



THE GRAPEVINE

WINTER 2025



I was born in 1930 as you will deduce from the segment that has kindly been done, highlighting my 95th birthday. Although it *kindly* points out that I'm not quite 5 years away from 100! Whilst I seldom say 'I'm great thank you' when my family enquire, and more often than not say - 'hmm - so so', I'm grateful to still be enjoying a great quality of life for my advanced years. I'm fortunate to live on the hotel grounds, as those who attend our weekly cocktail party at my home will know. I walk down to the hotel twice a day and make my way up the office stairs, which keeps me fit and allows me to try telling my 'young' what to do when I can! The truth is that they tell me what to do now — and when — but I'm enormously grateful for their care, and for the support of everyone across our teams.

Our happy, and very exciting news this year is the engagement of my granddaughter Emily, Mark and Maria's daughter, in January, to Harry Marsh. They have moved to the Philippines, so are a very long way away right now, but they are coming home in May for their wedding at St James Church and reception at Coral Reef. Then only a few days ago, Karen, my daughter, and her husband Wayne's eldest daughter, Olivia Capaldi, together with Will Rhys, announced their engagement, so that wonderful news is hot off the press. We look forward to welcoming these lovely young men into our family. All of my other grandchildren continue to thrive, and we are fortunate to have three of them living on island.

I can't recall everything I used to, but I keep up with the news and whilst it's always fascinating, I can't pretend to understand what AI is really all about, but I do know that I am a people person and those of us in hospitality tend to be in this business because we like people and I know that AI will not be able to replace our wonderful teams at both hotels or the loyal guests who stay with us. Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas and a Healthy and Happy 2026.

Cynthia O'Hara

CYNTHIA O'HARA
CHAIRMAN



PICTURED THE O'HARA & CAPALDI FAMILIES



THE GRAPEVINE



EXPERIENCE THE *Magic* OF THE
FESTIVE SEASON



MEET *Charlotte* OUR NEW HORTICULTURE & SUSTAINABILITY MANAGER

Charlotte Prud'Homme is an accomplished sustainability leader with over ten years' experience spanning climate finance, agroforestry, conservation, and regenerative land development. She specialises in designing and delivering high-impact environmental strategies that restore ecosystems, strengthen community resilience, and unlock sustainable investment opportunities.

With a proven track record in stakeholder engagement, project management, Charlotte brings deep expertise in sustainable agriculture, land regeneration, and conservation-driven policy advocacy. Her work is supported by international training from Yale University, Green School Bali, Tel Aviv University, and the United Nations Association Graduate Fellowship.





THE GRAPEVINE



REFURBISHMENTS

CORAL REEF CLUB



We closed Coral Reef for an extended period in the summer this year in order to implement some lovely upgrades including replacing the floors throughout the bar and restaurant with beautiful stone tiles. We opened up the entrance to the restaurant, creating an upgraded sense of arrival, a new wine cellar to the left, with a verde chevron marble floor and bespoke wooden joinery to house our selection of wines.

Guests can now enter and peruse the wines themselves. On the right is a new reception area for the Maitre D' to welcome guests, guiding them to the bar or the restaurant. The view across the bar towards the sea, framed by tropical plants, sets the stage for a lovely dining experience.

An elegant new bandstand was designed and built, to reflect the island's architecture highlighting its charming timber detailing. With the stunning Caribbean Sea behind, and the dance floor in front, this iconic area has been re-born. Additionally, the restaurant now flows seamlessly to the south, into the new Shell Terrace, with Coral Reef's signature coralstone banquette seating. Skilfully carved by talented local artisan, Colin Alleyne (aka 'Top Cat'), now in his 70s, this area will be comfortably furnished to relax and enjoy the breathtaking views of the sea, the ideal way to live in the tropics. These areas set the tone for mid-morning coffee or sunset cocktails and are beautifully presented with bespoke carved coral stone urns, wicker baskets and lush planting.

There are still some elements in motion, including some wonderful artwork and furnishings, as, typically island style, some special features are still being crafted. We are most grateful to Susie Atkinson, of Studio Atkinson, London, and Michael Gomes, renowned architect responsible for some of the most beautiful homes in Barbados who share our passion for evolving Coral Reef with great style. Susie uses her broad knowledge, from outstanding hospitality projects such as the beautiful Lime Wood and Beaverbrook Hotels and private clubs. She has created uplifting concepts with a deft mix of patterns, colours and objets, creating sophisticated spaces, both relaxing and comfortable, in harmony with island living. Michael's architectural designs, long admired by the O'Hara family, reflect their love of Olivier Messel's inimitable style created in Barbados in the 1950s. His expertise has brought new flow to Coral Reef, where the aim is to emulate an exclusive private residence, where guests can feel perfectly at home.



THE GRAPEVINE



CELEBRATING *Cynthia*

This year we celebrated our wonderful matriarch, Cynthia O'Hara, on her 95th birthday! Surrounded by her children and grandchildren, it was an evening filled with love, laughter, and family.

Cynthia and her late husband Budge first came to Barbados in 1956 to run Coral Reef Club and they built The Sandpiper in 1970, not just developing beautiful hotels but a family legacy of warm hospitality and high standards that continue today with the younger generation.

We are thankful for Cynthia's 95 incredible years of love and leadership.

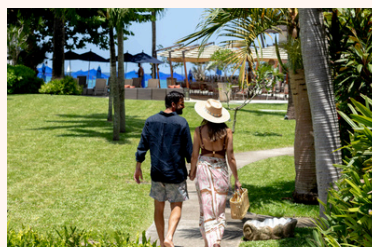


ARRIVE IN STYLE

Start your holiday in style with our **A-Class Arrival** experience. While this experience is not available to guests staying in our Plantation, Tree Top Suites or Curlew suites, other guests may choose to upgrade their arrival.

Our A-Class Arrival includes a Meet & Greet luxury transfer with Fast Track service, a chilled bottle of Champagne or premium wine, and a welcome drink of your choice. Guests can also enjoy an assorted charcuterie board or crudités, along with two 50-minute post-arrival spa massages, the perfect way to unwind and relax.

This experience is available for an additional cost, offering a relaxing beginning to your holiday.





THE GRAPEVINE



THE SANDPIPER

Christmas ISLAND STYLE



MEET *Spencer* OUR NEW EXECUTIVE CHEF

Spencer Kells rejoins The Sandpiper as Executive Chef, bringing over 30 years of international culinary and leadership experience across Asia, Australia, the UK, the US, and the Caribbean. A familiar face, he previously worked at The Sandpiper (1995–96) and Coral Reef Club (1999–2001).

Before returning to Barbados, Spencer was Group Culinary Director for Habitat Hospitality Group in Thailand and has led teams at renowned brands including Anantara, The Willard Intercontinental DC, and Mandarin Oriental Bangkok. He began his career at London's Connaught Hotel under Michelin-starred Chef Michel Bourdin.

Throughout his career, Spencer has cooked for royalty, world leaders, and the Pope. Known for his creativity and strong team leadership, he is thrilled to return to The Sandpiper and work once more for the Capaldi & O'Hara families.



[Click here to view interview!](#)



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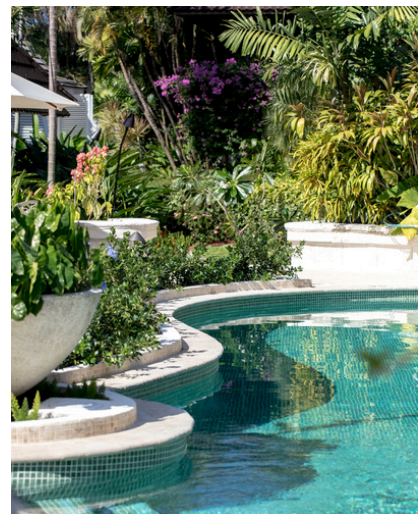
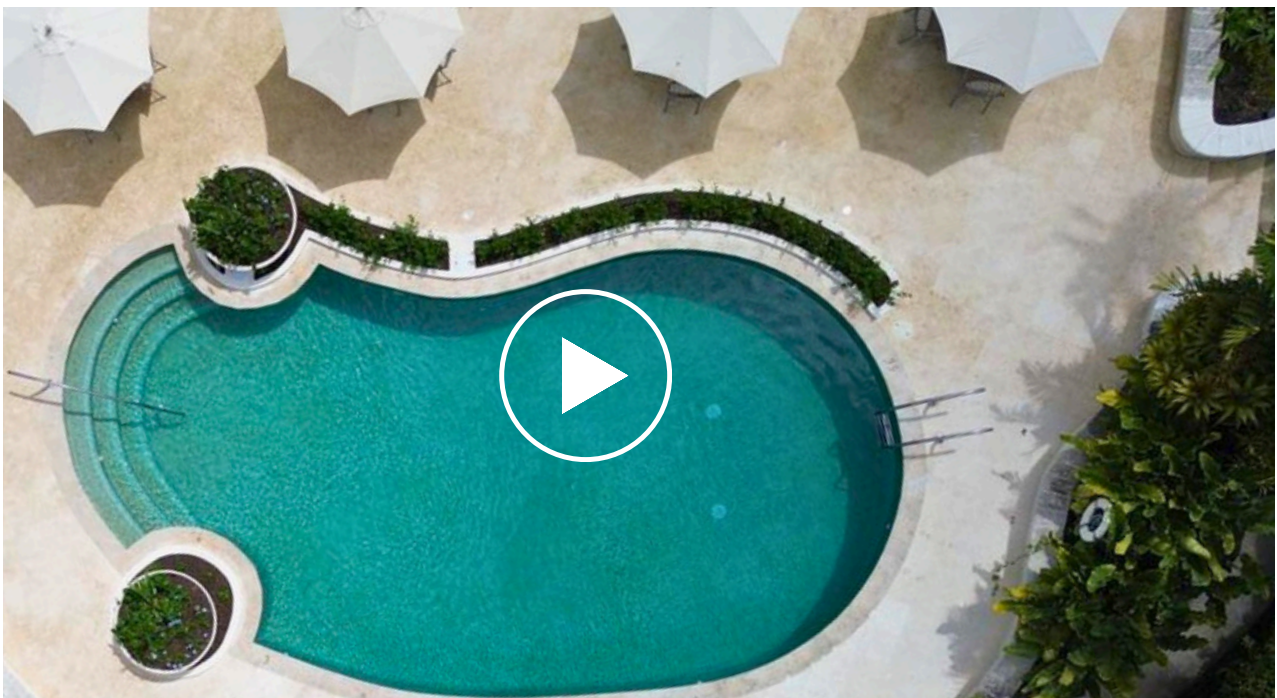


REFURBISHMENT

THE SANDPIPER

During Sandpiper's closure this year we re-tiled the original pool and rather than just re-tiling it because we had to, we decided to re-imagine it and in doing so we 'greened up' the area. The tiles are green, we created more planting around the pool and re-tiled the deck which, in its entirety, gives the area a whole new look, creating more intimate areas and a softer feel.

We also refurbished the Ladies and Gents and gave the Gents a bit more space!





THE GRAPEVINE



THE TEAM

EXECUTIVE CHEFS

Executive Chefs, Hance Bannister of Coral Reef Club and Spencer Kells of The Sandpiper, are spreading holiday cheer straight from the kitchen. Between whisking, chopping, and a few cheeky taste tests, they're preparing for a season filled with flavour and festivity.

This is Chef Spencer's very first festive season with us, and he's excited to bring his own creative touch to the celebrations.

For both chefs, the festive season is about more than food, it's about celebration, connection, and a little fun along the way. Judging by the laughter and delicious aromas coming from their kitchens, this year's celebrations are shaping up to be truly memorable.



[Click here to view Hance and Spencer's video highlights](#)

A NIGHT OF *Celebration*

This year, our teams stepped back in time for a night of fun and celebration at The Sandpiper, embracing a vibrant retro theme under the glow of a beautiful full moon. Our annual staff party brought together colleagues from both hotels for an evening filled with laughter, music, awards, and priceless memories.

We are endlessly proud of our teams, whose dedication, passion, and warmth shine through every day. Their commitment to excellence ensures that every guest experience is extraordinary and that our hotels truly feel like home. From the dance floor to the award stage, it was a night that celebrated not just achievements, but the joy, camaraderie, and spirit that make our teams so special.



The Sandpiper's Employee of the Year: Wyatt Maynard



The Sandpiper's Team of the Year: Warehouse Department



Coral Reef's Supervisor of the Year: Kashiann Rock



Coral Reef's Team of the Year: Kitchen Department



Barbados FUTSAL TOURNAMENT 2025

In a shared commitment to nurturing Barbados' future leaders, both Coral Reef Club and The Sandpiper proudly took part in this year's Adopt-a-School Futsal Tournament. This meaningful initiative, introduced by the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association in collaboration with the Ministry of Education Transformation, focuses on supporting improved infrastructure and resources across the island's schools.

Sixteen teams—from both tourism and non-tourism organisations—competed at The Oasis between August 9th and 31st, collectively raising BDS \$20,000 towards enhancing educational facilities for students.

Our teams represented the hotels with tremendous spirit, sportsmanship, and determination. The Sandpiper delivered an exceptional run throughout the tournament, securing a place in the finals and proudly finished as the second runner-up. Coral Reef Club also put forward a strong performance, reaching the quarter-finals.

BHTA President Ryan Forde praised the programme for its tangible contribution to school development, while Minister of Education Transformation Chad Blackman underscored how initiatives such as these play a vital role in shaping the next generation.

We are honoured to support an event that not only strengthens community partnerships but also reinforces our dedication to education, youth development, and the wider Barbados community.





BARBADOS SWEARS IN ITS SECOND PRESIDENT

On 30 November 2025, Jeffrey Davidson Bostic was officially sworn in as the second President of Barbados, succeeding Sandra Mason, the nation's first President. His inauguration coincided with Barbados' 59th Independence Anniversary, marking a symbolic moment in the country's republican journey. Bostic, a former Lieutenant Colonel in the Barbados Defence Force and ex-Minister of Health and Wellness, is known for his calm and decisive leadership, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. His election was by acclamation, reflecting strong bipartisan support.

In his largely ceremonial role, President Bostic now serves as the country's head of state, representing national unity, performing constitutional duties, and continuing the evolution of Barbados as a parliamentary republic.



Photos credit:
Nation News Barbados



Lucas CLOVES 50 MARATHONS IN 50 DAYS

London runner Lucas Cloves recently achieved an extraordinary milestone, completing 50 marathons in 50 consecutive days to support the Alzheimer's Society. Following this remarkable accomplishment, Lucas spent some time in the month of October at The Sandpiper, taking the opportunity to unwind, recharge, while taking in some well-earned Caribbean sunshine.

Motivated by his grandmother's experience with Alzheimer's, Lucas embarked on this challenge to raise both awareness and vital funds for dementia care and research.

Balancing full-time work with daily 42.2 km runs, he traversed London's parks and neighbourhoods, completing his final marathon on 11 October 2025 in Battersea Park. His dedication has already helped raise over £16,000, with donations continuing to grow.



Photo credit: London Post

[Click here for more information and to make a donation](#)



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AIRLIFT TO *Barbados*



BRITISH AIRWAYS, VIRGIN ATLANTIC & AER LINGUS

British Airways continues to provide frequent direct flights from London Heathrow to Barbados, with twice daily services throughout the winter period. The airline offers multiple cabin options and consistent year-round connectivity. Virgin Atlantic offers strong service into Barbados for the winter season, with daily year-round flights from London Heathrow and seasonal flights from Manchester operating several times a week from late October 2025 to March 2026. Aer Lingus operates a seasonal winter service from Manchester to Barbados, typically running from November through March/April. This route is especially convenient for travellers departing from northern England.

UNITED, AMERICAN, DELTA & JETBLUE AIRLINES

United, American, Delta, and JetBlue all offer convenient U.S. connections to Barbados this winter season. United provides direct service from Newark (EWR) with additional seasonal flights from hubs like Washington, D.C. American remains the most robust U.S. carrier, with daily nonstop flights from New York (JFK), seasonal service from Philadelphia, and further connections via Miami and Charlotte. Delta operates seasonal flights from Atlanta and Saturday service from New York (JFK), while JetBlue offers multiple weekly nonstop flights from New York (JFK), ensuring strong winter availability for Northeast travellers.

AIR CANADA & WESTJET

Air Canada offers direct flights from Toronto (YYZ) and Montreal (YUL) to Barbados throughout the Winter 2025–2026 season, providing convenient, nonstop access for travellers from eastern Canada. Westjet, however, has suspended its flights to Barbados for this period, so travellers will need to consider Air Canada or connecting flights via U.S. or other Caribbean hubs.