



YOUR BEST SHOT

## After the rain

Reader Marc Buncher of Southlake took this picture in California's Napa Valley. Submit your photos online at [DallasNews.com/travel](http://DallasNews.com/travel).

LOOK INSIDE

the fold of Travel for this week's Sunday Life and Sunday New Homes

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## SPECIAL REPORT: THE CARIBBEAN



The 15-room resort at Guana Island, British Virgin Islands, overlooks a beach that ranks with the Caribbean's loveliest and most tranquil.

# Island hide-outs

Sunny sanctuaries offer a tranquil antidote to bustling resorts

Stories and photographs by DAVID SWANSON  
Special Contributor

Searching for a true Caribbean hideaway? If you define your tropical escape as something beyond swim-up bars and limbo contests, read on.

After dozens of trips that have taken me to every inhabited island in the Caribbean, and after well over a thousand hotel inspections, I've found what I prefer.

Hint: It's not 300-room, cookie-cutter chain resorts.

Here and on Page 31 are five one-of-a-kind hide-outs that provide true escape for city-weary travelers. These outposts require a little extra effort to reach, and once you've arrived, you'll want a book—or two—to fill the time one might normally spend on vacation trolling duty-free shops or conquering a golf course. These understated Caribbean hideaways are all about rest and renewal.

### PRIVACY OPTION:

#### Guana Island, British Virgin Islands

Four more resorts, 31

An 850-acre islet a half-mile off Tortola, Guana Island is also a 15-room resort built in the 1930s.

Spinkled over the saddle of a breezy ridge several hundred feet above sea level, rooms are positioned at varying distances from the main lodge. Each room has a terrace, one of them utterly private, furnished with wicker and framed with oleander and frangipani.

The food at Guana is straightforward, unfussy and satisfying. Dinner is served at shared or individual tables; seats are assigned each afternoon. The arrangement works well to introduce Guana's new guests to loyal repeaters. Most of them are worldly and secure enough in their fortunes not to require pampering at every turn, and intriguing enough for far-reaching conversation. A well-stocked honor bar is a gathering place at sunset.

If evenings are convivial, it's easy to find privacy during the day. White Bay is a luminous, one-third-mile-long beach that ranks with the Caribbean's loveliest and

most tranquil (it's a steep five-minute walk, or two-minute shuttle ride, from the rooms down to the sand). But there are six more coves ringing Guana's shores. Most are reached only by ambitious trail or boat; excursions are arranged on request and include a picnic lunch if you like.

There are miles of trails to explore, along with tennis courts, snorkeling, kayaks, sailboats and windsurfing.

If tuxedoed waiters and air conditioning are what you seek, Guana Island isn't the ideal escape. Wildlife is more common than night life. But for those who like their lodgings immersed in the "natural Caribbean," Guana is a touchstone for relaxation.

Double rates are \$650 per day in summer, \$895 in winter, plus 17 percent tax, and include three meals daily, wine with meals, afternoon tea and non-motorized watersports. Contact: 1-800-544-8262; [www.guana.com](http://www.guana.com).

