

Stylish sustainability at Belle Mont Farm hotel on St. Kitts

By [Gay Nagle Myers](#) / March 11, 2015

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View from a guest cottage at Belle Mont Farm on Kittitian Hill. Photo Credit: Gay Nagle Myers

ST. KITTS — **Belle Mont Farm**, a farm-to-table hotel, marks the first chapter of Kittitian Hill, a sustainable community development in the foothills of Mount Liamuiga on the northern tip of this island.

On a recent visit, I instantly loved the place, but I also realized it is not for everyone. For one thing, it's not on the beach, although it does have a beachfront outpost in the nearby village, down a rutted dirt road.

If staying in a cottage minus the flat-screen TV — and with the loo, shower and clawfoot tub out on the side veranda secluded by only a privacy hedge of palm fronds — gives you qualms, it's not the place to spend a Caribbean vacation.

Inside the style-savvy sanctuary, however, a cinema-size screen unrolls at the push of a button, and a rear-view projector has been built discreetly into the wall.

Using the iPad on the writing desk, guests can select from hundreds of movies and TV shows on Netflix. They also can use the iPad to scan newspapers, check email and order from Rolling Mango room service. Meals are delivered in solar-powered golf carts and are cooked on site.

Belle Mont Farm is outside the envelope. Think dining al fresco at a 30-foot table out in the field where the after-dinner activity is lounging around a fire pit listening to West Indian elders spin tales.

Forget menus. You're handed a list of ingredients just plucked from the trees, pulled from the ground or hauled from the sea. The day's harvest dictates the menu. The wait staff guides you through the list.

My breakfast one morning consisted of a garden eggplant and pepper frittata with lemongrass tea and thick slices of gluten-free bread smeared with mammy sapote jam. Beats weak coffee and a bagel.

Instead of motorized watersports on the beach and loud music by the pool, you are offered the chance to meditate with gentle, Jamaican-born Nikky.

During a meditation session on a slightly overcast morning, she told me to focus on a color and one word and to treat each thought that intruded as a cloud that would drift away.


Kittitian Hill info

- Rates through April 9 start at \$2,250 per night, double, and cover arrival/departure processing at St. Kitts' new YU Lounge private jet terminal at the main airport, transfers, all meals with drinks, in-room wine bar and minibar, WiFi, nature hikes, unlimited golf and a daily spa credit of \$200 per couple.
- Spring/summer rates through July 31 start at \$1,700 per night, double.
- Kittitian Hill is closed from Sept. 1 through Oct. 15.


I picked yellow as my color, sun as my word and as I came out of my trance, the skies were as clear as my mind.

I foraged with Yahson Tafari, a Rastafarian organic farmer who walked me through the rows of herbs and vegetables and fruit trees on the farm. The greens he collected along the way appeared in my salad at lunch.

Green luxury on St. Kitts [1/11]



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Belle Mont Farm, the organic West Indian farm-to-table hotel, marks the first chapter of the luxury sustainable Kittitian Hill community on the northern tip of St. Kitts. Accommodations range from charming, oceanview guest cottages to the expansive Yaya Groves villas and four-bedroom units with a central living area that make up the Farmhouse section. Photos by Gay Nagle Myers

Kittitian Hill is all organic. “We don’t use insecticides,” Tafari said. “Spring water from the mountain irrigates our crops. We handpick the weeds.”

On the golf course below the tiered rows of crops, he pointed out several dozen sheep ambling along the fairways, which are former sugarcane fields.

“We like the sheep,” he said. “They eat the weeds.”

Kittitian Hill is a work in progress, although all exterior construction, including 15 villas, seven farmhouses and 84 cottages, is complete.

Val Kempadoo, a Trinidadian entrepreneur and the founder of the development, put it this way: “Kittitian Hill will constantly evolve. We are competing on the world stage. This place is not for everyone, but I believe that a fair amount of people know that they do not have to compromise on authentic experiences.”

Kittitian Hill was born from Kempadoo’s deep commitment to sustainable development.

“When I decided 10 years ago to become involved in the hospitality and resort sector, I was surprised that many hotels were being developed and operated by way of exploitative business models with little regard for our social, economic or physical environment,” Kempadoo said.

He decided that a luxury hotel and resort development based on a different model could serve as an agent of change for a more sustainable future.

Still to come is the Village component with its 100-room hotel, featuring lodgings above the 30 or so shops where locals are making herbal soap, roasting coffee from beans grown on the farm and baking pastries.

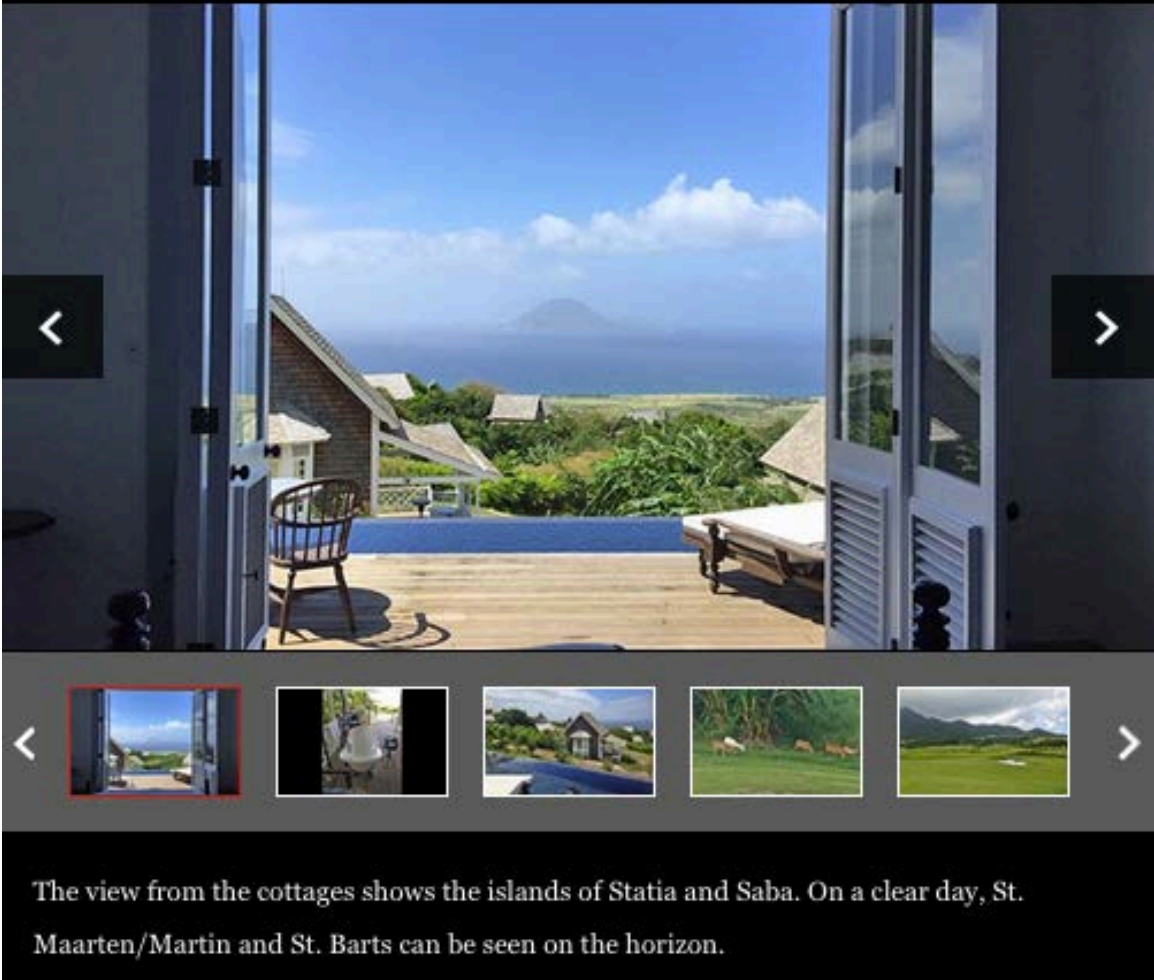
A farmers market on the cobblestone plaza in front of the chapel and town hall will offer farm produce. Narrow back streets behind the hotel will mimic the Caribbean towns of old.

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“We want agents [to come] down here to see for themselves,” said General Manager Carlos Salazar “Kittitian Hill is off the grid, and you have to see it to understand it.”

I saw it, I understood it, and I plan to return.



Green luxury on St. Kitts

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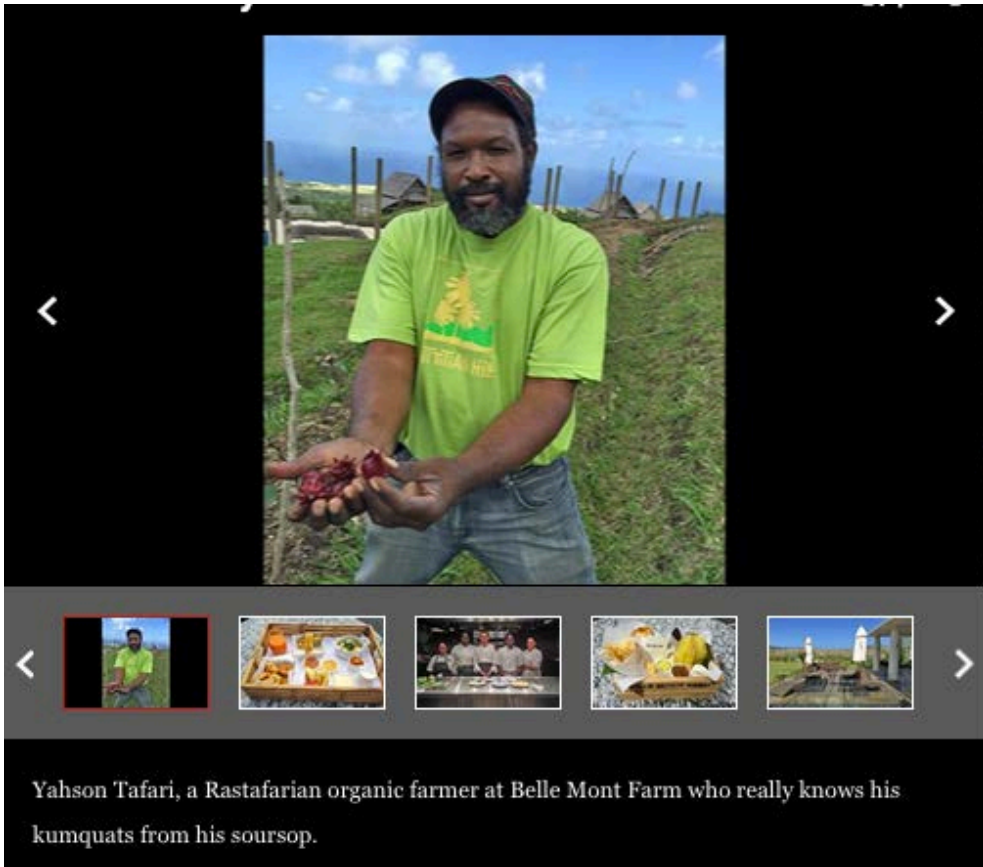
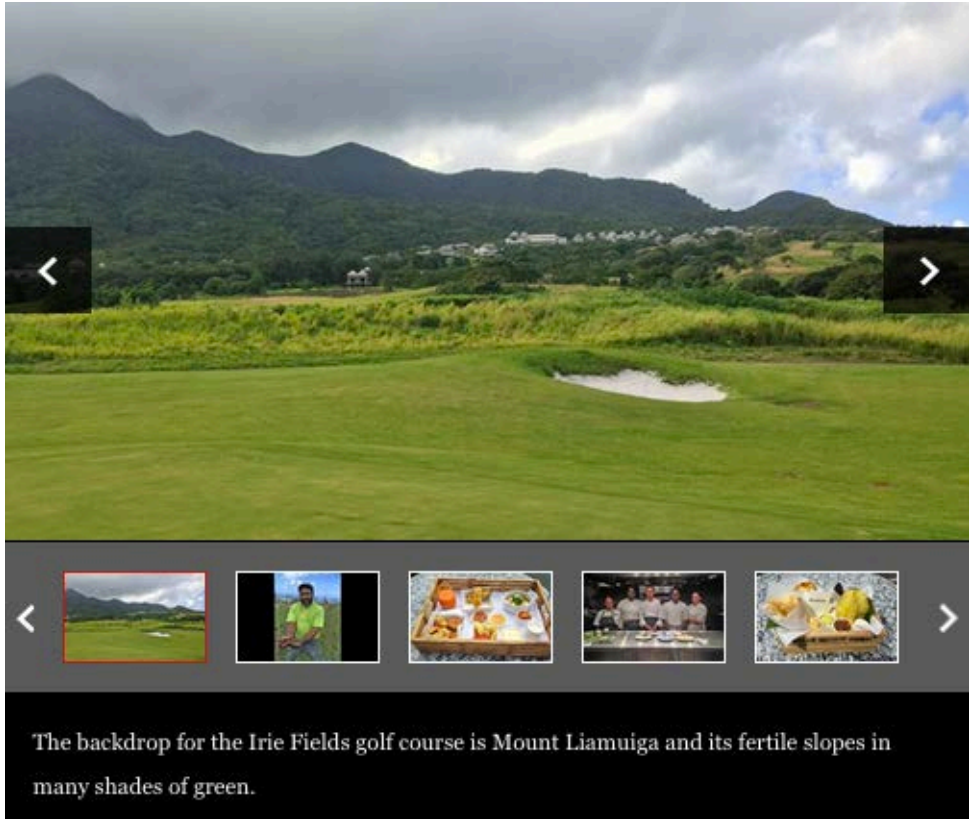
At each cottage, the bathroom is outside on a covered side deck with a privacy hedge of tall palm fronds to block the view from the neighboring cottage. The clawfoot porcelain tub is open to the elements. The loo does have a shutter door, as does the shower. Two vanities with lighted mirrors flank the tub.



Belle Mont Farm has 84 guest cottages spread about its 400-acre site. In addition, there are four-bedroom Farmhouses and the Yaya Groves Villas.



The 200-acre Irie Fields golf course at Belle Mont Farm is tended by herds of sheep that serve as nature's weed-eaters. The course has been dubbed as





A breakfast tray delivered by room service, dubbed Rolling Mango, featured garden eggplant and pepper frittata, farm bread, fruit jams, gluten-free muffins and mango juice.



Some of the kitchen staff, headed by Chef Christophe Latard (center), in the cooking area of the Kitchen restaurant. Belle Mont Farm, where all food is organically grown on farmland is set between Mount Liamuiga and the Caribbean Sea, is so passionate about its farm-to-table experiences that each day's forage determines that day's menus.



The lunch tray at Belle Mont Farm featured carambola fruit, farm bread, a coconut bar, chocolate peanut mint, banana dip, guacamole, goat cheese, lamb stew and vegetarian empanadas.



Guests are met upon arrival and transferred to the YU Lounge at the private jet terminal at the Robert Bradshaw Airport in St. Kitts. The YU staff assists with customs and immigration procedures and luggage transfers before transporting guests to Belle Mont Farm. The process is the same on the date of departure.