

Aficionado

Nandana: Belle of the Bahamas





The Sanskrit word for paradise is Nandana, an appropriate moniker for the private resort on the exclusive west end of Grand Bahama Island. By Jay Akasie.

For years now, large hotel chains have done everything imaginable to convince the super-high-net-worth crowd to frequent their resorts. But they're no longer any match for what is now the ultimate in luxury: the ultra-private resort. Nandana is noteworthy in that it manages to take the private resort concept up a notch. There is only one guest at any time on the sprawling oceanfront campus with its 18,000-square feet of living space: You. At your beck and call are an estate manager, concierge, private chef, masseuse, personal housekeeper, butler, chauffeur, and boat captain.

The buildings, designed in the Balinese style and constructed out of teak, limestone, and marble, are nestled within a private reserve of 300 palm trees that overlooks the teal-blue waters of the Caribbean. The last time we traveled there, the hostess arranged for us to stay in one of five

bungalows situated around the Great Hall of the estate, a main house with 40-foot ceilings and enormous doors that open onto an infinity pool.

We flew into the private landing strip adjacent to the estate on a single-prop plane owned by Nandana's hostess. We were whisked away in one of several Land Rovers to the main house, where the chef was already preparing hors d'oeuvres of delectable conch fritters. We kept the shells. Nandana has two private slips that are each able to harbor 100-foot yachts. So the next day, we embarked on a 43-foot deep-sea fishing yacht from one of those slips for a full-day excursion to a remote island also owned by our hostess. Some of the day was spent having a leisurely lunch that was prepared for us by the staff; the rest of it was spent on the high seas fishing for Mahi Mahi. We caught two and the chef filleted them and served them as one of the courses at dinner that evening.

The point of this travel essay isn't to highlight every amenity at Nandana; there's not enough room on this page. We were most impressed by what it didn't have: noise, pollution, and the stress that comes with everyday life. In that sense, Nandana surpasses its name as a paradise. It allows its guests to leave everything behind and to ensconce themselves in this ultra-private tropical kingdom.

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