TRAVEL TRAVEL

INDULGE IN ISLAND LIFE

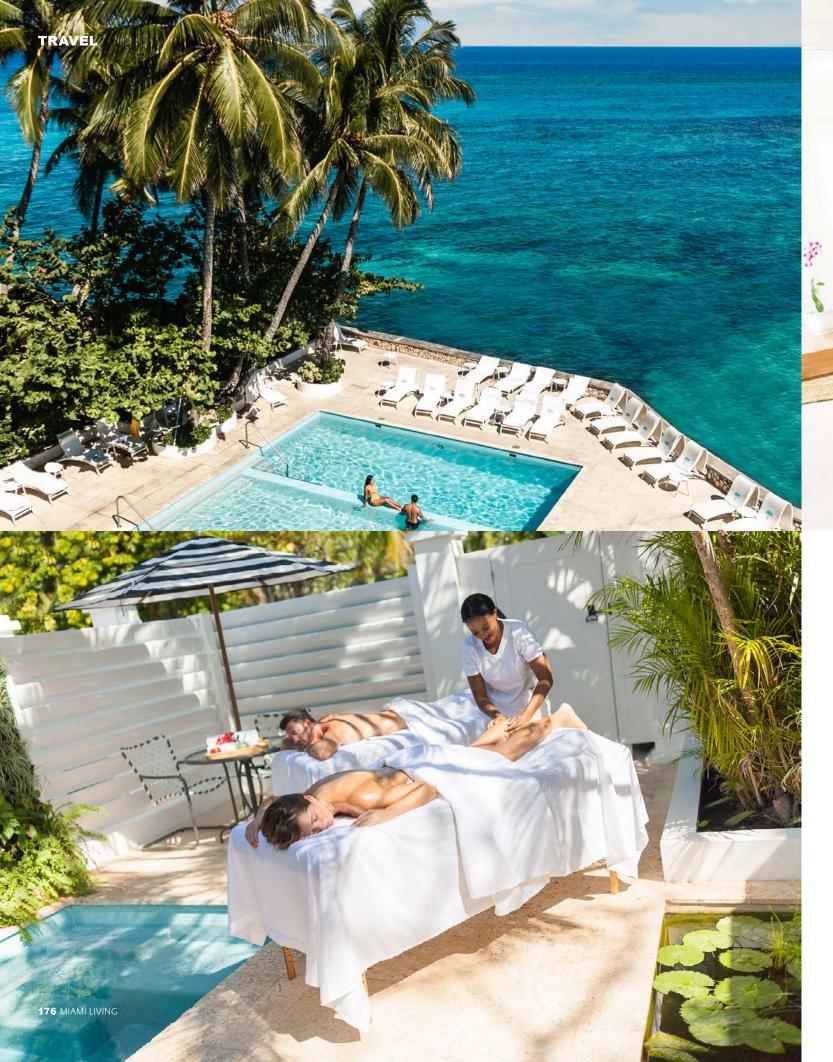
For unlimited spa treatments, exotic cuisines, and quality R&R, escape to Couples Resort Tower Isle Jamaica

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"The sun is shining, the weather is sweet. Make you want to move your dancing feet." -Bob Marley

s there anything more relaxing than watching the crashing waves of a blue-green sea on a sunny day? What's more delicious than the sweet taste of coconut mixed with rum or the soundtrack of the water meeting the sandy beach? It's a vibe, and it can be found at Couples Tower Isle Jamaica. Welcome to indulgent island life, where the food, libations, and spa services are limitless.

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I open the tall, white gate to uncover our intimate Signature Oasis Spa Villa. Wrapped within our fenced-in area is a tranquil sanctuary appointed with a personal plunge pool —heated to the alluring temperature of a hot tub— and an alfresco dining set —perfect for those mornings you want in-suite dining. Two lounge chairs sit in the shallow end of the pool, beckoning us to bask in the sun. At the other end of the terrace, there are walls of lush, green foliage and an outdoor shower. A steady breeze sweeps the island, causing the towering palms trees to emit a lulling swooshing sound. It's beautiful, private, peaceful.... Simply, it's paradise.

Inside our 639-square-foot villa are three rooms —a living room, bedroom, and bathroom— divided by white pocket doors. With its high ceilings, minimalist décor, and light color palette, the space feels serene and airy. The king-sized bed is appointed with a gorgeous wood carved headboard and is dressed in plush white bedding. There is an enormous walk-in shower with showerheads on either side, a dual vanity, a shampoo and body wash pump set, plus comfy bathrobes and slippers —to promote relaxation. The villa boasts flat screen TVs in the bedroom and living room, a Brita water pitcher (the eco-friendly resort has eliminated bottled water), a mini fridge stocked with soft drinks, bubbly, and a small selection of wine and liquor. The best part about these villas, in addition to the private, hot plunge pool, which is heavenly, is that you have access to unlimited spa services.

Outfitted in our bathrobes and slippers, we take a short, scenic walk through the manicured grounds to The Oasis Spa. Here, the spa concierge helps us schedule our spa services. I recommend that you book them sooner than later as space is limited. During our stay, we booked about two treatments a day. The awardwinning spa offers a nice selection of couples treatments, which we took full advantage of, as well as treatments (a variety of facials, massages, and body treatments) you can indulge in on your own. We enjoyed the Couples Seaweed Body Wrap, Couples 50-minute Aromatherapy Massage, Couples 50-minute Hot Stone Massage, Couples Facial, and Couples Manicure & Pedicure. The spa treatments are relaxing and rejuvenating, and the staff is friendly and accomodating. It's no wonder they were named Best Caribbean Hotel Spa by *Travel + Leisure*.

In addition to the private spa villas, there are two beachfront buildings that house 226 rooms and suites. There are four swimming pools and four jacuzzis at Tower Isle. Stay active during your trip and take advantage of their fitness center, tennis courts, beach volleyball, golf, and water sports, including scuba diving —all included. Across the way, there is a private au naturel island, which can be accessed by boat, simply coordinate with the hotel to explore it.

Tower Isle offers six different restaurants to satiate guests' discerning palates. For a light meal or snack, stop by the Pool

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Grill for all-day dining; this is where you'll find their tasty Jamaican beef patties. The Patio Restaurant is an open-air space with a buffet that serves an appetizing assortment of entrées for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. The perfect spot for breakfast, omelettes are made-to-order and crispy bacon and sausage are plentiful. They also offer Jamaican breakfast staples, cereals, yogurt, fresh juice, fruit, and an array of breads and sweet pastries. Smoothies, salads, sandwiches are available at The Veggie Bar. And if you prefer to stay in, there's in-suite dining. Get dolled up for dinner and experience the resort's three formal restaurants: The Verandah (continental fare), Bayside (Asian cuisine, requires a reservation), and Eight Rivers (authentic Jamaican cuisine, requires a reservation).

Bayside is a must because of its gorgeous setting, romantic ambiance, and stellar fare. Situated on the water, Bayside offers Asianinspired cuisine with a stunning view. To start, we ordered the Tasting Platter, which featured shrimp skewers, a spring roll, fried wontons, and an egg roll. For our entrées, we selected the special of the night: coconut curry lobster, which was delicious and succulent, as well as the tender lamb chops, and a noodle dish with chicken. The presentation was first-rate, and every dish was bursting with flavor.

Tower Isle does a fantastic job at keeping their guests entertained with daily and nightly entertainment and activities. During the day, you can participate in Arts & Crafts, Jewelry-Making, Salsa Dancing, and games. Additionally, the resort offers trips to Dunn's River Falls, Sunset Bar, and area excursions. At night, stop by the piano bar for a lively sing-along or retire to the lounge for speciality cocktails and dancing (their DJ is on point!). Perhaps Martinis on the Roof is more your speed —scintillating conversations under the moonlight are always a good idea.

During our stay, the resort celebrated their 42nd Anniversary and spared no expense to honor it with their guests. There was live entertainment and an extraordinary buffet fraught with Jamaican specialities, like Jerk Turkey and Oxtail Risotto, loads of fresh seafood, carving stations, and an incredible display of sweets —gourmet chocolates, cakes, pies, and cookies galore. With over four decades of service under their belt, it's evident that Couples Resort Tower Isle knows what they're doing. They have everything needed to ensure that your stay here is romantic, rejuvenating, and memorable. ML

For more information, visit: https://couples.com/resorts/tower-isle

