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Pregnancy & Baby

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DEVELOPMENT * HEALTH * FASHION * EXPERT ADVICE



Here comes the sun

Pack up your bag, bump or baby and treat yourself to a little winter sun

WORDS JANE ANDERSON



Cap Maison in St Lucia has easy beach access

Spa Maison, St. Lucia

With more artists, poets, writers and Nobel Prize winners per capita than any other country, St Lucia is than a sea and sand destination. This lush island is safe and sophisticated but has lost none of its Caribbean heartbeat. It's the kind of place you'd feel happy visiting for a pre-baby rest or to take your infant for a first long-haul jaunt. The weather is most agreeable from December to February with long warm days and cool breezes.

The opening of Cap Maison in July this year on the exclusive Cap Estate marks the island's first boutique hotel that is genuinely baby-friendly. There are 22 villas, all with butler service. The reassuringly heavy wood jalousie doors and windows set the tone allowing you to regulate shade and ventilation, along with coral stonework and hand-painted tiles. Villas have up to three bedrooms, ideal if you want to take grandparents along, too. Most of the villas have kitchens and private chefs are on hand to cook dinner in your suite if you don't want to bother with a babysitter. Of course, you may be tempted once you've seen the cliff-top restaurant, overseen by award-winning St Lucian chef, Craig Russell-Jones. And if you're looking for a romantic holiday before baby

arrives, a luxury motor yacht is on hand to take you on a sunset cruise.

At Spa Maison, new parents are offered a complementary 30-minute welcome massage, while mothers-to-be can enjoy the Citrus Facial to give an instant vitamin boost to the skin.

While there is no children's club here, there are age-appropriate toys and books and non-processed foods using fresh produce, while Cap Maison's gardens have been created by Veronica Shingleton-Smith and are the most peaceful place to relax with bump or baby. *Caribtours offers seven nights in a one-bedroom villa suite with separate kitchen and partial ocean views, flights and transfers from £2,702 per person. Baby goes free. Tel: 020 7751 0660 or visit www.caribtours.co.uk*

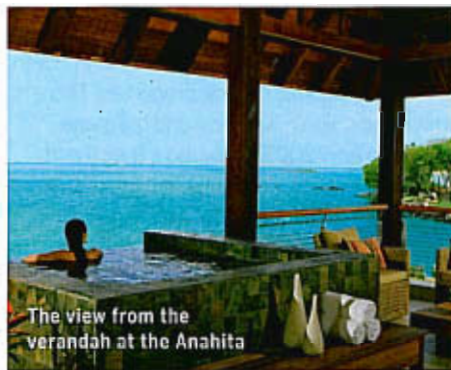
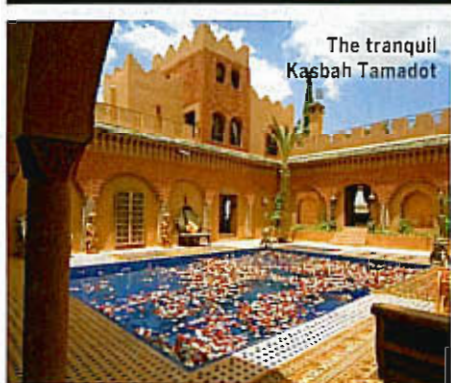
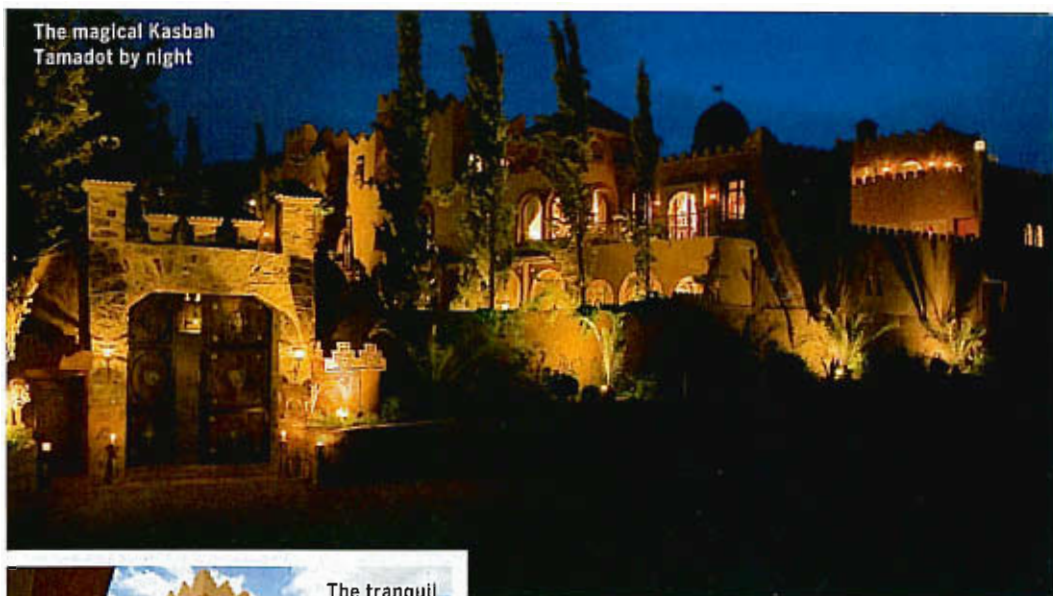


Mauritius

Leaving England on a dark, cold winter's day and heading south to the Indian Ocean island of Mauritius is one of life's 'must do' experiences, made even more special if it's baby's first trip overseas. Standards of service are high, so there's no need to worry if you're pregnant or taking baby. It's easy to rent a car and explore or simply fly 'n' flop at your beautiful resort. And boy is there a lot of choice. From the old-school luxury of the Royal Palm to newer resorts like Anahita World Class Sanctuary and The Grand Mauritian, parents are spoilt for choice.

The philosophy behind Anahita is to have all the ease of luxury hotel living within a spacious private home – a philosophy which works well with baby in tow. Each of the 70 residences or 'homes' have a minimum of two bedrooms and airy rooms that extend on to large ocean-facing verandas, complete with relaxing plunge pools. Each has a gourmet kitchen and luxurious baths with views to the lagoon, golf course (designed by Ernie Els) or distant mountains. And, of course, every residence comes with a personal butler, concierge, fully-stocked fridge, in-room massage and daily maid service. You can dine à la carte at the Origine restaurant or have a chef cook for you in your residence.

The OurSpace children's club takes babies from eight months and is managed by nannies fully trained to UK standard. Meanwhile, parents can head off and enjoy fishing in the lagoon or visit Port Louis, the capital. *Expression Holidays offer seven nights in a two-bedroom residence for a couple plus baby with breakfast, flights and transfers from £5,680. OurSpace costs £28 per child per day, including lunch and dinner (open 10am to 8pm). Tel: 020 7433 2636 www.expressionsholidays.co.uk*



Morocco

Not long ago, Marrakesh and the High Atlas Mountains weren't the obvious choice for a winter sun trip, pre- or post-baby. But now with luxurious riads and hidden mountain retreats and being only a four-hour flight away with no jet lag and this is a first-class destination.

The renowned Es Saadi Gardens & Resort has ten individually designed one- and two-bedroom villas set within vast tropical gardens. The Palace, a hotel of 92 luxury suites within the Es Saadi complex, opened at the end of last year, coinciding with the seventh International Marrakesh Film Festival, with Martin Scorsese among its first guests.

Each suite has a private garden with a heated swimming pool, jacuzzi, marble bathroom, dressing room and butler. All are based on Oriental architectural themes. The Oriental Spa offers Chinese musical therapies, including an antenatal song treatment.

Just a 45-minute drive from Marrakesh brings you to Sir Richard Branson's Kasbah Tamadot, a magical walled building set on the side of the hills of the High Atlas Mountains. This divine hideaway fuses traditional Moroccan design with contemporary elements. Wooden ceilings and heavily-carved cupboards blend with king-sized four-poster beds. An indoor and outdoor pool, two floodlit tennis courts, traditional Moroccan hamman and Virgin Touch treatment rooms will help new parents relax. There's also an intimate bar and terrace dining.

Although there is no obvious provision for babies, they are very welcome, and the level of service is such, that they will be well catered for. *The Es Saadi Resort has rooms from £131 per person per night. Tel: 00 212 0 24 44 8811 or visit www.essaadi.com.*

Kasbah Tamadot is open to children this winter from 17 October to 2 November and from 20 December to 4 January, 2009. Prices start from €385 per room per night staying in a superior room with breakfast. Children under six stay free if sharing a room with parents. Tel: 0800 716 919 or visit www.virginlimitededition.com