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Zemi Beach House Hotel & Spa, Anguilla

DESTINATIONS X OCTOBER 15, 2019

**PREVIOUS POST***The main pool at Zemi Beach House*

My first impression of the Zemi Beach House Hotel and Spa was that 'this place gets it'.

More of a larger boutique hotel than a full-scale resort, Zemi's 60-plus rooms and suites climb gently up the hillside from the beach on Shoal Bay East. The architecture is modern but complementary to its setting, integrating design elements inspired by the island's original Arawak inhabitants.

When I visit the Caribbean, I want to feel like I am in the Caribbean, and Zemi Beach manages that with the added bonus of modern comfort, understated luxury and excellent service. As you wander around, you never lose a sense of where you are. It has a distinct island feel – the exotic and lovely Thai House Spa (shipped over from Thailand) aside. Yet even that seems to blend seamlessly into the surroundings. Overall, Zemi Beach is a tranquil and romantic place, though families are welcome.

The location is unique, being the only real luxury resort in Anguilla's east end, taking advantage of the seeming endless beach at Shoal Bay East, and its quaint, fun – if compact – local neighbourhood.

The pool area, set beside the beach front bar, is a design highlight. You can literally swim right up to the dazzling white beach and gaze at the cerulean blue ocean just beyond. It can get a bit crowded at times. If that's the case, you can retreat to the adults-only tranquility pool for some peace.

There are several places to eat, including the fine dining Stone or the most casual 20 Knots, as well as the bar and lounge – all clustered conveniently around a central hub.

Then there's the Rhum Room. Despite the obvious historical connection, rum-focused bars are relatively new to the islands and, quite frankly, many of the ones I've visited seem to just go through the motions. The Rhum Room is different. The decor is sublime, managing to capture both the traditional luxury of an old world club and the cool tropical location. The selection is excellent, with over 100 labels, depending on availability. They try to make rum drinking more of an experience, with a knowledgeable bar tender (rummelier?), excellent regional representation (important to us rum drinkers), rare bottles and food pairings. More than worth wasting an evening or two. (OK, it was three).

Zemi Beach House is not be as big as, nor does it have the expansive secluded beach fronts of, its main high-end competitors, and some may find it a bit removed from other island hotspots. But it more than holds its own in terms of well-appointed rooms, amenities and super friendly staff, and all at (Anguilla-wise) reasonable rates. My overall impressions held up – Zemi Beach House gets the Anguillian holiday experience.

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The spectacular Rhum Room

Reflections...

It soon becomes obvious that the people behind Zemi Beach House not only know what they are doing, but also have a real feel – and love – for Anguilla. It shows up in many subtle ways throughout the resort, making a stay there that much more enjoyable.

Editor's Note: In December 2019, Zemi Beach House & Spa will become part of Hilton's luxury LXR brand, but will continue to be owned, operated and managed by its founders, the Goldstein family.

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The entrance to Zemi Beach House is deliberately understated.

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Zemi Beach House Hotel & Spa
Shoal Bay East
Anguilla
www.zemibeach.com

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Photos courtesy of Zemi Beach House Hotel & Spa

#ZEMI BEACH HOUSE HOTEL & SPA

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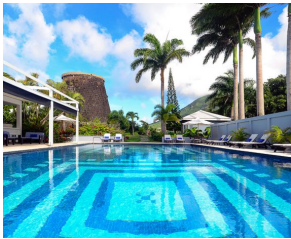
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