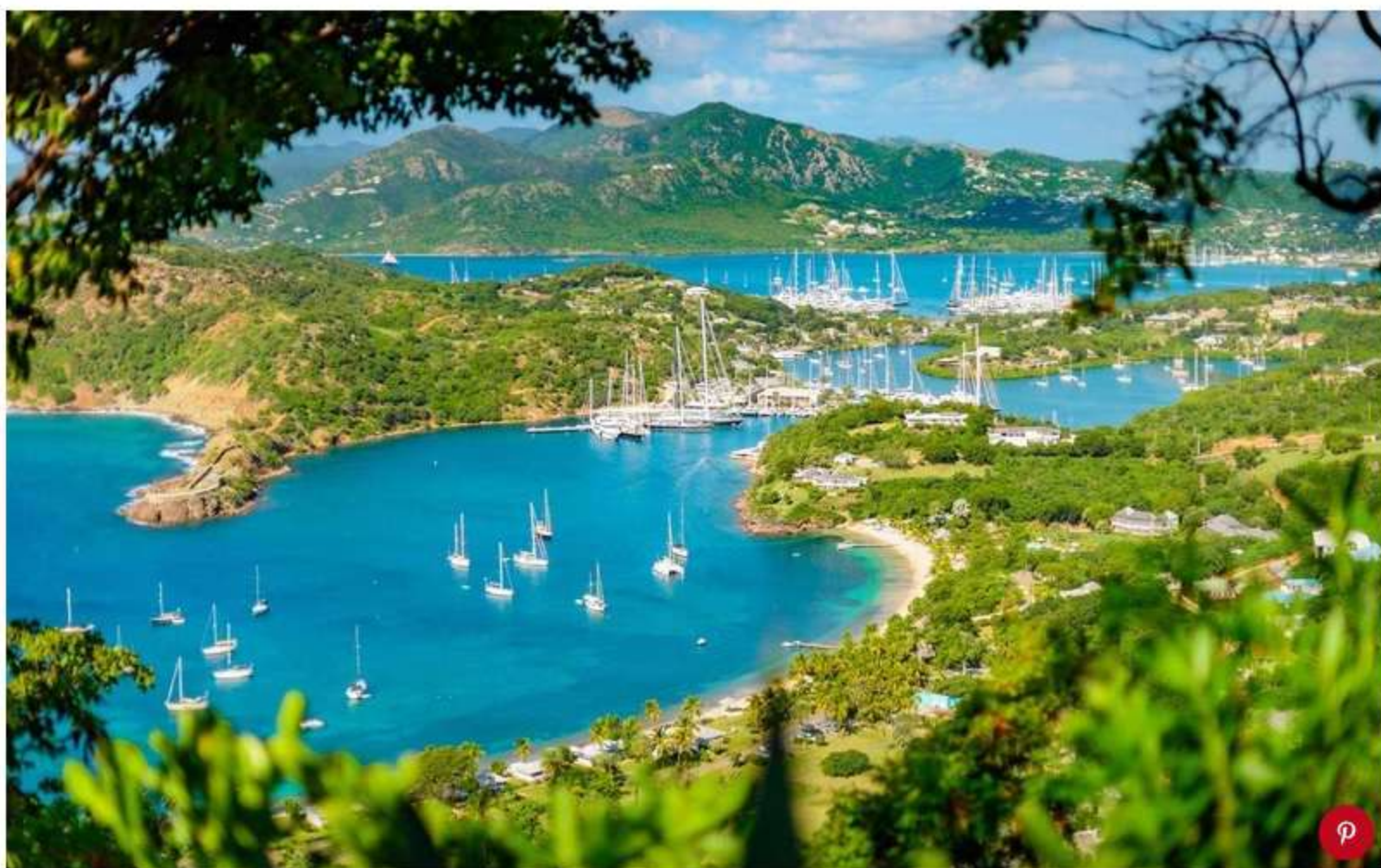


The Caribbean Is Making a Comeback — Here's Why You Should Book a Trip This Winter



Getty Images

There's never been a more important time to visit the Caribbean.

ANDREA ROMANO OCTOBER 18, 2018

Luckily, the areas that were devastated by Hurricanes Maria and Irma last year are on the upswing, according to [Travel Weekly](#).

Luxury travel agency network [Virtuoso](#) said that bookings in the Caribbean between December 22, 2018 and January 3, 2019 are actually up eight percent, and business between January and February of next year is actually up 21 percent from last year, [Travel Weekly](#) reported.

This means, now is the best time to book your Caribbean vacation. And [you'll be doing the islands](#) a lot of good by doing so.

According to [Departures Magazine](#), hotels have been leading the way when it comes to hurricane recovery, especially on Anguilla and Dominica, which withstood severe damage during Hurricane Irma. Around July of this year, forty-three percent of Dominica's 962 hotel rooms were back in business, said Colin Piper, CEO of the Discover Dominica Authority, to [Departures](#).



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And now, Anguilla still has some shadows of the damage, but is essentially [ready \(and eager\) to cater to tourists](#) again. This includes some major hotels like [Zemi Beach House](#), the [Frangipani Beach Resort](#) and the [Four Seasons](#). The Four Seasons is even running a special "[book four nights, get the fifth night free](#)" package.

And every dollar counts in helping the recovery further. The tourism industry is one of [the biggest employers in the Caribbean](#), so tourists returning to the island fuels job growth. And, you might be surprised at how much of the area is back to pre-hurricane condition. In fact, about [75 percent of the islands were unaffected](#), especially Aruba, the Bahamas, and the Cayman Islands.

There are also places to stay in the region that were affected by the storms, like Necker Island (Richard Branson's exclusive island) or Scrub Island Resort in the British Virgin Islands. For people who want practically perfect weather, they can find a reasonably priced vacation on St. Barth in the winter, where 14 of the island's beaches are open for business. Hotels on St. Martin and the U.S. Virgin Islands have also been slowly opening their doors throughout the year, such as [Belair Beach Hotel](#), [Divi Little Bay Beach Resort](#), and [Bolongo Bay Beach Resort](#). According to [Lonely Planet](#), St. Martin alone has 37 beaches that are open to the public again and half of its restaurants are up and running. The Virgin Islands National Park on the U.S. Virgin Islands is also open.

Puerto Rico, which is also in the midst of recovery, is coaxing tourists to spend their vacations there. While the effects of Hurricane Maria are still felt on the island, [tourism makes up 10 percent of the country's GDP](#), so staying away for too long can actually hurt recovery efforts.

By the end of October, the [El San Juan Hotel](#), [The St. Regis Bahia Beach Resort](#) and [Dorado Beach](#) will all be open or partially open for guests again. And, some of [Puerto Rico's best beaches](#) like Isla Verde Beach, Flamenco Beach, La Playuela and Gilligan's Island (no, not *that* Gilligan's Island) are open for sun and surf lovers.

As recovery continues, you can expect the Caribbean to return to being the popular vacation destination it once was, so it's best to start booking your trip now.