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## Take Off to Turks and Caicos

the sweetspot.ca guide to turks and caicos  
canada (Dec. 03, 11)

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With winter fast approaching (or, dare we say it, already here) we're planning our escape. Topping our travel list? Providenciales Island (or "Provo") in Turks and Caicos. With its turquoise waters and tranquil atmosphere, this peaceful spot is our new go-to for a jaunt away from the Great White North.

#### Where to Stay:

We stayed at the hip New York-bred **Gansevoort Turks & Caicos Hotel**, (from US \$460 a night), a modern hotel with chic décor. After being greeted in the open-air lobby with a refreshing cocktail, we eased right into vacay mode by the 7,000 square-foot infinity pool that takes centre stage. The talcum powder-white sands of Grace Bay Beach and the unbelievable turquoise waters had us forgetting our stress, and our tricked out room — featuring high-end amenities like a flat-screen LCD TV, Bose Sound Dock, and a large standalone soaking tub — provided the perfect luxurious home away from home.

#### Where to Eat:

As part of the room rate, the Gansevoort provides a fabulous breakfast buffet at the highly regarded **Bagatelle Bistro** — also our culinary mainstay for the duration of our trip. Lunch was equally delicious and featured a **seared tuna salad** (US \$17) and **mahi-mahi sliders** (US \$15). For dinner, we loved the **grilled grouper with bok choy** and a rich **bouillabaisse risotto including clams, shrimp and mussels** flanked by **grilled asparagus** (entrees US \$22 to US \$36).

We also discovered other fabulous restaurants on Provo, some for fine dining, such as **Coco Bistro** and **Lemon Café**, and a couple that were a little more budget-friendly, including **Da Conch Shack** and **Fresh Bakery and Bistro**.

#### What to Do:

Between the tasty cuisine and pool lounging, we were happy to find out that there were some exercise classes available at the hotel. The Gansevoort **Exhale Mind Body Spa** provides challenging cardio and yoga classes (and some fantastic massages and other body treatments to boot). And while Provo may not be known for its shopping, we had a blast browsing boutiques like **Philosophy**, **Art Provo** and **Mama's Gift Shop**.

**Travel Tip:** If you happen to be on Provo the second Saturday of the month, be sure to visit the **Grace Bay Market**, where local artists sell unique handmade arts & crafts such as jewelry, handbags, paintings and woven baskets, clothing and baking. A portion of sales are donated to local charities.

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