

Elegant Mustique...

We explore Cotton House, one of the Grenadines most exclusive properties

Our new 'Hotel of the Season' feature begins with a journey over the Atlantic to the Caribbean where we find ourselves on the private island of Mustique. Part of the country of St Vincent and the Grenadines, the island has approximately 100 private villa's and a population of approximately 500. Over the years, Mustique has attracted visits from royalty, celebrities and those seeking a unique island in the crowded Caribbean area. Spanish sailors first set eyes on the islands in the 15th century and named them 'Los Parajoras' or 'the birds', because they resembled a small flock of birds scattered across the sea in flight. They were later named the Grenadines by pirates who used their sheltered bays to hide their ships and treasures. Later they were used by

Europeans to grow sugar cane which have since been abandoned. With its fascinating past, and quality accommodation, Mustique offers a wonderful option for a quality winter holiday.

Cotton House...

Seclusion, sophistication and charm epitomise the luxury private island of Mustique in the Grenadines. Situated on a picturesque hillside flanked by views of the ocean, Cotton House is one of the Caribbean's leading luxury resorts and is distinguished as the only hotel on an island otherwise popular for private residences of the rich, famous and even royalty.

Originally an 18th century sugar mill and

cotton warehouse, the hotel has retained all the charm and colonial influences of its former life. Today the Cotton House is a paragon of chic Caribbean styling with modern and refreshed design. Recent refurbishments in October 2011 have brought enticing new interiors to the Deluxe and Superior rooms in the Coutinot House, now boasting contemporary décor based on deep blue or coral red. Each of the 17 luxurious guest rooms, cottages, suites and two bedroom Cotton Hill Residence offer the finest furnishings and amenities; some of which include private plunge pools and all offer outstanding views.

Delicious food in the newly revamped Veranda Restaurant, a soothing spa, beautiful beaches and crystalline pool are but a few of the hotel's stunning features. It is also a hub for social soirées where guests and island villa owners convene on Tuesday nights in The Great Room for champagne and canapés.

Cotton House enjoys a reputation as a relaxing and intimate retreat, making it a perfect place for couples and honeymooners to unwind and immerse in the magic of Mustique.

We can tailor make your holiday to Mustique to take in other islands, or enjoy a long relaxing stay at the Cotton House. Whichever way you like to take your holiday we can make the arrangements for you.

Travel in style...

What better way to get your holiday off to a special start than by upgrading from economy to Premium Economy or Club Class with BA or Upper Class with Virgin Atlantic. Our travel experts can offer you a personalised quotation and explain the benefits to you.



RBT Differences:

- \$200 room resort credit
 - 7 nights for the price of 6
 - FREE Inter-island flights from Barbados
 - 7 nights from £2410pp**
- Including flights from London for 2 people sharing a cottage on bed and breakfast board & private transfers



India; from a clients perspective...

One of our regular clients answers a few questions for us to explain their love for India [and our service]

What's the big attraction of India?

India is vivid, chaotic, beautiful, surprising and intensely alive.

Standing quietly with a camera, outside a temple, in the marketplace of a small Indian town, amongst the throngs of people - and with a Victorian railway station at the end of the street and the Maharajah's palace on the hill above, it's easy to feel like Dr Who: you could be in the twelfth, nineteenth and twenty-first centuries all at that same moment. There is no better place for idiosyncratic architecture, gorgeous colour and simple human drama - and almost no-one objects to having their photos taken.

Surely by now you've seen enough?

Michael Wood said that India is a hundred countries - and it would take a lifetime to see them all. The deserts of Rajasthan are a very different experience to the Himalayan foothills, or the Ganges at Varanasi. The only common factors are that almost everyone will be happy that you're there - and the food will be delicious. Even when you're being gently conned out of a few hundred rupees by an itinerant Saddhu, it's usually done with great charm and a wicked sense of fun - something to be relished rather than annoyed by.

Do you always book with Robert Broad Travel?

Our first visit to the Sub-Continent was to Sri Lanka. It was a 'Roots' trip for my wife, whose Ceylonese Grandfather had come to England, from Kandy, to study Law in 1913. We organised that ourselves, but since then, have always booked through R.B.T. Because we prefer to travel on our own, with just a car and driver - or on Indian Railways, the possible choices and

variations are endless. So having a knowledgeable and unbiased advisor when planning routes and selecting hotels, is invaluable. They have also always proved excellent advocates on our behalf in dealing with their carefully chosen and highly efficient Indian Agents. If, for instance, we want to visit an obscure town and therefore have to stay in an 'interesting' hotel, they will assure the organiser that we can cope.

It is immensely comforting when climbing down from a very late and very long train journey, to know that R.B.T.'s insistence on quality service and their careful choice of agent, means there will always be a friendly greeting and helping hand waiting for us.

Half a lifetime ago, as a very young man, with two friends, I travelled across Europe and the Balkans to Jordan and Egypt on a motorbike and sidecar. Nothing like the support network provided by R.B.T. existed in the 60's - and we returned after four months, desperately thin and without the bike. So nowadays it is very comforting to know, when Camilla and I set off for our trip to Tamil Nadu and Kerala in March that we have the people in Boley Park on our side, both before and during the journey. We know they will make a brilliant experience as smooth as India will ever allow.

Tips for a first visit to India:

Relax - forget any expectations of precision timekeeping and absolute schedules. India has been there for millenia and does things at its own pace. If something you were expecting doesn't happen, then, almost certainly something just as good will be waiting around the corner to surprise, shock or delight you.

Never drink tap water - and, if possible, always eat vegetarian. Even in the finest hotels, meat is much more likely to cause you problems. The food in India varies considerably from region to region but is almost always wonderful and quite different from the Great-British-Curry - however a change of place and pace can give anyone a bad tummy. Don't consider driving yourself on Indian Roads - the traffic is completely insane

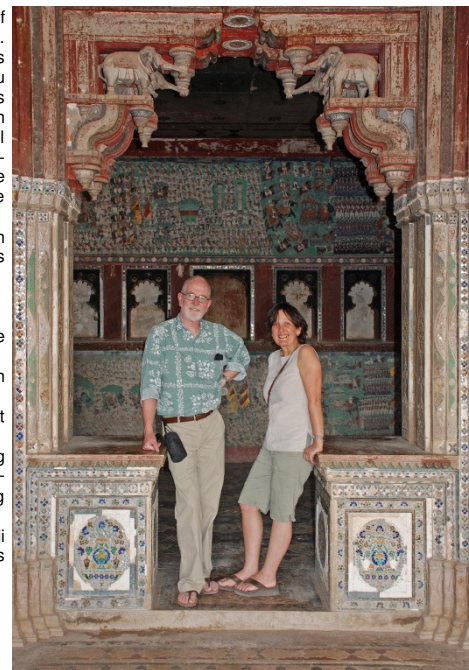
What experiences stand out?

- Watching the dawn light up the peaks of Kanchenjunga.
- A Tiger walking near us in Ranthambore.
- Strolling along the Ghats at Varanasi.
- Young Buddhist monks inviting us into their Kalimpong-Monastery, to listen to evening prayers.
- Drinking tea with Billu, our Bundi guide, on the roof terrace of his house.
- Shopping in Pushkar.
- The flower-market in Calcutta.
- This could go on and on...

Many thanks to Mr & Mrs Fisher for taking the time out to contribute this piece to our newsletter.

Budding writer?

We would love to print your travel stories! If you would like to share your travel experiences and write for our 'Travel Explorer' newsletter please do get in touch, simply email: oliver@robertbroadtravel.co.uk.



India: The RBT Differences:

Dave is our resident India specialist and has visited the country 4 times now. From the main highlights in the north to Kerala in the south the country is vast and it can be a needle in a haystack putting together a trip. And so do contact Dave to plan your India holiday.