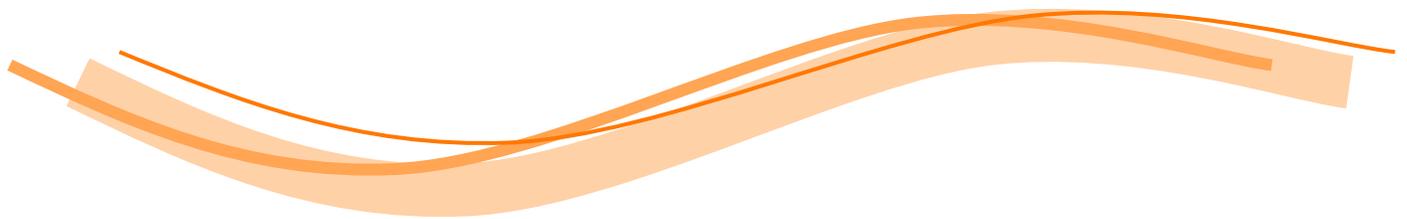




ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES





<p>ST VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES</p>	<p>There is nowhere more romantic than the tranquil natural setting of thirty two unspoiled islands in the secluded southern Caribbean. I have chosen St. Vincent and the Grenadines to renew my vows after thirty years of marriage with Dara on Mopion - a tiny sand bar near Petit St. Vincent.</p> <p>I will be broadcasting from Young Island, a private island resort located 200 yards south of the main island of St. Vincent. But during my visit I'll be enjoying one of the exciting twists that a trip to St. Vincent and the Grenadines has to offer - island hopping! So I'll also be visiting Bequia, Union Island, Canouan, Tobago Cays and Petit St. Vincent.</p> <p>St. Vincent and the Grenadines boasts the best of what the authentic Caribbean is renowned for: pristine white sand beaches; tranquil waters for exceptional diving, sailing and snorkeling; a lush, varied topography for soft adventure activities; private island retreats for couples; historic sites that unveil a colorful culture; many options for destination weddings and honeymoons - which Dara and I will experience for ourselves.</p> <p>The main island is St. Vincent, and only eight islands are inhabited. Virtually undeveloped compared to many popular island destinations - this is the Caribbean before mass tourism.</p> <p>St. Vincent and the Grenadines have a unique, laidback authenticity, friendly people and pristine natural attractions. Discover stunning white sand beaches, coral reefs, flowered hillsides and tranquil harbors. One of the best snorkeling and diving areas in the world, Tobago Cays is a horseshoe shaped reef shielding five deserted islets.</p> <p>See www.discoversvg.com for lots more information.</p>
<p>Location</p>	<p>St. Vincent and the Grenadines, part of the Windward Islands in the southern Caribbean, are located at 13° 15 N, 61° 12 W. Their closest neighbours are Grenada, 120 km to the south, St. Lucia 40 km to the north and Barbados 160 km to the east.</p>
<p>Geography</p>	<p>St. Vincent has a mountainous interior, having La Soufriere, an active volcano in the north rising to 1,220 m (4,000 ft.) as its highest point, and a sheltered and indented coastline on the Leeward coast. St. Vincent is roughly 29 km long and 17.7 km wide and has an area of 344 sq. km, while The Grenadines comprise an additional 44 sq. km.</p> <p>Bequia covers 18 sq. km and its highest peak is 268 m (881 ft.).</p>

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	<p>The island of Mustique is 5 sq. km and rises to 151 m (496 ft.) at its highest.</p> <p>Mount Royal at 274 m (900 ft.) is the highest point in the 7.5 sq. km island of Canouan.</p> <p>The 5.5 km long Union Island features as its highest peak Mt. Tobai which soars to 305 m (1,000 ft.)</p>
Name	In 1498 on his third voyage, Christopher Columbus sighted a new island. Hairoun, the Indian name for the island, "was a land blessed with rainbows, mist, fertile valleys and sun." Columbus named the island "St. Vincent" after the Spanish saint.
Population	Around 118,000. Most Vincentians are the descendants of African people brought to the island to work on plantations. There are other ethnic groups such as Portuguese, East Indian and Syrians living on the island. There is also a growing Chinese population and a sizable minority of mixed race.
Language	While the official language is English , many of the locals speak a dialect called Vincentian Creole . English is used in education, government, religion, and other formal domains, while Creole (or 'dialect' as it is referred to by locals) is used in informal situations such as in the home and among friends
Currency	Major credit cards are accepted by most hotels, car rental companies, and shops. The Eastern Caribbean Dollar, linked to the US Dollar, is the local currency. Currently, \$1 CDN = \$2.38 EC (December 2009).
Tipping	Tipping is suggested at 12% of taxi fares. Hotels and restaurants almost always add a 10% to 15% service charge. Ask whether or not it's included in the initial hotel rates you're quoted. If it's not already added at a restaurant, tip at that rate.
Telecommunications	LIME (L for Landline, I for Internet, M for Mobile, E for Entertainment), is the Caribbean's leading Communications Company. A fresh approach to telecommunications for the Caribbean, they stand on a single principle: A promise to use their international credentials to bring the best technologies to the region, build products and services that make Caribbean people's lives better; a promise to deliver the best service and the best communication solutions across the board - from landline to mobile, from broadband to TV and entertainment. www.time4lime.com
Government	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is a parliamentary democracy within the Commonwealth of Nations. Queen Elizabeth II is head of state and is represented on the island by a governor general, the Honourable Sir Fedrick Ballantyne, an office with mostly ceremonial functions. Control of the government rests with the prime minister and the cabinet
Documentation	Canadians need a passport and a return ticket.
Time zone	Both St. Vincent and the Grenadines operate on Atlantic Standard Time year-round.

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Health	No vaccinations are required and there is a modern hospital in Kingstown.
Safety tips	This destination is regarded as being very safe for travellers, but you should beware two natural hazards: the poisonous Manchineel tree can cause blisters and falling coconuts can cause a severe headache!

CLIMATE	
General climate	The average yearly temperature is 27° C. The coolest months are between November and February. During the rainy season, May through October, rain is frequent in the mountains of St. Vincent with the annual average rainfall being 380 cm inland and 200 cm on the coast. The driest time on the island is between January and March but brief, sporadic showers occur throughout the year. The hurricane season is generally from June to October, although most storms pass north of the Grenadines
Today's weather	30 Centigrade and sunny (16 December 2009)
Best time to visit	Any time is a good time here...Although there are obvious reasons to travel preferentially in the winter to escape the snow!

GETTING AROUND	
Flying time	<p>St. Vincent is reached by air from North America through six major gateways - Barbados, Grenada, Martinique, St. Lucia, Puerto Rico and Trinidad - with connections to Union Island, Canouan, Mustique, Bequia, or St. Vincent.</p> <p>Air Canada, American Airlines, BWIA and Air Jamaica, all provide excellent service to the gateways; while American Eagle, LIAT the Star of the Caribbean, SVG Air, Trans Island Air and Mustique Airways all provide a convenient connecting service from the gateways.</p> <p>Flight time to St. Vincent is approximately 35 minutes from Barbados; 30 minutes from Grenada; 45 minutes from Martinique; 20 minutes from St. Lucia; 2 hours 20 minutes from Puerto Rico.</p> <p>St. Vincent and the Grenadines has an information desk in the Arrivals Section of Grantley Adams International Airport in Barbados, open daily from approximately 1.00pm until the last flight to St. Vincent departs. Personnel are on hand to assist travellers in making connections to their final destinations.</p>
Cities	<p>The capital city of Kingstown is located in the southwestern part of the island, hugging a mile-wide swath of land on Kingstown Bay backed up by a ring of green hills and ridges. Nicknamed the "City of Arches", Kingstown is full of old world charm, with Cobblestone sidewalks, old brick buildings and like many Caribbean capitals, much of the colour and bustle of the island can be found in the market square at the corner of Bay and Bedford Streets.</p> <p>The city consists of twelve small blocks that are easy to walk and</p>

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	<p>perfect for browsing. Shops and stores range from simple to sophisticated, selling local crafts, books, cameras, binoculars, watches, crystal and bone china, gold and silver jewellery, Sea Island cotton and batik.</p>
Distances	<p>The main island of St Vincent is 29km long and 18 km wide</p>
Ferries	<p>St Vincent is a great starting point for an island-hopping adventure by boat and the Grenadines are well connected by ferry. These boats are the lifeline of the Grenadine islanders and they have great character. You will travel with every crate of fizzy drinks, box of plantains, breezeblock, car and goat that needs to make the journey up and down the small islands in the chain. Trips can take a while, with all the activity around the loading and unloading, but it is always an entertaining journey.</p> <p>The Grenadine ferries start their journeys at the Grenadines Dock on the waterfront in Kingstown, from where it is possible to make the journey down through the islands by boat all the way to Grenada. There are many ferries each day for Bequia but no ferries put in at Mustique. Ferries are reasonably priced and fairly regular. Do make sure you check the exact times of departure as they can change without warning.</p> <p>Ferry service to Canouan, Mayreau and Union Island from Kingstown Two St Vincent based boats, MV Barracuda and MV Gem Star, have a regular service between Kingstown on St Vincent and the southern Grenadines. The trip to Union Island takes around 5 hours and costs EC\$40. The ferries stop in Canouan (3 hours, EC\$30) and Mayreau (4 hours, EC\$35) on the way. Timings sometimes vary according to how long it takes to unload at each stop.</p> <p>MV Barracuda, t 456 5073, sails south from St Vincent on Mondays and Thursdays, and to the north, from Union Island to St Vincent, on Tuesdays and Fridays. On Saturdays it does a round trip from St Vincent.</p> <p>MV Gemstar, t 457 1531, makes the journey from St Vincent to Canouan and Union Island on Tuesdays and Fridays and the return from Union Island on Wednesdays and Saturdays.</p> <p>Ferry service to Bequia from Kingstown There are regular daily ferry services between Bequia and St Vincent on the MV Bequia Express, t 458 3472, and MV Admiral fleet, t 458 3348. The journey takes an hour and costs around EC\$20. The MV Barracuda also puts in at Bequia on its journey south to Mayreau and Union Island.</p> <p>Ferry Service to Carriacou (part of Grenada) It is possible to catch a ferry from Union Island to Carriacou. The MV Jasper leaves Union Island on a Monday and Thursday morning for the</p>

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	45 minute journey. From Carriacou there are several daily sailing down to St Georges in Grenada.
Car Rental	Driving on St. Vincent is a bit of an adventure because of the narrow, twisting roads (sound your horn as you make the sharp hairpin turns). Most importantly: Drive on the left! If you present your valid driver's license from home at the police department, on Bay Street in Kingstown, and pay an EC\$76 fee, you'll get a temporary permit to drive.
Buses	Flamboyantly painted "alfresco" buses travel the principal roads of St. Vincent, linking the major towns and villages. The price is low, depending on where you're going, and the experience will connect you with the locals. The central departure point is the bus terminal at the New Kingstown Fish Market. Fares range from EC\$.95-EC\$6

ACCOMMODATION TYPES	<p>Running the gamut from guest houses and self-catering apartments, to beachfront hotels and luxury all-inclusive resorts, accommodation in St. Vincent offers something for every taste and budget whether you are a honeymoon couple, vacationing with the family or on a business trip. There are approximately 105 accommodation establishments in St Vincent and the Grenadines with a room stock of just over 1700. These include guesthouses, hotels, apartments, villas and resorts.</p> <p>The area around Villa and Indian Bay is a popular tourist destination and many hotels are situated here. All the hotels are small and emphasize personal service. Kingstown itself has several hotels, while just outside town, in New Montrose, there are a number of hotels, apartments and guest houses. Venturing farther afield (and accessible only by boat) one finds the tranquil, eco-friendly resort at Petit Byahaut. See below for the hotels I stayed at on my trip.</p>
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THE GRENADINES	<p>This island nation includes the northern two-thirds of the Grenadines (45 km²), a chain of small islands stretching south from Saint Vincent to Grenada. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young Island Bequia Petite Nevis Quatre Bettowia Baliceaux Mustique Petite Mustique Savan Petite Canouan Canouan Mayreau
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	<p>The Tobago Cays Union Island Petit Saint Vincent Palm Island</p>
<p>Bequia</p>	<p>Bequia (pronounced beck-way) is the second largest island in the Grenadines and is approximately 15 km from the nation's capital, Kingstown. The island capital is Port Elizabeth. Other villages on the island are Paget Farm, Lower Bay, La Pompe, Hamilton, Mount Pleasant and Belmont. The total population is about 4,300, the native population being primarily a mixture of people of African, Scottish and Carib Indian descent. The island is very small, measuring some 7 square miles. The main population areas are Port Elizabeth and Paget Farm which host the Ferry Terminal and Airport respectively. Other prominent areas of Bequia include Spring, site of a former coconut plantation and home to agricultural animals, Industry Bay and Lower Bay. Princess Margaret, who had a home on nearby Mustique, visited Bequia and had a beach named in her honour. Princess Margaret Beach is next to Port Elizabeth and is situated inside Admiralty Bay.</p> <p>Bequia means "island of the clouds" in the ancient Arawak. The island's name was also 'Becouya' as part of the Granadilles.</p> <p>The island's hills are much lower than the peaks of St. Vincent, 10 miles to the north, so they do not receive as many rain showers.</p> <p>The main port Admiralty Bay, a large natural harbour, and the "town" Port Elizabeth are situated on the west coast.</p> <p>Two Scuba diving stores run dive trips to twenty-eight identified dive sites around Bequia. There are several wrecks and shallow caves accessible to advanced divers. It is not unusual to see Hawksbill turtles, lobsters, moray eels and many kinds of fish when diving Bequia.</p> <p>A feature of the Port Elizabeth waterfront is the Whale Boner Bar & Restaurant. This bar has an entrance onto the beach comprising of an arch of two whale ribs as well as whale vertebrae mounted on the bar seats and a whale rib running the length of the bar. Bequia has a long tradition of whaling as well as the building of whaling boats. There is a small whaling museum on the island which chronicles this history</p>
<p>Mustique</p>	<p>Mustique is a small private island covering 1,400 acres (5.7 km²) and it has several coral reefs. The land fauna includes tortoises, herons and many other species. Its year-round population of about 500 live in the villages of Lovell, Britannia Bay and Dover.</p> <p>The island is owned by the Mustique Company, which in turn is owned by the island's home owners. The island has approximately 90 private villas, many of which are available for weekly rentals through the Mustique Company. There are also two privately-owned hotels on the island (The Cotton House and Firefly). Because of its luxury and</p>

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	<p>isolation, Mustique has over the years attracted a number of the rich and famous: Amy Winehouse, Noel Gallagher, Princess Margaret, Mick Jagger, Bryan Adams, Shania Twain, Kate Moss, Felix Dennis, David Bowie, Tommy Hilfiger, Mike Smith and family, Hugh Grant, Kate Middleton, Prince William, Robert Worcester and Nigella Lawson. Those who still have homes on the island can sometimes be seen at Basil's Beach Bar. Queen Elizabeth II made a private visit to Mustique in the 1960's.</p>
<p>Mayreau</p>	<p>Mayreau is the smallest inhabited island of the Grenadines, with an area of about 1.5 sq. miles, and a population of about 300. The population is centered in Old Wall village, located on a hilltop in the southwest of the island. It is an isolated community, accessible only by boat. Electricity is only recently (2002) provided by a central generator. There is a single lane concrete road leading from Saltwhistle Bay to Saline Bay and through the village. The top of the island is crested with the small school, the telecommunications building and the Mayreau Catholic Church and a Pentecostal church. The island gets much of its water from three catchments set on the east side of the island. One serves the resort at Saltwhistle, and two serve the village. Saline Bay is named for the salt pond just east of the sandy beach. Salt was harvested and exported in times past but is now only harvested for local use. The island is mostly populated by fishermen and supported by tourism. The school has about 50 students in Grades 1-6. Upon completing their primary / elementary education, students attend secondary schools on the main island, St. Vincent. Mayreau also has a small resort area on Saltwhistle Bay. Saltwhistle Bay is also a very popular and beautiful spot for anchoring yachts. From the crest of the hill beside the Catholic Church, there is a beautiful overlook of the Tobago Cays, Canouan and Union Island.</p>
<p>Canouan</p>	<p>Canouan is a tiny, arid island measuring 3.5 miles by 1.25 miles. A barrier reef runs along the Atlantic side of the island. The highest point on the island is Mount Royal. Two bays, Glossy and Friendship, separate the southern side of the Canouan Island. Canouan lies approximately 25 miles south of St. Vincent. Locals in need of supplies beyond basic staples routinely board cargo ships to make the two-to-three-hour passage to the main Island of St. Vincent. In 2004 Raffles began managing the Raffles Resort, which occupies 1/3 of the island. The resort has a golf course, casino and 150 room hotel. The Golf Course won the Robb Reports best of the best Golf Courses in the World 2005 and consistently voted top course in the Caribbean. The two major resorts on Canouan, Raffles and the Tamarind, provide a stark contrast to life on the rest of the island. Outside the two resorts, wild dogs roam freely, along with chickens, goats, turtles, lizards, and the occasional bat.</p>

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<p>Palm Island</p>	<p>Palm Island in the Grenadines is a tiny island a mile from Union Island, and only accessible by boat. It has an area of 135 acres (0.55 km²) and has five beaches. Originally known as Prune Island, Palm Island got its current name when the former owners, the late John Caldwell ("Johnny Coconuts") and his wife Mary, planted hundreds of coconut palms, transforming the deserted island into a palm covered one. The island is currently the site of a resort and about twenty private residences.</p>
<p>Union Island</p>	<p>Union Island is the southernmost island of the Grenadines belonging to the state of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. It is situated 90 kilometers southwest of Barbados and the islands of Carriacou and the mainland of Grenada can be seen to the south. Clifton and Ashton are the two principal towns. The island is home to approximately 3,000 residents. The island has an international airport which has domestic flights to Saint Vincent and some of the Grenadines and international flights to Barbados, Carriacou, Grenada and Martinique.</p> <p>Due to its volcanic silhouette, it is also called the Tahiti of the West Indies. The island is approximately 3 miles long and 1 mile wide. Surrounding islands are Tobago Cays, Mayreau, Palm Island, and Petit Saint Vincent. The highest peak is Mount Taboi - 999 feet above sea level.</p> <p>Today the yacht services business and tourist day-chartering business provides a lot of jobs, there are numerous boutiques and supermarkets, bars and restaurants, internet cafes and a dive operator. There are several hotels and guest houses on Union Island, as well as schools, churches and a small health clinic.</p> <p>A key feature of the Union Island region is the Tobago Cays National Marine Park. The Tobago Cays are a group of small uninhabited islands surrounded by reefs – snorkelling, scuba diving, swimming with the sea turtles are all favourite pastimes of visitors. Entry to the park (for visitors) costs EC\$10/person/day – park fees can be paid in Clifton at the Custom's Offices, the Tobago Cays Marine Park office at the waterfront, or in the park itself from park rangers.</p> <p>Easter is a big event on Union Island, festivities take place in both Ashton and Clifton throughout Holy Week in a festival called "Easterval" – book early, accommodations can be hard to find. In late May, at the end of the dry season (Union is a desert island) a significant event is "the Maroon". The Maroon celebration is a day long affair, beginning before dawn, and lasting late into the night. The Maroon is known for its drums, dancing and plentiful food – these are meant to entice the Gods to bring on the rains.</p>
<p>Young Island</p>	<p>Young Island was established over 30 years ago as one of the first exclusive Caribbean resorts. In 1980, it was acquired by its current Vincentian owners, Mr. Vidal Browne and Dr. Fred Ballantyne. Since its beginning, this 35 acre island near the coast of St. Vincent has</p>

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	<p>continuously been a hotel resort of international standing and a popular vacation destination. The Young Island Dock is a 20 minute taxi ride from the Capital, Kingstown, and 8 minutes from the ET Joshua Airport at Arnos Vale.</p>
Petit St. Vincent	<p>Discover a thoughtfully designed and professionally managed private resort island. Fondly known as PSV, Petit St. Vincent Resort is an amazing tropical hideaway of powder white sand beaches, turquoise seas, and unparalleled luxury and elegance. Welcoming, idyllic and supremely tranquil, come to Petit St Vincent for an altogether perfect Caribbean island escape.</p> <p>PSV is a paradise of softly rolling hills spread over 113 acres surrounded by two miles of white sand beaches, PSV has been tamed just enough to allow for the presence of 22 discreet and simple, yet luxurious cottages. Lying well off the tourist mainstream, PSV could be best described by what is not there. There is no airport, no formal check in, no keys. There are no televisions nor are there telephones in the cottages. Above all however, there is privacy. Here, amid untouched nature and surrounded by warm, crystal-clear, turquoise water, one senses that the island is one's own.</p> <p>The truly hermitic guest need never meet another visitor. Room service is available for all meals, either in your own cottage or at any other location on the island. Most guests however, choose to make use of the resort's beautiful bar and dining room for at least some of their meals.</p> <p>http://www.psvresort.com</p>

TARGET GROUPS	
Kids	<p>These islands are perfect for family holidays. Vincentians are very family orientated and children are a very important part of island culture. It is also an incredibly safe country with very little crime and a welcoming, friendly atmosphere. Many of the beaches, especially in the Grenadines, have gently shelving beaches, and all have perfectly clear, warm, clean sea.</p> <p>There is plenty to do for all ages. Little ones will enjoy collecting shells, drinking out of a coconut for the first time, spotting crabs on the Belmont Walkway in Bequia or taking a trip in a glass bottom boat. Once they are a bit older, children can visit the Turtle Sanctuary on Bequia, try to spot the St Vincent Parrot or have their first experience of snorkelling on safe shallow reefs. There are dolphins and whales to see at certain times of the year and turtles to snorkel within the stunning waters of Tobago Cays.</p>
Teens	<p>Families looking to occupy their teenagers can take them hiking up the Soufriere volcano on St Vincent, cycling on the Vermont Nature Trail and kayaking through bat caves.</p> <p>Some of the private island hotels are particularly suited to families who</p>

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	<p>enjoy the privacy and security offered by these properties. Whilst not offering the organised "kids clubs" they have plenty of facilities - family suites, swimming pools, tennis courts, water sports such as paddle boats, kayaks, snorkelling and diving.</p> <p>Sailing is also particularly appealing for families who want to enjoy an activity together and discover a number of islands - swimming in the Tobago Cays, anchoring in Admiralty Bay, Bequia for a family friendly "jump-up", playing on deserted beaches and enjoying the buzz that is the Kingstown market in St Vincent.</p>
Romance	<p>Few destinations compare to St Vincent and the Grenadines when it comes to being a romantic paradise - breathtaking scenery, the most exquisite white sand beaches, turquoise blue waters, sunny and warm weather all year round and range of accommodation from the remote and secluded cottages on Petit St Vincent to the stylish Young island resort. Along with a collection of private villas and some small affordable hotels full of local character that make St Vincent and the Grenadines a romantic couple's dream. For those who simply want to get away from it all, there is no better place to relax on picture perfect beaches.</p> <p>For these reasons and more St. Vincent and the Grenadines makes my Top 10 Most Romantic Places in the world list:</p> <p>http://www.chrisrobinsontravelshow.ca/images/upload/ChrisFavouriteRomanticPlaces.pdf</p>
Honeymoons & Weddings	<p>St Vincent & the Grenadines provides all the staples of a memorable wedding: something old (the rich history of the islands goes back several millennia), something new (a small group of professional Wedding Planners), something borrowed (a number of appealing resorts sprinkled amidst the island nation's old south pacific "Bali Hai" ambience vibe) and something blue (the stunning azure sea). From eco-resorts to old forts, classically elegant resorts on private island escapes, St Vincent & the Grenadines is the best place to escape the stresses of traditional wedding planning.</p> <p>Non-Vincentians wishing to be married in St Vincent & the Grenadines must be residents here for at least one day before a marriage ceremony (civil or church) can take place. Parties must reside in the state for a minimum of one day.</p>
Seniors	<p>The luxury island resorts are a perfect haven for Seniors wanting to simply get away from it all and not worry about a thing...</p>

UNIQUES	
Surprising	<p>The Grenadines island of Bequia is one of the few places in the world where limited whaling is still allowed by the International Whaling Commission. Natives of Bequia are allowed to catch up to 4 Humpback Whales per year using only traditional hunting methods of hand thrown harpoons in small open sailing boats. Though they rarely catch their</p>

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	limit and some years do not catch any.
History	<p>Carib Indians aggressively prevented European settlement on St. Vincent until the 18th century. Enslaved Africans - whether shipwrecked or escaped from Barbados, St. Lucia and Grenada and seeking refuge in mainland St. Vincent, or Hairouna as it was originally named by the Caribs, intermarried with the Caribs and became known as Garifuna or Black Caribs.</p> <p>Beginning in 1719, French settlers cultivated coffee, tobacco, indigo, cotton, and sugar on plantations worked by enslaved Africans. In 1763, St. Vincent was ceded to Britain. Restored to French rule in 1779, St. Vincent was regained by the British under the Treaty of Paris (1783) in which Great Britain officially recognized the end of the American Revolution. Ancillary treaties were also signed with France and Spain, known as the Treaties of Versailles of 1783, part of which put St. Vincent back under British control. Conflict between the British and the Black Caribs, led by defiant Paramount Chief Joseph Chatoyer, continued until 1796, when General Sir Ralph Abercromby crushed a revolt fomented by the French radical Victor Hugues. More than 5,000 Black Caribs were eventually deported to Roatán, an island off the coast of Honduras.</p> <p>Slavery was abolished in 1834. After the apprenticeship period, which ended prematurely in 1838, labour shortages on the plantations resulted in the immigration of indentured servants. The Portuguese came from Madeira starting in the 1840s and shiploads of East Indian labourers arrived between 1861-1880. Conditions remained harsh for both former slaves and immigrant agricultural workers, as depressed world sugar prices kept the economy stagnant until the turn of the century.</p> <p>From 1763 until independence, St. Vincent passed through various stages of colonial status under the British. A representative assembly was authorized in 1776, Crown Colony government installed in 1877, a legislative council created in 1925, and universal adult suffrage granted in 1951.</p> <p>During this period, the British made several unsuccessful attempts to affiliate St. Vincent with other Windward Islands in order to govern the region through a unified administration. The colonies themselves, desirous of freedom from British rule, made a notable attempt at unification called West Indies Federation, which collapsed in 1962. St. Vincent was granted associate statehood status on October 27th, 1969, giving it complete control over its internal affairs. Following a referendum in 1979, under Milton Cato St. Vincent and the Grenadines became the last of the Windward Islands to gain independence on the 10th anniversary of its associate statehood status, October 27th, 1979. In 1902, La Soufrière volcano erupted, killing 2,000 people. Much</p>

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	farmland was damaged, and the economy deteriorated. In April 1979, La Soufrière erupted again. Although no one was killed, thousands had to be evacuated, and there was extensive agricultural damage.
Books	Frommer's Caribbean 2010
1000 Places to see before you die	Sailing The Grenadines – yachtsmen paradise Bequia Island – plantation and idyllic hotel Mustique - The Cotton House and Basil's Beach Bar Petit St Vincent – private luxury island resort
Must Sees	The contrast of the lush mountains of St Vincent and the get-away-from-it-all tropical islands of the Grenadines: two destinations in one! See my trip itinerary below for how I packed in as much of this memorable destination into one week as possible.

SPORTS ACTIVITIES	
Golf	There is one golf course in St Vincent and the Grenadines, on the island of Canouan. It is part of the Raffles Resort and Trump Development but outsiders can come in to play if they wish. Trump International Golf Club, tel 458 8000, Canouan, www.canouan.affles.com Designed by Jim Fazio, 18 holes, par 72. Eventually to be surrounded by villas, the course covers 140 acres above the Raffles resort and around a hilltop in the north of the island, from where there are cracking views.
Fishing	It's best to go to a local fisherman for advice, but your hotel can also arrange a trip for you. It's sometimes possible to accompany a fisherman on a trip, perhaps 6 or 8km from shore. A modest fee should suffice. The fishing fleet leaves from the leeward coast at Barrouallie. People have been known to return to shore with everything from a 6-inch redfish to a 6m (20-ft.) pilot whale. Visitors don't need a fishing license.
Horse riding	The only island where horse-riding is available is Mustique, where you can canter along the beaches and ride around the island's lesser known paths. Contact Mustique Equestrian which offers rental and riding lessons, equestrian@mustique.vc .
Hiking	Exploring St. Vincent's hot volcano, La Soufrière , is an intriguing adventure. As you travel the island, you can't miss its cloud-capped splendor. The most recent eruption was back in 1979, when it spewed ashes, lava, and hot mud that covered the vegetation on its slopes. Belching rocks and black curling smoke filled the blue Caribbean sky. About 17,000 people were evacuated from a 15km ring around the volcano. At the rim of the crater, you'll be rewarded with one of the most panoramic views in the Caribbean - that is, if the wind doesn't blow too hard and make you topple over into the crater itself! Warning: Use extreme caution. Looking inside, you can see the steam rising from the crater.

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	<p>Even if you're an experienced hiker, don't attempt to explore the volcano without a guide. Wear suitable hiking clothes and be sure that you're in the best of health before making the arduous journey. The easiest route is the 5km-long eastern approach from Rabacca. The more arduous trail, longer by 2km, is the western trail from Chateaubelair. The round-trip to the crater takes about 5 hours.</p>
Sailing	<p>Whether you opt for a "bareboat" or fully chartered vacation, St. Vincent is undoubtedly the prime jump-off spot. Starting here puts you on the doorstep of the Grenadines without the 65-mile sail (including a 5-hour open-water passage) from St. Lucia, or the 6 to 7 hour sail (often against the wind) from Grenada. The Moorings' new base in Canouan puts you in the very heart of the Grenadines. Captain yourself or enjoy the luxury of an all-inclusive Signature Vacation with a professional Captain and Chef. For details, call The Moorings' Vacation Planning team at 1 800 669-7476 or visit www.moorings.com</p> <p>St. Vincent and the Grenadines is renowned throughout the world for fantastic sailing. For the second consecutive year St Vincent & the Grenadines has been awarded the "Best Sailing & Yachting Island of the Year" from Caribbean World.</p>
Diving	<p>Diving sites abound in the turquoise waters surrounding these volcanic islands. Abundant reef-life, normally found at 80-ft in most dive destinations around the world, flourishes here at depths of only 25-ft, with an extraordinary variety of tropical reef fish such as angelfish, sergeant majors and peacock flounder. The shallow-water reefs surrounding almost every island make snorkelling an exciting adventure. Local dive shops and tour operators are both knowledgeable and experienced at making arrangements, according to each individual's requirements</p>

CULTURE	
Music	<p>Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is a Caribbean island with thriving music scenes based on Big Drum, calypso, soca, steelpan and also reggae. String band music, quadrille and bele music and traditional storytelling are also popular.</p> <p>The national anthem of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is "St. Vincent! Land So Beautiful", adopted upon independence in 1979; it was written by Phyllis Joyce McClean Punnett with music by Joel Bertram Miguel. The most popular international singer from St. Vincent is Marlon Roudette, lead singer from the band Mattafix they are famous for their hit single "Big City Life"</p>
Films	<p>"Pirates of the Caribbean" was filmed largely in St Vincent and has contributed to the increased popularity of the island.</p>

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Festivals

The Nine Mornings Festival in December is St. Vincent and the Grenadines' unique way of celebrating Christmas every year. Most renowned is the walk through town in the early morning hours of each day -- with neighbors, street dancers, drummers and carolers all parading together.

The origins of the Nine Mornings Festival relate to a "novena," a Roman Catholic devotion of prayers said for nine consecutive days. It is believed that after the early morning church services, worshippers wandered back to their houses, eagerly greeting friends with holiday blessings. It soon became customary to include "Boom Drum" bands, composed of musicians playing goatskin drums and wooden flutes; carolers who went house to house singing Christmas carols; and street vendors selling holiday cakes and sweets, as well as drinks made from ginger and sorrel.

Today, Victoria Park in Kingstown hosts a variety of Nine Mornings competitions: caroling, speech making, beer drinking, banana eating, crying, laughing, and story telling. In recent years, a welcomed addition to the Nine Mornings tradition is the lighting up of towns, villages, commercial buildings, churches and private homes.

Late June brings **St. Vincent's weeklong Carnival**, one of the largest such celebrations in the eastern Caribbean. The festivities include steel-band and calypso competitions, parades, costumes, and the crowning of the king and queen of the carnival. The fun extends through the first 2 weeks in July, culminating in a huge street party.

Easterval Held around the Easter period each year – come celebrate Easterval on Union Island

Canouan Regatta May-June 2010

A calypso competition, beauty pageant and boat races draw crowds to the island of Canouan in the Grenadines for the Canouan Regatta. Catch live music at nearby resorts and small bars, and join in land games.

Vincy Mas Carnival, Kingstown June-July 2010

See the 'devils' with paint and mud daubed on their bodies roam Kingstown in the pre-dawn hours for J'ouvert, the beginning of St Vincent's colourful West Indian carnival celebrations, Vincy Mas. Don't miss the popular Steel Band and Calypso competitions. There are competitions to find the King and Queen of The Bands, a Junior Carnival, and the Mardi Gras parade of costumed bands on the last day.

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ATTRACTIONS	
Beaches	<p>Leeward Coast</p> <p>Chateaubetair - The bay here, with its 40-foot deep reef and array of brightly coloured fish, is a snorkeller's dream. While usually a good anchorage, especially on the eastern half of the bay, the northerly swells in the winter months can cause difficulties.</p> <p>Cumberland Bay - The bay is very deep and those boats wishing to anchor will need to do so with a bow or stern-rope to a palm tree.</p> <p>Petit Byahaut - Four moorings are available at the resort al Petit Byahaut. There is a small beach, diving and snorkelling are superb. At Dinosaur Head (face of Byahaut point) you will find a 120-foot wall covered in sponges, sea-fans and coral.</p> <p>Troumaca Bay - This small well-protected bay, with room for only a handful of yachts, has some mooring posts on the beach. There is good snorkelling along the northern shore.</p> <p>Wallilabou - This picturesque bay is a good diving spot and reliable line handlers are available to help secure yachts. Customs can be cleared here between 4.00pm and 6.00 pm. Kingstown - Customs and immigration can be cleared at Kingstown Harbour and there is a tie-up for yachts.</p> <p>Mount Wynne - This expansive black sand beach is a local favourite. It lies on the leeward coast thus the sea is very calm. There are toilet facilities, benches and huts. The ideal spot for a picnic and for anchoring speed boats and yachts.</p> <p>South-East Coast</p> <p>Blue Lagoon - Surrounded by palm trees, this area with a lovely beach provides a very pleasant anchorage. Moorings are available at Barefoot Yacht Charters or The Lagoon Marina.</p> <p>Villa Beach and Indian Bay - There are two white sand beaches on mainland St. Vincent located on the southeast end of the island. They are divided by a small hilly projection and are easily accessible. Both beaches offer good snorkelling and provide lovely views of Young Island and some of the Grenadine islands.</p> <p>Young Island Cut - The anchorage here, lying in clear water, is a favourite with yachts-people. Anchor with care as the current sweeps both ways and the centre of the cut is 65 feet deep. Moorings are available, but stay clear of the sea bed close to Young Island itself. No customs clearance.</p> <p>Windward Coast</p> <p>On the windward side of the island there are a number of beautiful black sand beaches. Especially popular is Argyle, a long beach unto which breakers crash furiously. Most of the windward beaches are not</p>

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	<p>recommended for swimming. Also you will find a lovely picturesque, long beach at Black Point.</p> <p>Brighton Beach is a secluded black sand beach. This beach faces the Grenadines. It has high waves and is the perfect place for a bit of boogie boarding .</p>
Waterfalls	<p>There are a number of tropical waterfalls accessible to visitors:</p> <p>Dark View Falls are set in the forest-clad Richmond Valley in the NW of the island, where a natural bamboo bridge spans the tumbling river leading you on to two majestic falls.</p> <p>The Falls of Baleine are a single stage fall with the sparkling waters plunging 60 feet into a rock pool that is perfect for a refreshing dip; there is a footpath and a landing stage for boats in the bay.</p> <p>Trinity Falls are a 2 hour drive from Kingstown followed by a 20 minute hike through lush rain forest, but it's worth it: they are said to be the most beautiful in St Vincent.</p>
Wildlife	<p>The perfect way to get "off-the-beaten-track" and see the serene countryside, including a visit to the Old Hegg Turtle Sanctuary where former seaman, Orton King, saves endangered Hawksbill turtles from extinction.</p> <p>HazECO Tours also provide guides for various hiking excursions: along Bequia's dazzling beaches, a scenic rural hike and a 'Hardy Hikers Tour' in the northeast of the island. For those interested in a day of dolphin and whale watching, outings can be arranged through several operators, including Kim Halbich of Fantasea Tours www.fantaseatours.com and Hal Daize of Sea Breeze Nature Tours www.seabreezenaturetours.com</p> <p>St Vincent & the Grenadines can boast four endemic and fifteen sub-endemic bird species that put the country among the top four bird watching market in the Caribbean.</p>
Tours	<p>HazECO Tours is a company that operates in harmony with the natural environment, while providing personalized, quality eco-tours in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Offering access to the loveliest and often most remote areas of the country, HazECO Tours caters to all ages, abilities, and interests. Available tours include excursions to the La Soufrière Volcano, Dark View Falls, Trinity Falls, Vermont Nature Trail, and Owia Salt Pond. www.hazecotours.com</p> <p>One way to experience the real St. Vincent is with HazECO's Jeep Safari Tours http://www.hazecotours.com - travel along winding mountain roads, through small remote villages and rain forests with blue-tinted ferns, passing deep gorges with fresh-water streams and waterfalls and enjoy lunch at Hell's Gate waterfall where you can swim and snorkel.</p>
Gardens	<p>The Botanical Gardens: The Leeward (west) coast of St. Vincent leads to many interesting sights. A visit to the Botanical Gardens, the oldest in</p>

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	<p>the Western Hemisphere, is a favourite stop for both visitors and Locals. Here, rare and exotic flowers, plants and trees abound. The garden was founded in 1762 as a commercial breeding ground for plants brought from other parts of the world. St. Vincent was Captain Bligh's original destination when the mutiny on HMS Bounty delayed his first scheduled arrival. He eventually completed a second voyage, and a descendant of one of his original breadfruit trees thrives in today's garden. There is also an aviary for a close-up view of the majestically coloured national bird, the St. Vincent parrot (<i>Amazona Guildingii</i>). Guides are available and will happily escort you on a short, half-hour tour of the grounds for \$2 a person, longer tours are available for \$3 a person.</p>
<p>Castles/Forts</p>	<p>Fort Charlotte: On Berkshire Hill, just west of town, and over 600 feet above the bay, is Fort Charlotte. Named after King George III's wife, the fortification was constructed in 1806. In its heyday, it supported 600 troops and 34 guns. Some of the old barracks now house a museum with the colourful history of the Black Caribs depicted on its walls.</p> <p>Fort Duvernette: Alongside Young Island, this fort (built in 1800) is situated 195 feet above the sea and was originally intended to defend the anchorage at Calliaqua Bay. Transportation to the fort can be arranged with the ferry at the dock on Villa Beach.</p>

<p>OTHER ACTIVITIES</p>	
<p>Shopping</p>	<p>Edwin D. Layne & Sons is a sizeable department store on Bay and Middle Street in Kingstown where you will find everything from clothing and fabric, to building materials and electrical supplies. The Voyager (on Halifax Street) is one of only a few duty-free shops in town and Gonsalves Liquors has a duty-free liquor store at the E.T. Joshua Airport and a downtown location offering a wide selection of imported wines, spirits and liqueurs, stored in their temperature controlled cellars. On the other side of town, just across from Young Island, is an area known as Villa. This is where you'll find many of the island's hotels, restaurants and bars along with a few nice boutiques. When in the area be sure to check out At Basil's, a unique antique and furniture store, housed in an old colonial style building. They carry a wonderful selection of collectibles, home accessories and furnishings collected from around the world.</p> <p>A wide variety of unique local arts and crafts can be found throughout Kingstown particularly at the Artisans Craft Shop and The Bounty Restaurant and Art Gallery on Egmont Street. A visit to the new Kingstown Market and shopping mall can also produce some fruitful findings, from jewellery to wood carvings.</p>
<p>Markets</p>	<p>Kingstown Market is a bustling, vibrant market carrying a superb selection of fresh vegetables, fruits, meats, and fish. Particularly well</p>

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	stocked on Fridays and Saturdays. Local arts and crafts are frequently displayed in the courtyard.
Nightlife	While St. Vincent may not boast a raucous nightlife scene, there are a few spots that offer evening entertainment. A number of hotels feature live weekly entertainment with local steel bands or string bands. Grand View, Young Island Resort, , are just a few that offer live musical groups, usually on Fridays and Saturdays. The Attic and Emotions are two well known, lively nightclubs in Kingstown and Iguana and Marcomay located in Villa.

CUISINE	
Food	Virtually everything you eat in St. Vincent & The Grenadines will have been grown or reared locally. The furthest many ingredients will travel is from a small farm on St. Vincent to a plate at a restaurant on the Grenadine islands. The fish will have been pulled out of the waters surrounding the island by a local fisherman and sold straight to the chef just a couple of hours before it is cooked. Be sure to sample the local dishes jackfish and breadfruit, and wash it all down with a cool Hairoun Beer or a Sunset Rum.
Restaurants	<p>St. Vincent sports an eclectic range of dining options from beachside grills and take-away pizzas to simple, casual fare and more elaborate fine gourmet cuisine. Hotel restaurants are generally open to non-resident guests and further increase your choices. Along the Villa and Indian Bay strip is a delightful amalgam of local and international restaurants. Moorings around the Young Island Cut make many of these restaurants easily accessible to yachtsmen. For those seeking a slightly more adventurous lunch or dinner experience take the picturesque drive out to Pebbles in Mount Pleasant or take a boat ride over to Petit Byahaut or Young Island. Here are two recommendations:</p> <p>Basil's Bar and Restaurant, Kingstown: This enclave is set beneath Cobblestone Inn, a former sugar warehouse. The air-conditioned interior is accented with exposed stone and brick, soaring arches, and a rambling mahogany bar, which remains open throughout the day. The menu might include lobster salad, shrimp in garlic butter, sandwiches, hamburgers, and barbecued chicken. Dinners feature grilled lobster, shrimp cocktail, grilled red snapper, and grilled filet mignon, all fairly standard dishes of the international repertoire. http://www.basilsbar.com</p> <p>Rooftop Restaurant and Bar, Kingstown: This restaurant does a thriving business, thanks to its well-prepared food and its location three stories above the center of Kingstown. After you climb some flights of stairs, you'll see a bar near the entrance, an indoor area decorated in</p>

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	<p>earth tones, and a patio open to the prevailing breezes. Lunches stress traditional Creole recipes using fresh fish, chicken, mutton, beef, and goat. Dinners are more international, and may include lobster, excellent snapper with lemon-butter and garlic sauce, steaks with onions and mushrooms, and several savory preparations of pork.</p> <p>Phone: 784/456-1937</p>
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MORE INFO	
Brochures	Request from the Tourism Board at www.svgtourism.com
Website	See www.discoversvg.com for lots more information.

HOTEL PRIZE PARTNERS - CFRB	<p>Young Island Resort, Young Island: Legend has it that Young Island Resort was once the home of a Carib Indian chief who traded his island for a black stallion. Young Island Resort is a 35-acre private island retreat in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. It features 29 beachfront and hillside cottages, each with a private terrace overlooking the tranquil Caribbean Sea. Guests enjoy a quaint swimming pool amidst lush grounds, beachfront thatched kiosks for dining, a full-service Spa Kalina, the floating "Coconut Bar," two 44-foot sailing yachts, non-motorized water sports, a tennis court, and more.</p> <p>Web site: www.youngisland.com Phone: (800) 223-1108 Email: info@youngisland.com</p>
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HOTEL PRIZE PARTNERS - CJAD	<p>Paradise Beach Hotel Watching an amber tropical sunset from one's balcony whilst sipping a cool refreshing rum punch listening to the waves roll onto the beach -- that's how time passes at Paradise Beach Hotel. Located just five minutes from E.T. Joshua Airport in St. Vincent and 10 minutes from the capital Kingstown, Paradise Beach Hotel features 14 rooms, a restaurant overlooking the Caribbean Ocean, on-site spa treatments, and gift Shop and boutique. All one needs to do is arrive and let Paradise take care of the rest.</p> <p>http://www.paradisesvg.com/about/index.php</p>
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AIRLINE PARTNERS	<p>SVG Air is the airline of St Vincent, Nevis, Grenada and the Grenadine islands of Bequia, Carriacou, Mustique, Canouan and Union island also servicing Mayreau, Petit St Vincent, Palm Island, Carriacou, Grenada, Barbados, Martinique and St Lucia.</p> <p>http://www.svgair.com</p> <p>LIAT are a long-established airline in the Caribbean region that</p>
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provides great connections between many of the islands.
<http://www.liatairline.com>

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

My visit to the idyllic island of St. Vincent and the Grenadines is the reason I have listed this destination as one of my Top Ten Romantic Destinations on the Travel Show website...See:
<http://www.chrisrobinsontravelshow.ca/images/upload/ChrisFavouriteRomanticPlaces.pdf>

Here is some of what I experienced on my trip and therefore what I can personally recommend:

Grenadine House: My base on the main island of St. Vincent and overlooking the vibrant capital of Kingstown in St. Vincent, Grenadine House is complemented by 20 well-appointed guest rooms, all equipped with a queen sized bed, air-conditioning, high-speed Internet, and a safety box. Set in residential Kingstown Park, overlooking Kingstown towards the Grenadine Islands, Grenadine House offers elegant comfort to the discerning traveler. A Historical Site The building housing Grenadine House, originally known as The Great House, was built in 1765 as the residence to the British Administrator of the island of Saint Vincent. Fully renovated and upgraded to meet today's international standards, Grenadine House recently opened its doors to guests offering the best of Vincy hospitality. The hotel also features the historical Sapodilla dining room, the elegant West Indies Cocktail Bar, and The Terrace with panoramic views of the archipelago. www.grenadinehouse.com

Lunch at **Cobblestone Inn:** The Rooftop restaurant at Cobblestone Inn adds Vincentian flair to favored European dishes. Open for breakfast and lunch 7:00 a.m. – 3 p.m. daily, its menu regularly serves freshly caught fish and conch, in addition to standard poultry, meats and vegetables. Built as a sugar warehouse and recreated in its original Georgian splendor, Cobblestone Inn is an elegant property situated on the waterfront of Kingstown overlooking the harbor. It is only 15 minutes from the airport or to the beach, and boasts 17 double rooms and two single rooms that are all exquisitely furnished. www.thecobblestoneinn.com

Kingstown: Nicknamed the "City of Arches," the capital city of Kingstown is full of old-world charm, cobblestone sidewalks and brick buildings. On Fridays and Saturdays, the vibrant "Market Square" teems with local fruit, vegetables, meat, and fish.

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Botanical Gardens: Visit the oldest such gardens in the Western Hemisphere, created in 1765. They are famous for being the destination of Captain Bligh's second visit to the Caribbean in 1798 (his first ended in the infamous mutiny on the Bounty) when he introduced breadfruit to the island.

Fort Charlotte: This is a former British garrison built in 1806, which supported 600 troops and 34 guns in its heyday. Some of the old barracks now house a museum with the colorful history of the Black Caribs depicted on its walls. It offers a magnificent view over Kingstown and the northern Grenadines.

Falls of Baleine: One of St. Vincent's most popular northern attractions, which can only be reached comfortably by boat. The 60-foot falls are located in a narrow valley and plunge into a cool pool. Visitors get a kick out of climbing up under the falls and diving into the water. The Falls are a great day trip when combined with diving, snorkeling, and lunch.

The waterfront **French Verandah Restaurant** at Villa Bay Beach in St. Vincent offers delectable continental cuisine fused with Caribbean flavors. The restaurant's extensive wine cellar makes for perfect pairings with dishes. Friendly service and the charming seaside setting make this restaurant a popular choice amongst locals and visitors alike. www.marinershotel.com

Ferry to **Bequia** (one hour one-way): Just nine miles south of St. Vincent lies the largest island in the Grenadine chain, at just seven square miles! Bequia ("BEK-way") is a charming enclave that retains its age-old boat building and fishing traditions. Dotted with colorful homes draped in bougainvillea and shaded by almond trees, the island boasts some of the best beaches in the country, casual restaurants serving West Indian fare and boutique lodging. Bequia is popular among yachties, "cocktail cruisers" and travelers in search of the offbeat Caribbean, where they might embrace a little joie de vivre along the waterfront bar scene.

Bequia Beach Hotel is located on one of the island's best beaches in Friendship Bay. Featuring 30 rooms with a total of 35 will be completed by 2010, the property boasts 13 suites, 11 classic rooms, and six villas - three with their own individual plunge pools. All rooms are decorated in bespoke colonial style, and feature ensuite bathrooms, indoor seating, and private covered terraces complete with sun loungers. The property debuted a new beachfront seafood-inspired restaurant in November

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2009 - the Bagatelle Beach Bar & Restaurant - offering guests and visitors to the island a second and varied dining option to the hotel's already existing Blue Tropic Café. The hotel will also introduce a new spa and gym in 2010. www.bequiabeach.com

Driftwood Restaurant on St Vincent serves up Mediterranean cuisine that has earned rave reviews from all over. With great prices and an air-conditioned lounge and bar, it is an ideal place for a satisfying meal.

Petit St Vincent: Best known for being completely un-plugged, PSV was recently named # 3 “Best Caribbean Resort” by the discerning readers of Conde Nast Traveler magazine. Once on-island, guests can count on total privacy and barely a trace of the world from which they escaped - no televisions, phones, casinos, not even room keys. With only 22 cottages spread over 113 acres and a ratio of two staff for every guest, your every need is met with a wave of a flag – literally. Hoist a red flag, and you will not be disturbed. Hoist a yellow flag, and a staff member will soon be at your service. Cottages were made with natural stone found on the island, terra cotta floors and peaked hardwood ceilings, and are naturally air-conditioned with the ever-present ocean breeze while ceiling fans and louvered windows keep the air circulation moving. Guests enjoy a living room, a wooden sundeck, bedroom, bathroom, and a dressing area. www.psvresort.com

Mopion: PSV motorboat took us from the PSV dock and ferried us to Mopion for our wedding vow renewal ceremony. Located just a short boat ride away from Petit St. Vincent, Mopion – also known as Petit St. Richardson – is a small sandbar with a single thatched umbrella. It has been recognized by Caribbean Travel & Life magazine as an “Ultimate Beach” and is perfect for picnics, snorkeling and diving.

Moorings picked us up for an afternoon sail from Union to Canouan, with a stop at Tobago Cays for swimming and snorkeling. There will be snorkeling gear aboard. The Tobago Cays is a protected wildlife reserve of five islets bordered by a giant horseshoe reef and teeming with wildlife. Pet wild sea turtles here, many of which have been saved and nursed to health by the Old Hegg Turtle Sanctuary on Bequia. There remain few places on earth today that can match the unblemished natural beauty, easy accessibility and “feel good” tranquility.

<http://www.moorings.com/vacation-options/bareboat-yacht-charter/destinations/caribbean/st-vincent-grenadines/canouan>

Canouan: Unspoiled and virtually undiscovered, Canouan is located in the heart of the Grenadines and recognized as one of the top island

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destinations in the Caribbean. With two world-class resorts, dining, and soft sand beaches, visit Canouan for the ultimate escape.

<http://discoversvg.com/index.php/en/theislands/canouan>

Tamarind Beach Hotel & Yacht Club: The cozy-yet-chic boutique property is an escapist haven for destination weddings and castaway honeymoons. There are 32 rooms and 8 suites, all of which feature Brazilian walnut wooden paneling with a private balcony overlooking a pristine white sand beach and the tranquil Caribbean Sea. Facilities and services include: two restaurants, two bars, "Sea Grape" massage room, a private jetty, non-motorized water sports, complimentary ground transfer from/to the airport, welcome drink, and wireless Internet in the rooms www.tamarindbeachhotel.com

Raffles Canouan is situated on 300 acres of a 1,200-acre private estate featuring 88 suites, a Raffles Amrita Spa (with the only over-water glass-bottom treatment suites in the Caribbean), five restaurants ranging from fine dining to a casual beachside grill, an 18-hole Trump International Golf Club, and a collection of Grenadines Estate luxury villas. www.affles.com/canouan

Young Island Resort is a 35-acre private island retreat situated a few hundred metres off the coast of St. Vincent. It features 29 beachfront and hillside cottages, each with a private terrace overlooking the tranquil Caribbean Sea. Guest will enjoy a quaint swimming pool amidst lush grounds, beachfront thatched kiosks for dining, a full-service Spa Kalina, the floating "Coconut Bar," two 44-foot sailing yachts, non-motorized water sports, a tennis court, and more. Young Island Resort has complimentary water-sports equipment including: windsurfers, kayaks, pedaloos, sailing dinghies, snorkels, masks and flippers
www.youngisland.com

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