MUSTIQUE ISLAND



Mustique /mn'sti:k/ is a small private island that is one of the Grenadines, a chain of islands in the West Indies, and like most of these, it is part of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The island is located within Grenadines Parish, an administrative area of the country.

The island covers 1,400 acres $(5.7 \text{ km}^2; 2.2 \text{ sq mi})$ and it has several coral reefs. The land fauna includes tortoises, herons and many other species. Its year-round population of about 500 mostly live in the villages of Lovell, Britannia Bay, and Dover.

The island of Mustique is owned by the Mustique Company, which in turn is owned by the island's homeowners. The island has approximately 100 private villas, many of which are rented out through the Mustique Company. In addition, there is one hotel called the Cotton House, owned by the Mustique Company, and one privately owned seven-bedroom hotel called Firefly.

Early history

The history of the island of Mustique, and of the Grenadines in general, dates back to the 15th century, when Spanish sailors first sighted this more or less linear group of small rocky islands and named them "Los Pájaros" or "the birds", because they resembled a small flock of birds scattered across the sea in flight. During the 17th century, the islands were renamed the Grenadines by pirates, who used the sheltered bays to hide their ships and treasure. The islands were later used by European planters to grow sugar cane. This lucrative industry lasted until the 19th century when the extraction of sugar from European-grown sugar beet dramatically lessened the worldwide demand for tropical sugar.

Mustique's sugar plantations were abandoned and eventually swallowed up by scrub, leaving remnants such as the sugar mill at "Endeavor" and its "Cotton House". The Plantation House was built in the 18th century.

Later history

Mustique was purchased in 1958 by Colin Tennant, 3rd Baron Glenconner, under whose guidance the island began to be developed. In 1960, Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon, the sister of Queen Elizabeth II, accepted as a wedding present his gift of a 10-acre (40,000 m²) plot of land, where she built a residence called Les Jolies Eaux. In 1979, Mustique Island was transformed from a family estate into a private limited company with the homeowners as shareholders. [citation needed]

In 1971, the SS *Antilles* struck a reef not far off of the island and sank, referred to locally as the Antilles Pack Boat.

Residents and guests

There are a core set of names whose influence created Mustique as what it is today. In probable order, they are Colin Tennant, Oliver Messel, Princess Margaret, Tommy Hilfiger, Quincy Providence, Shania Twain and Mick Jagger. Immediately prior to that, the island was home only to fishermen and goats.

Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Prince Philip made private visits to Mustique in 1966, 1977 and 1985. Prince William, Duke of Cambridge, who is second-in-line to the Throne of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge vacation in Mustique often.

David Bowie once owned an Indonesian-inspired multi-pavilion villa on the island, which he left, asserting that "the house was so tranquil and peaceful that he found it hard to get any work done." Bowie then sold the estate for \$5 million to business tycoon and poet Felix Dennis in 1994. After the death of Felix Dennis in June 2014 the Mandalay Estate was put up for sale and sold for a reported price of £14 million to entrepreneur Simon Dolan.

In 1996, while on holiday at Mustique, Noel Gallagher wrote and demoed many of the songs that would later be released on *Be Here Now*.

The painter Stefan Szczesny has also been coming to the island since 1995 and has been working on his art there. He has already published three books about Mustique.



The Island

Mustique, steeped in history and surrounded by intrigue, lies in the stream of islands of St Vincent and the Grenadines just a hundred miles west of Barbados.

The islands gentle climate and natural beauty of dramatic hilltops and pristine palm-fringed beaches have attracted visitors for generations. Drawn by the unique sense of island life, they return to enjoy the exclusive luxury villas and hospitality offered on this original private island.

Island Life

There are no rules on Mustique, no protocols or expectations. Guests can simply do as they wish.

Enjoy the privacy of your own villa, or the legendary house parties where fellow guests get together to enjoy anything from a gastronomic dinner, a cocktail party, to a beach barbeque, or Jump Up at Basil's. On Mustique, anything goes.

Explore the island at your own speed, where a whole host of experiences await; from swimming and scuba diving in the jewel-coloured waters to sailing and snorkelling with the turtles at nearby Tobago Cays. Onshore choose from riding horses along the beaches or honing your tennis skills at the renowned Mustique Tennis Club or indulge in a world-class spa treatment.

Many visitors are so charmed by island life, the unequivocal hospitality and friendliness of the staff and the sense of well-being this holiday island gives them that they fall under its spell, only to return every year.