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THE LIFE OF

LUXURY

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For just \$28,000 a week, your wish is the staff's command at Cerulean Villa

ANGUILLA, BRITISH WEST INDIES — Frothy waves from the Caribbean Sea broke gently at the shore of the uninhabited island that we had chosen to inhabit for lunch.

Two motorboats bobbed at anchor a few feet offshore, one launch for bringing the lunch of grilled crayfish with fresh drawn butter and all the accouterments — a table draped in white linen and a canopy that kept the noonday sun from frying our group of eight.

The other boat had sped us the 20 minutes to Prickley Pear Island from a private villa on Anguilla. We

ON A BUDGET: High-end, low-end: It's the same sand for everyone on Anguilla. **K4**

one of the ladies declined to moisten her newly rosed toenails, so the first mate swept her into his arms, waded ashore and deposited her gently on the fine white sand.

The rest of the staff set about cooking the fish, placing the silver and pouring wine.

Living like a multimillionaire is what you get for \$28,000 to



David
Molyneux

made a wet landing, meaning that our bare feet and ankles were washed by the cool seawater during the last few steps between boat and beach. But

ing area, sits on a quiet beach at Barnes Bay on picture-postcard Anguilla, a few sea miles from the bustling vacation island of St. Martin/St. Maarten.

Cerulean is the kind of place that appeals to families or small groups looking for the luxury of vacationing at a spacious estate with a full-service staff.

The house sleeps 14 to 16. Your staff is at least a dozen, including cooks, housekeepers, maids, butlers and a concierge to plan outings such as the motor launch to Prickley Pear Island for lunch.

SEE VILLA | **K4**

In the background, a tennis court and a pool are visible.

Hearn, with his guests, travel agency, and more are used to a high degree of personal service. Perhaps half of Cerulean's guests arrive by private jet.

These are people who would have thought traveling by private jet was extravagant but are using it today to reduce the stress of travel," said Hearn.

Many guests ship their luggage, so their belongings are unpacked and ready for their arrival. Others figure out the joys of shipping after their vacation and don't even bother to pack when their villa time comes and

villa, with a steel band or a private performance by singer Neville Brown, who appears regularly at the Dune Festival at Rendezvous Bay on Anguilla.

Hearn is used to catering to demanding guests, such as the American couple with their own staff of 28, including three nannies who worked in eight-hour shifts caring for their two children. The staff stayed at a separate rental nearby.

On the honeymooning Arab couple who wanted to rest a submarine for the week. The couple changed their minds, but Hearn had figured out how to do it. He had a cab and driver to take them to the villa.

Travelers will also find houses and villas for rent. Contact the location office at 1-800-553-4935, a-mail location@anguillatour.com or go to www.anguilla-vacation.com.

— David Molyneux

VILLA

ROOM K1

Your wish is the staff's command

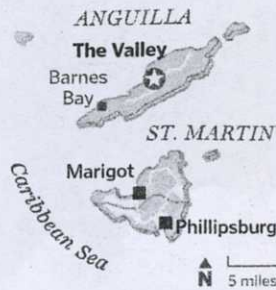
Meals can be formal or informal, depending on your whims.

"You're sitting on the beach about midday and want a grilled cheese sandwich, just ask," said Bruce Hearn, the general manager.

Hearn said he runs Cerulean something like a megayacht, which is provisioned for you — at a cost plus 15 percent — based on whatever you want to eat and drink. Special activities, such as uninhabited island beach picnics, guided craft shopping and horseback riding, cost extra, as do nanny service and massages.

Hearn said he typically begins planning the stay months before guests arrive, chatting about wish lists that lead to menus, games and activities.

"Some groups are very specific," he said. "Others just say, 'Do your thing.' When you take over a whole villa, you can make it your way. The beach lends itself to casual dining, but we've done dinners with black tie. We've brought in a masseuse for everyone to have a massage in their rooms."



SOURCE: ESRI THE PLAIN DEALER

Cerulean opened in 1997. The villa, washed in white, is an undulating Moorish style, with archways and domes favored by a number of resorts in Anguilla, notably the ritzy Cap Juluca, a short ride away. Cerulean was designed by architect Deborah Berke with high ceilings and stone tile floors.

The house sports wood railings, louvered doors and wood trim all painted a gray-green. The seven bedrooms on two floors have sea views (an unusual amenity in a private house), full baths, balconies or patios with tables and lounge chairs. Bedrooms are all spacious, though I especially liked No. 6, which, I was told, is a favorite of actor Robert De Niro. The second-floor room has a very private balcony overlooking the beach.

In the backyard are a tennis court and a workout gym.

Hearn said his guests crave privacy, and most are used to a high degree of personal service. Perhaps half of Cerulean's guests arrive by private jet.

"These are people who once would have thought traveling by private jet was extravagant but are using it today to reduce the stress of travel," said Hearn.

Many guests ship their luggage, so their belongings are unpacked and ready for their arrival. Others figure out the joys of shipping after their vacation and don't even bother to pack when their villa time is over, said Hearn.

"They are not spending their final hours of vacation packing," he said. "They tell us, 'Just pack it up and send it on.'"

One repeat guest leaves his Anguilla clothes stored on the island, ready for his return.

Hearn will arrange just about anything, from a snorkeling trip to Prickly Pear — where the villa folks turn an empty beach into a tented picnic spot — to a torch-lit feast on the beach in front of the

villa, with a steel band or a private performance by singer Bankie Banx, who appears regularly at the Dune Preserve at Rendezvous Bay on Anguilla.

Hearn is used to catering to demanding guests, such as the American couple with their own staff of 35, including three nannies who worked in eight-hour shifts caring for their two children. The staff stayed at a separate rental nearby.

Or the honeymooning Arab couple who wanted to rent a submarine for the week. The couple changed their minds, but Hearn had figured out how to do it, flying a sub and equipment to St. Martin in two wide-bodied jets, then towing it to Anguilla.

Sub or snorkel, black tie or Bankie Banx, lobster or grilled cheese, Cerulean is a can-do place. If you have the money, you can do pretty much whatever you want.

David Molyneaux is travel editor of The Plain Dealer. For earlier columns, go to www.cleveland.com/travel.

DETAILS

The villa in Anguilla

Getting there: Most travelers to Anguilla fly to St. Martin, then either fly 10 minutes on a small plane to Anguilla or use a water taxi to Anguilla's Blowing Point immigration office. Resorts on Anguilla will arrange transportation to the island, including a private motor launch that docks across the road from the St. Martin airport.

Cerulean Villa: Contact the villa by telephone at 264-497-8841 or go to www.cerulean-villa.com. The Web site includes availability dates. Rates range from \$28,000 to \$42,000 a week (even higher during December holiday weeks), plus 10 percent service charge and 10 percent tax. Best rates are after May 1. There is little availability for this winter, said general manager Bruce Hearn, who recommends booking for spring or summer when the seas are calmer, and the seawater reaches temperatures into the 80s.

Anguilla: The island, 16 miles long and three miles at its widest point, is known for its soft sand beaches and luxury resorts. Travelers will also find houses and villas for rent. Contact the tourism office at 1-800-553-4939, e-mail atbtour@anguillanet.com or go to www.anguilla-vacation.com.



Grilled Anguillian crayfish and salad prepared by Cerulean Villa chef Andy Gumbs.

— David Molyneaux