

## Miami: The way we were

# The multi-millionaire of Star Island

● 236th in a series on early Miami.

**HOWARD KLEINBERG**

Editor of The Miami News

His full name was Edward H. Robinson Green, but he was more familiarly known as Col. E.H.R. Green. His Star Island intimates knew him as Uncle Ned Green. He got to be a colonel by being a member of the military staff of a Texas governor at one time.

And he was rich!

Green was the son of Henrietta Howland Green, reputed to have been the richest woman in the world in her day. Hetty Green, as she was known, inherited \$10 million when her parents died in 1865. She built that fortune to more than \$100 million when she died in 1916.

The Colonel inherited that.

London-born Col. Green managed his mother's properties, such as railroads and banks, and built the fortune even greater.

Green came to Miami in 1921, being the first to travel here on the inland waterway in

a houseboat. In 1926, he bought the former Star Island Yacht Club and spent \$85,000, a princely sum in those days, remodeling it into a palatial residence.

He spent his winters on Star Island and his summers at South Dartmouth, Mass.

His civic activity in Miami was heavy. According to clippings in The Miami News' files, Green's activities included donations to many of the needy groups in the community.

"Perhaps more than any other individual," a Miami News story also noted, "Colonel Green was responsible for the great successes of the annual Miami All-America Air races, for which he donated the most important cup in competition. He'd sit in the glass-topped car and watch the maneuvers every year."

In 1932, Green announced that he was financing a plan to smash the atom. His program did not succeed but was followed, not much later, by success by others.

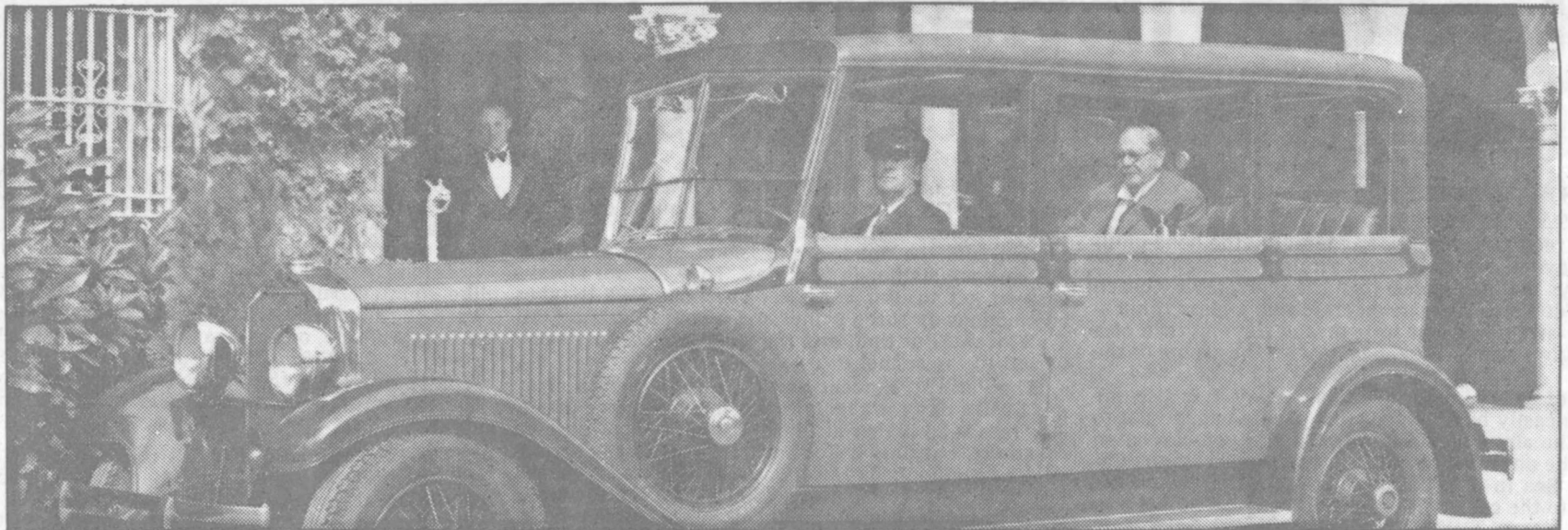
Green's car was a curiosity. It was all enclosed in glass, "a large brown sedan with

glass through which he could see but not be seen. This car became a familiar sight on Miami streets during the season and the philanthropist could enjoy the sun's rays through the glass roof as well as watch the stars or airplanes or other things in the upper air."

Green fell ill at his Star Island home in 1935. He suffered from heart disease. After being bedridden for months, he was transferred to Lake Placid, N.Y., where he died on June 8, 1936 at the age of 67. He is buried in Bellows Falls, Vt., alongside his mother.

Following his death and a long estate battle by his widow — his 1906 will had bequeathed his fortune to his sister and his wife renounced all claim to his estate when they married in 1917 — the Star Island home was in disuse for almost two decades. Finally, in 1953, the estate — too expensive and elaborate to be purchased by a single party — was divided into three homes and sold to three families.

● NEXT SATURDAY: The railway that went to sea.



Green and his dog Stella sit in his customized automobile in this January 1932 photograph



(From The Miami Daily News,  
Jan. 15, 1932)

## Green Cash May Smash Atom

Experiments to unleash the mighty forces held latent in the tiny world of the atom are being carried on at Round Hill, Massachusetts estate of Col. E.H.R. Green, noted Miami Beach winter resident, the colonel revealed today in an interview given at his Star island winter home.

Through construction of electric ray apparatus, far more powerful than anything of its type ever before developed, scientists financed by Colonel Green are preparing the climax to a series of electrical experiments to break down the atom.

Smashing the atom has been the dream of savants for years, as only by breaking it down may the gigantic forces existing within these units be transformed from metaphysical theory to actual power for driving the wheels of the world's industries.

Generation of an electric power of 25,000,000 volts is the principal effort required to carry through the experiments at Colonel Green's Massachusetts estate. While Colonel Green is furnishing the backing for the experiments, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology staff of scientists is carrying out the work. Dr. Van De Graaff, inventor of powerful ray apparatus, is the principal savant involved.

The experiments, while having the ultimate goal of smashing the atom, also would result in the discovery of super X-ray equipment that would enable medical science to surpass by a great degree the limitations of the present X-ray.

Colonel Green said preliminary experiments had shown real progress. The ultimate attempt to break down the atom will be made at the hangar during June. However, this date is tentative.

"I can't say whether we'll be ready then or not," the colonel said. "Many problems must be surmounted. When I came south, I expected to find the addition to my home here finished, but there were delays. I may find the same thing has happened to the ray apparatus when I return north."

Even though the Round Hill tests fail to reach their objective, Colonel Green believes the problem of smashing the atom will be solved within a few years.

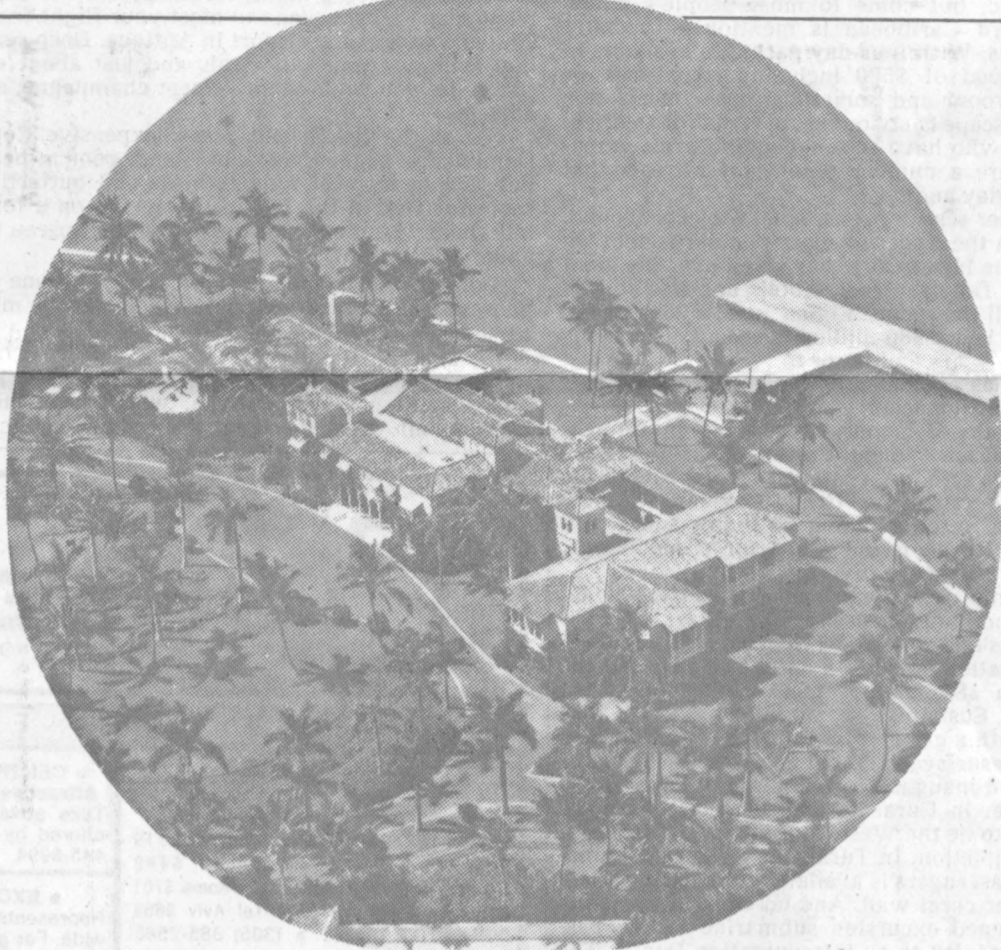
The colonel expressed himself as highly satisfied with his new glass-topped automobile, made after his own specifications.

"There's only one thing that worries me about it," he asserted. "That is how it will behave during rain. I am anxious to try it out in the rain. In placing the glass top, we didn't think about the effect of driving rain on a horizontal glass surface. I hope it isn't too noisy."

The colonel, who, with Mrs. Green, arrived this week, expressed regret that he missed the air races, in which he donated a cup. He intends to remain at the Beach until spring, when he will return north for the atom-smashing experiments.



Green and Stella in 1932



Green's estate was the Star Island Yacht Club when he purchased it in 1926. He spent \$85,000 transforming it into his residence.

(Excerpted from The Miami News, July 7, 1953)

### NEW OWNERS HUNT TREASURES

## Famous Green Mansion Split 3 Ways

By JACK W. ROBERTS  
Miami Daily News Staff Writer

Fifty-room mansions are just like icebergs — they're nice to look at but there really isn't a market for the things.

For years that was the case with the fabulous Star Island estate of the late Col. E.H.R. Green, son of the famous and eccentric woman financier, Hetty Green.

Construction experts examined the sprawling waterfront estate and figured it would cost \$5,000,000 to duplicate today. But even with the price whittled down to one fiftieth of this amount (\$100,000), it was impossible to find a person willing to take on the heavy tax load presented by the property.

Then George Deen, a local broker, hit on the solution. Why not split the estate into three sections and sell it that way?

That's what Deen did and this week the new owners are happily rummaging through the effects of the late Col. Green and having a wonderful time restoring the mansion to its former beauty.

The man, or center section of the mansion was purchased by Cecil and Edna Loeb, of Miami Beach and Washington. It was with their portion of the building that most of the furniture was thrown into the bargain.

The living room rug is a Kerman oriental creation, which reputedly set the lavishly-spending Col. Green back a cool \$50,000. Frankly, the rug looks a little beaten up, but the Loeb's hope to have it restored.

There isn't a stick of veneer furniture in the mansion — everything is solid something or other. Rich brocaded leather chairs line a massive director's table in the library. The drapes are all brocaded and present a good size lifting problem.

Standing out like a sore thumb in the library is a huge set of scales, enclosed in a glass case. Col. Green was a diamond collector and the scales were used to weigh his treasures.

The colonel also liked movies and a full-size projection room was added to the library so he could watch in comfort.

The tremendous fortune which Hetty Green built up and wouldn't spend was so big that even the spendthrift Col. Green couldn't put a dent in it.

Hetty was worth in excess of \$100,000,000 when she died and the hoard kept growing and growing from dividends.

Col. Green married and later disinherited his wife after giving her \$750,000 in cash and \$1,000,000 in bonds. When he died she received only their bedroom suite, and the fortune reverted to his sister, Mrs. H. Sylvia A. H. G. Wilks.

The Loeb's are sure that antique collectors would like to get a share of Col. Green's treasure — but they're not for sale. The Loeb's have a beautiful modern home on Hibiscus Island, but they're giving that up for the pleasure of restoring the mansion.

They won't use a major portion of their share. There are 17 servants' rooms, which will be sealed off. Col. Green kept a staff of 30 servants and they were a bit cramped in their quarters.

The east end of the estate was purchased by Ernest L. Hallbauer. He didn't get nearly as many rooms as the Loeb's but his share contains a massive elevator which runs from the first to the second floor.

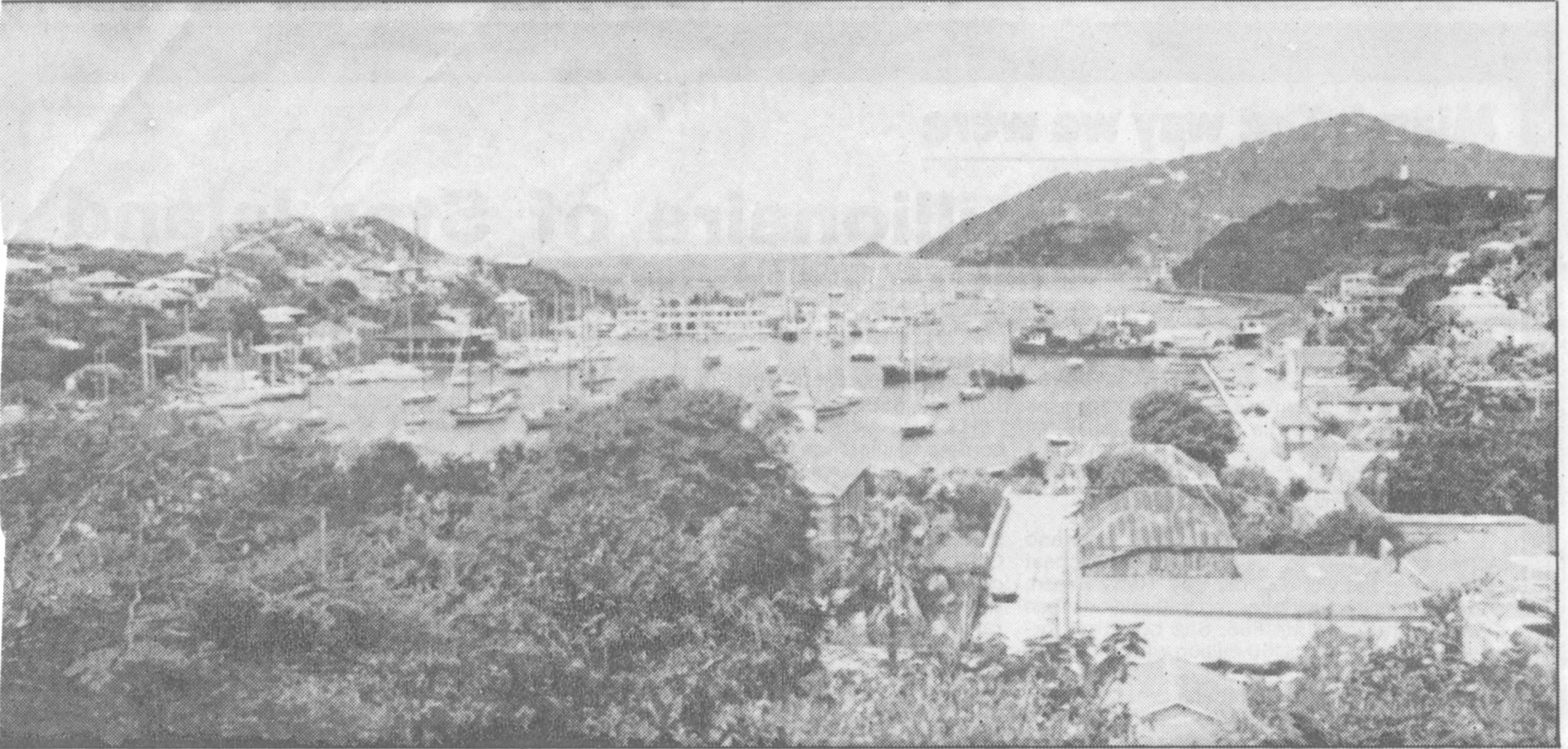
Part of the building was cut away to separate Hallbauer's share from the Loeb's.

An entirely separate wing on the west end of the property was purchased by David Parrack of Washington. He has already restored his portion and it's closed for the summer. Like the Loeb's, Parrack also owned an island estate but couldn't resist the lure of the Green property.

The new residents figure the house is worth its weight in conversion.

Col. Green is dead, but he'll always be the unseen guest and prime topic of conversation for the new owners of his mansion.





Associated Press

The Caribbean harbor on the French island of St. Barthelemy is quiet and hopes to stay that way

# The Caribbean

## Elegant retreats and quiet waters await the tourist rush

JOSEPH B. TREASTER

New York Times News Service

It is a recurring fantasy triggered by the bone-chilling days of winter. First there are the palm trees, always the palm trees; then the wide, tawny beach leading down to a gentle emerald sea, a clear robin's-eye sky stretching out forever and the embrace of a soothingly warm breeze, heavy with the aroma of the sea.

Few of us are immune to this fantasy. It is also one that can easily be indulged. Just pack a bag, go out to one of the airports and in a few hours you can be on one of the dozens of islands that sweep across the Caribbean Sea in a 2,500-mile arc from the waters off Florida to the coast of South America.

This season TWA is beginning service from New York and St. Louis to San Juan, P.R., and to Nassau and Freeport in the Bahamas, which are technically on the Atlantic, but come to most people's minds when the word Caribbean is mentioned in chilly northern climes. With four-day packages available in the neighborhood of \$500 including round-trip airfare, a hotel room and sometimes even meals, the great winter escape is no longer reserved for the rich. For those who have the money and prize exclusivity, there are a number of elegant retreats that charge \$300 a day and up.

As the winter season opens, hotel projects abound, particularly on the larger or more popular islands. In Puerto Rico, the Hyatt Corp. has taken over the giant Promar and Dorado Beach Hotels and has started decorating all the rooms. El San Juan, a 26-year-old landmark, has had a \$30 million overhaul after being closed for two years and is set to reopen in January. Hundred villas are being added to the Palmas del Mar complex in Humacao.

In Nassau, the Bahamas, there's big investment in Cable Beach, where the two-year-old Cable

The tiny islands like Petit St. Vincent and Mustique in the Grenadines tend to offer quiet, often elegant vacations with little glitter. Anguilla, near St. Martin, and the not-so-small island of Barbuda near Antigua are similar in this way. They are not always easy to get to. For example, on some days it takes connections on three planes and a boat to get to Petit St. Vincent. But that, and the steep prices, only seem to add to the cachet.

The Petit St. Vincent Resort, with 22 rooms, charges \$240 a day for a couple; this includes three meals. The rate is \$8 higher at the 19-room Cotton House on Mustique, but only a Continental breakfast is included. The Malliouhana Hotel on Anguilla, which opened last year, charges \$260 to \$300 a day for a couple, without meals. The Malliouhana boasts marble baths and says it has the largest rooms in the Caribbean. A couple can stay at the Coco Pont Lodge on Barbuda for \$400 to \$600 a night. At that price the management sends a light plane to meet your flight from the United States at the airport in Antigua. Deep sea fishing, sailing, tennis, all meals and just about everything else you could want, except champagne, are included.

Not all the little islands are so expensive. Consider Dominica, a rugged volcanic island, poor in beaches, but rich in tropical foliage, birds and butterflies. A room for two in the Layou Valley Inn on a forested hill about 11 miles from the capital of Roseau is just under \$50 a night.

Dominica, a former British colony and one of the poorest islands in the Caribbean, lies about midway between the French islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique and can be reached by light plane in 20 to 25 minutes. Tourists vacationing in the French islands and sometimes even Antigua, which is 50 minutes away by air, often spend a few days in Dominica.

Some of the larger islands and groups of islands offer both quiet and rip-roarin' action. In the Montego Bay area of Jamaica, for example, there are resorts with bargain packages for couples inclined to weeklong parties as well as sedate places that feel like country clubs and charge \$300 a night. Off toward the northeast tip of Jamaica, outside the town of Port Antonio, on the beach and surrounded by jungle-covered hills are two superb resort hotels, the Trident Hotel and the Marbella Club at Dragon Bay. The rates for both start at about \$300 a couple a night.

The Bahamas and Puerto Rico also offer a mix of the fast life and the subdued. Gambling casinos with all the usual games and floor shows with Las Vegas-style dancers draw hordes of visitors. But most of the 700 islands in the Bahamas chain are sleepy little places, ideal for swinging in a hammock, snorkeling, scuba diving or hunting with fly or spinning tackle for the elusive bonefish.

There are also vast stretches of quiet, virtually undeveloped beaches in Puerto Rico. Not so long ago Puerto Rico had a reputation for treating tourists with a kind of disdain. But a recent visit indicates that, if that was ever true, it certainly is not now.

A few years ago, a political leader on one of the islands criticized his neighbors for promoting their islands to outsiders as paradise when in fact the residents were plagued with all kinds of economic and social problems. His idea was to focus on the best of what was local. But the idea did not get very far. Most of the islands are still selling a kind of a dream, projecting themselves as hideouts from a harsh world, cozy cocoons where the sun almost always shines and the toughest decisions are whether to have the rum punch or the pina colada.



Cable Beach, where the two-year-old Cablech Hotel has acted as a catalyst for improvements in neighboring resorts. On Grand Cayman, the new Pavilion Hotel is adding 60 rooms and a conference center to an island noted for casual living, dominiums and scuba diving.

Developments on other islands include the widespread construction of housekeeping villas, the addition of more island-to-island ferryboats, the restoration of a plantation home as a hotel on Nevis and the turning of an 18th-century merchant's house as a museum on St. Eustatius.

onaire, with a grant from the European Common Market, has resurfaced the climbing roads in its national park and inaugurated bus tours of the island's landscape. In Curacao, a 6,000-foot man-made highway — said to be the Western Hemisphere's longest near completion. In Turks and Caicos, a submarine for two passengers is available for cruising along underwater coral wall. And on Grand Cayman, a newly designed excursion submarine for 28 passengers is scheduled to go into operation Dec. 1. The 1 will make 10 to 12 hourlong trips daily — at \$15 per person for day trips, \$55 at night — from the George Town harbor.

Each year, more than 7.7 million people — nearly 70 percent of them Americans, largely from the East Coast — headed for the Caribbean. This year more than 8 million are expected. And in a world increasingly conscious of security, the Caribbean seems well insulated from many of the tensions that foster terrorism.

There are islands for every taste: lively, quiet, rustic, glitzy. Even though the distance to most of the islands is not great, their atmosphere is distinctly foreign and they tend to feel far away. People seem to relax at perhaps half to two-thirds the speed at which New Yorkers normally cruise and, unless you're trying to work in the Caribbean, that can have an almost relaxing effect.

The whole area was colonized by Europeans and largely populated by slaves brought from Africa to work the sugar plantations. After the abolition of slavery, shiploads of indentured workers were brought in from India. The French, Spanish, Dutch and English all left their imprints on the islands and people. That, added to the personalities of the islands and the size, location and varying economic possibilities of the islands, has combined to give each island a character of its own.

The islanders invented calypso and reggae. But the most accessible music, which flows around you from the moment you arrive, is in the lilting speech of the people. Since most of the islands were British colonies, English is the most common language in the Caribbean. There are some places — the poor sections of Kingston, Jamaica, for example, or on the waterfront in Grenada — where the accent is so profound that the slang so obscure that an American needs an interpreter. But for the most part conversation with people a tourist is likely to meet is not difficult.

Many in the tourist trade speak two and three languages and menus are usually printed in at least two languages including English. If you happen to speak the principal language of the island, so much the better — you can step out of your daily routine and spend your vacation never speaking English.

Everyone seems to agree that the best eating in the Caribbean is in the French islands, Guadeloupe, Martinique, St. Bart's and the French half of St. Martin. None of the expensive, all-inclusive resorts sprinkled throughout the region also have reputations for good chefs and there are some culinary surprises elsewhere.

There is an excellent restaurant, for example, in the Green Parrot Hotel in St. Lucia and the Italian restaurant atop the Windham Hotel in Kingston, Jamaica, is good. In Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic, Vesuvio's, along the waterfront boulevard, Lina's in the hotel and casino of the same name serve fine Italian food.

In most of the Caribbean, simple dishes like grilled fish and chicken usually come out of the kitchen in a simple shape than ones with fancy sauces. Wine and whisky tends to be expensive, but many islands have their own rum and beer.



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