

welcome to The Bahamas



Glitz & Glamour

The rich and famous (and the merely rich) flock to the Bahamas for posh resorts, slick restaurants and A-list treatment. You too can live the high life at one of the country's star-spangled hotspots, provided you've got the cash and the flash (or just the cash). Nassau, the go-go capital, is the place for old-school elegance, with chic colonial hotels, James Bond-approved cocktail lounges and an ultra-cool cigar factory. Across the bridge, high-rollers test their luck at the Atlantis casino while the paparazzi snap starlets suntanning on Cabbage Beach. A short skip away, Harbour Island plays host to rock stars and CEOs, though the low-key locals don't make a fuss about it. Yachties

point their compasses toward the Abacos, the sailing capital of the world.

Sand & Solitude

Life in the fast lane not your style? Head for the 'Out Islands' (also known as the Family Islands) – that is to say, all the islands besides New Providence and Grand Bahama – which share a grand total of one traffic light between them. Life isn't just slower here, life is actually asleep in a hammock with a half-drunk bottle of Kalik by its side. Fishermen untangle their nets by quiet harbors, donkeys graze on the side of muddy roads, *potcakes* (stray dogs) snooze beneath hibiscus bushes. Rent snorkel gear and explore a sun-dappled cove in the Exumas.

PETER DAMS/CORBIS



Scattered like a handful of pirate's gold across 100,000 sq miles of turquoise ocean, the islands of the Bahamas could practically patent the word 'paradise'.

(left) Waves breaking on a Bahamian shore
(below) A yellow rock beauty in the waters off Andros

LAWSON WOOD/CORBIS



Eat cracked conch at a wooden shack on Long Island. Read a novel on the porch of a pretty little gingerbread-trimmed rental cottage on Elbow Cay. Hike to the Hermitage on Cat Island for tear-inducing sunsets. Or just grab a hammock and kick up your feet – around here, that's not lazy, it's livin'.

Family Fun

The under-18 set has plenty to keep them busy in the Bahamas, so you'll be free from the dreaded whine of 'Moooooom, where's my Nintendo DS?' Frolic with dolphins in the shallows off tidy, modern Grand Bahama. Get wildly overstimulated at the Atlantis megaresort on Paradise Island (Waterslides! Shark tanks! All-you-can-eat

breakfast buffets!). Watch vibrant Junkanoo parades in downtown Nassau. Rent a boat and ferry the family around the secluded cays and silvery beaches of the Abacos. Splash with the famous swimming pigs (yep, you heard us) of Exuma. Family-oriented Bahamians love kids, so your little ones will be cooed over wherever you go.