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Bermuda is known for its beautiful pink beaches and stunning blue waters



ITINERARIES

BERMUDA: PARADISE FOUND

IN THE BEAUTIFUL MIDDLE OF NOWHERE LIE 181 ISLANDS
AND ISLETS DEDICATED TO THE PROPOSITION OF RELAXATION

BY TARA DONALDSON

ISTOCK (BERMUDA); GARY LIND (MONA MONKEY)

It's hard to be uptight in a subtropical Eden where shorts are a requisite for business. Yet more than anything, it's an easygoing style that defines life on "De Rock," as Bermudans call their beloved land. The good vibes begin in Hamilton, Bermuda's capital and hub of activity. On Front Street pastel-colored stores sell everything from those famed Bermuda shorts to jewelry to Gosling's Black Seal rum used for the island's cherished specialty drink, the Dark and Stormy. >>



Downtown Hamilton (top) and inside the island's Crystal Cave (below)

deep cavern with water so pure that the massive stalagmites that rise from the cave floor appear to be mere inches from your face, even though they're more than 50 feet away.

The caves are part of Walsingham Nature Reserve, otherwise known as Tom Moore's Jungle, named for the 19th-century Irish poet who admired the view from Walsingham House (now Tom Moore's Tavern), which was built in 1652. He wrote of a particular tree, still standing today: "Twas thus in the shade of the Calabash tree, With a few who could feel and remember like me."

Though visitors today are equally inspired by Bermuda's natural beauty, it's the people they remember most.

"What sets us apart is our natural culture of hospitality; it's a way of life for us," Dill says. "When you encounter a Bermudian you will experience a uniqueness you will not find anywhere else in the world."



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The national cocktail is made with rum (the dark) and ginger beer (the stormy) and is as easy to enjoy as the island itself.

Bermuda is the oldest remaining British overseas territory, so cultural influences are quite evident. The bright-colored Bermuda shorts were adapted from early British military uniforms, and there are rules for adornment. Bermudas must be worn with a jacket, tie, and knee-high socks and, according to local law, can't be shorter than six inches above the knee. Many non-natives mistake the shorts for informal, but they lend a Bermudian gentleman a crisp and distinguished air. If you're after a pair of your own, you'll want to visit Front Street's English Sports Shop.

After Hamilton, the southern shores offer Bermuda's best beaches. Here you'll find the bliss promised by postcards and the 21-square-mile island's famed pink sand. Horseshoe Bay is one of Bermuda's most popular and picturesque spots, offering a string of secluded coves and full facilities. The sand's rosy hue comes from a combination of crushed coral, calcium carbonate, and shells of tiny single-celled animals called foraminifers.

"You see the hues best closer to the water's edge," says Jill Dill, who is with the Bermuda Tourism Authority.

Crystal Caves are the island's most popular attraction. Reached by a descending walkway, the subterranean caves are a mind-boggling natural phenomenon, containing deep pools of, yes, crystal-clear water and a profusion of surreal rock formations. The main Crystal Cave is a 200-foot-

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VOICES

“My favorite Half Moon Cay memory is horseback riding through the surf—absolutely exhilarating.”

LORRAINE T.

