

**NEW TRIPS** for Families, Foodies  
REAL ESCAPES FOR ALL AGES P. 82 > ASIA'S SURPRISE CUISINE P. 68

Best of the  
**Caribbean**

p. 36

# ISLANDS

96  
Reasons  
to follow  
this plane



- 1) This beach
- 2) That water
- 3) Jamaica's resorts
- 4) Cozumel's spas
- 5) St. Lucia's scenery
- 6) Fresh lobster
- 7) Friendliest island people
- 8) Gourmet dishes on St. Martin
- 9) And St. Maarten
- 10) Snorkeling in the USVI
- 11) Sailing through the BVI
- 12) Anything conch
- 13) Wildwaterfalls
- 14) Puerto Rico's Bio Bay
- 15) Pink sand

**55** Caribbean destinations  
at ISLANDS.com

NOVEMBER 2009 U.S. \$4.99







Families have room  
to roam at the Villa  
Aquamare in the  
British Virgin Islands.





# THE BEST FAMILY ISLANDS



**IT'S EASY TO** PICK THE ISLAND with the biggest water slide and just take the kids there. Harder — but worth it — is finding **the** place where the entire family can bond while spying giant sea turtles, searching for hidden beaches and sharing more island experiences. Easy accessibility, fun amenities and big accommodations are important too for any family getaway, and ISLANDS' experts considered those factors as well. Whether for a young family's first island trip or an extended family's best reunion ever, these 14 destinations can spark lifetime memories and a lifelong love of travel.

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BY CHRIS TAUBER  
AND TONY PERROTTET



Heron Island,  
Australia

**BEST FOR FAMILY REUNIONS**  
**Virgin Gorda,**  
**British Virgin Islands**

➤ A big reunion does not have to be a big amount of work. In a quiet nook of Virgin Gorda, book all three 8,000-square-foot villas at **Aquamare**, which opened just last year. Then let the staff cater to your group of 36. If you'd like to join your private chef at the local dock to pick the freshest lobsters for dinner, you can, of course. If you'd like to take the 62-foot yacht out, climb aboard. But if you just want to lie in the suspended "Dream Bed" floating over the sand at the private beach park while

your extended family frolics in the Sir Francis Drake Channel, by all means do. After all, your work is done. Weekly rates per villa from \$13,750 (easily split among family members). [villaaquamare.com](http://villaaquamare.com)

**BEST BACK-TO-NATURE TRIP**  
**Heron Island, Australia**

➤ Focus entirely on Australia's nature at Heron Island. This mango-shaped droplet of fauna-filled national parkland, 44 acres in size, is planted off the Great Barrier Reef's southern tip. The 109-room eco-friendly resort, sheltered by pandanus trees and ringed by white-sand beaches, encourages every

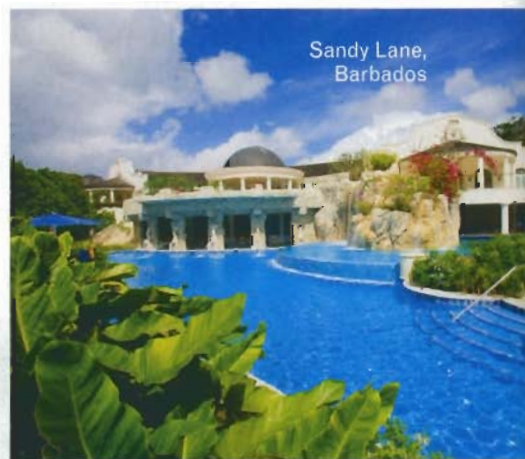
family to explore. Kids can enroll in the Junior Rangers Program, complete with Ranger hat and workbook. They can then earn badges as they wander the forest paths filled with thousands of squawking seabirds, discover coral at low tide with naturalists or venture out at night to spy the giant sea turtles nesting on the beach. To see the fish, sharks and rays of the reef only a five-minute boat ride from the resort, children at least 8 years old can snorkel and certified divers at least 10 years old can go deeper with a parent. Just 500 yards offshore lies "the Bommie," an underwater pillar of coral-encrusted rock that Jacques Cousteau declared one of his favorite dive sites. Jump in. Rates from \$160. [heronisland.com](http://heronisland.com)

**BEST FOR LEARNING**  
**Barbados**

➤ Marvel at the green monkeys of the Barbados Wildlife Reserve and the green pools of Harrison's Cave. But marvel too at the Barbados school system, which has led to one of the world's highest literacy rates at 99.7 percent. Let that be an example to the kids as you explore Barbados. Then relax at the luxurious, 112-room Sandy Lane resort, where the likes of Tiger Woods have stayed. There through the complimentary Treehouse Club for children ages 3 to 16, you can all try a game of cricket, practice how to dive, and get a chance to swim and snorkel with

FROM TOP: COURTESY HERON ISLAND; STEFANO MANTINI/CORBIS

The resort, ringed by trees and beaches, encourages every family to explore.

Sandy Lane,  
Barbados