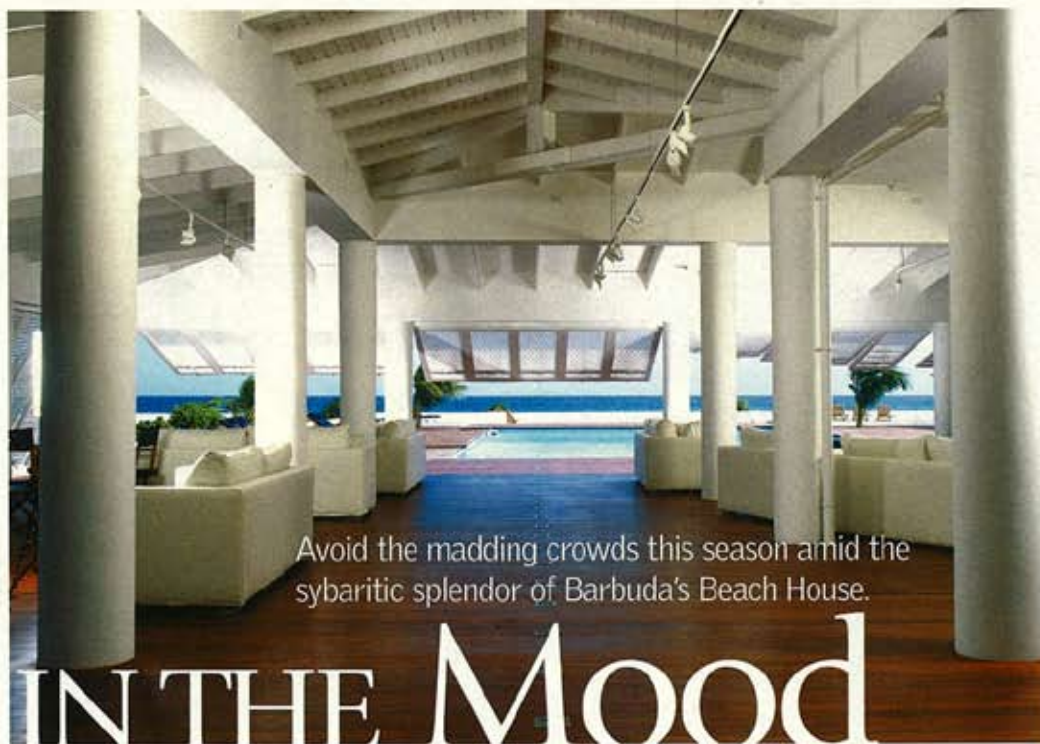


# OTTAWA

Fair to Remember  
**EMY IRONS**  
**ANNETTE BENING**

Conjure Up a Tale of  
Sexy, Glittering Revenge  
in Being Julia

**Petal  
Pushers**  
FROM THE DESKS OF  
THE CITY'S MOST  
COLORFUL FLORISTS



Avoid the madding crowds this season amid the sybaritic splendor of Barbuda's Beach House.

# IN THE MOOD for BARBUDA

[by Andrew Stone]

**WHEN YOU EXPLAIN** to your friends and neighbors where you picked up that fabulous tan and serene, satisfied demeanor, they are going to try to correct you. "You were where? Bermuda? Barbados?" No, you were in Barbuda—one of the Caribbean's most secluded, magnificent islands just a quick puddle-jump from Antigua. Painting a picture of the unspoiled Caribbean that is impossible to find on its more tourist-addled neighbors, Barbuda boasts breathtaking natural conditions and offers luxury travelers a sense of true seclusion (the island received one of its largest bits of publicity when the late Princess Diana chose it as a vacation spot for the princes and herself, safe from paparazzi).

The Beach House, Barbuda's newest resort, provides an exquisite retreat for refined travelers, who consider privacy an important luxury. Your full-service, cosseting experience starts as soon as you step off the plane at the island's tiny public airport, where hotel staff assist with luggage, immigration details, and offer cool towels and water. After a quick Jeep ride, all cares melt away as you view the resort itself, a breezy, elegant Mediterranean-style oasis located on Palmetto Point (where the Palmetto Beach Hotel once stood). You are warmly greeted by expertly trained local attendants in the open-air clubhouse overlooking a picturesque saltwater pool, a decorative pond strewn with flickering blue

lights, and the unspoiled ocean. All guests are assigned a personal attendant, clad in white linen and head wraps, who ensures every element of a stay is utterly rejuvenating.

The attendant leads you to one of 21 generously sized rooms done up in clean navy and white, accented by terra-cotta tiles and black-and-white photos of local scenery. Fili D'Oro linens and superb featherbeds dress the canopied beds, while thick curtains completely block out the sun in the evening. The sitting areas are comfortable, spacious, and accented by glorious tropical flowers; private terraces extend from each room with two chaise longues overlooking the pond. Double-sink bathrooms feature strong showers and Gilchrist & Soames bath products.

If you have any intention of leaving your room (and this place is ideal for a honeymoon, so who knows?), your time will joyously be spent by the pool and in the clubhouse. As you recline in one of the top-notch chaise longues lining the pool deck, smiling attendants tend to your every need, from fruity drinks to Evian spritzes (that's right, they spray you down and leave the canister). After taking in the sun, stroll the 18 miles of private, pink-sand beach or arrange for a fresh aloe rub in your room.

Whether you choose to read a newspaper, check your e-mail, sip a cocktail, or play a round of billiards, the club room is a great place to take your mind off city pressures—in fact, that is the

entire point of the resort, and there are no televisions in the rooms (although they do have a viewing room, if you absolutely must).

Meals, expertly prepared by a 27-year-old star chef, can be a private or communal affair. Each specialized menu capitalizes on the spectacular seafood bounty of the region (Barbuda is where most of the lobster is caught for the entire stretch of the Caribbean), prepared with a distinctive Italian flair. The ably tended bar features an extensive list of classic and specialty cocktails, the house signature drink being the "B Passion," a transporting mix of Passoa, Malibu, pineapple juice, and grenadine.

Our recommendations: Pack light. Most days, the temperature fluctuates between the high 70s and high 80s. There is snorkeling available—one of the dynamic attendants will often double as a guide for your excursions—and there are several wonderful sights to behold on the island, which can be arranged through the hotel. By all means, charter a boat through the mangroves, where bonefish and lobsters are caught, then venture out to the frigate bird sanctuary, where more than 5,000 of these spectacular prehistoric-looking birds—whose wingspans measure about eight feet—circle over a seven-mile stretch of mangroves. Other must-see sites include Louis Beach, a stretch cleared during Hurricane Louis with warm, clear water, no current, and smooth, perfect sand. Bikes can be rented to trek out to the island's caves; there are expeditions to a huge, remarkable sinkhole; and there are several other adventures for when you feel like doing more than maxing and relaxing.

In all likelihood, however, your weary bones will urge you to stay on the property for most of your trip, taking in the warm, wonderful service and allotting yourself the rest you deserve. The Beach House's mission is to make you feel fantastic, and it more than executes. *The Beach House, Palmetto Point, Barbuda, 888-776-0333; beachhousebarbuda.com; doubles from \$470.*

Relax in the Beach House's soothing great room, TOP, or BELOW, float about in the chic, modern pool.

