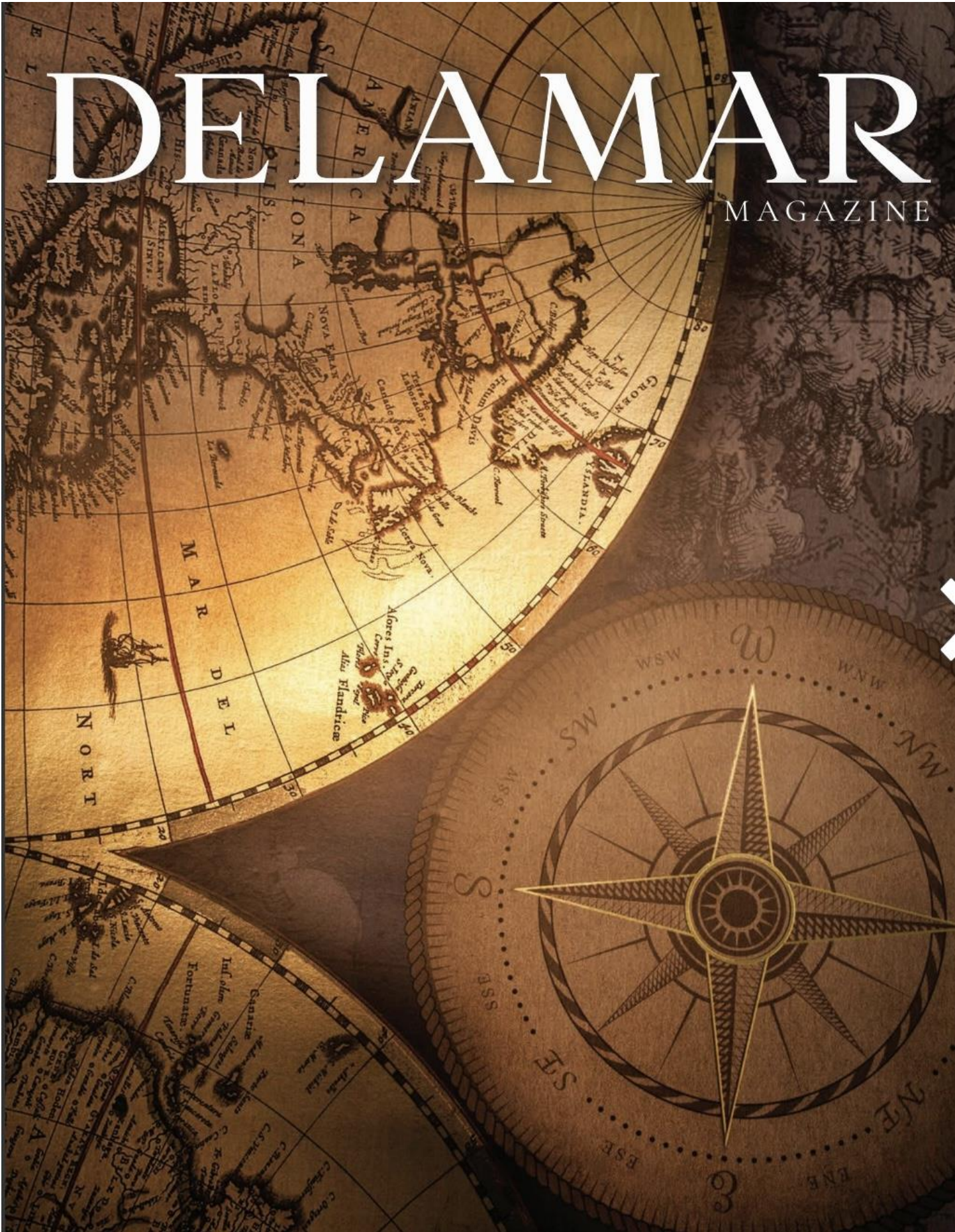
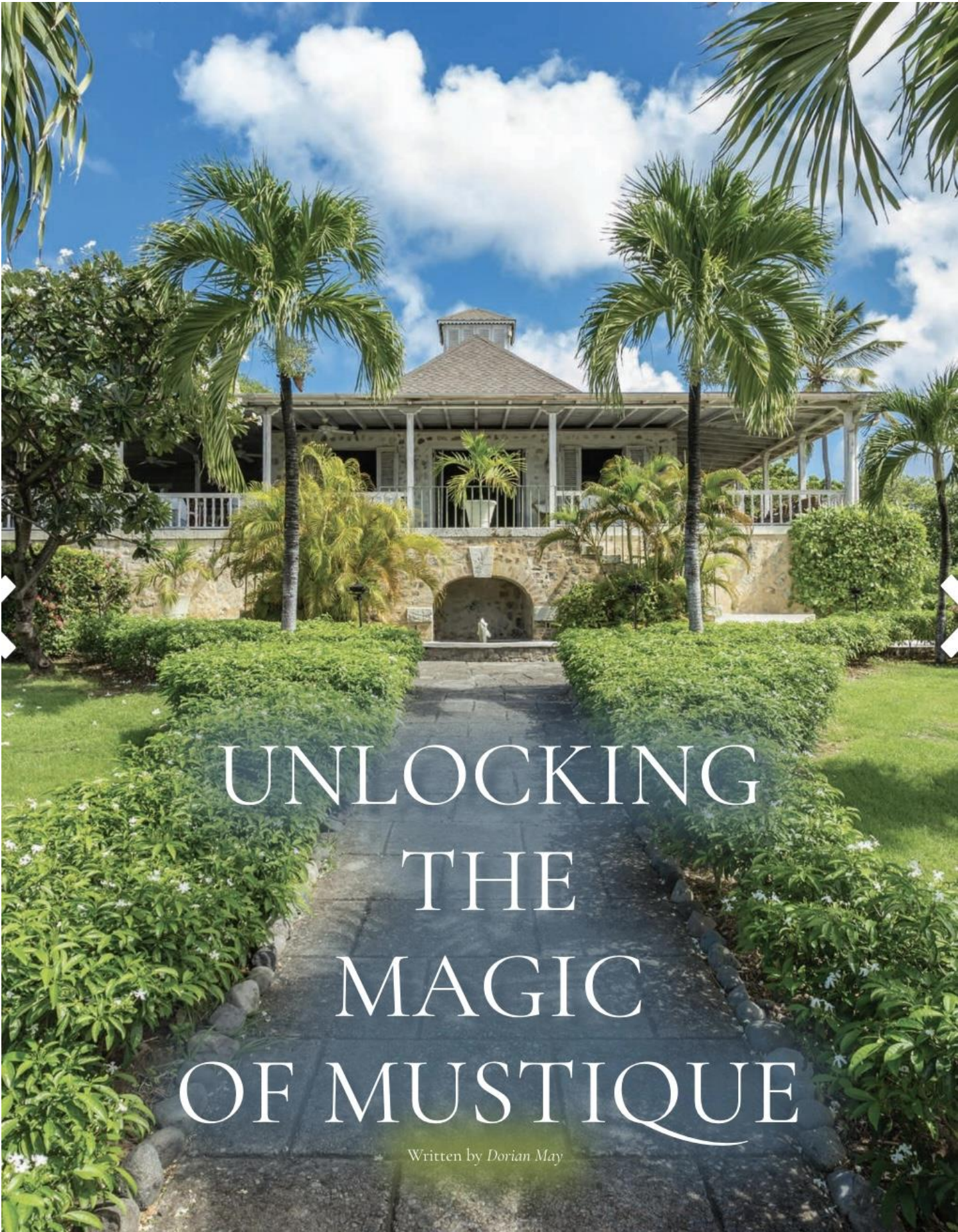


DELAMAR

MAGAZINE





UNLOCKING
THE
MAGIC
OF MUSTIQUE

Written by Dorian May

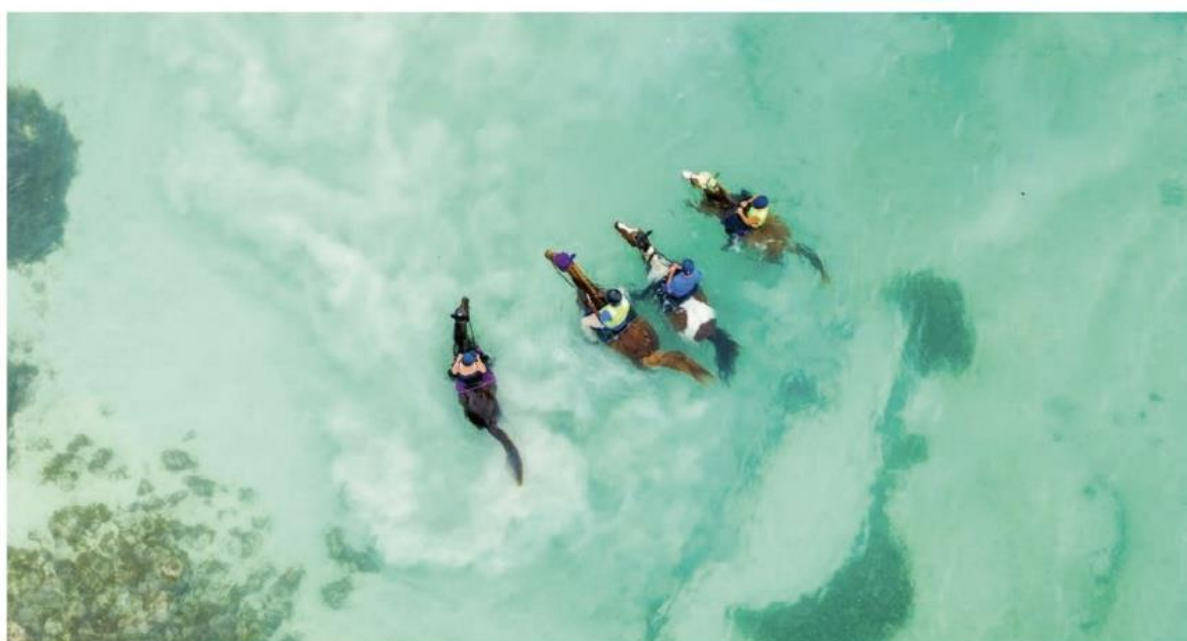


In a world where social media has turned the notion of discretion into a nearly extinct experience, people who seek out luxurious holidays without sacrificing privacy can still find solace on the Caribbean Island of Mustique; the if-you-know-you-know tropical getaway for those who value discretion over ostentation. The island boasts a deep Royal history, with the late Princess Margaret famously describing Mustique as “the only place I can relax”. She frequently fled the gaze of Buckingham Palace to Les Jolies Eaux, a five-bedroom villa gifted to her by her friend and the island’s original owner, Lord Colin Tennant. Tennant purchased the island from St. Vincent and the Grenadines in 1958 for approximately \$126,000 to cultivate a haven for his aristocratic friends, including the princess. In the globally popular series “The Crown”, Princess Margaret is depicted picnicking and partying on the island. Though paparazzi were and still are unwelcome, legendary soirees like hers drew the likes of Mick Jagger and David Bowie, who eventually both became Mustique homeowners now woven into the island’s famed folklore. For the past 60 years, a glamorous array of jet setters, including royals like Prince William and Princess Kate, musicians like Jagger and Beyonce, moguls such as Tommy Hilfiger and supermodels like Kate Moss, have continued to vacation on the island, preserving in tandem, theirs and the island’s mystique.

From the one (short) airport runway and thatched roof terminal to the quaint Bamboo Church, it is quickly evident upon arrival that Mustique has managed to preserve the authentic minimalism that made the destination so coveted. The unpaved roads and pristine beaches remain unspoiled by resort development, and the lush greenery still is wild and natural along the roads, which guests traverse on “mules” (nee golf carts), the preferred mode of transport on the island.



A-listers book far in advance to secure their favorite villa or suites in the island's only hotel, The Cotton House which has just 17 rooms and suites. Each of the hundred or so exceptional homes on the 1400-acre island boasts individual history, architectural style, décor and dynamic views. The experience of renting one of the villas here truly feels like a one-of-a-kind custom experience. Each property is staffed with butlers, chefs, gardeners and housekeepers who skillfully manage every aspect of your daily life while on the island, feeling like you are in your own home sans the rigors of management. No matter what your aesthetic style, here you are spoiled for choice; one can rent Princess Margaret's Les Jolies Eaux, a traditional colonial, or Sienna, which is a pink terracotta-roofed Italian chateau with corridors punctuated by endless arches framing sea views and turning them into museum-like masterpieces. The magical tiled pool has a built-in grotto festooned with murals. At French chateau style CoccoLoba, peer straight out to sweeping ocean vistas upon entering and drink them in with lunch or cocktails in the bespoke poolside tiki hut. Conch shells line the entry to beachside La Palma, recently refurbished by award-winning design firm Paolo Moschino Inc. This white one-story residence with direct beach access from the yard boasts playful mixes of patterns and colors with blue hues in the shared living spaces echoing the ocean. A shaded set of stone steps leads up to the oasis of Serenity Bay situated fifty feet above Britannia Bay and aptly named, providing endless 360 turquoise water views. Taliesin, a contemporary Frank Lloyd Wright inspired villa feels like a Zen retreat. A freestanding bathtub sits in the main bedroom behind the master bed where sweeping views of both the Atlantic and Caribbean oceans greet you. The property has a cool compound feel with a yoga pavilion, gardens, an outdoor cinema and a large gong which is used to signal mealtime.





The beauty of Mustique is that the day can be spent doing almost nothing but enjoying the tropical beauty or on the go by creating a more active schedule. Take to the water for sailing, snorkeling scuba diving, or simply floating in the ocean. Swim with the turtles at Tobago Cays or ride horses along the beaches. Mustique sits in a space between the Caribbean and the Atlantic, and each beach articulates this. The Atlantic-facing Macaroni Beach enjoys powerful waves, while the more secluded Gelliceaux Beach on the Caribbean side is a more tranquil hideaway. On the island's southwest, Lagoon Bay area is equipped with tables your staff can help you organize for over-the-top picnics staffed, furnished, and often featuring freshly prepared Caribbean lobster and rosé. Turquoise waters and a nearby cave invite the opportunity for scuba diving. The Cotton House's Beach Café is a bucolic spot on En-

deavor Bay for lunch on the deck while reggae plays, and the bartender serves rum punch with a secret ingredient; "a lot of love". Charter a boat, windsurf, pedal or paddle are all available at the dock nearby.

Curate your own idyllic wellness journey by checking out the numerous picturesque hikes at various levels of challenge. Wake up early to beat the heat and drive your mule (to the top of Rutland Bay for a hike exploring the island's Northeastern tip. Pass the grazing horses in the Island Sanctuary with mountains and ponds in the foreground. The path leads into a glistening bay reflecting the morning sun. Follow the marked trail, wind up the hill on the clay path, and curve around the island's uninhabited, lush and rocky perimeter. You are greeted along the way by turtles, frogs, herons and butterflies; each clearing exposes jaw-dropping and expansive views of the Atlantic Ocean.



Follow the hike with a yoga class held at the exercise pavilion, a plain air structure. Enjoy your practice while gazing out at the sea, a thatched roof shielding the direct sun and the sound of the waves meditative.

One of the newest additions to the island is a state-of-the-art gym boasting full range of Life Fitness equipment and floor-to-ceiling windows with panoramic views of the adjacent lilypond. The full-service spa is steps away, with customized treatments also available in room or villa.

For as idyllic as most days in Mustique are, evenings can be quite social and buzzy, filled with opulent cocktail parties hosted by guests and exuberantly organised by staff in the private villas or by the manager at The Cotton House.

There may not be any nightclubs on the island, but that doesn't mean Mustique regulars don't know how to let loose. Internationally renowned Basil's Bar, a seaside watering hole where Mick Jagger and Bon Jovi have spontaneously taken the stage, is a legendary dive where, every Wednesday, the weekly Jump Up party draws the entire island for dancing and live music from a notoriously good cover band. Infamous bartender-owner Basil Charles is still known as the king of the island and even attended the Royal wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton.

Mustique truly is the definition of quiet luxury, a term that was popularized in recent years to define a lifestyle focused on refined elegance rather than ostentatious showing of wealth. Unlike its bougie sister destinations such as St Barth or St Tropez, this is not the kind of



place you spot Chanel swimwear, logoed bikinis or table service where sparkler-topped champagne is served by scantily clad waitresses. It has all the glitz and glamour without being gaudy. If Mustique had a personality type, it would be an extroverted introvert, someone who is outgoing but also thrives with quiet time.

To get to Mustique, you'll head to St. Lucia or Barbados, then connect through a Mustique Airways flight—take my word for it, you won't want to leave.

*For further information:
mustique-island.com*