

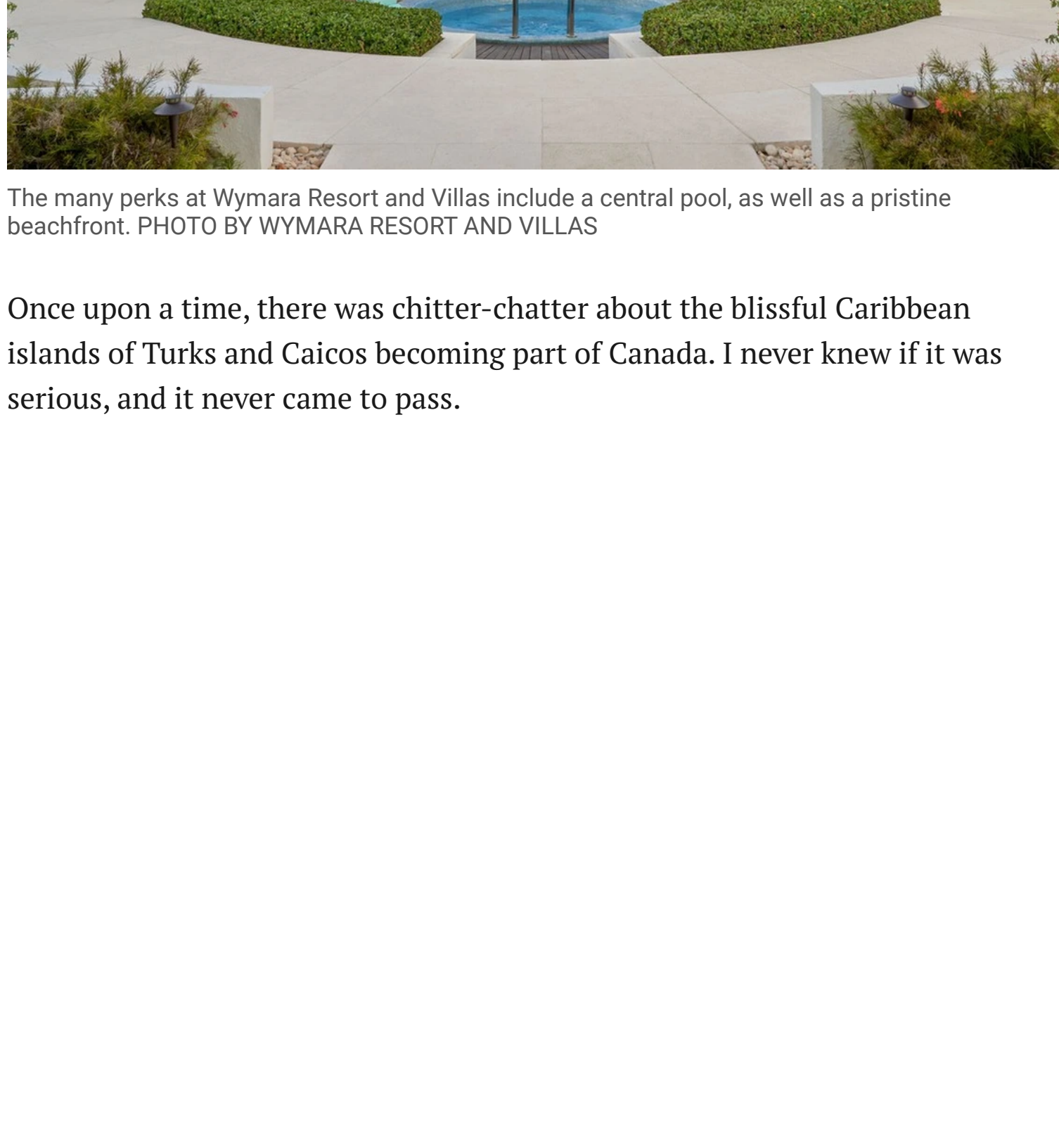
Travel / Life

# Hotel Intel: Posh Wymara in Turks and Caicos reflects romance of Caribbean

*The mellow resort was co-developed by Canadian businessman Bruce Maclaren.*

Rochelle Lash • Special to the Montreal Gazette  
Nov 24, 2022 • November 24, 2022 • 4 minute read

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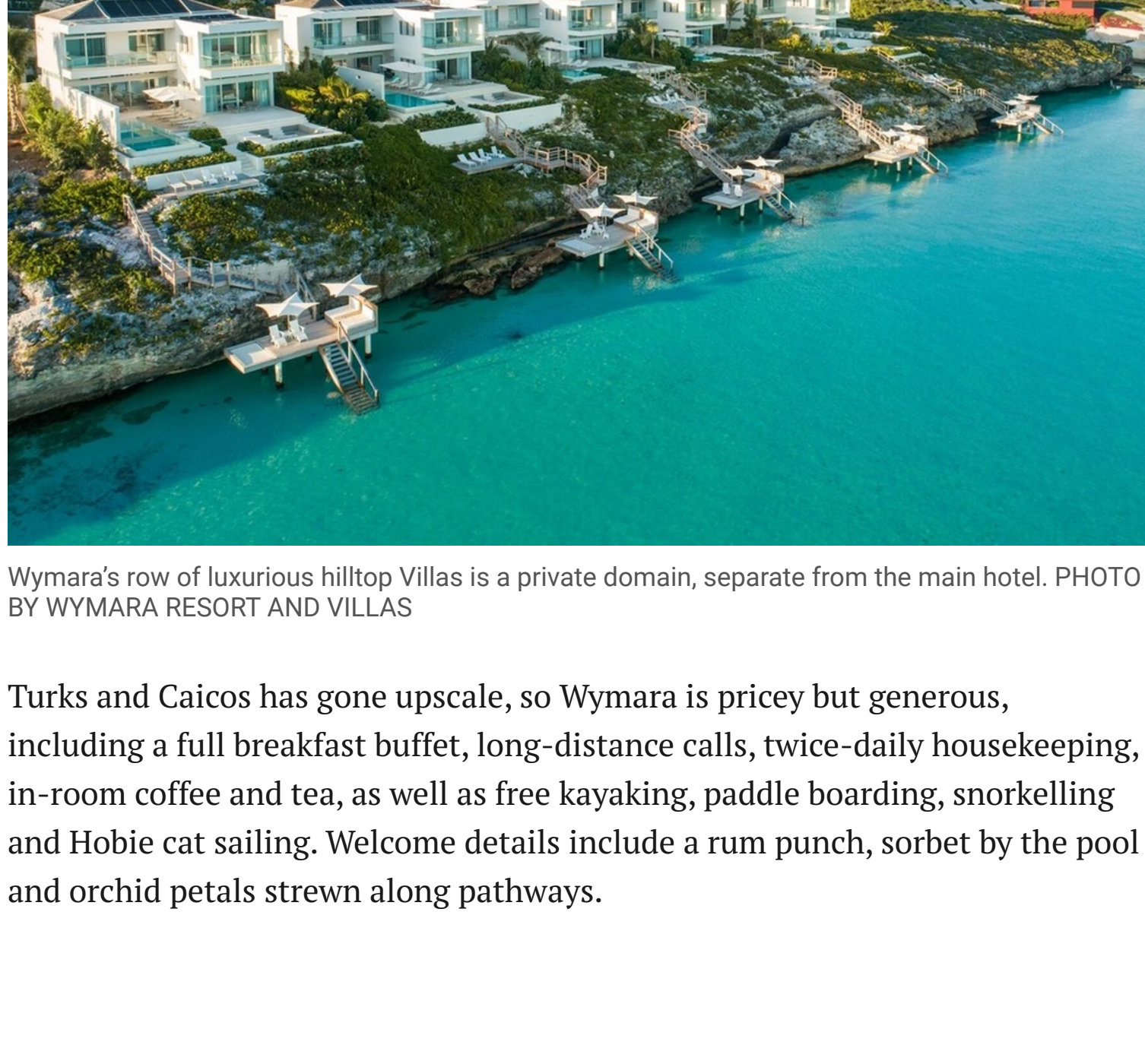


The many perks at Wymara Resort and Villas include a central pool, as well as a pristine beachfront. PHOTO BY WYMARA RESORT AND VILLAS

Once upon a time, there was chitter-chatter about the blissful Caribbean islands of Turks and Caicos becoming part of Canada. I never knew if it was serious, and it never came to pass.

Canadian businessman Bruce Maclaren did his small part, though. In the early 2000s, he co-developed what is now the magnificent Wymara Resort and Villas in Turks and Caicos, sealing a connection between the two territories.

Wymara is a dreamy, romantic destination with a refined air, stellar Caribbean-accented cuisine, earnest service, sophisticated contemporary decor and pampering spa life, all along beautiful Grace Bay Beach. It's mellow, with just enough mingling to make the atmosphere sociable, including nightly happy hour, Wednesday seafood feasts and Saturday barbecues with beach bonfires and dancing.



Wymara's row of luxurious hilltop Villas is a private domain, separate from the main hotel. PHOTO BY WYMARA RESORT AND VILLAS

Turks and Caicos has gone upscale, so Wymara is pricey but generous, including a full breakfast buffet, long-distance calls, twice-daily housekeeping, in-room coffee and tea, as well as free kayaking, paddle boarding, snorkelling and Hobie cat sailing. Welcome details include a rum punch, sorbet by the pool and orchid petals strewn along pathways.

"My vision is for people to spend quality time in this perfect climate," said Maclaren, who hails from Ottawa. "Our architecture channels the optimum timing for sun and shade, as well as capturing the sea breezes and the awesome views of the water and the horizon."

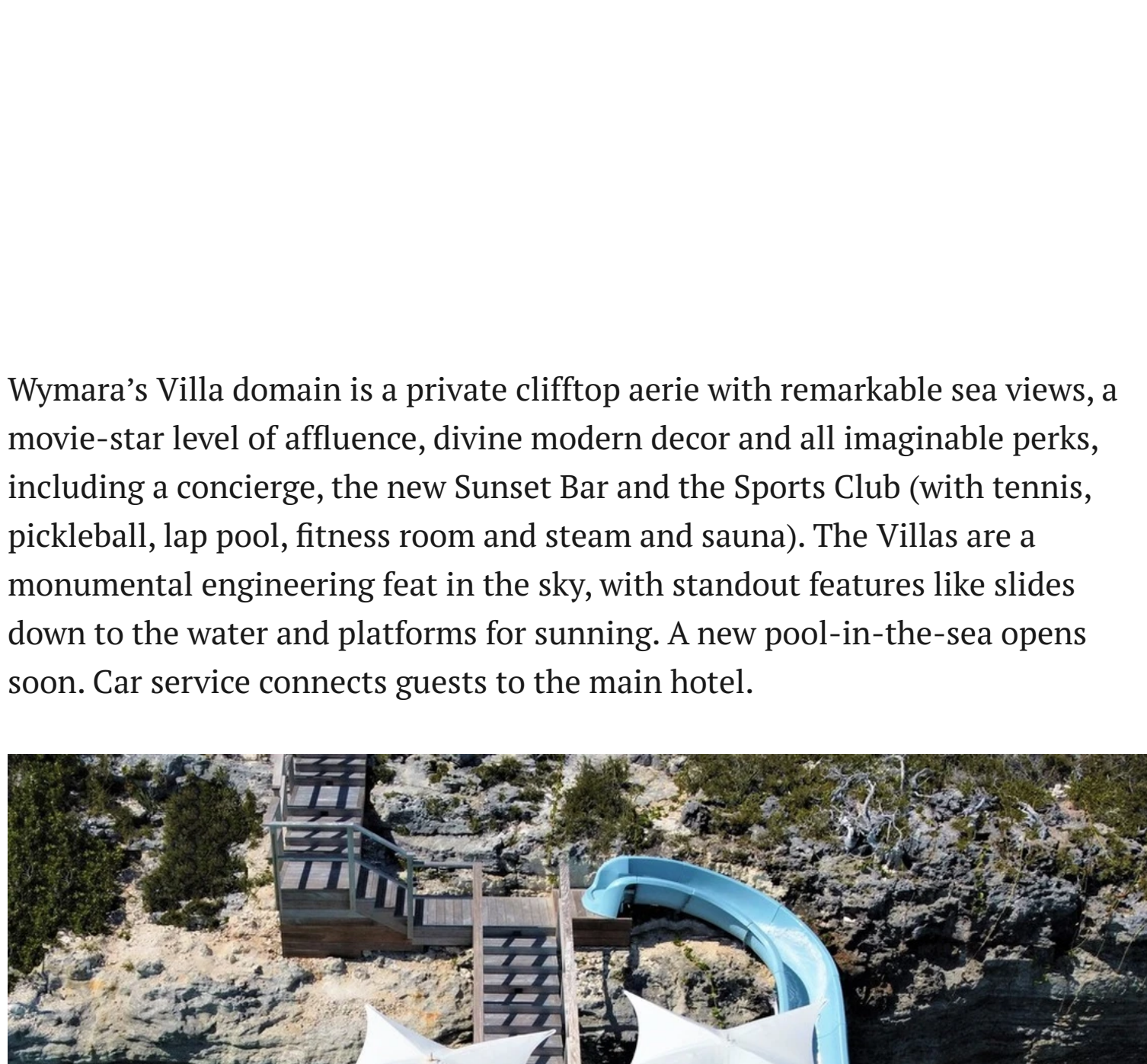
The resort's interiors are swathed in shades of white, with the coolness of stone, marble and glass warmed by linen sofas and honey-coloured wood trim. Outdoors, stark white concrete is softened with billowy white muslin canopies and trellises of colourful vines.

Wymara has two captivating sides: the elegant, seaside main hotel and the sensational hilltop Villas, 2.5 kilometres down the road. The entire resort is luxurious, but relaxed and friendly, and the contemporary lines are strikingly pure and polished.

"Our design is distinctive," said Jorge Collazo, the resort's debonair general manager, who brings savoir-faire from the Setai Miami Beach and Four Seasons hotels. "Wymara has avoided Caribbean frills in favour of a subtle, modern-minimalist look."

On the eco front, Wymara operates green energy and recycling systems, and has installed water stations for refillable bottles and eliminated plastic, right down to the room key cards.

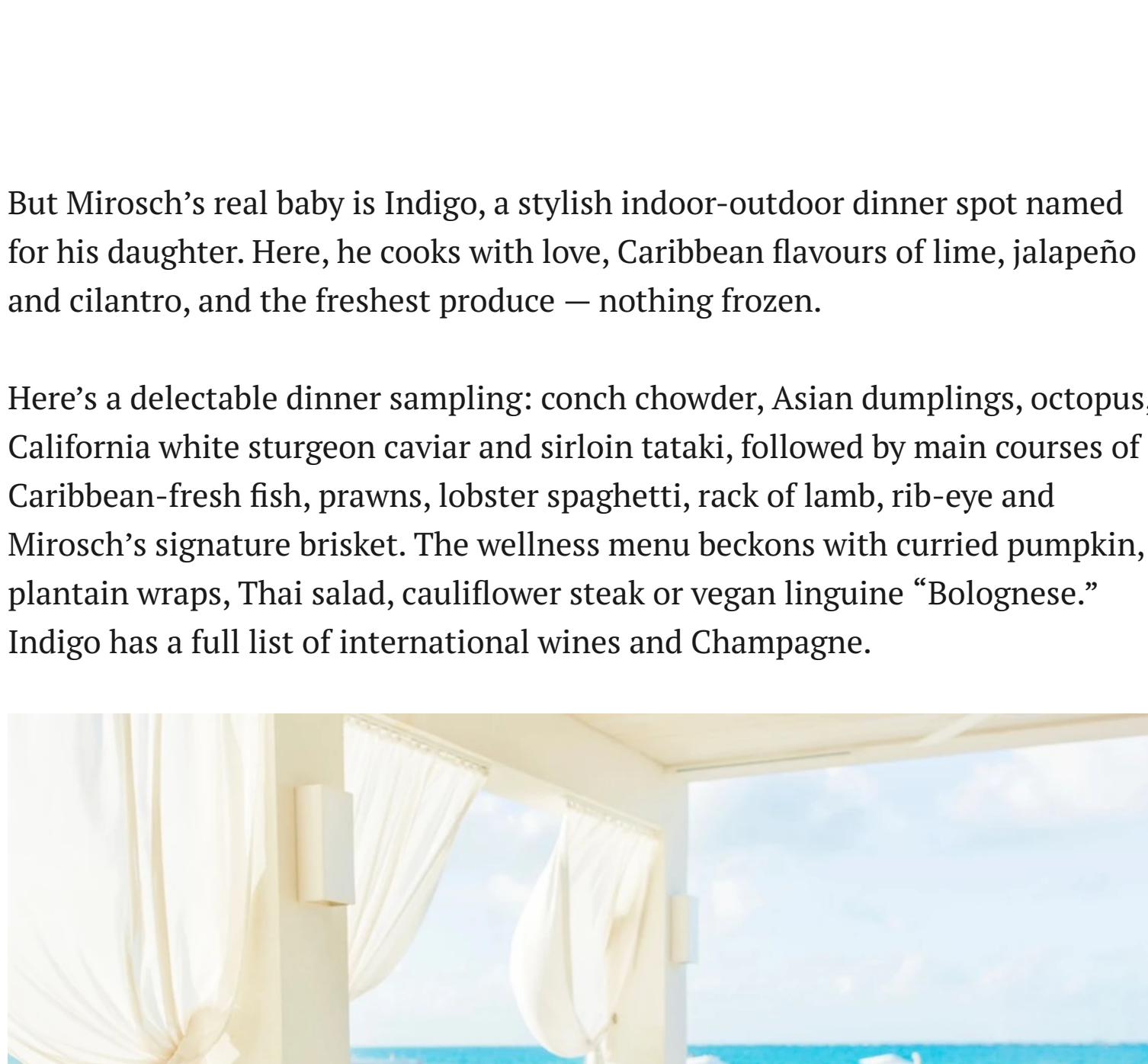
Wymara has been tapped as the best in class by Forbes Travel Guide, Condé Nast and Travel + Leisure, but it had a leg up from nature: Grace Bay Beach was voted the world's No. 1 beach by Tripadvisor this year. Its fine, pale sand is totally rock-free and always stays cool.



A studio suite at Wymara Resort and Villas in Turks and Caicos. PHOTO BY WYMARA RESORT AND VILLAS

**Two scenes:** The main hotel is a compact complex with dining and drinking, a spa, a boutique, the beachfront, and a pool so serene that private cabanas float around the edge. Expect top-drawer everything: kitchens or kitchenettes with European appliances, electric blinds, Frette linens, Sterling mattresses and Kohler tubs or showers.

Wymara's Villa domain is a private clifftop aerie with remarkable sea views, a movie-star level of affluence, divine modern decor and all imaginable perks, including a concierge, the new Sunset Bar and the Sports Club (with tennis, pickleball, lap pool, fitness room and steam and sauna). The Villas are a monumental engineering feat in the sky, with standout features like slides down to the water and platforms for sunning. A new pool-in-the-sea opens soon. Car service connects guests to the main hotel.

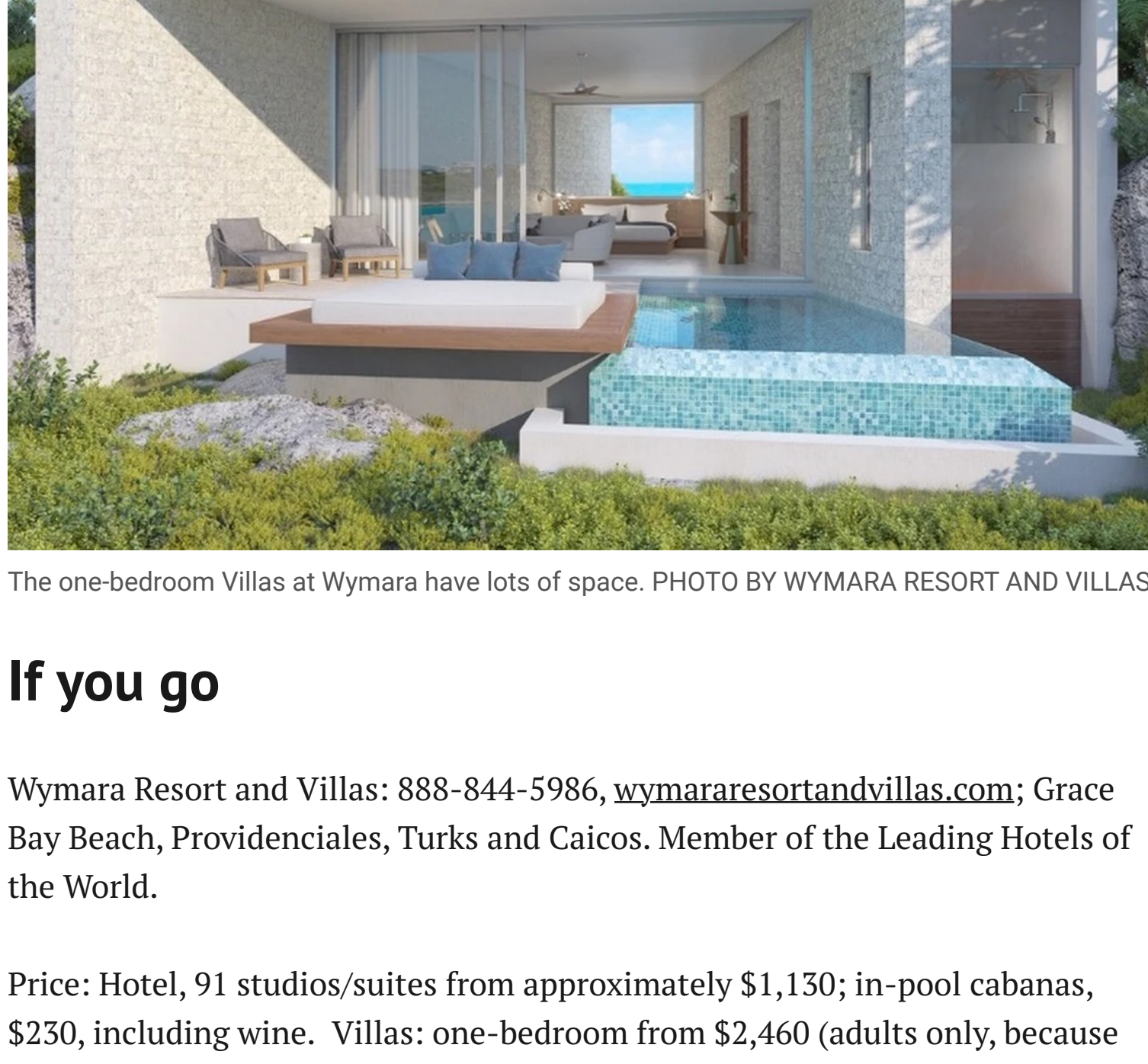


Wymara's Villa domain is equipped with water slides and sunning platforms. PHOTO BY WYMARA RESORT AND VILLAS

**Dining:** Executive chef Andrew Mirosch keeps life entertaining and tasty. Zest is a beachside café for lobster pizza, tuna tacos, a bevy of burgers and a kids' menu. Christmas and New Year's Eve will sparkle with feasts. And a new beach bar launches soon with delights like a watermelon mojito and the Vodka Lemonade.

But Mirosch's real baby is Indigo, a stylish indoor-outdoor dinner spot named for his daughter. Here, he cooks with love, Caribbean flavours of lime, jalapeño and cilantro, and the freshest produce — nothing frozen.

Here's a delectable dinner sampling: conch cadowki, Asian dumplings, octopus, California white sturgeon caviar and sirloin tataki, followed by main courses of Caribbean-fresh fish, prawns, lobster spaghetti, rack of lamb, rib-eye and Mirosch's signature brisket. The wellness menu beckons with curried pumpkin, plantain wraps, Thai salad, cauliflower steak or vegan linguine "Bolognese." Indigo has a full list of international wines and Champagne.



Wymara's open-air bistro Zest offers casual Caribbean fare and a beachfront view. PHOTO BY WYMARA RESORT AND VILLAS

**Wellness:** The Wymara Spa offers massages and after-sun facials with biodynamic products by Eminence and Figlow Beauty. You can expand your wellness experience with meditation in the relaxation garden, or (for a fee) join a Pilates, yoga or HIIT class.



The one-bedroom Villas at Wymara have lots of space. PHOTO BY WYMARA RESORT AND VILLAS

## If you go

Wymara Resort and Villas: 888-844-5986, [wymararesortandvillas.com](http://wymararesortandvillas.com); Grace Bay Beach, Providenciales, Turks and Caicos. Member of the Leading Hotels of the World.

Price: Hotel, 91 studios/suites from approximately \$1,150; in-pool cabanas, \$230, including wine. Villas: one-bedroom from \$2,460 (adults only, because of the cliffside location). Four- and five-bedrooms from \$6,300. May-Oct. rates might be lower or include airport transportation, Champagne, fitness classes, spa, dining deals or, at the Villas, a fifth night free.