ANGUILLA ISLAND: THE BEST LITTLE ISLAND IN THE CARRIBEAN

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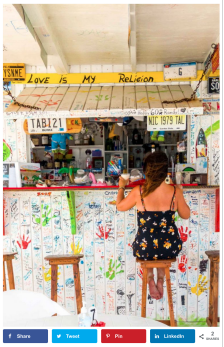

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This morning I received an invitation to visit Anguilla Island for a food festival the first thing I thought was:

Is that one of those many tiny islands in the Caribbean?

It is.

This past year I've enjoyed exploring the Caribbean. I've been based in Havana and have been able to go to Montego Bay, Barbados and pop over to Playa del Carmen.

And so I was a bit humbled to admit **I knew nothing about Anguilla**.

In fact, I had been pronouncing it in a spanish manner (an-gee-ya) for a few weeks before realising it was an English pronunciation then I pronounced it wrong (an-gwee-la) for three days until someone told me it rhymes with vanilla (an-gwill-a).

But Anguilla isn't just any island.

Shoal Bay at Zemi Beach is so beautiful you won't want to leave your chair.

I went to the beautiful Plum Resort at Zemi Beach for a tasting with a group and we had a lot of fun.

After a relaxation massage you can spend the day at Zemi Thai House Spa

Spa

Anguilla is known to have fantastic spas, and both Zemi Beach and Cuisinart offer incredible services.

I really like that Zemi Beach ties in its Taino heritage. But I also loved the deep tissue massage at CuisinArt Resort. I have a lot of issues from working at a laptop while on the road and the massage was very therapeutic. - I asked him to crush me and that's exactly what he did.

Located in Zemi Beach House, this is the fine dining restaurant on the resort. You can eat inside or there's an outside patio (think: perfect if you have kids).

Zemi Beach House

There are hotels and resorts and then there is Zemi. It was a tough resort to leave and probably my favourite accommodation in 2019. There are a number of different options, some with multiple rooms, or private infinity rooms. If you have a group they have large spaces as well.

I missed the Thursday Caribbean night at Zemi's where they have live music and a Caribbean BBQ. However, my first experience was breakfast, which has traditional breakfast food but, also lots of savoury things like grilled vegetables for people like me who hate breakfast.

And the spa. Get a treatment and stay all day. The Thai inspired grounds are beautiful and you'll want to stay a few hours.

If someone asked me where to stay to make a truly special holiday I wouldn't hesitate. Seriously, when can I go back?

Read Reviews on TripAdvisor or Check Rates on Expedia

Zemi Beach House, Resort and Spa
Shoal Bay East, Shoal Bay Village, West Indies, Anguilla
1 264-584-0001

Anguilla Great House Beach Resort

I didn't stay here but I wanted to include it as we did ask to peek into the rooms. Anguilla Great House is a fantastic example of budget-friendly accommodation.

It's an Anguillian-style property with cottages looking onto Rendezvous Bay. And it's 100% Anguillian owned and all staff are from Anguilla.

Many locals stay here, as well as Italians who want to visit for a few weeks and want a good place with a view of one of the best beaches in Anguilla.

Hurricane Irma completely destroyed this side of the island, and so the Anguilla Great House needed to build from scratch. Cottages are now open, the pool is ready and beach bar is cranking rock classics.

Read Reviews on TripAdvisor or Check Rates on Expedia

Banana rum from Zemi Beach House makes a great souvenir.

Anguilla Food Souvenirs

One of the things I liked about visiting Anguilla island was the absence of people hawking souvenirs. I only saw it happen once on Rendezvous Bay and the woman was so lovely I think she was welcomed by tourists.

Hotel gift shops tend to be a bit more curated with interesting art, clothing and other souvenirs. Normally I bypass the gift shops but I was nicely dragged into Zemi Beach's and I understand why. If I didn't travel with a full carry-on I would have likely bought a number of things as it was reasonably priced.

Food souvenirs are the best souvenirs. Here are a few you may want to consider:

- **Rum:** Both Zemi Beach and CuisinArt make their own version of banana rum – which is not rum made from bananas (which I thought) but a flavoured rum. Zemi Beach gives samples and it will remind you of bananas foster. CuisinArt also makes several other flavours.