



lose its luster to ... Bequia?

BY MARK ELLWOOD JANUARY 29, 2022

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right next door. Mostly, they say, because Bequia retains the off-kilter glamour that once defined Mustique, which is effectively banned by the shellacked and cinched-tight scene that

Call it the Mustique Misstep.

has now taken over the island.

Piper-like developer of the island, who was notorious for his naked beach parties there in the

1960s with Princess Margaret. Now, though, the new generation is opting to stay—or stray—

A view of Port Elizabeth. "There are so many rules at Mustique now, it's become the Island of No," says one longtime visitor to Tennant's playground, likening the current makeup of the board of the island's operator, the Mustique Company, to a prissy New York co-op.

"Someone's always offended," says a former resident, alluding to the newcomers who don't

understand the ways of the natives. "We used to do crazy stuff like pool diving. You'd go around

the island and jump into someone's pool, swim a length, and run off again. Everyone thought it

was hysterical. At the end of a party, people used to take the wrong cars, and you'd sort it out

the next day. Now, God forbid, security would be on you with a letter of complaint."



David Bowie's holiday retreat on Mustique.

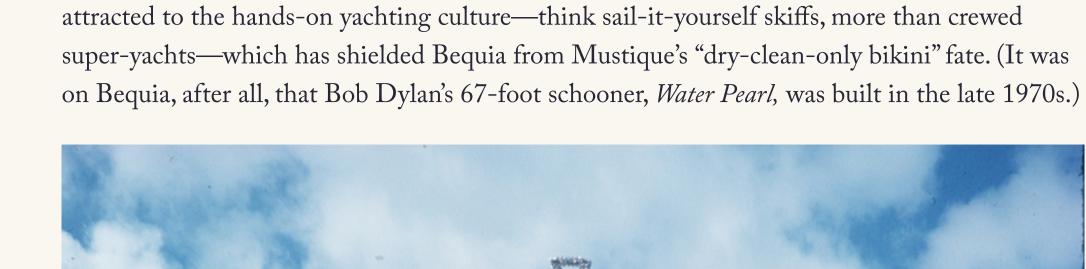
"The expats on Bequia look at Mustique like a snooty older brother," says Lauren King-Barry,

who came to the island with her husband, Evan, and four children to wait out the pandemic,

and are still there. "A certain kind of people love this place—more adventurous, more open to

People like Evan Barry, for example, an avid sailor who chanced on Bequia decades ago and was

things."





want to put on your ball gown with flip-flops and some heritage diamonds, and go to down to a

rum shack on the beach here, it doesn't matter," says Cornwell. "No one gives a shit what you

did before—you're judged by how you act, not who you were. They have a saying in Bequia:

'We're all here because we're not all there."

Tennant, the Third Baron Glenconner, with his wife Anne in 1973. The ultimate embodiment of Bequia's offbeat charm might be Moonhole, a quirky development seemingly carved out of the face of a cliff, which is one of the first sights you see as you land at the small airstrip. Homes on this 30-acre plot were built in the 1960s by a New York advertising couple, Tom and Gladdie Johnston. Tom had no formal training, and would throw

up a shack, mostly using blocks of local volcanic rock. Now a trust oversees the site, and private

Other homes are a bargain compared to ones on Mustique, where a six-bedroom house can cost

\$16 million. "People actually live here, so there's genuine culture," says real-estate agent Meg

Whitaker of the Grenadines Collection. "It's very eccentric, and, geographically, it's amazing.

People do not live on Mustique, apart from a sort of herded little village where they've put all

homes are offered for rental and sale, even though many lack electricity and rely on rainwater.

(Tranquility House is on the market for \$1.59 million).

the local inhabitants."

Mustique devotees.

stars." @



They could also buy one of the villas Liz Clayton is building with her husband, Stan. In 2016,

they took on a business partner to develop the Firefly, a four-room hotel with a guest cottage

"Bequia is the Caribbean as you imagine it," Clayton says. "You don't need to prove yourself

here. Here, you can still sit out at night with a G&T and look up and see the black sky and

As he says, Mark Ellwood focuses on "froth in all its forms." He has written for AIR MAIL about the turmoil

inside Moda Operandi. He is also a columnist for Bloomberg Pursuits, the creator and a co-host of Bloomberg's

Travel Genius podcast, and the author of Bargain Fever: How to Shop in a Discounted World

and three luxury villas on a beach called Paradise, aimed at the kind of clientele who were once

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