

BEACHES RESORT

Turks and Caicos

A Photo Review

by

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All photos by Rex Ungericht unless otherwise noted. Some pictures were taken in 2018, others in 2015. The 2015 photos may not exactly picture the resort as it is now due to Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017 and the subsequent repairs made to the resort.

Why this Review?

In November of 2018, I found myself once again at the Beaches resort in the Turks and Caicos islands. This was my second visit, having been there for the first time in 2015. And for the second time, I took pictures. So I thought I would share what I saw so that folks who might be contemplating a visit can see what the resort is like.

What's a Beaches?

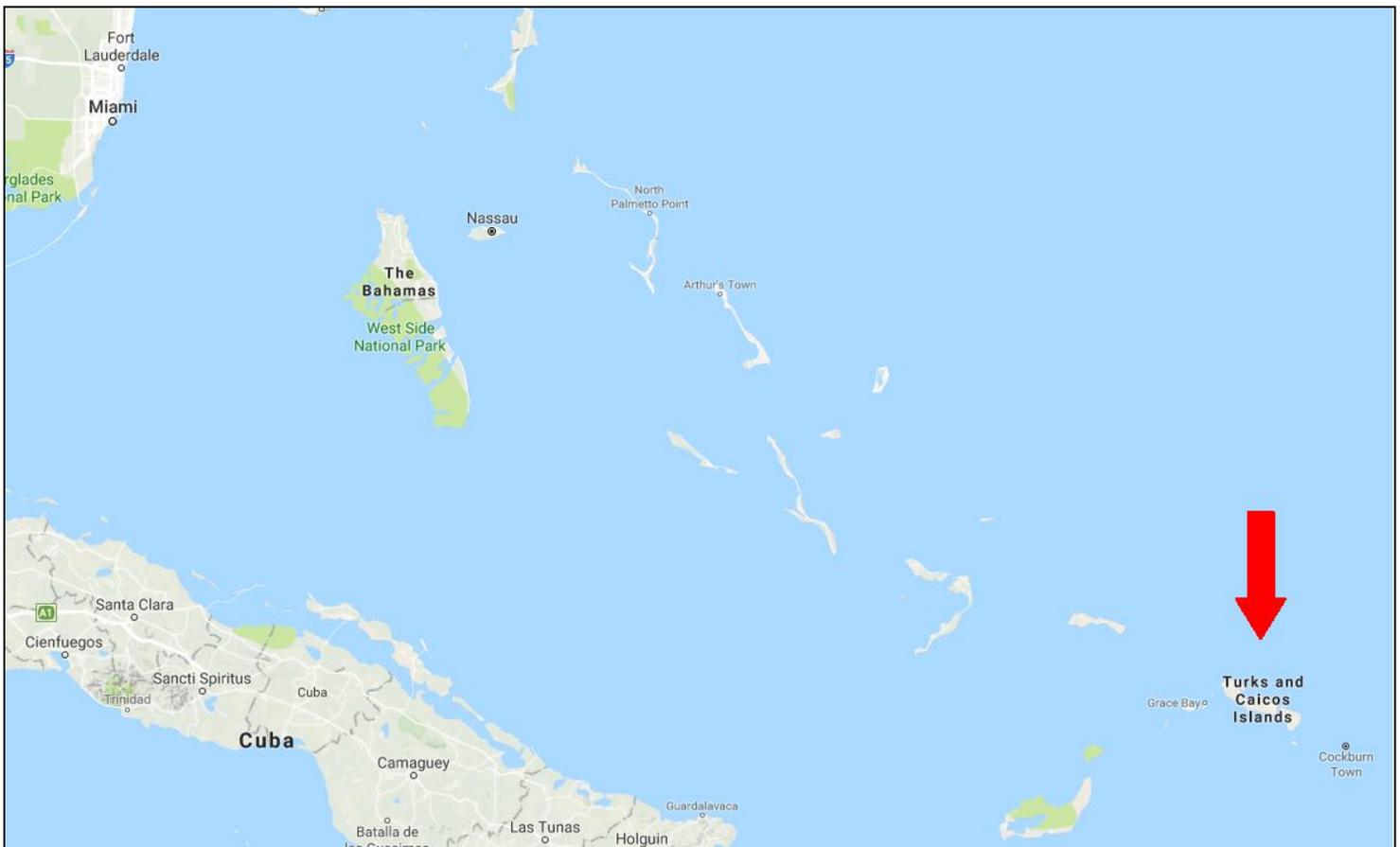
Back in 1981, Jamaican-born businessman Gordon "Butch" Stewart opened his first all-inclusive resort in Montego Bay, Jamaica. The resort was named Sandals, and catered to adults only.

Sandals was a success, and Stewart launched several more of the resorts around the Caribbean. Then, in 1997, he opened his first family resort. To distinguish it from the adults-only Sandals, he named it Beaches. There are currently three Beaches resorts, in Negril, Ocho Rios, and Turks & Caicos.

Note that even though the resort is billed as "all-inclusive", there are some things that you must purchase separately, like spa services and top-shelf liquor. This seems to be pretty common practice for Caribbean all-inclusive resorts, not just Beaches. Turks and Caicos uses the American dollar.

What's a Turks and Caicos?

Turks and Caicos is a British territory, composed of two island groups. If you start at Miami, Florida, USA and head southeast, you pass through the Bahamas and eventually reach Turks & Caicos.



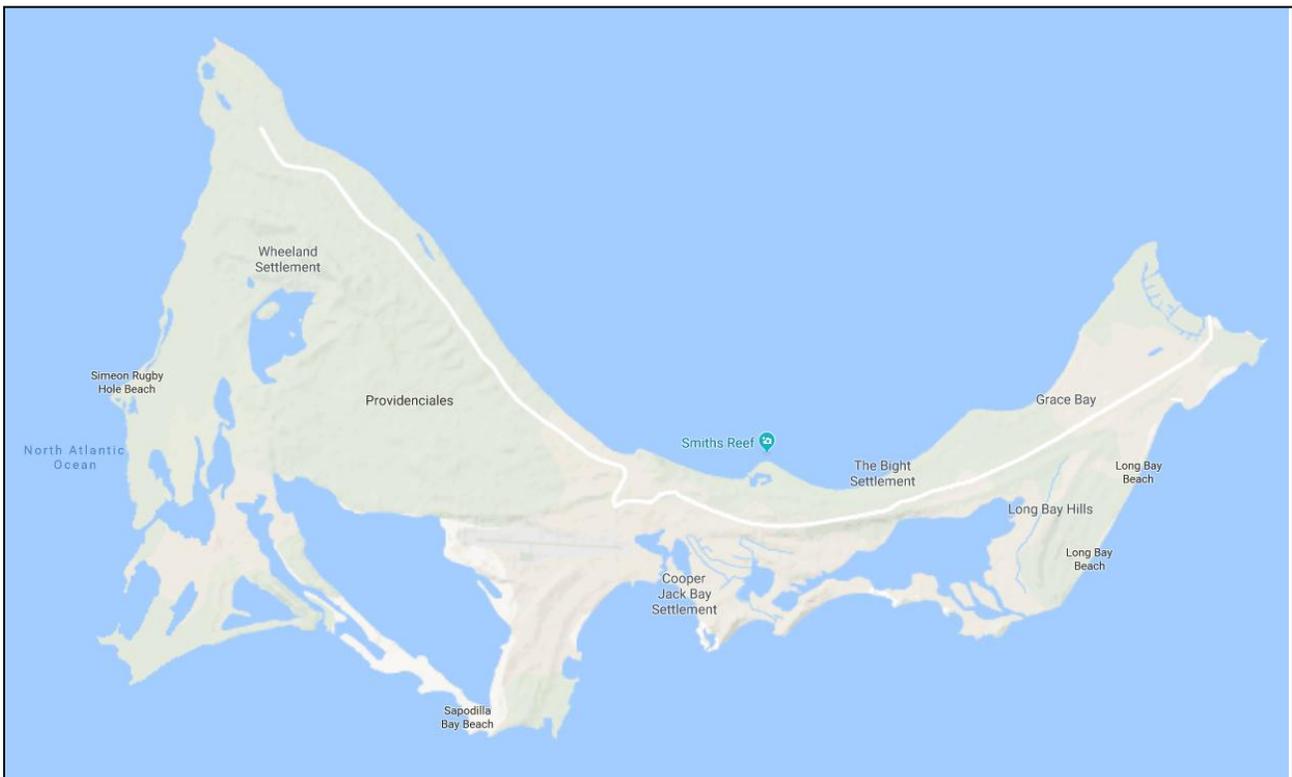
[Image from [Google Maps](#)]

The Caicos Islands make up the largest land area in Turks & Caicos.



[Image modified from [Google Maps](#)]

The most populous island in Turks & Caicos, and the island with the greatest number of facilities for tourists, is Providenciales (called Provo by pretty much everyone). Of ~50,000 T&C residents, around two-thirds live on Provo.



[Image from [Google Maps](#)]

There's a good reason that Provo is the main tourist draw. It's home to the world-class Grace Bay Beach.



[Image by [Southard](#). Image used per [CC BY-SA 3.0 license](#). Some of the sky has been cropped to fit this page.]

But be forewarned: there is the actual Grace Bay beach, and there is the marketing version of Grace Bay beach. In the image below, the yellow line is the actual beach on Grace Bay. Add in the red line and you get what some call Grace Bay Beach.

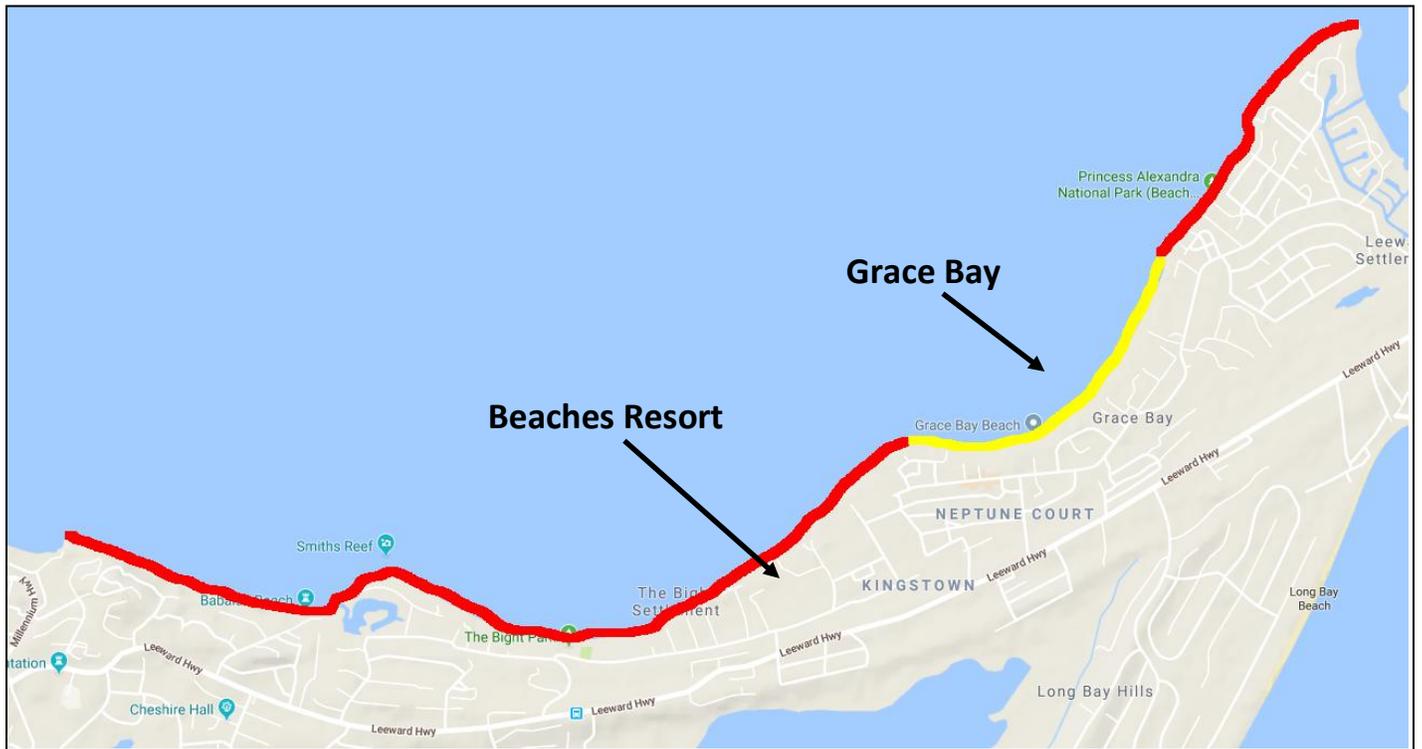


[Image modified from [Google Maps](#)]

Most if not all of the beach east of the Bight Park is lovely, white, and powdery. However, if you are looking to stay west of the Bight Park, you might want to do some research before deciding if that beach area is right for you.

Beaches Resort

The Beaches resort is on Grace Bay Beach but not on the beach on Grace Bay.



[Image modified from [Google Maps](#)]



[Beaches resort and surroundings. Photo By Dana Browne]

If you fly into Provo, you'll find a Beaches desk at the airport that will get you onto a shuttle to the resort. It's about a 15-minute drive. Once at the resort, the driver will take you to the lobby of the village where you are staying for check-in.



The resort used to be divided into four villages: Caribbean, French, Italian, and Key West. When I visited in 2018, I discovered that the part of the Caribbean Village closest to the ocean had been renamed the Seaside Village.

As best as I've been able to piece together, the original Beaches resort is what is now called the Caribbean and Seaside Villages. Then they built the resort behind them and named it the French village. Then they built the resort next door and named it the Italian Village. Then they bought the resort next to that (originally the Veranda Resort and Residences) and named it the Key West village.

No matter which village you stay in, you have the run of the entire resort. Let's walk around, shall we?

Here we are in the Key West village:



[Key West Village]

And here's another view, looking out over the Bayside and Sky restaurants:



[Key West Village and restaurants]

There are only a few, smallish swimming pools in the Key West village. Some of the suites have tiny individual pools.

Here we are looking down the path between the Key West (right) and Italian (left) villages.



[Between the Key West and Italian villages]

In Key West, the vibe of the village is laid back and relaxed. The Italian Village, on the other hand, is party central.



[Italian Village pool]

The Italian village is full of statues.



[Italian Village statue]

Most of the resort shops are in the Italian village, including a gift and sundry shop, a jewelry shop, a candy shop, a boutique, and more.



[Italian Village shop]

Like all of the villages, the Italian Village has guideposts to help you find your way around.



[Italian Village guidepost]

At the border of the Italian and Caribbean villages is the Beaches pier and dive shop.



[The Pier]

The dive shop has plenty of equipment for beach and water fun, as well as snorkeling and sightseeing trips (although you will likely need to get your reservation in early if you want a spot on one of the boats).



[The Dive Shop]



Water Sports Daily Activities

Aqua Center

Opening Hours 7:00am – 6:00pm



Snorkeling Trips (Inclusive)

Monday through Friday 9AM, 11AM, 1:30PM, 2:30PM

Saturday- 9AM, 10AM

Sunday- 9AM, 11AM, 1:30PM, 2:30PM

Glass Bottom Trips (Inclusive)

Monday through Friday 9:30AM, 11:30AM, 2:30PM & 3:30PM

Saturday & Sunday – 9:30AM & 11:30AM

Sunday - 9:30AM & 11:30AM

Certified Scuba Divers

Monday through Saturday two tank dive – 8:00AM

Monday through Saturday single tank dive – 2:00pm

Sunday single tank dive – 9:30AM & 2:00PM

Dive Orientation - 8:30AM & 3:00PM

Scuba Tune Ups – 2:00PM everyday

- All 2:00PM Dives will be a shallow dive.
- Divers must complete an orientation before signing up for dives.
- All Watersports Activities will be based on the Weather conditions.

Water Sports Activity Hut

Opening Hours 9:00am – 6:00pm



kayaks

Aqua Tricks

Stand Up Paddle Boards

Sailing Boats (Hobie Cat)

Wind Surfing

Lesson Times

kayaks- 9:00AM - 5:30PM

Aqua Tricks- 9:00AM - 5:00PM

Stand Up Paddle Boards- 9:00AM - 5:00PM

Sailing Boats- 9:30AM - 12:00PM & 2:30PM - 5:00PM

Wind Surfing- 9:30AM - 12:00PM & 2:30PM - 5:00PM

Hobie Sail Rides- 9:30AM - 12:00PM & 2:30PM - 5:00PM

New To Diving

Discover Scuba Diving Classes-9AM

Discover Scuba Diving Dives-8:30AM & 2PM

[Dive Shop Sign]

Since we're down by the beach, let's take a peek. The beach at Beaches is very nice, but not as deep as the beach on some parts of Grace Bay.



[Beaches beach]

Like the beach everywhere on Turks & Caicos, the beach at Beaches is public. When you walk down to the beach, you actually leave the resort.

This means that it is possible you will encounter vendors on the beach. When I was there in September of 2016 and in October of 2018, almost all of the vendors were guys with boats trying to sell fishing expeditions or sightseeing expeditions or snorkeling expeditions and so on. They were not pushy, but they did want to let you know they had boats that could be hired.

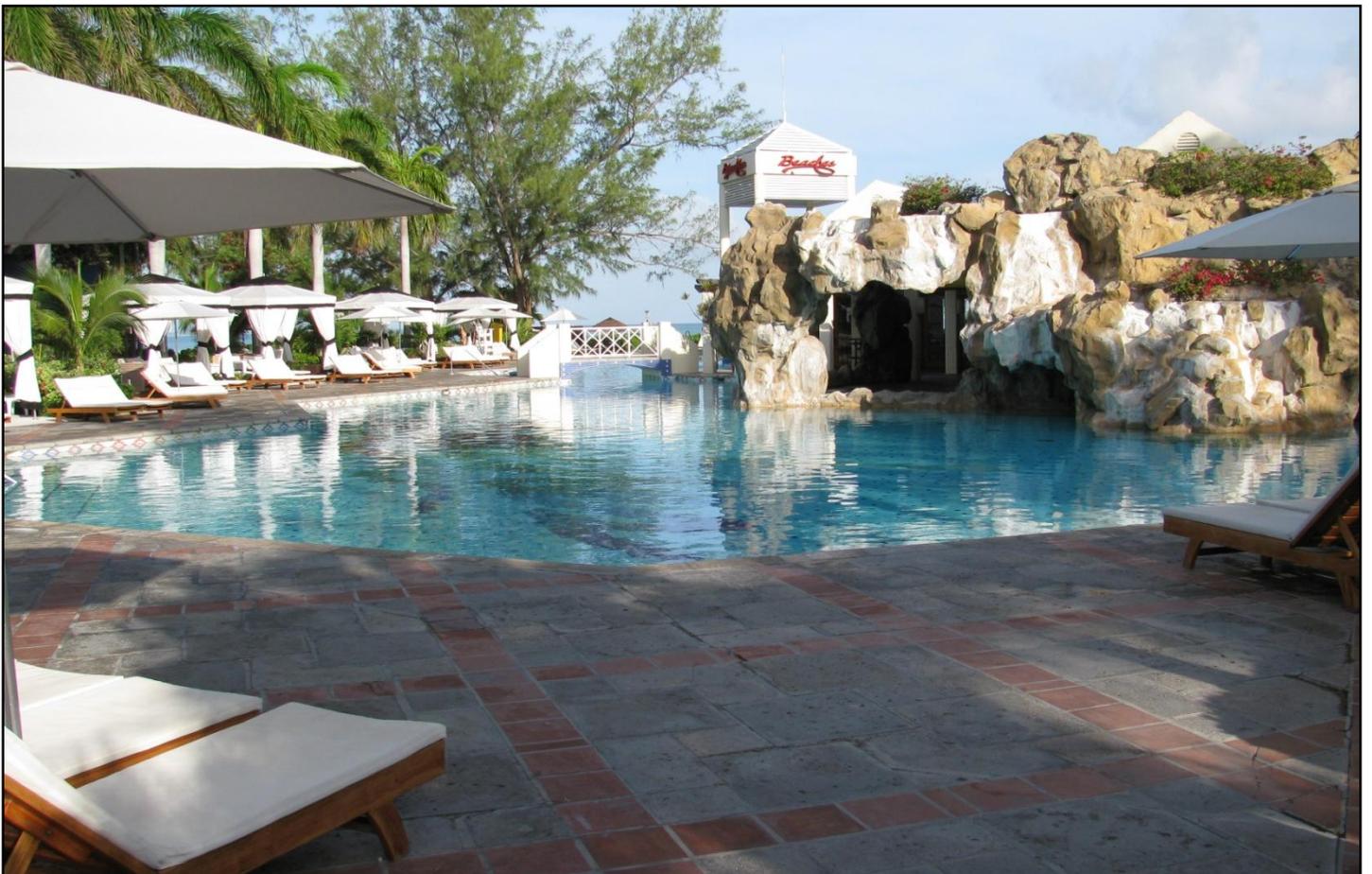
Beaches has security guards watching the beach, and it seems quite safe, but you still probably shouldn't leave anything valuable out where someone walking by could snag it while you're off in the water.

As you walk west past the dive shop, you enter the Caribbean and Seaside Villages.



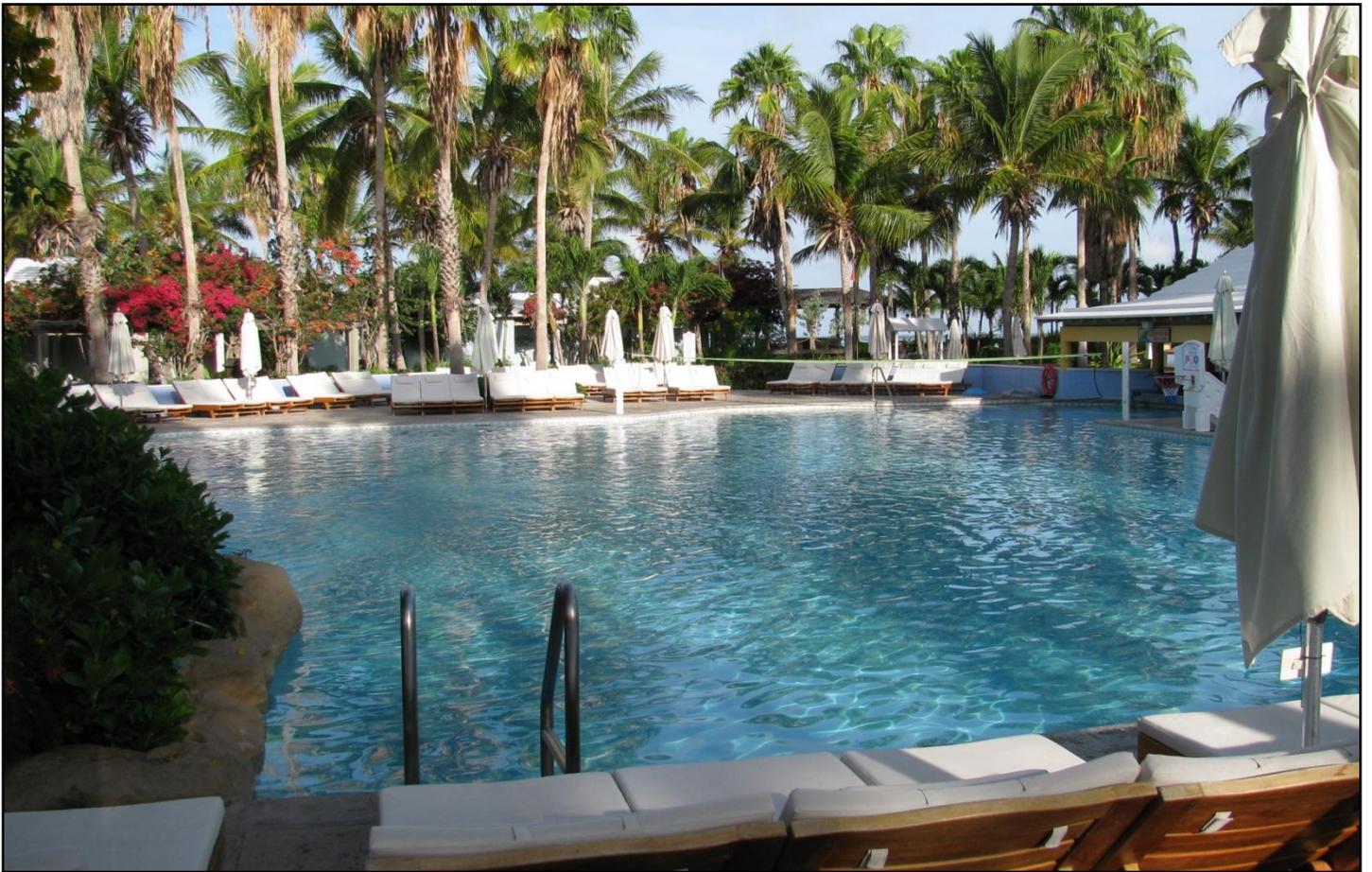
[One building in the Caribbean and Seaside Villages]

The Caribbean Village has two pools. Here's one of them.



[Caribbean pool #1]

And here's the other.



[Caribbean pool #2]

Although most of the shops are in the Italian Village, there is a row of interconnected shops in the Caribbean Village.



[Caribbean Village shops]



[One part of the waterpark]



[Another part of the waterpark]



[The kids swim-up bar at the waterpark]



[The lazy river at the waterpark]

If you pass through the waterpark in the right direction, you wind up at the French Village.



[The French Village]

The French Village is home to the formal stage, where shows are performed most nights.



[French Village stage]



[Performance at the French Village stage. Picture by Dana Browne.]

Like the Italian Village, the French Village has statues...



[French Village statues]

...and it also has fountains.



[French Village fountain]

The French Village pool is very nice.



[The French Village pool]

There is one more section of the resort in addition to the villages and the waterpark. Down on the shore, if you walk west past the Caribbean Village you enter an area called Treasure Beach.



[Treasure Beach]

There is an open stage here, used for shows that don't need a more formal stage like the one in the French Village. There are a bunch of tables in front of the stage; they bring out chairs when they have a show or event going on.



[Treasure Beach stage and tables]

If you walk down this way, you'll pass the menu for the Jerk Shack on the side of a small lean-to.



[Jerk Shack menu]

And if you keep walking, you'll eventually reach the Jerk Shack at the end of Treasure Beach.



[The Jerk Shack]

There are a lot of restaurants on the resort in addition to the Jerk Shack, and there are a lot of reviews of those restaurants. My personal observation is that the food is hit and miss, no matter which restaurant you go to. I enjoyed the buffet lunches at Bayside, the filet mignon at Le Petite Chateau, the steak at Schooners, and the buffet breakfast at Marios. Service for ordered meals (not buffets) was usually pretty slow compared to restaurants back home - I ordered breakfast at 10am at Schooners and left at 10:55 to go join my tour group without ever having been served. So be prepared for things to move at island time.

Also be aware of the dress code. Most restaurants are resort casual (shorts and t-shirts ok). The walk-up spots (Jerk Shack, Mr. Mac, Curls & Swirls) are ok with folks in swimsuits. But there are a few restaurants (Giuseppe's, Sapodilla's, Kimono's, Schooner's for dinner, Le Petite Chateau, Barefoot By the Sea for dinner) that require a bit of dress up - no shorts, no t-shirts, etc. Kimono's is the only restaurant that requires reservations.

Here are photos of a few of the restaurants.



[Barefoot By the Sea]



[Arizona's - the inside part]



[Arizona's - the outside part]



[Cricketer's Pub on the left, Mario's on the right]



[Entrance to Mario's]



[Schooner's]



[Schooner's Menu]



[Bobby Dee's]

Beaches
Resorts for Everyone by Sandals

<p>REGULAR SHAKES</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Vanilla 2. Strawberry 3. Chocolate 4. Caramel 5. Raspberry 6. Lime 	<p>FROZEN YOGURTS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Candy Bar Crunch 3. Coconut Milk 4. Tropical Sorbet 5. Cookies & Cream
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OVER THE TOP "SHAKES"

1. **Banana Bounty** - vanilla ice cream, fresh banana, coconut milk, whipped cream and coconut flakes
2. **Chocolate Cookie Dough Fudge** - vanilla ice cream, chocolate chip cookie, fudge brownie, chocolate milk
3. **Raspberry Chocolate Truffle** - raspberries, chocolate chips, chocolate ice cream, floating marshmallows
4. **Electric Jellyfish** - vanilla ice cream, blended blueberries, and blueberry compote
5. **Key Lime Pie** - vanilla ice cream, key lime juice, graham crackers, whipped cream
6. **Fairy Princess** - strawberry ice cream, strawberries, whipped cream, cotton candy

Mr. Mac
The Mac Daddy of Cheese...

- 1 **Mr. Mac's Crab Mac**
Lump crab meat, garlic, lemon, mozzarella, smoked Gouda, provolone and parmesan cheeses, home-made scampi sauce and crispy fried onions
- 2 **All American**
The classic mac 'n cheese - macaroni, American & sharp cheddar cheese
- 3 **Deluxe Cheeseburger Mac**
Macaroni, ground beef, bacon, onions, frisée lettuce, tomato, pickles, sharp cheddar & American cheese, herb crostini
- 4 **Blazin' Buffalo Chicken Mac**
Macaroni, chicken, Buffalo sauce, cheddar, Monterey jack, bleu cheese crumble
- 5 **Pulled Pork Mac**
Macaroni, pulled pork, citrus BBQ sauce, cheddar cheese, pickled red onions, herb bread crumbs
- 6 **Taco Mac**
Macaroni, ground beef, cheddar & American cheese, taco seasoning, jalapeno, salsa, guacamole, sour cream, cilantro, tortilla crisp
- 7 **Philly Cheese Steak Mac**
Macaroni, shaved rib-eye steak, provolone cheese, garlic, peppers, onions
- 8 **Chicken Parmesan Mac**
Macaroni, chicken, tomato concasse, mozzarella & parmesan cheese, fresh basil, herb bread crumbs
- 10 **Deep Fried Mac Balls**
Mozzarella, cheddar and parmesan cheese, marinara sauce, chopped parsley, fried onions

CHEESE PLEASE!

[Curls & Swirls and Mr, Mac Menus]

I recommend that shortly after you arrive, you spend some time walking around the resort, seeing where everything is. It's such a large place that it can seem a bit overwhelming at first, but once you learn the layout it's not difficult to get to where you want to go.

As you walk around, you'll discover many things.



[There's a wide variety of flowers throughout the resort...]



[...and little landscaping touches like turf lizards]



[There are real lizards too]



[And birds of various types]



[Even chickens!]



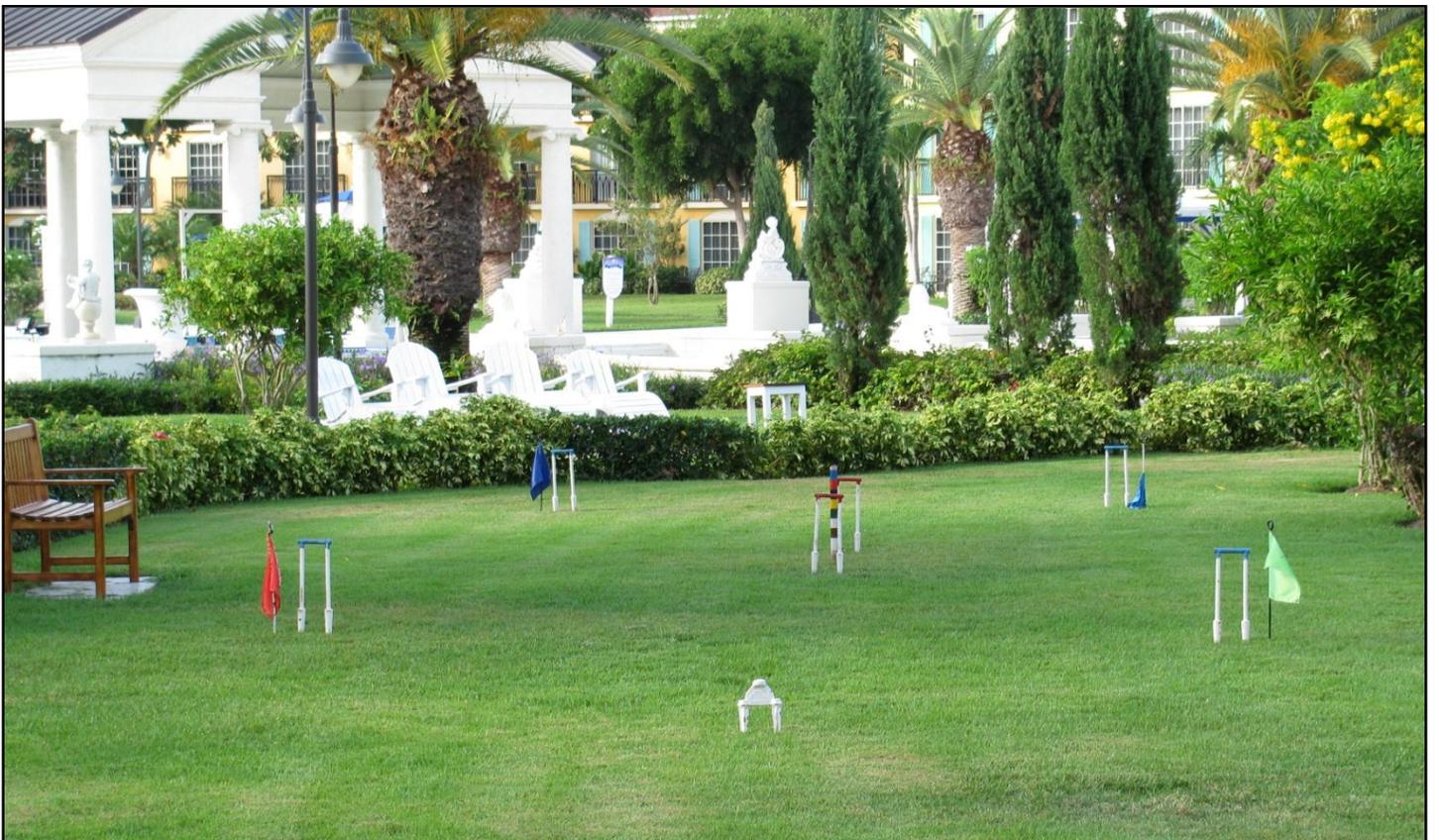
[You might even find a sandcastle]



[If you smoke, there are designated smoking areas]



[Shuffleboard]



[Croquet]



[Lawn Chess]



[Basketball]



[Tennis]



[And when you're done with sports, there are hammocks all over the resort]

To wrap up, since the main draw of the resorts in Turks and Caicos is the beach and the ocean, here are a few photos that showcase those features.

