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# PARADISE FOUND

AVENUE's associate editor Mi Mi Chloe Park dispatches from Turks and Caicos.

## Perfect escape

Turks and Caicos is without a doubt one of the most pristine Caribbean islands, and its unrivaled white sands and uncrowded beaches make it one of my favorite short getaways from New York. Interestingly enough, Turks and Caicos happens to be in the Atlantic Ocean, making its marine life diverse and interesting to observe if you are a licensed rescue diver such as myself. But it's the hospitality and warmth of the people who inhabit the island that make this place unparalleled to other tropical destinations.



Grace Bay Club from the Estates

## Lap of luxury

For this particular trip I stayed at Grace Bay Club, which has the largest beachfront access in all of Turks and Caicos, and is divided into three separate sections for various types of travelers, to ensure maximum privacy and enjoyment. Interiors are designed by Thom Filicia.



Chef Lefevre's mahi mahi



Sunset at Grace Bay Club

## For the foodies

I went to Turks and Caicos for the fourth annual Caribbean Food & Wine Festival. This weeklong celebration of Caribbean culture and cuisine brought together both Michelin-star and local chefs and welcomed chefs such as Leah Cohen of New York's Pig and Khao, and David Lefevre, formerly of Spain's El Bulli and now of California's Manhattan Beach Post. Every meal was accompanied by wine pairings from renowned vintners such as the Weingut Salz! Seewinkelhof in Austria. This not-for-profit event raises funds for the Department of Youth Affairs and the island's Little Chefs mentorship program, which supports and encourages young local chefs to pursue careers in hospitality. The festival also offers a gourmet safari excursion, a local street food fair and dinner under the stars, where you can enjoy a meal with the premier and the first lady of Turks and Caicos.

## Expert tips

When visiting Turks and Caicos, book a boat ride with Island Vibes for a unique experience of conch fishing. You can literally jump off the boat, dive for some fresh conch in the ocean and enjoy a wonderfully fresh ceviche on white beaches, prepared by the captain and his crew. The conch fry on Thursday nights is also a big draw for locals if you're looking for a more authentic and down-to-earth experience. Grace Bay Club also offers free bike rentals, so feel free to roam around this beautiful island or book a massage on the beach. If you're craving for a late night snack, indulge in off-menu items such as chocolate salt sprinkled over a frozen banana from room service. Also stop by Mr. Grouper in town for the best mango chutney salsa and rice and beans. Finally, enjoy Turks and Caicos rum; it's incredibly smooth: You won't regret it, or you might!

## Worth your salt

Turks was known up until the '60s as being one of the world's top salt producers; try to bring back a bottle of this export. And keep your eye out for a little guidebook that resembles a passport; the TCI Tourist Passport has insider tips from islander Alison Capron.



Freshly caught conch



Junkanoo parade

## I can't travel without

My Kora Organics moisturizer and Lavender face mist! These products adhere in any extreme climate. A disposable camera is also a must; capture candid moments and leave your phone in your room. Pack a good book and unplug! ✨