

Caribbean - Dominica - Pointe Baptiste

We immediately fell in love with this historic house full of charm set in 25 Acres of beautiful gardens with views over the sea and plenty of beaches nearby. in a beautiful part of North West Dominica. The site in the remote North West part of Dominica is spectacular and the buildings although far from luxurious are full of character, charm and local history. As far from tourist development as you can get in the Caribbean, Pointe Baptiste estate is a private domain with a main house and a small cottage. The two can be rented together or separately. There are miles of shoreline and the grounds, include two beaches, one of white sand and the other a black sand beach within five minutes walk of the house and gardens. The most popular swimming area is the pool between the white sand beach and an island little way off shore. The reefs off Black Beach are good for snorkelling, with many colourful fish.

The main house

The main house commands a spectacular ocean view from the long verandah. From here you can see across the Guadeloupe Channel to the French Islands of Marie Gallante, the Saintes and Guadalupe. The House is ideal for 6 persons, but will comfortably accommodate 8 persons. There are 4 bedrooms and three bathrooms, including one self contained room on the ground floor. Two of the upstairs bedrooms look out over the sea as does the ground floor room. Two of the rooms have double beds, the master bedroom has a double which can be converted into two singles and the downstairs bedroom has two singles. Other beds are available, in the sitting room, verandah and end passage room if required. Extra charges may apply for numbers over 6. There is a large fan-cooled sitting room with antique furniture, extensive library and dining area. In addition guests have a well equipped kitchen and scullery. Maid and cook are available. To the east side of the house there is a cool tiled terrace.

Small House: has double bed which can be converted to two single beds.

There is also a single bed in a passage room, as well as a sofa that can be made into a bed in the living room and also on the veranda.

Small House

The small house is set amongst gardens. From here there are views of the white sand beach and the ocean. The house is ideal for 2 persons, there is a double bed which can be converted into two singles and an extra bed available for a child. In addition there is an inside washroom with hot water, a kitchen, as well as a tiled open back terrace to enjoy the sun and the view. An additional shower and toilet may be reached from the outside. For part of the year this house is occupied by a charming American couple who manage and maintain the house.

History

The estate was founded by the Napier family who still own the house today. The small house was built first in 1930 followed by the main house constructed using pitch-pine imported from Canada in order to provide maximum protection against hurricanes. Much attention was paid to the gardens and to beautifying the estate. The beaches in those days were strictly private and bathing suits were often dispensed with. There were no roads to the south of the island so journeys to Roseau involved driving to Portsmouth and then a three hour boat journey along the leeward coast, stopping at villages on the way. When her husband died, Elma Napier lived on for 33 years at Pointe Baptiste, writing several books and taking over his interest in community affairs, eventually having her portrait on a postage stamp as being the first woman to be elected to a West Indian legislature.

Over the years the house has been visited by many famous writers and artists and Pointe Baptiste itself has remained unspoiled. The adjacent village of Calibishie is still one of the loveliest and most friendly on the island. In a world which is becoming increasingly uniform, it remains a place which is different amid an environment of outstanding natural beauty.

Food

There is both a cook and a maid at the house. There is no extra charge for their services. Food and drinks can be bought in the local village but for a wider selection a visit to Roseau or Portsmouth is necessary. There are several friendly but simple restaurants in the village.

Transport

The airport of Melville Hall is only 20 minutes from the house. We recommend that you hire a car for your stay to allow you to explore this wonderful island. This can be easily arranged for you before or on arrival. Alternatively there are good bus services around the island if you have time and it is a great way to really mix with local people.

Flora and Fauna

Pointe Baptiste Estate, part of which is scheduled to become a nature reserve, contains some of the finest littoral woodland in the Caribbean, with massive white cedars, galba, balata and a host of other tree species. Around both houses an artistically kept tropical garden is a pleasure to see and to smell in the night Jasmine and Ylang –Ylang. Around the estate are to be found breadfruit and bread nuts, mangoes, avocados, carambolas, grapefruit, orange and lime trees, as well as bananas, plantain, dasheen, tannia and passion fruit, Coconuts, Almond and sea grapes grow near the beaches. Bird life is plentiful with finches, bananaquit and many species of humming bird, as well

as sand pipers on the beach along with doves and the local pipere. Heron, osprey and frigate birds are often to be observed. Crabs and Lizards of many types and sizes are plentiful, manicoou are occasionally to be seen, and vivid black and yellow caterpillars are a feature at certain seasons, feeding off alamanda and frangipani leaves.

Walks

There are interesting walks to be taken from the estate through woodland on to the extensive red rocks, where caves, canyons and blowholes are to be founded. Paths follow the coast to cliffs overlooking Calibishie Village and there are roads leading inland behind Calibishie and Woodford Hill villages and between the Penton and Hampstead rivers, eventually leading to virgin forest where parrots(the Sisserou and the Jacco) may be often observed. Near Anse de Mai, on the Portsmouth road, there is a road going inland to Bense Village, you will see the Sign : Chaudiere Falls, there is an attractive deep bathing pool with a waterfall at the confluent of the Hampstead and the Ti-branche rivers. The Chaudiere estate was formerly owned by the Napier family.

In the Calibishie area there are other beaches you may want to explore, they include Hampstead, Batibou, Hodges, Turtle Bay, and Woodford Hill. You will need directions and some type transport to visit them.

Client comments

"Pointe Baptiste was wonderful and relaxing, exactly what we needed after the first part of our stay at Papillote, where we did a lot of hiking."

"Pointe Baptiste was a wonderful experience. The Dominicans were extremely friendly and welcoming."

"For once the word 'uniqueness' was appropriate. What a marvellous place. Normally we never 'go back but this time we may make an exception."

"Dominica is so lush and gorgeous and within the island this house has a tranquil and beautiful setting - quite unique and very refreshing.

"An unspoiled piece of paradise. Enchanting, artistic setting. Pointe Baptiste is the best place to be. Thanks for another stay."

"What a fabulous place for adventures and for relaxing. The hikes into the interior were extraordinary."

"Each time we visit we find more reason to come back again".

Image Gallery

{gallery}Caribbean/Dominica/PointeBaptiste{/gallery}

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