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The Luxurious, All-Inclusive Paradise

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Bluefields Bay Jamaica Villas

For the seasoned Caribbean traveler, who is likely accustomed to a certain tropical roughness in the best of surroundings, **Bluefields Bay Villas** is a stark exception: an all-inclusive resort with standards of elegance and luxury we've rarely experienced before, anywhere else in the world (all-inclusive or otherwise). A cozy gathering of six resort homes directly on Jamaica's gentle south coast – all fully staffed with a butler, housekeeper, maids, nannies for child care, footmen at meals, and each with a personal chef – Bluefields is a welcoming world far from the madding tourist mobs that flock to the more cookie-cutter, all-inclusive resorts of **Montego Bay** and **Negril**.

American owner-managers Debbie and Braxton Moncure have invested more than 30 years of Jamaican business

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experience into crafting their paradise, and the results are immediately apparent. The villas are bright and airy museum-quality wonders of architecture that blend seamlessly with the beautiful tropical surroundings. (Each of the houses was designed or renovated by Debbie, with interiors planned by Braxton.) Furnished in traditional Jamaican colonial style, the villas contain mostly antiques or close copies found on the island, while others have been collected from as far away as London, Buenos Aires, and Bali.

Arriving at Bluefields is an experience in itself. Guests can get there by car and enjoy a leisurely one-hour drive through Jamaica's picturesque mountains from Montego Bay (included in one-week bookings; \$130 each way for parties of two), or arrange in advance for a **dramatic 12-minute helicopter ride** across the island to land directly on a croquet lawn (\$580 each way). Upon arrival, a uniformed butler welcomes you with flutes of the resort's signature champagne-and-papaya cocktail (dubbed Bluefields, natch) that were the contribution of an imaginative guest of years ago. And then you're off, and it's your choice whether you want to frolic in the gently lapping blue-green ocean, snorkel, kayak, or simply doing nothing at all while lying in a hammock overlooking the verdant hills that rise from the shore. Over the course of your stay, you'll be attended to by a staff of dozens who make sure you want for nothing.

Breakfast, lunch, hors d'oeuvres, and dinner come from a broad menu of inspired local cuisine prepared by the excellent in-house chefs. Local specialties like **callaloo** omelettes and Jamaican scrambled eggs mix it up with traditional breakfast favorites, while lunch and dinner menus abound in local seafood, lamb, and pork dishes (Wednesdays are always jerk chicken day, cooked over an open fire by expert chef James). You will eat well for sure, and also sleep wonderfully, and experience the best Jamaica has to offer. The only downside is that you might just hate yourself for choosing to leave.

[Prices vary by villa, season, and length of stay; sample visit to Hermitage for three couples: \$14,280/week in peak season and \$12,530/week off-peak, plus 15 percent service charge; bluefieldvillas.com]

– **Paul du Quenoy**

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