

Days out ON NEVIS

There's so much to do on Nevis for sightseers of all ages and interests. Visitor has created three customised itineraries: for families, the adventurous, and the more romantically inclined BY PETER SWAIN

Photo courtesy of Four Seasons

An adventurous DAY OUT ON NEVIS

A traditional triathlon involves swimming, cycling and running. The Nevis version comprises climbing/hiking, cycling and scuba diving.

To start the day, thrill-seekers will relish the climb up the 3,232ft **Nevis Peak**. Depending on conditions underfoot and fitness, the hike takes about four hours up and back, and is best started by about 7am to avoid the heat of the day.

On the lower slopes, walkers pass ancient mango, cinnamon and mahogany trees. The trickiest section involves a series of ropes up near vertical rocky paths, with climbers hauling themselves up hand over hand. If there's no cloud cover, climbers are rewarded at the summit by dramatic



views of surrounding islands. You'll need a guide for this trek, as well as for less strenuous walks up through the verdant forest to the **Source** or the **waterfalls**, both great ways to experience the island's diverse flora and fauna.

After topping up the fluid levels, it's time to **cycle** round the island. There are some Tour de France-style lung-busting



hills on the main 21-mile (34km) road, so fit cyclists usually take an hour to complete the scenic trip, but others should allow two, with water and sun screen essential. Bike hire can be arranged by hotels or direct from Winston Crooke at the bike shop on Oualie Beach. bikenevis.com

Having climbed up and cycled round the island, it's now time to dive off it. **Scuba Safaris** at Oualie offer a range of guided dives and snorkelling adventures, suitable for both experienced aquanauts and novices. Two-tank dives to reefs, shipwrecks, canyons, hot springs and drop-offs take about 3-3½ hours, and you might expect to see sea turtles, rays and a colourful assortment of tropical fish. Shorter, one-tank dives and snorkelling trips are also available.

Then it's time to find a beach bar and top up those fluids again...

Photo courtesy of Four Seasons



A romantic DAY OUT ON NEVIS

The most laidback place to begin the morning after the night before is the **Bath Hot Springs** in Charlestown. Nevis is a dormant volcano, so mineral-rich water bubbles up from deep below at about 104F (40C). Free and efficacious, these open-air thermal baths will soothe tired muscles and give you a chance to catch up on local gossip.

Then it's off to **Lovers Beach** – a seductive half-mile stretch of pristine sand just made for swimming and power tanning. Sea turtles also nest here, which is why Prince Harry visited in 2017 and released some hatchlings into the surf.

The walk up and back, with a certain amount of pool gazing and shell collecting, takes a lazy hour, with the only excitement coming from watching small island-hoppers land at Nevis Airport just east of the beach.

Next up, some light retail therapy.



“Rum tastings combine history, geography and a little light imbibing”

At Cliffdwellers, a collection of luxe holiday villas, you'll find one of the island's very best boutique gift shops. **Out of the Blue** features a tasteful collection of local arts and crafts, as well as some colourful collectibles – perfect for souvenirs and last-minute festive gifting. Then take a

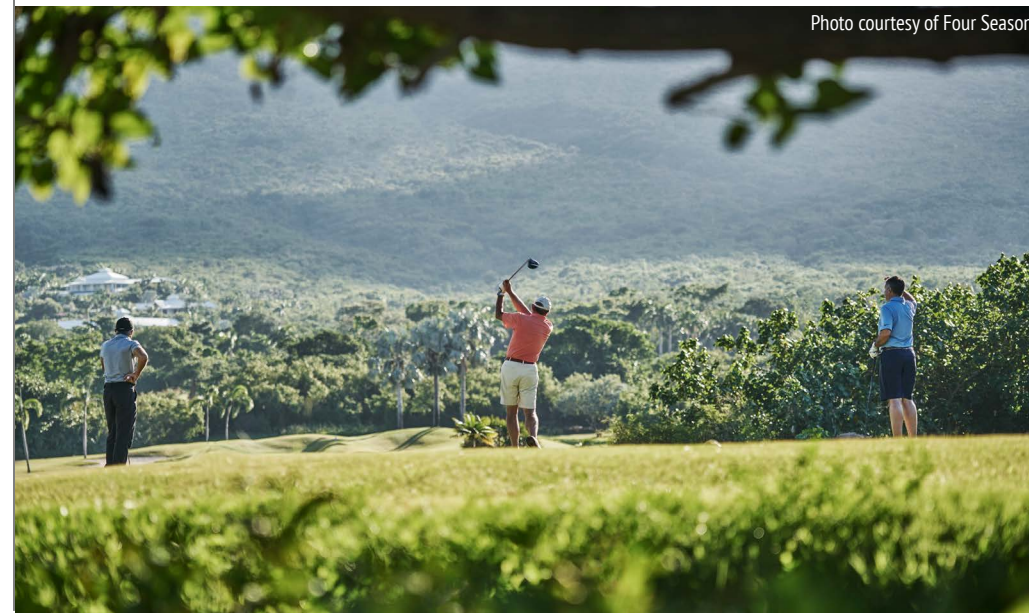
long lunch at somewhere relaxed like the chic **Chrishi Beach**.

By now you'll be in need of a spa treatment, game of tennis or round of golf – all available at the **Four Seasons**, the island's premier international resort. The beautifully equipped spa is Zen personified and offers impeccable pampering; the Robert Trent Jones II course is one of the Caribbean's finest; and the tennis centre has four clay and six hard courts, some floodlit. fourseasons.com/nevis

After that, a **Rum Tasting** is in order. This is the Caribbean and our local spirit is rum, ron or rhum, depending on whether it's British, Spanish or French.

But which one's best? Mark Theron, who has a fine rum and cigar emporium in Charlestown called L&L, conducts tastings at Montpelier and Mango that combine history, geography and of course a little light imbibing – the perfect aperitif before a dreamy dinner at one of the island's many romantic restaurants. cliftonestaterums.com →

Photo courtesy of Four Seasons



A family DAY OUT ON NEVIS

There's no better family-friendly introduction to the island than a **Funky Monkey** tour. Greg Slagon's fleet of open-sided jeeps come with a guide who'll suggest a variety of all-terrain itineraries. "On the beach, up in the hills, through the bush, past resorts and ruins," he says, "we'll show you the lot." In a 3½-hour drive, visitors get a kaleidoscopic introduction to Nevis, its history and people. The coolers are full of good cheer, so just show up and the team will do the rest. funkymonkeytours.com

After the drive, it's time for a **stroll along the beach**. Pinney's is always fun, but another favourite stretch runs from Nisbet southeast past Herbert's Beach. Water shoes, Crocs or similar are a good idea, as high tide covers the beach in places. The comical sight of brown pelicans dive-bombing the waves for their lunch is always entertaining, and there are conch shells to be collected. On Nevis, the simple pleasures are often the most memorable. Then it's time for a lazy lunch at nearby **Sea Breeze**, Nisbet's friendly beach bar.

While there, ask about Fanny Nisbet, who married Horatio Nelson in 1787 – it's a fascinating story. By now you'll want to know even more about our history. Nevisians are delighted that **Alexander Hamilton**, born on island in 1757 and one of America's Founding Fathers,



Photo © Tina Thuell Photography



Photo © Tina Thuell Photography

has become a Broadway star. The museum in Charlestown dedicated to him is a gem, as is the collection devoted to **Nelson** in Bath village. The Hermitage Plantation Inn also has a Nelson room with a fine collection of memorabilia.

Serious history buffs can follow the blue **Heritage Trail** signs that take in: St. Thomas Anglican Church c.1643, the oldest Protestant church still in use in the Caribbean; the Bath Hotel c.1778; and New River-Coconut Walk Estate c.1810, once one of the largest sugar mills on island. nevisisland.com/activities/heritage-trail

Then head for the **Botanical Gardens**, which has an exotic orchid collection, outlandish palms, rare fruits, a butterfly-filled rainforest conservatory, and a Thai restaurant serving a colourful range of healthy fruit juices. There's also a shop for souvenirs.

A classic way to round out a family day on Nevis is **horse riding at sunset** along Pinney's beach, easy to arrange through the Nevis Equestrian Centre. If there are no clouds, as the sun dips below the waves on the western horizon, riders might even see the fabled green flash. nevishorseback.com



"On Nevis, the simple pleasures are often the most memorable"

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