

CARIBBEAN

Resorts in Aruba and Nevis focus on the sea-turtle experience

By Gay Nagle Myers   | Jun 05, 2021



Three species of turtles travel to Nevis to nest each year, from June to October. Photo Credit: Courtesy of Sea Turtle Conservancy

Pandemic-weary travelers aren't the only ones heading to the Caribbean these days. Magnificent sea turtles travel thousands of miles to return each year to the beaches on which they were born.

There, they lay the next generation of sea turtles that will one day make the same journey.

The most common of the turtle species who make the long trek to the Caribbean are the leatherback, hawksbill, green and loggerhead turtles. Nests, called clutches, are fenced off as protected sites until hatchlings arrive within 55 to 75 days.

Two resorts, one in Aruba and one in Nevis, are offering special turtle experiences for their guests during nesting and hatching season.

At the Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort in Aruba, it's the massive leatherback that calls Eagle Beach its home. Weighing up to 1,500 pounds and stretching up to seven feet long, this gentle giant is the fourth largest modern reptile in the world, behind crocodiles.

Guests interested in joining the resort's sea turtle experience just have to let the concierge know to alert them when there are nestings or signs that hatchlings may emerge.

Guests receive booklets with helpful tips and facts, such as drawing curtains at night and turning off unnecessary lights so nesting turtles aren't distracted. This also helps tiny hatchlings find the moonlight they often seek to make their first steps towards the sea.

Only one in 1,000 hatchlings lives to maturity.

The protective measures put in place by Bucuti & Tara, along with with Turtugaruba, Aruba's sea turtle conservation organization, have helped leatherback sea turtles move up from endangered to vulnerable on the world conservation status chart.

In Nevis, the Four Seasons Resort offers a variety of family-friendly turtle activities, including a Sea Turtle Adoption Kit from the Sea Turtle Conservancy, marine biology classes, sea turtle-themed arts and crafts experiences and sea turtle-inspired baking classes.

The resort has partnered with the Sea Turtle Conservancy for more than 10 years to support research and education that contributes to the long-term protection and recovery of endangered sea turtles that call Nevis home.

The turtle activities can be purchased separately or are all included in a new Sea Turtle Summer Camp program for guests staying seven nights or more that also offers guided nature walks, beach clean-ups, marine-themed dinner and movie nights, golf cart, greens fees and club rental, scrub classes at the Spa and private airport transfers.

The camp program is priced at \$2,000 per night, double, in an oceanview room; kids five to 12 are \$475 per night.

Four Seasons donates \$50 per booking to the Sea Turtle Conservancy to support the conservancy's work on behalf of these sea creatures.

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