

The Feel-Good FACTOR

Stretch, stroke and soak: our guide to wellness BY CHERYL MARKOSKY

Clambering mountains, running and cycling on St. Kitts and Nevis are admirable ways to keep fit. However, there's also a softer side to health and happiness while enjoying your tropical holiday.

Sun Salutation

Yin yoga on the beach? Or conquering the camel pose on a terrace? A tricky choice, but someone's got to make it.

- Yoga-friendly places to stay include: **Christophe Harbour** (christopheharbour.com), the **Park Hyatt** (stkitts.parkhyatt.com) and **Ocean Terrace Inn** (oceanterraceinn.com) on St. Kitts; and the **Four Seasons** (fourseasons.com/nevis) and **Cliffdwellers** (663 8910) on Nevis.
- Yoga and wellness on the beach at new venture, **Anahata** (anahatayogastkitts.com), on **Turtle Beach**, The Peninsula.
- Harness your inner warrior practising yoga at **The Harvest Hideaway**, Coconut



Park Hyatt

Farm, The Peninsula 669 9957

Ital Creations offers more than great vegetarian food, with evening yoga sessions. italcreations@yahoo.com, 661 1029

Rhonda Grant conducts slow and deep yoga flow in private homes, beachside and at the Bath Hotel, Nevis. rhodayoga60@gmail.com, 668 3107

Eden Life hosts yoga retreats on St. Kitts and Nevis. completecaribwellness.com, 469 2147

Massage

Need some kneading? Allow yourself to be rubbed with local herb blends,

SHADWELL GREAT HOUSE, ART AND WELLNESS CENTRE

Once an 18th-century diplomatic residence built by governor Gilbert Fleming, Shadwell housed Lord Nelson prior to his marriage to Fanny Nisbet on Nevis and Prince (later King) William, before he sailed across the Narrows to give Fanny away. One of St. Kitts's oldest surviving Great Houses, owner Dr Lisa Skerit has given it new life as a gallery, café and wellness hub.

Upcoming workshops and classes include:

- Yoga with dogs
- Yogapuncture
- Painting classes with Daniela Batella and Tom Jones
- Cooking workshops with Yayah and Ital Creations
- Bend and brunch

shadwellgreathouse.com, 760 4260

while cooled by tradewind breezes.

Miraval Life in Balance Spa, Park Hyatt puts a spring in your step with rise and shine yoga, mindful walking meditation and St. Kitts-exclusive fire-stone massage. miravalstkitts.com, 468 1234

Four Seasons' signature island ceremony massage uses oils, scents and spices of the Caribbean. fourseasons.com/nevis, 469 1111

Compassionate Touch does what it says on the tin – a caring experience Nevis-style. compassionatetouchspa.com, 469 9748

Enjoy massage therapy, emotional balancing and acupuncture at holistic practice **Eden Life** on both islands. completecaribwellness.com

Discover massage, acupuncture and physiotherapy as well as general medicine at **Meridian Medical** on St. Kitts and Nevis. meridianmedcons.com, 465 5096

Hot Springs

Take a dip in Nevis's volcanic hot springs - which contain minerals of medicinal value - next to the Bath Hotel, Charlestown. You're in for a sizzling time, as temperatures range from 104-108F. ▼



Eden Life

Natural Remedies

An unspoiled environment is our greatest asset – and it's also good for you BY PETER SWAIN

Nothing says 'Caribbean' like a palm tree swaying lazily in the tropical breeze. And nothing says 'St. Kitts and Nevis' like a brown pelican, our national bird, diving acrobatically into the waves for its fish dinner, or a hummingbird sipping from a spectacular red-flowering flamboyant, our national tree.

Unlike more overdeveloped countries in the region, we prize our natural habitat very highly. We're blessed with a diverse environmental palette, from 3,000ft-high forest-clad peaks to grassland, salt ponds and of course the Caribbean Sea itself. We're passionate about its conservation and enjoy sharing our unique ecosystem with like-minded visitors.

On trails up through the rainforest, you'll see ancient mahogany, cinnamon, soursop and bamboo, and in late afternoon, you'll smell the heady scent of ylang-ylang, reminiscent of Chanel No.5.

According to local lore, many of these plants have positive health-giving properties. "Aloe vera is good for treating sunburn and grazes," says Andrea Kaye, a Kittitian now living on Nevis. "Used internally, it's also an anti-inflammatory that combats toxins and calms stomach pains." Sorrel, avocado, plantain and silk-cotton leaves are also known to be efficacious.

"The juice from the greenish-white fruit of the Noni Tree is rather stinky, but many believe it's an analgesic that also boosts the immune system. Leaves of the Moringa Tree, originally from

India, are a superfood that makes a highly nutritious bush tea counteracting high blood pressure and diabetes. Coconut water is good the morning after a heavy night – it also has diuretic properties. Coconut oil is good for the skin and hair, and for cooking at high temperatures, so it's perfect for sweet potato fries – maybe not so good for you!"

Most of these specimens grow wild, but Andrea also has some in her garden. "Cinnamon leaves and lemongrass make a refreshing bush tea, particularly effective if you're suffering from 'da creep-up' – general aches and pains or a hangover. Fresh ginger root is a powerful anti-inflammatory and antioxidant, good for combatting indigestion."

A drink made from Mauby bark is believed to cure bladder infections, treat constipation and reduce cholesterol. Not convinced? Well, remember that a key constituent of aspirin originally came from willow bark.

With frigatebirds and red-tailed hawks patrolling the skies, vervet monkeys playing in the trees, and a chorus of tree frogs, crickets, grasshoppers and mountain doves creating an authentic night-time lullaby, the natural tastes, sights and sounds of our islands are a magical part of any visit. ▼

MOTHER BECKY

When it comes to buying and drinking 'bush tea', visitors will find that locally produced Mother Becky's Kittitian Bush Tea, found either in the Duty Free area or at the airport, provides an authentic experience and makes an excellent souvenir – varieties include Mint, Lemongrass, Soursop and Basil. motherbeckytea.com



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Anahata