

Colombier

Villa Fleur de Mer

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As you enter Villa Fleur de Mer, the gentle sound of water cascading down beside the walkway signals that it is time to relax. You have arrived at the modern version of true colonial grandeur, richly appointed with fine furniture and art - and with a view like no other, an unforgettable expanse of sea and sky so captivating that you can hardly tear yourself away to look at anything else.

To update a traditional style, Villa Fleur de Mer is not isolated from nature but integrated with it. A tyrant bird hops across the terrace in pursuit of an errant butterfly. This is a home equally well adapted to the weary traveler seeking peace and quiet or to the host with visions of elegant dinner parties.

Step out onto the terrace and imagine yourself sitting down to breakfast at the table between the pool and the palm grove, the most extraordinary view on the entire island stretched out before you. Across the vast expanse of turquoise water you can make out the islands of Saba and Statia on the horizon. Below you, sailboats out of Gustavia harbor ply the calm sea toward Colombier beach or Tintamarre. Turn and gaze across the courtyard, through the silhouette of a gaiac tree, you have a view to the east as well, a true panorama.

After a pleasant morning spent poolside, you may retreat from the noonday sun into the open living room, still just steps from the refreshing waters of the travertine-tiled infinity pool, one of the largest on the island. Or you can find a shady spot on the master-bedroom terrace, surrounded by a drift of bougainvillea blossoms. The master bedroom offers the comfort of a grand four-poster bed. His-and-hers dressing rooms lead into separate bathrooms, complete with two rain-head showers, one inside and the other outside, sheltered by flowering bird-of-paradise plants.

Between the master bedroom and the main house of Villa Fleur de Mer, you find the library, furnished with dark wood shelves lined with books, a sumptuous sofa, flatscreen television and a surround-sound stereo. As throughout the house, the walls are adorned with fine prints of Caribbean flora and fauna.

Cross the courtyard from the living area to the four bedroom suites, each with its own private bath and terrace. These bedrooms offer expansive views to the north and east, from Anse de Flamands and the tiny islands offshore to the far-off hilltops of the island's cote sauvage. The rooms are tastefully decorated with Kenzo fabrics and colonial furniture, and the bathrooms welcome you with soothing tones of polished limestone.

Villa Fleur de Mer's elegant dining room provides seating for twelve, with the adjoining kitchen hidden from view in a nod to the refinement of colonial tradition - a use of space perfectly designed for catered parties. The most discerning chef will feel at home in the well-appointed kitchen, with dual SubZero refrigerators, a wine-cooler and ice maker, twin Bosch dishwashers and a Lacanche Cote d'Or range. The gas grill on the terrace just outside the kitchen will come to mind whenever you pass the Boucherie de St. Jean on your way home. The cabinets are stocked with service for dozens of guests.

Follow a path through the garden to find a hidden, self-contained guest bath accessible without passing through any of the bedrooms. And just steps away, one of the island's best-equipped fitness rooms awaits the motivated with a full compliment of Cybex and Life Fitness machines, including twin top-of-the-line Flex Deck treadmills. Whereas many villas' exercise rooms are merely an afterthought, this one clearly is not, with mirrored walls, a full bath, stereo and intercom, a private terrace and of course an exquisite view of the Atlantic.



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