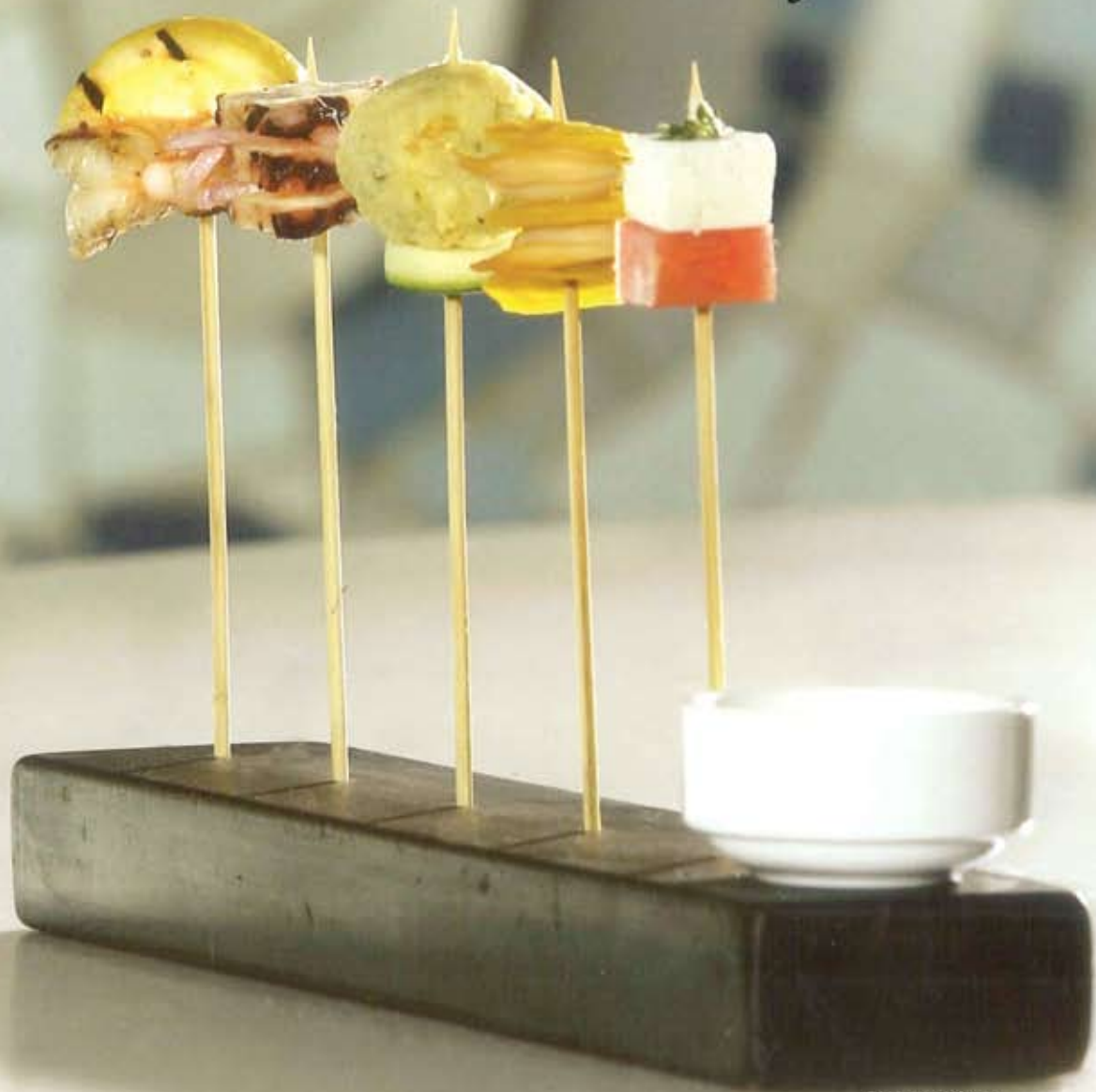


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Best of Both Worlds

At Cambridge Beaches Resort and Spa in Bermuda, you can get a culinary education and a tropical vacation in one long weekend.



By Allison Weiss Entrekin



IT'S DIFFICULT TO CHOOSE between a great travel experience and a great culinary one. Both expand the pathways of your mind, letting you tap more deeply into your senses and more thoroughly into your environment. Both also serve as natural relaxants, shining the soft glow of perspective on your problems and calming your weary mind. So when you don't have to choose between travel and cuisine — when you can marry the two pleasures and indulge in one multisensory escape — you have a true gift indeed.

On Bermuda's western edge you'll find just such a gift. It is called Cambridge Beaches Resort and Spa, and on its 30 acres you'll find miles of pink sand, dozens of quaint pastel cottages, and three distinct restaurants offering a variety of excellent cuisine. This AAA Four-Diamond property boasts a whopping four beaches on-site, from tiny coves to long stretches of seashore. And with the exception of a few select dates, children 16 and under are not allowed, making a seaside retreat here an exceptionally quiet one.



Guests of Cambridge Beaches enjoy accommodations in pastel stucco cottages.



An infinity-edge pool offers a setting for rest and relaxation.



Tamarisk offers an award-winning four-course menu that changes daily.

But let's delve into the culinary aspect of this experience. The resort recently unveiled a new fleet of themed weekends for 2009 and 2010, and one of its most highly anticipated is its healthy-cooking escape. Guests will perfect the art of nutritious cooking November 5-8 with Chef Laurie Erickson, a Georgia peach who has worked with the culinary teams at Arizona's famed Canyon Ranch and The Cloister and who now serves as a private chef on Sea Island. As guests relax near the pool and the ocean breeze wafts in, they'll learn how to chop an onion in under a minute, save vegetable scraps to make homemade soup stock and create dinner-party meals without ever unwrapping a stick of butter. Over the course of the weekend, Erickson will offer tips for shopping smart at the grocery store, reading between the lines on labels and ridding your pantry of preservative-laden "staples." (Go ahead and say goodbye to your Pam!) It promises to be a weekend of education and guilt-free indulgence, arming guests with new ideas and filling their bellies with healthy fare.

Of course, there will be plenty of time to enjoy Cambridge Beaches' restaurants as well. Tamarisk is the property's fine-dining establishment, offering a daily four-course dinner menu so good, *Food and Wine* named the restaurant one of Bermuda's best. You'll love innovative items like saffron-infused fennel cappuccino, and it's



Chef Laurie Erickson is a Georgian who will host Cambridge Beaches' Healthy Cooking Escape in November.



The Aquarium Baths have a small lap pool and a retractable sunroof.



Breezes restaurant serves lunch and dinner beachside.



Fresh seafood is a hallmark of the restaurants at Cambridge Beaches Resort.

hard to get any fresher than a filet of grilled local rock fish served over vegetable minestrone. Tamarisk offers indoor and outdoor seating overlooking Mangrove Bay, and though it is the resort's most elegant restaurant, gentlemen can still show up in loafers, knee socks and a pair of (what else?) Bermuda shorts.

The resort's other two restaurants, Shutters and Breezes, are decidedly low-key, with Shutters overlooking the infinity-edge pool and Breezes flanking the beach. At Breezes, you can choose from among the daily catches and ask the chef to prepare your selection to your liking; it's like going to a fish market without ever leaving the resort. You'll also want to try the area's popular cocktails, a Dark and Stormy (one part dark rum and four parts ginger beer) and a Rum Swizzle (rum, Angostura bitters, lemon, pineapple, orange juice and grenadine).

The accommodations at Cambridge Beaches are quite unique: All 94 rooms and suites are housed in pastel stucco cottages, and each boasts either a private terrace or a porch. Refrigerators, coffee makers and even toasters are at your disposal, as is a decent-sized room-service menu.

When you're not taking a cooking class or relaxing in your cottage, you'll find an almost mind-boggling array of activities to try. At the Aquarium Baths, a Romanesque solarium with a retractable sunroof, there's a small lap pool, a whirlpool and a SwimEx conditioning pool at your disposal. Just outside the Baths are a croquet lawn, putting green and fully equipped fitness center. Kayaks and motorboats are available for rent at the resort's marina, and the meditation gardens offer a place for quiet reflection.

One of Cambridge Beaches' highlights is its spa, a 10,000-square-foot, two-level complex that offers treatments like couples' massage lessons, aromatherapy facials and Indian head massages. New to the spa are its "experience suites," which allow guests to indulge in sensory experiences before or after their treatments. While the steam room, sauna and shower aren't exactly unusual, the crystal mist room, which lets guests inhale cool mist while a variety of crystals supposedly emit healing energies, is undeniably unique.

At the end of your time in Bermuda, your muscles will be soothed, your mind will be expanded and your taste buds will be awfully happy with you. There are many difficult choices we have to make in these challenging times. Deciding between a rewarding travel experience and a culinary awakening shouldn't be one of them. ■



Cambridge Beaches Resort and Spa

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