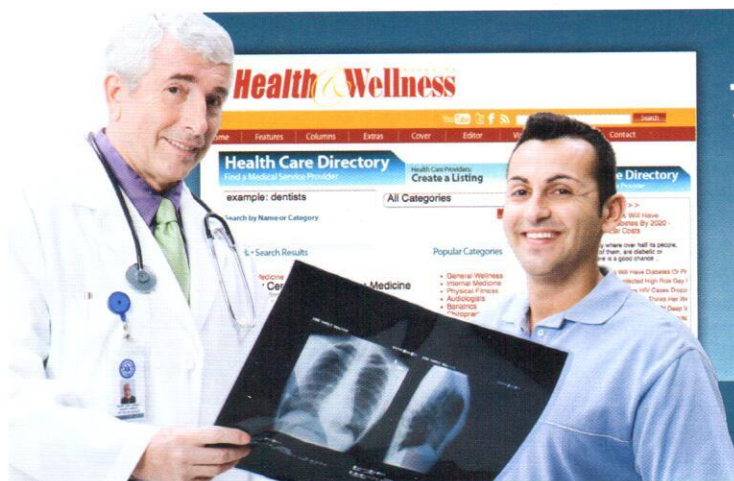


sun, sand and shop in the eastern CARIBBEA



70,000 people read H&W every month.
WILL THEY FIND YOU?

Connect with thousands of potential patients who are searching for YOUR services. Create your **FREE listing** in the **Health&Wellness online directory**.

www.healthandwellnessmagazine.net/directory

by Jan Ross, Staff Writer

It's truly amazing the Carnival Liberty made it back to shore in Miami with the load of purchases my girlfriends and I had managed to amass while cruising to several islands in the eastern Caribbean.

Fabulous meals, a wonderful spa and the marvelously comfortable "Carnival Comfort" beds made our time on the ship enjoyable and the gorgeous beaches and turquoise Caribbean water made our island time equally enjoyable. But it was the shopping that really made the trip.

Having traveled the last few times with a husband who merely tolerates shopping, it was truly a joy to be with a group of women who could join me in squealing with delight over a gorgeous silver bracelet or darling sundress.

The best suggestion I have for you when you go on a cruise and plan to shop in the Caribbean is to go to the shopping talks they offer before you go ashore. I thought these were a silly waste of time, but I was completely wrong. I'm sure the cruise ships get some sort of kickback from the shops they recommend but, on the other hand, you are guaranteed that the gold bracelet you buy is the best price and won't turn your wrist a lovely shade of green after you have been wearing it for a week. These shopping experts will also help you get the best price and freebies at the talk and coupons for more freebies at the shops. That free teeny-tiny topaz necklace you get free may seem like a waste of time but think how much your little niece will like it for a souvenir.



The best thing about shopping in the Caribbean is that items can be purchased duty-free. Duty refers to a tax or fee placed on goods by local governments. Shop owners who import goods in certain areas (like the Caribbean) and sell them to buyers who are leaving their country aren't charged a duty on these products. This allows sellers to pass the savings along to their customers, giving smart shoppers the opportunity to grab fantastic merchandise at bargain prices. This means that the designer purse, watch, perfume or those precious jewels actually are a bargain.

If you are thinking about purchasing that Louis Vuitton purse or emerald necklace, do your research before you leave the states to make sure you are getting a good deal. There are also limits on how much of certain items you can bring back to the United States, so make sure you research this as well.

Certainly, you should buy what makes you happy, but don't forget to

consider locally-produced items as well. Everything from delicious rum cake to beautiful Larimar jewelry can be purchased in the Caribbean at very reasonable prices and will make wonderful presents or lovely memories. I have some beautiful Larimar jewelry that I truly treasure.

Although shopping was by far my favorite thing on our girlfriends getaway, a close second was snorkeling at St. Thomas in the U.S. Virgin Islands. I had snorkeled before but had never taken a catamaran out to a shipwreck before. Skipping along on the azure waves as salty mist sprayed up over the netting on the deck made for a truly wonderful experience. It was an incredible experience. And one of the nicest things was that when the snorkeling was over, we still had plenty of time left to shop!

About the Author

Jan Ross is a freelance writer specializing in travel. You can contact Jan at kentuckygal53@gmail.com with comments or suggestions for article topics.

Doctors orders? Usually steak or seafood.

Sometimes it's even beer and burgers. Come give us a try and place your own order ~ no appointment necessary!

MALONE'S
AQUA
SUSHI

HARRY'S
AN AMERICAN BAR

BHG
Bluegrass Hospitality Group

DRAKE'S
Come play.

Sal's
CHOPHOUSE

MALONE'S
BANQUETS

www.bluegrasshospitality.com | 335 6500