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6 DESIGN HOTELS  
STARTING AT \$40

# Budget Travel

Vacations for Real People

February 2009

## SEXY BEACH ESCAPES

Say good-bye cold  
Say hello Caribbean!

This hammock has your name written all over it!

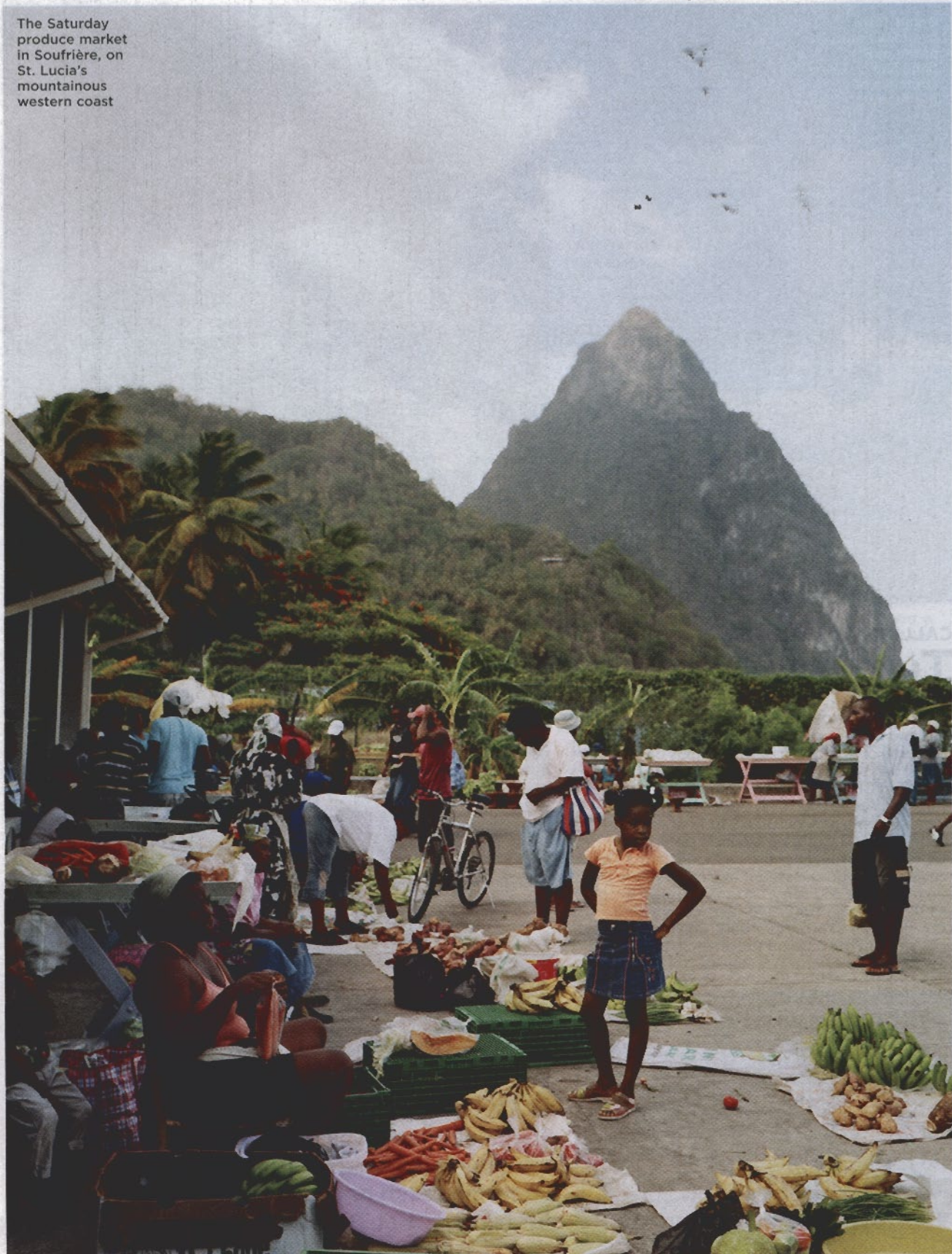
25  
REASONS  
TO LOVE  
AUSTIN

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THE \$10 RENTAL CAR AND OTHER STEALS: TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE?

The Saturday produce market in Soufrière, on St. Lucia's mountainous western coast



## HONEYMOON FAVORITE

# St. Lucia

**REASON TO GO NOW** In the past few years, a handful of intimate villa resorts have opened on St. Lucia's secluded western coast. The latest to debut is **Ti Kaye Village Resort**, with 33 beach cottages and a cliff-side spa that uses island ingredients and caters to couples. You don't have to be guests to book treatments—perhaps an ylang-ylang massage or a papaya scrub?—in bungalows with side-by-side massage tables and floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the ocean (758/456-8101, [tikaye.com](http://tikaye.com), treatments from \$75, rooms from \$280 in high season). Want to take in the island? The **International Pony Club** has a riding tour for two that progresses from the mountains to the fishing village of Gros Islet to a Danielle Steel-worthy gallop along Cas-en-Bas Beach (758/452-8139, [internationalponyclub.net](http://internationalponyclub.net), from \$65 per person).

**BEACH LOCALS LOVE** All of St. Lucia's sands are public, but there's one quiet spot residents try to keep secret: Smuggler's Cove, a half-mile stretch surrounded by black volcanic cliffs. Beauty aside, the beach is next door to the Cap Maison Resort & Spa; waiters from the bar take towel-side drink orders from anyone sunbathing in the vicinity.

**PLACE TO STAY** St. Lucia is pricey, particularly in peak season. A great value is the **Marina Outpost Villa**, which opened last fall with four guesthouses on a peak above Rodney Bay. The red-and-yellow chalets have two-bedroom suites with four-poster beds, and balconies that face the sea. The resort's hibiscus and bougainvillea bushes attract purple-throated carib hummingbirds and yellow-breasted *bananaquits*—the inspiration for the villas' eye-opening palette (800/263-4202, [oasismarigot.com](http://oasismarigot.com), from \$270 in high season). —Alison Rohrs

**GET THERE**  
 American Airlines has new nonstop week-day flights from JFK in New York.  
 Air Canada has added four nonstop flights from Toronto, as well as new nonstop Monday service from Montreal.

St. Lucia has 10 hidden waterfalls



Marina Outpost Villa, high atop Rodney Bay

**LOVE POTION** The island has its own aphrodisiac, a juicy pear-like fruit known as the *pomme d'amour*, or love apple. **Dasheene**, an open-air restaurant in the hills of Soufrière, serves a delicious *pomme d'amour* daiquiri (866/290-0978, \$8).

