

# ASK THE experts

Help clients see more of the Caribbean with these top tips. **Yolanda Zappaterra** reports



PICTURES: Shutterstock/CO Leong; Sean Pavone

1 “You can literally be in another Caribbean island in under an hour or two”

Martyn joined Classic Collection Holidays – which offers both short-haul and long-haul luxury personalised holidays to more than 90 destinations – in March. While he’s fairly new to the company, he’s not new to the Caribbean, having been contracting, representing and visiting it since joining the travel industry 14 years ago.



**Martyn Jones**  
product and purchasing manager for long-haul, Classic Collection Holidays

“I’ve been a passionate campaigner for multi-destination holidays in the Caribbean for a long time. I think it’s so easy to do, but a lot of people don’t realise just how easy. For example, people aren’t always aware that interCaribbean Airways connects quite a few of the islands, or that BA do double drops.

The three main islands, Antigua, Barbados and Saint Lucia, are very easily accessible between one another, so doing an island hop between those is growing in popularity. But my personal suggestion would be to twin one of those with a lesser-known island, allowing you to experience a more rustic, untouched and authentic side of the Caribbean. A few recommendations would include Barbados with Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, or Antigua with St Kitts and Nevis, which actually gives you three islands in one.

I’d recommend doing some research into those lesser-known islands, which may be quieter but still have lots to do on them. For example, Grenada and Saint Vincent and Grenadines are huge for diving and hiking. If you need somewhere to start, our Caribbean guide has a whole section on multi-trip holidays, with different itineraries. It can be downloaded or ordered from our website, and the island-hopping information is also on a blog post ([bit.ly/3FZ9GnT](https://bit.ly/3FZ9GnT)).

2 “Every island has its own unique personality and rhythm”

Caroline has worked with the Caribbean for most of her 22 years in the luxury travel sector, the last 14 of which have been with Elegant Resorts. The company has been creating personalised travel experiences for 34 years and prides itself on an approach that has earned it the Feefo Platinum Service Award.



**Caroline Beckett**  
product manager, Caribbean, Mexico, Latin America & Cruise, Elegant Resorts

“Through lockdown there was a big drop-off in multi-destination trips to the Caribbean, because the islands had different rules and protocols, but now that restrictions are lifting, we’re seeing a lot more interest in twin-destination holidays to the region.

People who are willing to travel and those looking for new experiences are open to the idea of island-hopping in the Caribbean. But the power of suggestion is very important; clients won’t necessarily know that they can easily fly into one place and travel to another, but once it’s suggested, they’re interested.

Making people aware of the variety of experiences possible, and giving them insights into the individuality of the islands, is key. Lots of people think the Caribbean is just beach, but there are so many other things to do, including culture, fabulous dining experiences, unique scenery and wonderful activities. St Barts, for example, has a strong European influence, with chic shopping and a vibrant nightlife. Anguilla offers high-end dining. Dominica is all about soft eco adventures and the natural world; twinning it with Barbados or Antigua creates a great mix of a more cosmopolitan island with nature and adventure.

3 “People are looking for experiences and to make the most of their holiday”

Jenny brought a decade of experience in the Caribbean with her when she joined Caribtours as head of commercial four years ago. The operator has been tailor-making luxury holidays to the region since 1979, expanding since then to Europe, Arabia and the Indian Ocean.



**Jenny Peart**  
head of commercial, Caribtours

“Twin or multi-centre holidays in the Caribbean give clients the opportunity to experience two destinations in one trip, and it doesn’t have to be as difficult as you might think; we can assist with inter-Caribbean flying and transfers to make it a seamless experience. Things we help with include considerations around how long to stay in different destinations, flight times and finding the right combination to suit clients’ needs and interests.

We’re seeing a rise in booking numbers for these trips. People are looking for experiences, as well as juggling eco considerations about making the most of their holiday time but taking just one long-haul trip.

As well as contrasting islands, visiting two resort areas in one destination is also popular. This works well in Saint Lucia or Jamaica, where we often find people twin the Ocho Rios, Blue Mountains and Montego Bay areas. The islands of the Bahamas also make an option for a multi-centre within one destination. And Barbados and the Grenadines is a nice twin-centre; we recommend a west coast stay [in Barbados] before hopping over to one of the smaller islands in the Grenadines. Beach and mountain combinations can also work, and different types of hotels as well as destinations, such as a really active stay followed by a more relaxing few days away from it all.