

KUONI

# MAGAZINE

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# Gorgeous GRENADA

From enjoying the comforts of a luxury beachside hotel to touring a cocoa factory and cooking with local chefs, this Caribbean island is distinguished by the breadth of the experiences it offers, writes *Katie Silcox*.





**Katie Silcox, freelance travel writer**  
*"Grenada's range of landscapes, wildlife, food and culture belies belief."*

'Now you have the motion, you need to add the love,' our guide said, laughing. "You have to move your hips. Hips!" he repeated"

**I didn't expect to find myself dancing, barefoot, through dried cocoa beans on my trip to Grenada – I'd focused more on the dreamy beaches that are so synonymous with the Caribbean. But Grenada is an island of surprises.**

I'm at Belmont Estate, a 17th-century working cocoa factory. I've watched how the cocoa pod and its beans are grown, harvested and fermented. Now my guide – via my barefoot performance – is demonstrating the traditional way beans were turned by foot to dry. I notice the slightly sweet, slightly musty smell of fermenting beans wafting through the air as I dance.

It's not a dissimilar smell to that at the River Antoine Estate, a nearby 18th-century rum distillery that uses the same production process it did in 1785 – including the same

sugarcane crushing mill. I'm visiting both as part of a Kuoni-led island tour. Grenada is small and possible to circumnavigate in a day, but the range of landscapes, wildlife, food and culture you'll see in such a time belies belief.

**Adventure time**

The day began in the island's south, at **Silversands Grenada hotel**. Following a dip in the waters of Grande Anse – the hotel's beach and the prettiest on the island – I'd attempted a few laps of its 100m infinity pool, the Caribbean's longest. Nearby, boat, snorkelling and scuba trips are popular ways to see the vibrant array of reef and marine life, alongside the sunken secrets of at least 14 shipwrecks and an underwater sculpture park.

Though the cocoa and rum factories are in the island's northeast, they're only an hour's drive away and set among tree-dotted rolling hills.

Leaving them with a spring in my step – cocoa and rum will do that – we continued our drive, crossing steep valleys and lush rainforests while admiring meandering rivers and dramatic waterfalls. Tubing, rafting and hiking are popular pastimes here, too.

Hungry, we arrived at a local chef's home. Wandering his expansive gardens we collected fresh cinnamon, basil, pawpaw, ylang-ylang and "callaloo, one of the main ingredients in oil down [a salted meat and vegetable stew], Grenada's national dish", chef explains, before taking us to his kitchen to help him make it. Sitting to eat, the ambience – friendly and relaxed – and the mood – genuine and heart-felt – seemed to sum up that of the wider island. A place permeated with authenticity and tradition, and a nation of people keen to share their island's beauty – as well as its secrets.

**MAKE IT HAPPEN:** *Stay seven nights at Silversands, Grenada in a Garden View King Room from £2999pp including flights. Turn the page to discover more to love about this remarkable island with our expert guide >*



Clockwise from left: Silversands Grenada; Annandale Waterfall; a mona monkey; cocoa beans drying at a plantation; infinity pool and Grande Anse beach at Silversands Grenada