for at least 48 hours before you apply for your marriage license; it is typically issued one or two days later. For more information, visit www.turksandcaicoistourism.com.

COMBINING BUSINESS WITH PLEASURE

Opportunity Abounds in Turks & Caicos

If you think you'd like to extend your Turks & Caicos vacation . . . perhaps permanently . . . you'll join the ranks of visitors turned expatriates, who have chosen to do business, retire or enjoy a second home in idyllic surroundings.

In the Turks & Caicos, you'll find a unique business environment: besides the sea and sand at your front door and a climate of perpetual sunny days, there are currently no direct taxes on either income or capital for individuals or companies. This means no capital gains tax, no sales tax and no income tax. U.S. currency is the legal tender, and there are no exchange controls. TCI enjoys duty-free access to Canadian markets and privileged access to European Union markets. TCI is an Associate member of CARICOM, and is eligible for designation as a beneficiary country under the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) of the United States.

The Islands' long-established financial service sector is characterized by modern offshore legislation and personal, expert service, with a range of sophisticated products — including company structures, trusts, mutual funds and captive insurance and reinsurance companies — useful for investors and corporate and family situations. Incorporation in the TCI is cost-effective, provides a high degree of confidentiality and advantageous tax planning.

TCInvest (www.tcinvest.tc) is an independent agency charged with attracting and facilitating investment. They are your first stop to submit a pro-

posed project, look for ideas and plot the way forward. Once approved, government may grant concessions such as duty exemptions, long term leases on Crown Land, aid in obtaining work permits for employees and the granting of Permanent Residence Certificates to select investors. Future opportunities abound in mariculture, manufacturing, agriculture and technology.

The TCI real estate market continues to be active, with prices stabilizing from years of skyrocketing values. With a wide selection of homes, villas, condominiums, townhomes, vacant land and commercial properties on offer, it is currently a buyer's market, and a good time to take the first step in property ownership. In TCI, the market is open to everyone, and any nationality may purchase and hold land. There is no property tax or other cost of holding land, nor capital gains or other taxes when you sell.

For your investment and planning needs, the Islands have knowledgeable personnel in all business areas, including the Turks & Caicos Real Estate Association (www.tcrea.com), which operates a comprehensive multiple listing system, international accounting firms and banks, legal firms, architects, contractors and engineers.

No matter what your future holds, you'll find TCI's infrastructure, including two new, modern medical centers, a stable electricity and water supply, and superb telecommunications options, of a high standard for the Caribbean.

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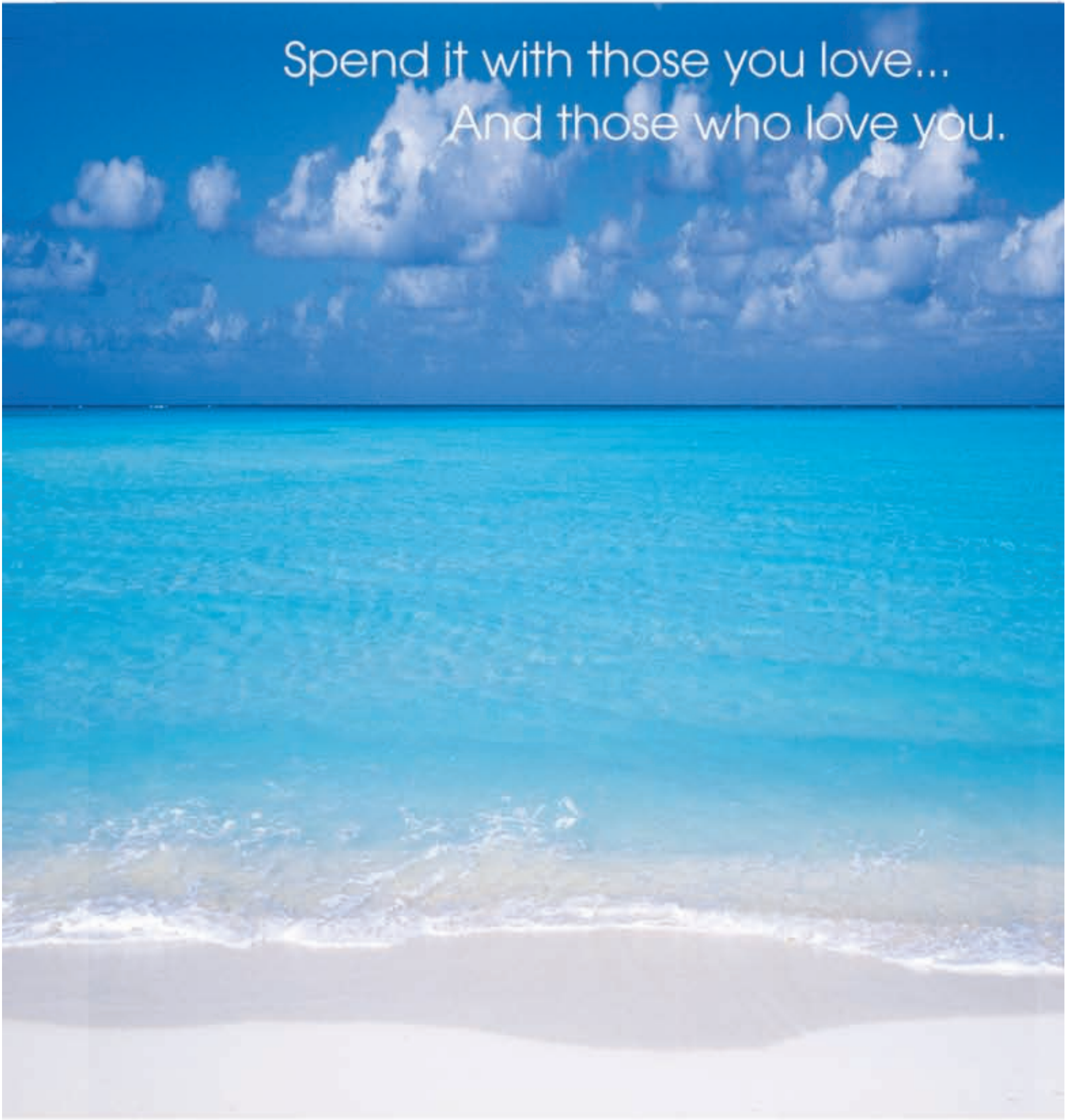
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