

ISLAND INSIDER SCOOP



No one knows a destination like a hotel insider. We spoke to five of the best to get their takes on what's tops.

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Stingray City is one of the most popular to-dos on the island, but not everyone wants to battle boats and crowds. That's the appeal of a **private helicopter**, says *Ann Whiting*, concierge at **Luxury Cayman Villas**. In the 45-minute aerial overview, the water is so crystal-clear that you can see the stingrays fluttering among the swimmers. Other sites are the shipwrecks that are on divers' bucket lists, **Pedro St. James Castle**, the super tropical **East End**, and **Rum Point**. Call it GC's heli-primer.



The two most captivating amenities of **Le Soleil D'Or** appear courtesy of nature: the stars and the waters. You can see the Milky Way from Cayman Brac, where there's practically zero light pollution, says *Lucia Poleon*, guest relations coordinator. Holistic and spiritual wellness is a key at Cayman Brac's **Le Soleil**, where guests can tailor scrubs, masks and detox juices by harvesting ingredients from the onsite 20-acre farm.



Seven Mile Beach. Beautiful, absolutely. Popular, without a doubt. *Elena Karpechenko*, an events manager at **The Ritz-Carlton, Grand Cayman**, recommends an alternative spot, **Smith Cove**, near **George Town**. It isn't unpopular, particularly on the weekends but it feels like a giant swimming pool with the added benefit of a drop-off close to shore. Bonus: The cove is protected from stronger winds. (Translation: snorkeling spectacular.)



The stand-up paddleboard is the current choice activity for many beach goers, but **Kimpton Seafire Resort & Spa** puts a new spin on it. The instructor not only teaches newbies how to SUP but also how to do yoga and other fitness moves while afloat, explains *Virgil Napier*, director of sales and marketing. You can even pair your workout with kombucha or fresh juice (or the poison of your choice). Afterward, take your newfound balance and hit the sea on a kayak, Hobie cat or jet ski.



People are surprised to discover the amount of culture on the island, says *Danielle Wolfe*, general manager of boutique **Caribbean Club** hotel. Half the island are expats, and they bring their traditions with them—in art, in food and in music. Check local listings for art gallery openings at **The National Gallery**, plays being performed at the theaters, or local live musicians playing at **Havana Club Cigar Lounge** or **The Wharf**. **Barefoot Man** and **Hi-Tide** are two top draws.