

# A trio of island retreats

Are you having trouble deciding which St Lucia accommodation to recommend to your clients? *Katherine Lawrey* samples what's on offer at three resorts

## Ti Kaye Resort & Spa

I start my week in Ti Kaye Resort & Spa, an environmentally conscious retreat, midway up the west coast. With its roomy four-poster beds and candlelit dining, this is a hotel for lovers, just not party lovers. It's a remote property reached by a long access road. Ti Kaye staff can arrange day trips, and there's a weekly shuttle to Anse Le Ray's Friday fish fry. Come nightfall, we are marooned but then lively bars tend to be lower down the priority list when you're on honeymoon - as 80% of Ti Kaye's clientele are.



It's worth discussing the setting with clients. It's not a beachfront property - the gingerbread-style cottages are perched on the hillside. They all have ocean views, but the

beach is 166 steps down a boardwalk. Great for easing my guilt when I've over-indulged, but not for the elderly or infirm - although staff will give a lift to those who need it.

Once honeymooners give up their double hammock, they can try sailing, snorkeling and diving. Wine tasting in St Lucia's biggest wine cellar (3,500 bottles) is a sophisticated touch and the spa offers dramatic views and organic natural treatments.

**Book it:** Caribtours offers seven nights' B&B at Ti Kaye from £1,325pp, based on two sharing an Ocean View room, departing December 1-21. Price includes flights, private transfers and Gatwick lounge passes. ■ [caribtours.co.uk](http://caribtours.co.uk)

## Bay Gardens Beach Resort & Spa

There's a different vibe to Bay Gardens Beach Resort & Spa, a more social, family-oriented hotel fronting Reduit Beach in the north of the island. It looks out on to Rodney Bay, which teems with activity. There's a lagoon-style pool area, spa and fitness centre, playground and tour desk. The hotel is on the edge of Rodney Bay Village, which has a

wide choice of eateries and bars. Among the room selections are one and two-bedroom suites with kitchen/dining areas.

The bar area is lively at nighttime, the staff are friendly and the breakfast buffet a feast. I'm not so sold on my one-bedroom suite in a concrete block overlooking the pool - inside it feels less homely than others I've occupied in the Caribbean, and the bathroom has a whiff of drains.

But a room this size is intended to be filled with family paraphernalia. If Bay Gardens is around your clients' budget, it's a TripAdvisor favourite worth considering.

**Book it:** Virgin Holidays offers seven nights at Bay Gardens Beach Resort from £1,239pp, based on four sharing a deluxe room, based on March 31, 2015 departure. Price includes flights and island transfers. ■ [vhols4agents.co.uk](http://vhols4agents.co.uk)



## Sugar Beach, A Viceroy Resort

If Ti Kaye is the hotel where a future family is conceived, and Bay Gardens where budget-conscious parents first take their young children, then Sugar Beach is the inheritance-blowing option. It's hard to imagine a more magical setting, slap bang in between the Pitons. Guests are lodged in plantation-style villas - they each have a plunge pool and private patio screened off from the world by jungle foliage. My one-bedroom cottage has all the luxurious amenities I could wish for -

a roll-top bath, a walk-in double shower, iPod docking station, iPad, four-poster bed and butler service. On the first night I opt for room service, just so I can spend more time lounging around on the private patio. It feels like a home - a chic, expensive home of my dreams.

The next day, I enjoy one delicious gourmet experience after another: breakfast in The Terrace, lunch in the more casual Bayside venue, dinner in the Great House and a nightcap in The Cane Bar. This last specialises in rum and has a cutting-edge design that could place it in the heart of any

hip city. Between mealtimes, not much can pull me away from the wonderful view on the beach - and the attentive beach service - but the Rainforest Spa does it. One sublime facial later and I'm already spending my life savings on a return visit. Beg, borrow or steal the money - just make sure you come here.

**Book it:** ITC Luxury Travel offers seven nights' room-only at Sugar Beach from £2,179pp, based on two sharing a Sugar Mill room, departing December 3. Price includes flights and private transfers. ■ [itcluxurytravel.co.uk](http://itcluxurytravel.co.uk)