

The Beverly Hills Of The Caribbean Beckons With The Christopher St. Barth

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“Oh, that’s the Beverly Hills of the Caribbean,” insisted a local. I had mentioned I was taking the ferry over to St. Barts, the French Caribbean island about a 50 minute ferry ride from St. Martin, one of the main islands of 700 or so in the Caribbean that serves as portal to more, like St. Barts. “Is that so?” I responded. The truth was: I had never really heard of St. Barts. Maybe this was another “silly American” moments where I just had no clue of something existing. Maybe it was like French people not knowing, perhaps, how stunning Maui was. I perched on the bow of the ferry in anticipation of taking in the island rendition of Beverly Hills.



Soon enough, the red tiled roofs of Gustavia, the main town of St. Barts, came lazily into view from the ferry deck. So did the marquees of Prada, Louis Vuitton, Bulgari, Dolce & Gabbana, and other luxury brands. These brands also exist in Beverly Hills, of course, and just like the famed Los Angeles destination, I soon learned celebrities stroll the streets in St. Barts as well. But the brands and celebrities are where the similarities fade between Beverly Hills and the dreamy French favored destination. St Barts is distinctly French, fanciful, and full of 5 star gem resorts, including perhaps the most dazzling of all, the [Christopher St. Barth](#).

So named after Christopher Columbus with a modern three sails logo to match, the Christopher is the kind of property one has to indeed discover. The hotel is found down below the winding hills of Pointe Milou, one of St. Bart's most well-heeled neighborhoods dotted with mega villas that overlook the shimmering ocean. Even from the small driveway, one might mistake the entry

of the Christopher, a discreet and modern entry way of white awnings and impeccable landscaping of palms and birds of paradise. As I headed around the corner from the lobby area, I had one of those gleeful moments of surprise, the kind you clap your hands for. Right on ocean shore, the Christopher boasts one of the most coveted spots for sunsets of the island, particularly from the massive vanishing edge pool, the centerpiece of the hotel. It was sunset when I arrived, and it was quite a discovery of delight.

Any sunset, I learned, can also be savored from the Christopher's [42 rooms and suites in addition to the three new four bedroom](#) private villas, just completed in 2020. As every room faces the ocean, the Christopher makes sure you have no excuse to skip nature's spectacular daily show. Even the spa, co-branded with the famed French luxury label, Sisley, has five treatments rooms that all overlook the ocean. Make sure to give yourself extra time to enjoy the teak wood deck after a treatment or "ritual" package as well, another aspect of what makes the Christopher a great example of joie de vivre, the French phrase for "exuberant enjoyment of life."



It wouldn't be very French to not have a fantastic restaurant on site, and the Christopher delivers in the culinary realm perhaps strongest of all. Opened this fall, [RIVYERA](#) is an open air concept led by Chef Arnaud Faye, a two-time Michelin star chef who gained a following while at The Ritz Paris and the Mandarin Oriental soon after. Details are paramount to Faye, and they show in the menus' butter-soft paper, the restaurant's exclusively French sound track, the colorful plates by French designer Agnes Sandahl, the chic uniforms of the servers, and even a just-barely-there floral scent that waifs through the restaurant, designed by French perfumer, Julie Quosentis, of course. The cuisine is equally thoughtful with several standouts. I asked Faye to send out his favorites, which included an outstanding risotto of the day (eggplant during my visit), a delicate watermelon "crudo," and a seared tuna with grilled avocado I thought only California could dare to match. Dessert, never to be missed at a French restaurant with a well trained pastry chef, was excellent, too. Go for the "runny heart" chocolate soufflé that melts upon arrival.

St Barts is certainly on my radar now. It's the kind of destination one returns to year upon year, as the French do with a relatively quick 8 hour flight. For a classic St Barts stay, the Christopher is a top choice. Joie de vivre, one could say.