

Why You Need to Visit Zemi Beach House Resort & Spa in Anguilla, the Caribbean



Actually, a visit won't be enough; you need to *stay* at Zemi Beach, which opened last year on tiny-yet-*tony* Anguilla, in the British West Indies. Nothing is ever too far on a 35-square-mile island, but luxurious Zemi Beach—with 54 ocean-view rooms, nine magnificent villas and two divine infinity pools—sits on a relatively remote stretch of surreally stunning white-sand beach in Shoal Bay East; I guarantee you'll find it impossible to extricate yourself from it. If that beach isn't reason enough to make the trip, here are three features of Zemi that make the newcomer stand out even amid Anguilla's plethora of high-end offerings.



RHUM ROOM “Hello, I’m your rummelier,” my bartender greeted me. It was music to my ears. A committed rum enthusiast, I have long found it infuriating that Caribbean properties don’t do more in homage to the indigenous spirit of the islands. Enter Zemi Beach’s oh-so-sexy Rhum Room, with more than 100 small-batch, single-estate rums, including such rare finds as Appleton 50 Year Old and Brugal Papá Andrés. Sink into a rum-colored leather couch, light up a Cuban and enjoy tastings and pairings: El Dorado Demerara 21 year with prawn tempura and apricot crumble, or Clement 1976 with Oxtail rilette and twice-fried plantain? I was so excited, I hopped a flight—a rum flight, that is; there are English, Spanish and French options, along with a magnificent “Pirates of Caribbean” pan-island sampling. My rummelier knew her history, so we chatted for hours about the critical distinction between rum and rhum. Don’t know the difference? Get thee to Zemi Beach.



ZEMI THAI HOUSE SPA I initially rolled my eyes at the name: *Thailand* in Anguilla? But then I booked a Five Element Aroma Massage and walked in. Really, truly, I thought I was in Thailand—and not in a Disney-fied sort of way. Noticing my shock, my therapist Princess explained that I was standing in an actual Thai house, transported to Anguilla several decades ago, when Shoal Bay was utterly deserted. Zemi has brilliantly transformed this island oddity into 15,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor peace, complete with orchid-lined meditation garden, a vitality pool, a juice bar, an organic stone hammam and mahogany treatment suites with hanging lanterns and vaulted ceilings. The menu boasts massage options along with such special treats as a Grapefruit and Rosemary Muscle Melt, great for easing pain and tension, and a Mother of Pearl Body Scrub, enriched with Argan and Sacha oils.



STONE Woe unto the restaurant making its debut in Anguilla. The island, touted as a culinary capital of the Caribbean, is saturated in fine-dining options, so competition is fierce. Enter Stone, with its seasonally inspired cuisine and Asian influence. I hereby give it five stars. The tuna carpaccio came dressed in caper aioli, arugula and pickled red onion; the smoked salmon was perfectly complimented by pickled shallot, cucumber, fennel and lemon vinaigrette; the vegetable dimsum sat in a tasty lobster bisque; the curried mussels were beautifully fresh and just rich enough. Main dishes actually carried me to Asia, from the Korean roast pork to the fisherman's stew—loaded with local crayfish, wahoo, mussels and shrimp—and the Vitenamese crab. A Hong Kong egg tart with cacao purée ended the evening. Well, a nightcap across the courtyard in the Rhum Room did. Zemibeach.com



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