

CONNECTICUT COTTAGES & GARDENS | FEBRUARY 2016

CTC & G

Connecticut Cottages and Gardens

COTTAGESGARDENS.COM | FEBRUARY 2016

Season of Color



COTTAGESGARDENS.COM

MCC
Meg Connolly Communications



TRAVEL BY DESIGN



Winter Warmers

IRRESISTIBLE CARIBBEAN DESTINATIONS GET LAVISH ATTENTION FROM TOP DESIGNERS

While top designers work in the Caribbean often enough—Alessandra Branca on Harbour Island, Tony Ingrao on St. John, everybody who’s anybody on Mustique and St. Barths—they tend to lavish attention on their own homes or those of private clients. Increasingly, however, hotels there are staking claim to high-style ideals, commissioning aesthetical arbiters of great renown to perform feats of derring-design-do. Viceroy and W were early adaptors, hiring Kelly Wearstler and Patricia Urquiola, respectively, to create their properties in Anguilla and Puerto Rico and, now, a trio of new properties by Alexandra Champalimaud, Celerie Kemble and Richard Mishaan are providing sophisticated travelers new reasons to return to the Caribbean this winter and spring.



THE ISLAND HOUSE

Nassau, Bahamas

Alexandra Champalimaud brought a tailored look and feel to tropical style at this year-old hotel in western Nassau, spinning a cool, contemporary atmosphere from such warm materials as Pecky cypress, driftwood and coral stone. She describes the property as the “antithesis of the mega-resorts that tend to crowd Caribbean beaches. We want guests to feel like they’re staying at a friend’s private beach estate.” A personal vibe permeates the family-owned hotel’s 30 rooms, two cottages and six two- and three-bedroom apartments, as well as the two restaurants and other public spaces, which feature works by emerging Bahamian artists. While the hotel isn’t on the water, the designer aimed to bring the beach inside: “We developed a fresh, airy and relaxing palette with natural fibers and materials, neutral tones and shades of playful colors to frame and complement the surrounding colors of the lush green flora and aqua waters of nearby Lyford Cay.”

DON'T MISS!

1. The light-filled main bar at Playa Grande, where an archway handset with a seashell collage frames latticework and shelves of glassware. playagrandebeachclub.com.

2. The Island House’s Bamford spa, courtesy of British aristocrat Carole Bamford’s beloved organic wellness and lifestyle brand. the-island-house.com.

3. The glass-mosaic tiled rooftop infinity pool and chaise lounge-lined terrace at Tcherassi Hotel + Spa, with adjacent spa, restaurant and bar. tcherassihotels.com.

PLAYA GRANDE BEACH CLUB

Rio San Juan, Dominican Republic

If this boutique resort’s Victorian-inspired, Caribbean colonial, plantation-style bungalows feel particularly residential, it’s with good reason. Celerie Kemble designed them as individual vacation homes for her family and the bold-faced-name friends—Mariska Hargitay, Richard Meier and Charlie Rose, among others—that she and her husband, money-manager Boykin Curry, invited to join as investors in this sprawling, jungled property on the DR’s relatively un-visited north coast. But Playa Grande operates as a hotel as well, which means the rest of us can enjoy all it offers. Kemble outfitted the nine one- and three-bedroom indoor-outdoor accommodations, as well as the resort’s dining room, library and bars in her signature style, creatively mixing eras and styles, silhouettes and materials both Caribbean and Continental. A palette of bright white dominates, setting off accents in what Kemble has described as “faded-bathing-suit pastels.” She notes that all the paint was handmade locally, “so there is no guarantee of color matching.” It’s all part of the homey, barefoot-chic charm.



TCHERASSI HOTEL + SPA

Cartagena, Colombia

Following up on her first eponymous boutique hotel in Cartagena, Colombian fashion designer Silvia Tcherassi will reveal her sophomore outing there this spring. While the first

property—seven rooms in a 250-year-old colonial mansion—felt as much like a home as a hotel, the new 42-room spot will be more of a full-service operation. It uses a restored 16th-century house for its entrance but is largely contained in a new four-story structure. Tcherassi is collaborating with Cartagena native son Richard Mishaan, whose clean-lined scheme weaves together soothing and layered neutrals, referencing the walled city’s brightly painted buildings only in the blue fresco finish of the vestibule. Mishaan has custom designed everything in the hotel, from the check-in and concierge station modeled after a travel trunk found in Cartagena’s Palacio de la Inquisición Museum, to furniture inspired by Tcherassi’s tailored and refined collections, to locally handcrafted lighting and textiles. Vertical and hanging gardens on terraces, in courtyards and on the roof will connect the rooms, restaurant, spa and pool to nature. —Andrew Sessa