



Dying to get away?  
Well, the Caribbean is the  
sweetest deal right now  
because summertime means  
slashed prices everywhere.  
Read on and start packing!  
By Cemile Kavountzis



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Nestle deals on page 90.

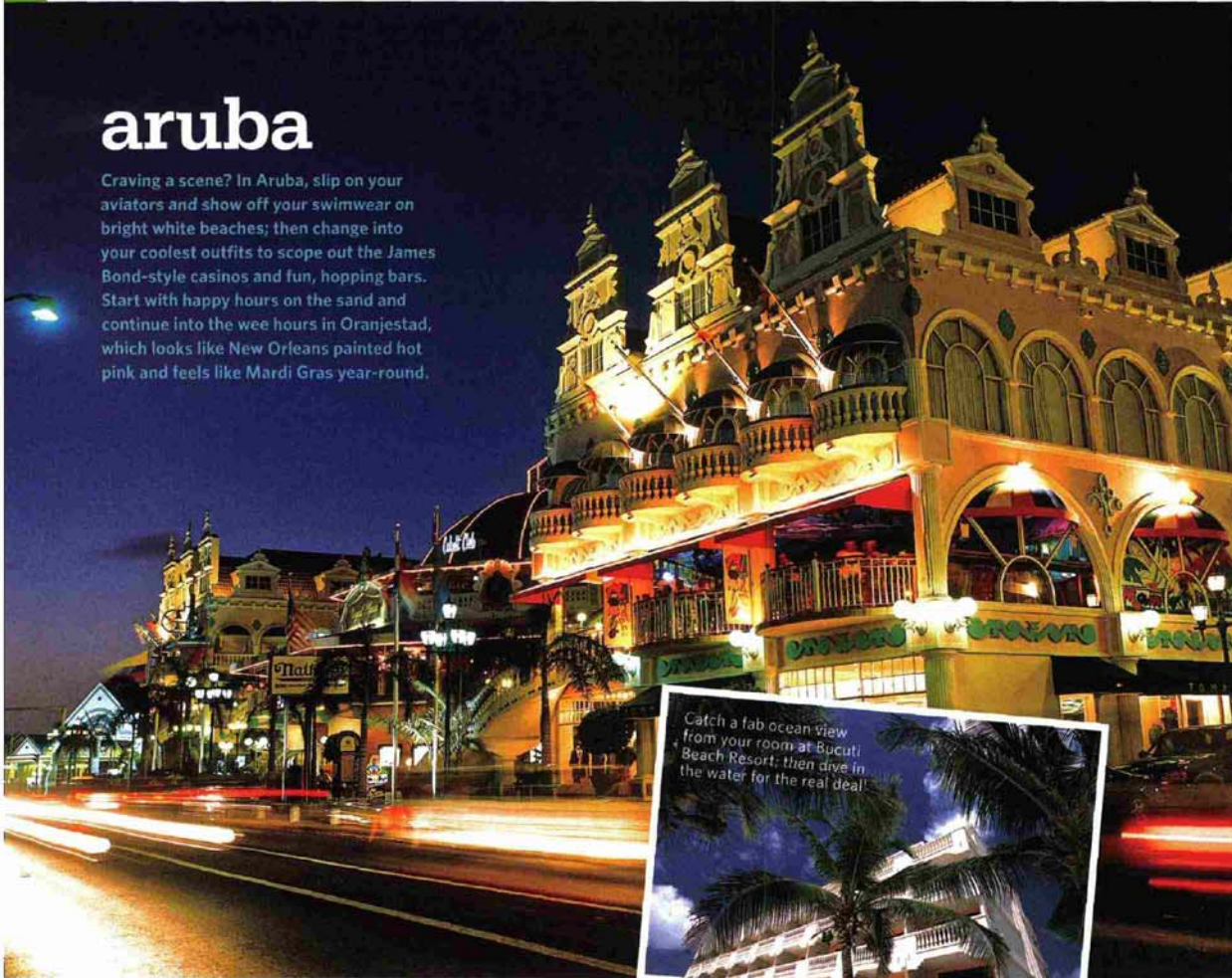




life | the caribbean |

## aruba

Craving a scene? In Aruba, slip on your aviators and show off your swimwear on bright white beaches; then change into your coolest outfits to scope out the James Bond-style casinos and fun, hopping bars. Start with happy hours on the sand and continue into the wee hours in Oranjestad, which looks like New Orleans painted hot pink and feels like Mardi Gras year-round.



Catch a fab ocean view from your room at Bucuti Beach Resort; then dive in the water for the real deal!

### where to stay

- After spending a couple of days relaxing in **Bucuti Beach Resort's** modern, airy rooms and beachfront (and kid-free!) pool, you'll be addicted. Cool fact: The resort fosters sea turtle preservation right on its grounds ([Bucuti.com](http://Bucuti.com); 297-583-1100).
- One of the island's best-kept secrets, **Amsterdam Manor Beach Resort's** charming Dutch colonial-style architecture wraps around a spotless pool and the gorgeous beach is just a quick stroll away ([AmsterdamManor.com](http://AmsterdamManor.com); 800-969-2310).

### what to do

- On **Red Sail Sport's Antilla Snorkel Sail**, see the famous shipwreck and Catalina Bay; for \$49 per person, you'll get drinks, snacks, instruction and equipment ([RedSailAruba.com](http://RedSailAruba.com); 877-733-7245).
- Hike, walk or bike through divi-divi trees, cactus gardens, sand dunes and even caves for free at **Arikok National Park**.

- Craving some culture? Check out the folklore dancing on Tuesday night at the **Bon Bini Festival**, where local Aruban dancers strut their stuff in traditional costumes from 6:30 to 9 p.m. in downtown Oranjestad (\$3 entry fee; Fort Zoutman inner courtyard).

### drinking and dining

- At **Pinchos Grill & Bar** on the Surfside Marina, every table is on the water's edge, making it a hot spot for sunset dinner (entrées from \$19; [Interprets.nl/pinchos.htm](http://Interprets.nl/pinchos.htm); 297-583-2666).
- Go to **Charlie's Bar & Restaurant** for a tasty lunch and collection of tchotchkes left behind by people from around the world. Try the spicy honeymoon sauce and, for a laugh, ask what the "hoere hap" seafood special is (from \$7; San Nicolas; 297-584-5086).
- Hunt for souvenirs in town; then kick back with a locally brewed Balashi beer for \$3.50 at **Salt & Pepper**. Bring a set of shakers and they'll swap you a free glass of wine ([SaltandPepperAruba.com](http://SaltandPepperAruba.com))!

FRONT TOP: FRIDMAN; DAMM/ZUMA; CORBIS. COURTESY OF BUCUTI BEACH RESORT