



COUNTRY LIFE®

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EVERY WEEK

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In the pink

Bahama House, Harbour Island, Bahamas

SITUATED a jet plane, a small plane, a taxi, a water taxi and, finally, a golf-cart ride away, Harbour Island isn't the easiest place to get to, but it's worth it. A private haunt of the rich and famous, this three-mile by half-a-mile island is described as the Caribbean's crown jewel.

Bahama House, one of the island's newer residences, is a peaceful oasis from the bustling, tiny harbour one block away. The blush-coloured building, built in about 1800, has modern additions, sympathetically added by owner Eleven Experience, all arranged around a central courtyard, a freshwater swimming pool and a *tiki* bar.

Each of the 11 rooms is exquisitely decorated, with coral and bamboo accents, vintage rattan and sumptuous linens. Colonial-style wooden shutters shelter you from the endless sun and the bathrooms feature copper fittings, full-sized Malin + Goetz toiletries and a handy necessities basket.

Breakfast is a particular highlight—fresh fruit and juices, a dizzying array of warm pastries and a daily hot special (the coconut

French toast with maple bacon is one to watch out for). Come sunset, enjoy chef Nikoya Lightbourne's local stone-crab claws at the *tiki* bar with a refreshing Bahama-mama or Coconut Sky Juice.

What really sets Bahama House apart is infectiously cheery experience manager Richard Bullard. He can arrange anything, including a water-based sightseeing excursion on the hotel's 37ft boat (turtles, sting-rays and dolphins are among the friendly locals), at the drop of a hat.

A visit to Sand Dollar Beach is a must—this stretch of sand in the middle of the ocean is best enjoyed with a Goombay Smash cocktail. *MB*

Bahama House is open from November to July 31. Rooms from \$600 (£465) per night, based on two people sharing, including breakfast, après-snacks, pre-arrival planning and round-trip transfers from North Eleuthera airport. It's also available for exclusive hire (020-8102 9800; www.elevenexperience.com)

When you're there

- **Hit the beach, famous for its pink sands created by coral fragments. Snorkelling, canoeing, paddleboarding and boogie boarding are all on offer**
- Indulge in conch fritters and spicy sauce from one of the harbourfront shacks
- **Dine out in style at The Landing or Dunmore beach club on spicy grouper curry or Caribbean bouillabaisse**
- Grab a beach-cruiser bicycle and hit the shops. Look out for Dilly Dally (handpainted

signs across town proclaim 'Dilly Dally Dis Way' and 'Dilly Dally Dat Way'), Blue Rooster and India Hicks's The Sugar Mill

- **Take a daytrip to North Eleuthra island, where you can view the meeting point of the stormy, dark-blue Atlantic and calmer, aquamarine Caribbean from the Glass Window Bridge**
- Ask for Alice—the designer behind the hotel's hand-stitched rugs, she sells rattan bags, beach hats and other natural souvenirs made from straw and coconut fibre