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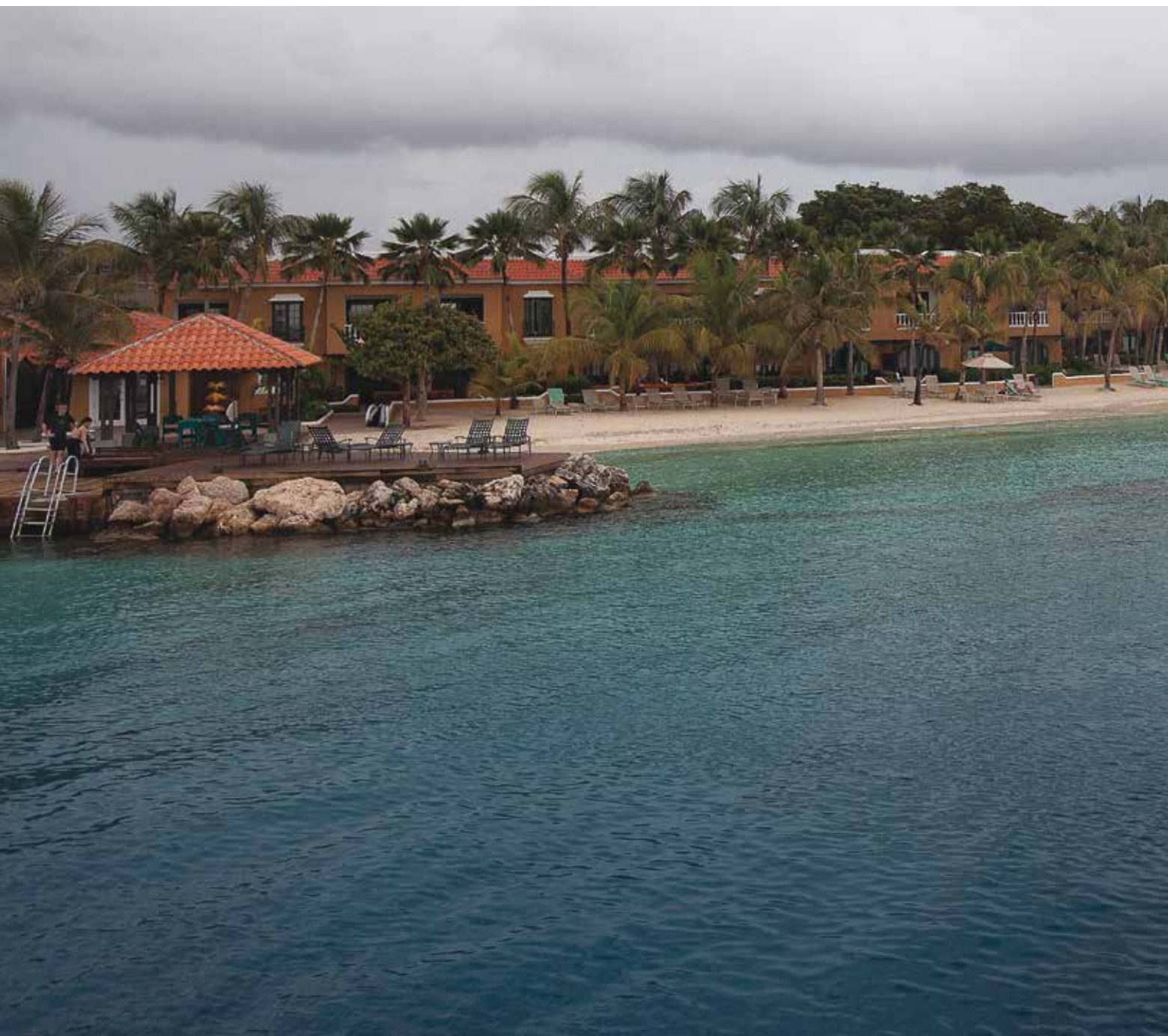
BY ANDREWWINNERARITY

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PAST &
PRESENT





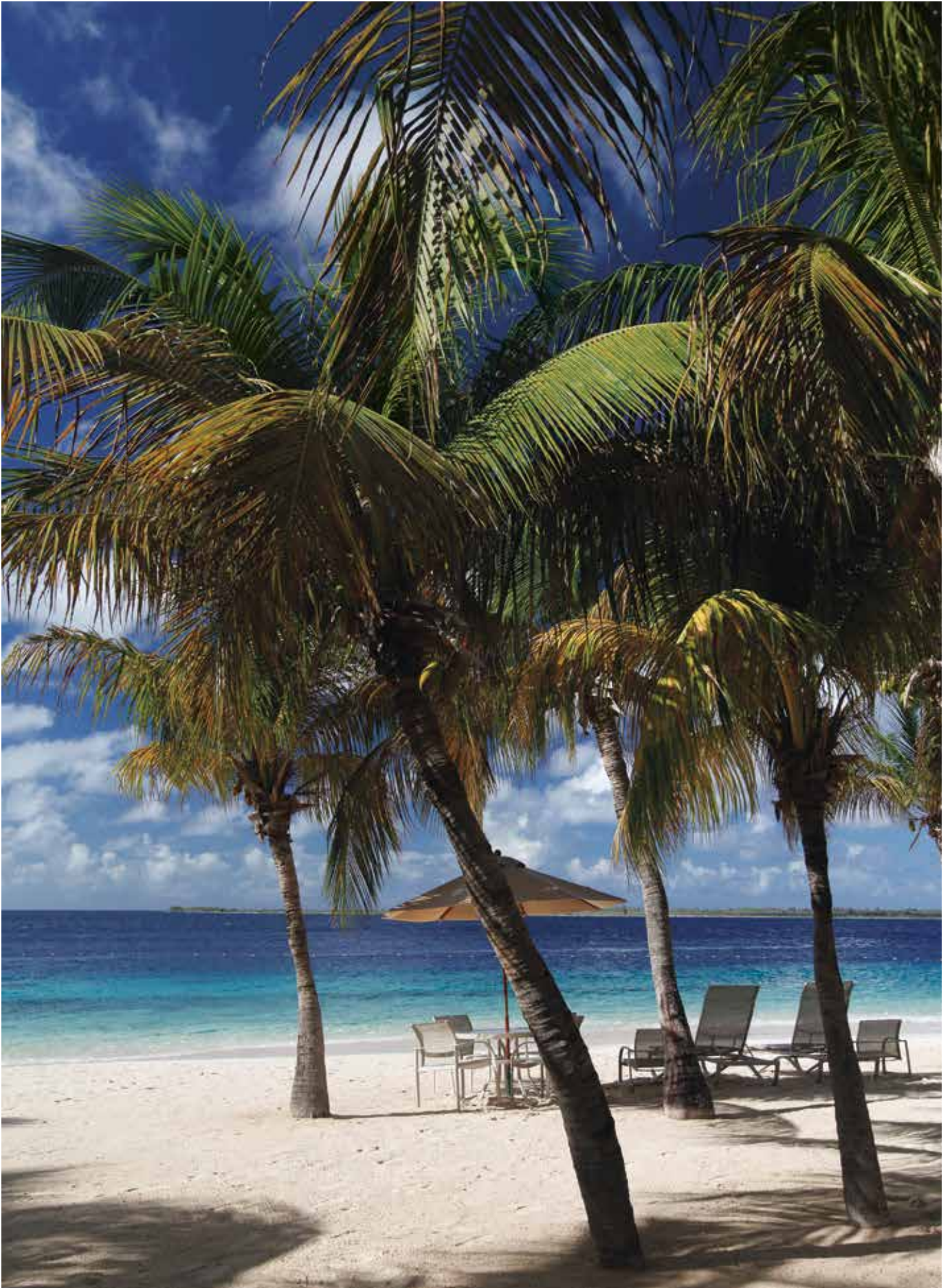
Bonaire is an island with very few beaches and at the quaint resort of Harbour Village Beach Club, you'll find one of those. The geological processes that formed this 100 square mile island make the destination internationally renowned for activities either atop or below the water. Swimmers of all abilities can walk to the shoreline, and either head a few dozen yards off shore then descend hundreds of feet through crystal clear water or snorkel coral formations at much shallower regions.



"...try a night-dive, where UV light illuminates the fluorescence of much of the underwater nightlife!"

Harbor Village's onsite diving facility caters to guests ranging from snorkelers to advanced divers, it's no wonder that their facility is named, Great Adventures Bonaire; it's a PADI 5 Star Resort facility. For the adventures that go beyond dive lessons, try a night-dive, where UV light illuminates the fluorescence of much of the underwater nightlife! The flexibility of this facility offers experiences as many times a day as the resort's occupancy requires; as close as you can get to a dive on demand scenario. Their kayaks let non-swimmers and divers make the quick trip to one of several dive sites, a few minutes away. Kayaking is a great way to explore the shoreline and surface as others take in a virtually unspoiled coral reef and a number of fish species accurately described as the greatest in the Caribbean. So many divers know Bonaire for these very reasons.







As pristine and unchanged as the surrounding waters and reefs are, back on the island itself, whether for the aquatic adventures or the tranquility of the destination, you have options. The island has preserved historical slave quarters, at the water's edge; not to embrace those travesties but to preserve snapshots of its rich past. Thankfully, the present offers a vantage point to take in all of the island's beauty. Harbour Village lets you own a piece of the rock or just kick back as a guest. Tempted by a one or two bedroom suite, beachfront premiere-size villas with a full kitchen and a private balcony or terrace? Perhaps you prefer marina or garden view? If one requires immediate gratification, and only has a few days to spend on a one-time visit, then just relax for a few days as a guest and rent an owner's villa.

Harbour Village is a marine-lover's home away from home, it even boasts a 64 slip marina, accommodating yachts up to 240 ft. with facility for one mega-yacht dock whose water depth is 16 ft.

If you arrived business class, via one stop or nonstop flight, either from Europe, South America or the U.S. ,you probably landed on Curacao, a fifteen-minute hop away, fear not, you will arrive prepared to tan, rest or ready to hit the water.





Bonaire's diving scene has been nurtured here since 1962, when the sport's best-known advocate, Captain Don Stewart realized how perfect the island was for his beloved sport of SCUBA. The marine park offers access to any of the nation's 86 official dive sites, all named by Don's obvious Dutch Antillean attitude. 1,000 Steps, No Name, and the other 84 sites accommodate only one dive boat at a time, minimizing the chance of overcrowding, and the \$10 marine park admission fee each user pays, goes to the strict site control and maintenance. That level of commitment, allows snorkelers to revel in marine life and reefs a few feet below the surface, while SCUBA divers head down as far as they care to.

If you would rather get wet only from the ankles down, the strong, consistent trade winds make for world-class kiteboarding and windsurfing.

"...some businesses open for only as long as they need to, so they can ensure a subsistent cash flow."

Harbour Village's general manager, Jean Marc Petin, proudly exclaims that he is one of only 7 French people on the island, strangely enough he does not know them all, likely because Petin is regularly seen around La Balandra Beach Bar & Restaurant and its beach area, welcoming guests and observing staff, ensuring service is top notch. Diners can enjoy a casual beachside dining experience where the international cuisine is understandably seafood-based; nightly specials can include barracuda and snapper. For some additional privacy and lots of extra romance, guests may arrange a "Torch-Lit" dinner on the beach.

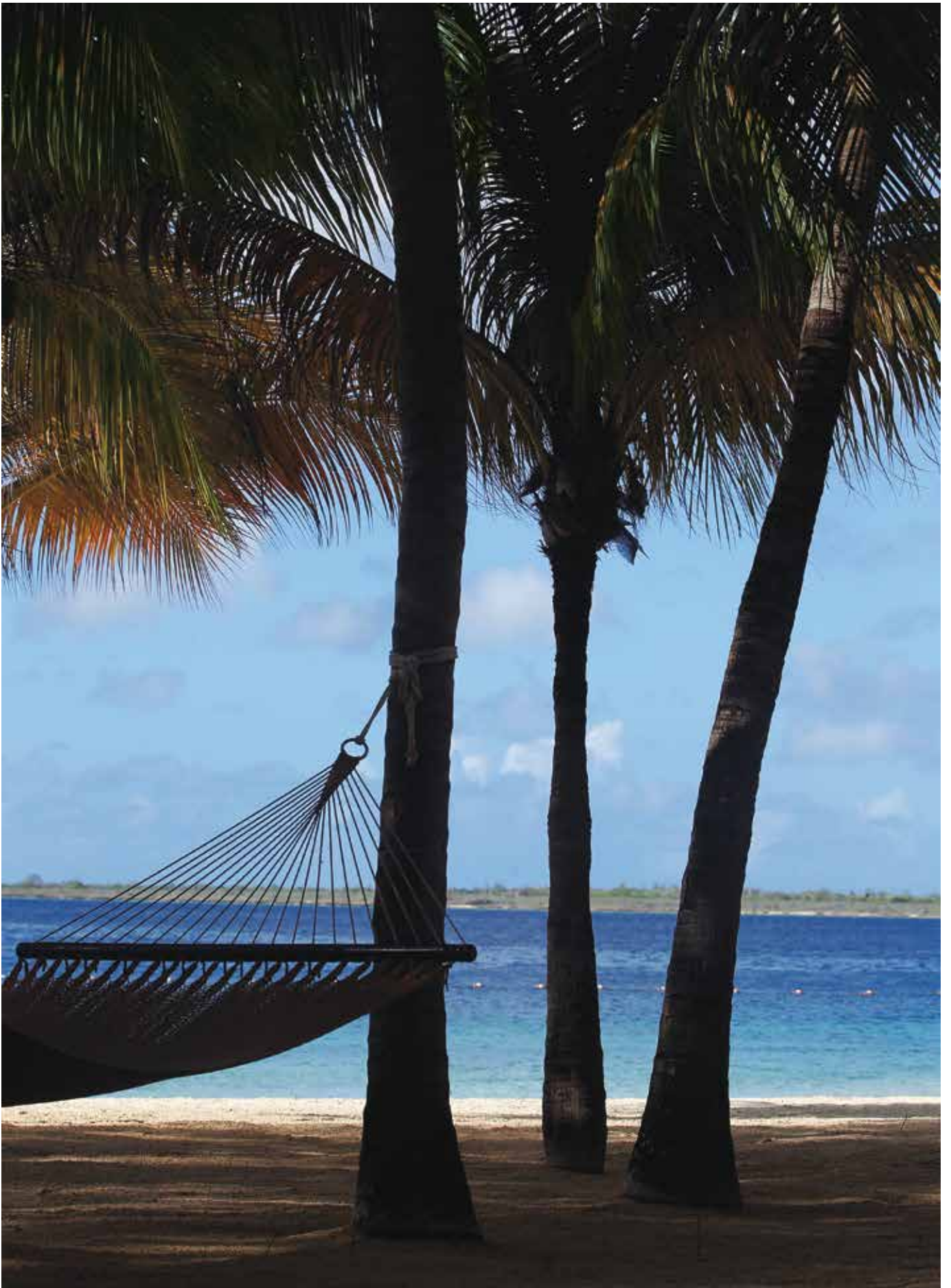
Now, around the island, it's rather a different story. Shopping is a five-minute cab ride from the property, but ensure you come equipped with the Bonairian mentality intact. Lunch for businesses is usually two hours and can begin as early as 11:30, some businesses open for only as long as they need to, so they can ensure a subsistent cash flow; so timing is everything. When asked why a certain shop that caters to tourists isn't open, it's not unusual for a local to answer, "Because there is no (cruise) ship today." Here on Bonaire the local attitude is largely "We have what we need, so there's not much need to crank out a 40 hour week or have a business that takes more effort than is absolutely necessary." A tour of the island's distillery which makes a light-green cactus based liquor can be accomplished in half an hour, and is a good way to put you in a laid-back mood.

OPEN:

Mo: 10:00-17:00

We: 10:00-17:00

fri: 10:00-17:00





"If these options are too overwhelming, there's always the swimming pool or private oasis that is the spa."

Though the island can go seven months without considerable rain, when the sky tires of holding water, it hardly sneaks up. Oncoming rain is seen for miles, given Bonaire's virtual absence of hills and the sea's obvious flatness. Besides, between the scuba, snorkeling, kiteboarding and swimming, you're likely already wet; so, what's a little more water?

If these options are too overwhelming, there's always the swimming pool or private oasis that is the spa. As you relax, know the children, if you brought them, are well in hand at the property's Kids Great Adventures, a supervised program for 5 to 12 year olds, providing snorkeling in and education about Bonaire and its marine park, in an effort to give these future divers an appreciation for the past and an adventurous present.

