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THE TRAVEL INTELLIGENCE JOURNAL

Bahamas

THE OTHER SIDE • BAHAMA HOUSE
ROSEWOOD BAHAMA MAR • THE ISLAND HOUSE
THE OCEAN CLUB, A FOUR SEASONS RESORT



The Ocean Club, a Four Seasons Resort

BEVERLY HILLS Waldorf Astoria Beverly Hills

ORANGE COUNTY The Resort at Pelican Hill

LOS CABOS Montage Los Cabos

BAHAMA HOUSE

Discreet retreat.



ENTER THE GATE to Bahama House and you feel an immediate sense of relief. It's not that Harbour Island is so hectic—the main mode of transportation on the three-mile-long island is the golf buggy—but the serenity of the airy colonial-style architecture and the luxuriant gardens work their charms on you.

Guests are met at the North Eleuthera airport, with complimentary transfers to Bahama House. We actually arrived by boat from reviewing another resort on Eleuthera, and were pleased to find a staff member waiting patiently for us on the Harbour Island dock.

We were shown to the Dunmore Suite in the pale salmon-pink 1800 House. The 11-key resort includes this historic house, the annex, and two cottages surrounding a courtyard with a pool, and a few steps down, a bar where “après,” or canapés, are served each evening around 6pm. The Dunmore, with its four-poster bed and décor that's a heart-felt salute to Bunny Williams, manages to be both stylish and cozy.

Bahama House is part of the Colorado-based Eleven Experience group of high-end adventure properties that eliminate the need to choose between luxury and adventure. The lodge in Iceland and the Bahama House are the start of expansion outside the Centennial State.

Here's what you need to know: Bahama House is not on the beach. It's in the center of Dunmore Town, on the hill above the harbor, a few steps from two of the most popular restaurants on the island. The resort operates like a B&B, offering full breakfast daily, but no other meals without special arrangements.

For what it lacks, Bahama House is the most upscale resort on an island that attracts a chic international crowd who'd really prefer no one else ever heard about the place. Drive south of colorful Dunmore Town and its historic tropical-colonial houses, and



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF BAHAMA HOUSE

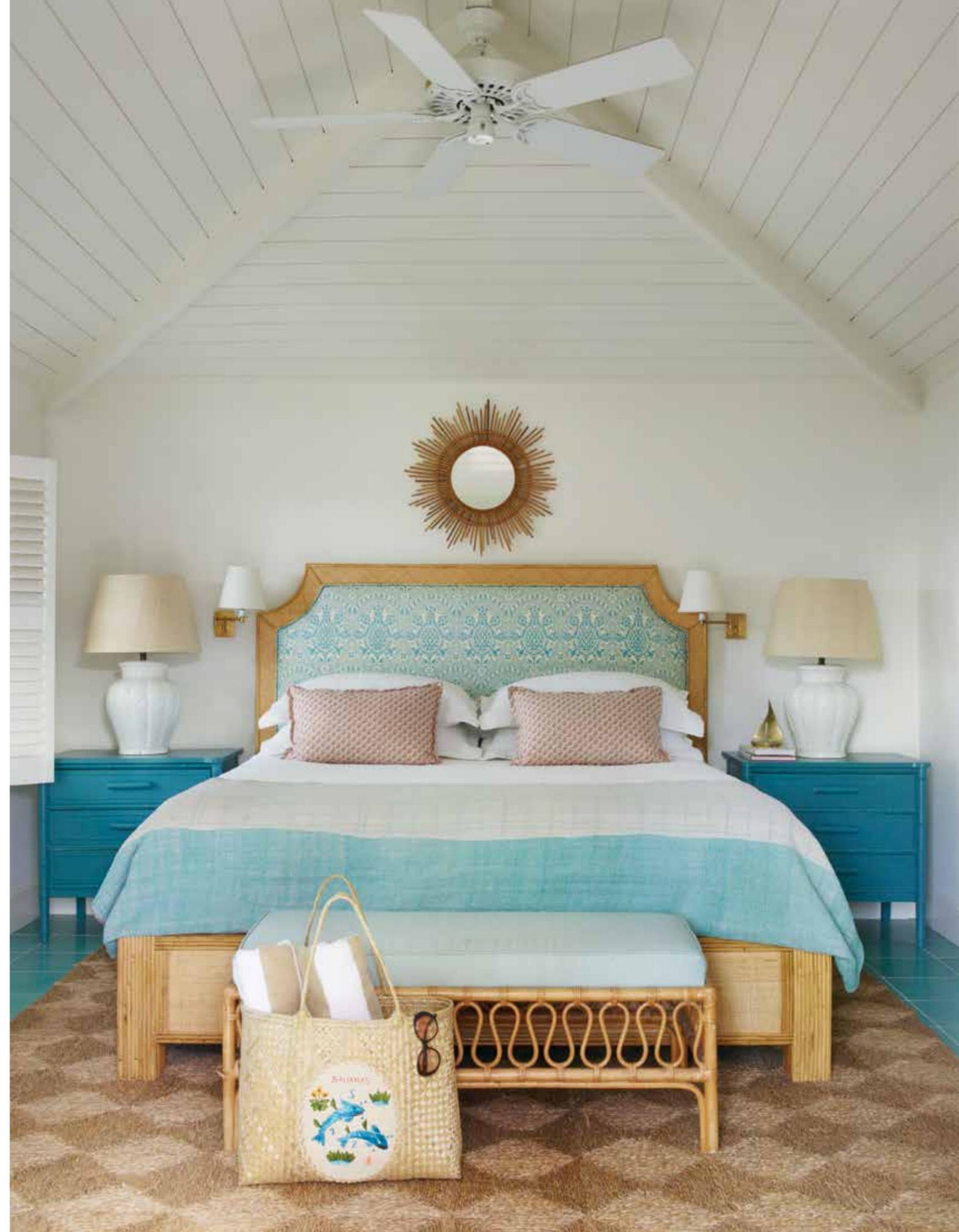
you see sprawling vacation villas owned by recognizable names.

Everyone's concerned about development on the island, amid fears it could lose its unique character. Occasionally a cruise ship appears on the horizon, and everyone's up in arms, but so far they've been able to fend off the ships. The island's foremost cheerleader is longtime resident India Hicks, whose father, famed British designer David Hicks, had a house on Eleuthera. But even she touts Harbour Island with mixed emotions.

Bahama House compensates for its location by setting up an enclave of chaises and umbrellas at the far end of the gorgeous mile-long Pink Sand Beach, with coolers containing everything from water to sports drinks to beer and rosé. No one's on duty there, but staff swing by periodically to check on supplies and guests' well-being.

The lack of an in-house restaurant beyond breakfast is reasonable, considering the intimate size of Bahama House and the existence of so many good restaurants on the island, from white tablecloth to local barbecue joints. Guests are out during the day taking part in the kind of adventures the Eleven Experience offers, so to

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offer lunch would be pointless. Picnic lunches, however, are available for certain outings, and a special dinner can be arranged with sufficient advance notice.

Service is terrific here. The staff is attentive, always ready to plan outings, make reservations, recommend shops, and straighten out the mix-ups when guests occasionally return with the wrong buggy or discover theirs missing. The staff quickly starts to feel like family. We arrived with a broken suitcase zipper and Lodge Manager Giorgia Ravilli immediately took

charge, sending it to be fixed, then refusing payment.

Bahama House is the kind of place everyone leaves tearily, vowing to return as soon as possible. ●●●●

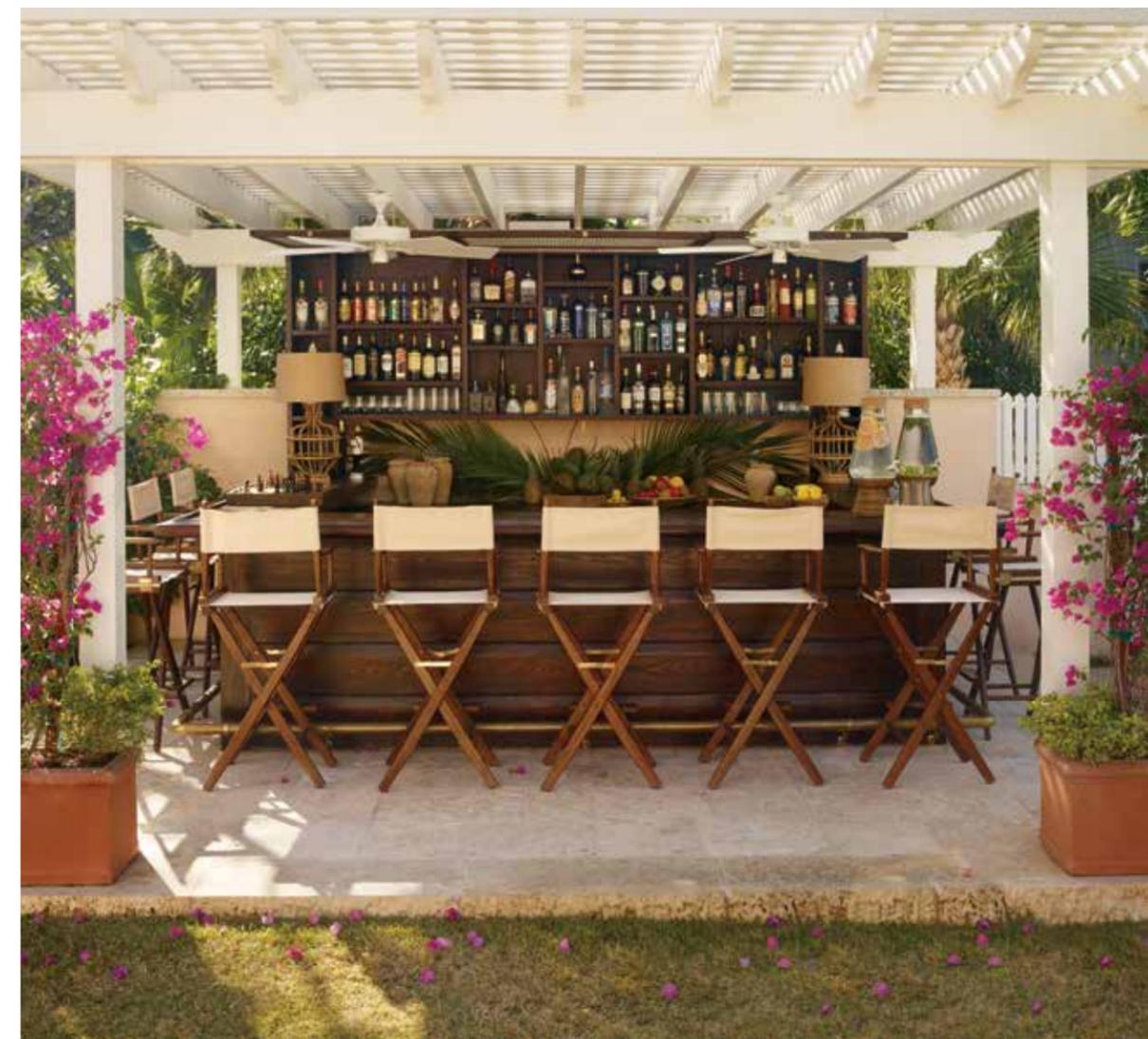
Bahama House

Harbour Island, Bahamas

General Manager: Anne Ward

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DOS & DON'TS

DO rent a buggy. We didn't and regretted it.

DO try some of the resort's recommended restaurants, from a lobster quesadilla lunch at beachfront Sip Sip, to the fresh-from-the-ocean conch salad at Queen Conch, to the farm-fresh Mediterranean offerings at India Hicks-designed The Landing, a favorite of celebrities and the local in-crowd.

DO venture out on Eleven Experience adventures, carefully curated and ranging from bone fishing to cliff-jumping to lolling on a remote beach. If you're a fishing fanatic, check out the company's live-aboard The Mothership, a 74-foot Hatteras. Charters are regularly combined with a stay at Bahama House.

DON'T miss evening cocktails at the bar with Robert and talented chef Niki's delicious canapés.