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O2 Beach Club & Spa

Saint Lawrence, Barbados

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8/10

Telegraph expert
rating

" O2 Beach Club & Spa, a contemporary take on the Caribbean all-inclusive, brings a fresher, more design-led approach to Barbados's south coast. With its sociable atmosphere, varied dining and breezy oceanfront setting, it's a strong choice for those who want an easy, sun-soaked stay without sacrificing style. "



Naomi Chadderton

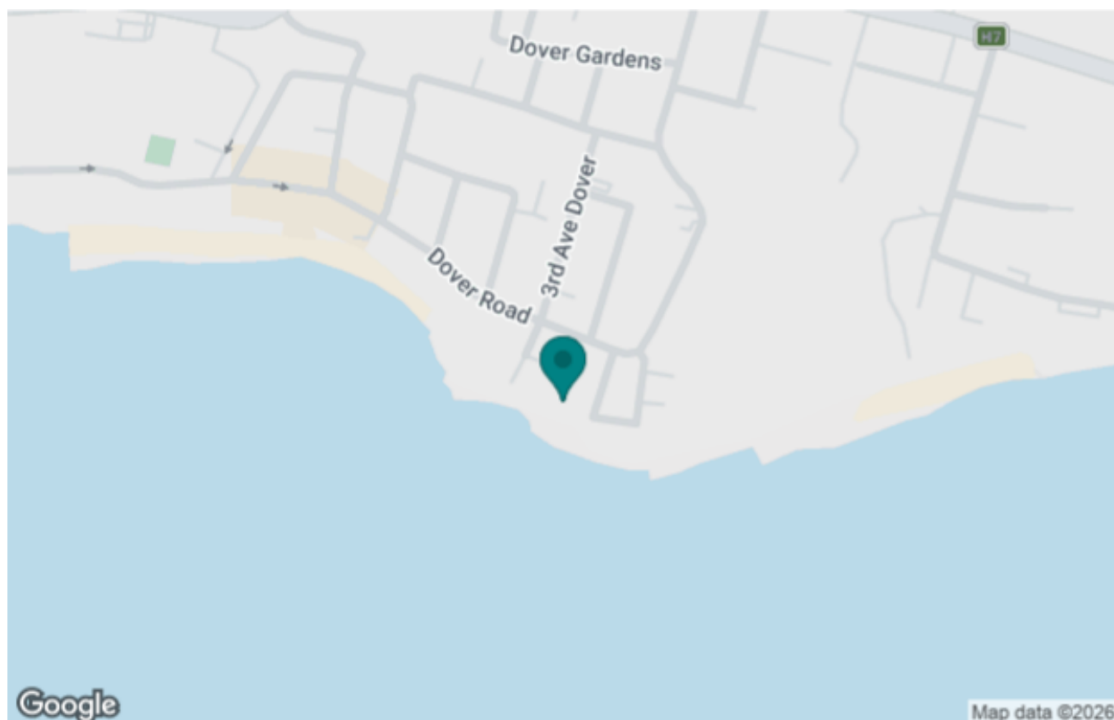
Travel Writer

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8/10 Location

The hotel is set on Barbados's lively south coast, and looks out onto a stretch of sea that, while undeniably beautiful, is noticeably rougher than elsewhere on the island – it's not ideal for swimming, but the constant swell makes for a soothing soundtrack, particularly at night. For calmer waters, Dover Beach is just a two-minute walk west, where a wide stretch of sand and a sheltered bay make it popular for swimming (and the occasional sea turtle sighting).

It's also well placed for the St Lawrence Gap neighbourhood, with its mix of restaurants, bars and nightlife within easy reach, while Bridgetown is around a 20-minute drive away and the airport just 15 minutes by car. A handy supermarket directly opposite covers any forgotten essentials.

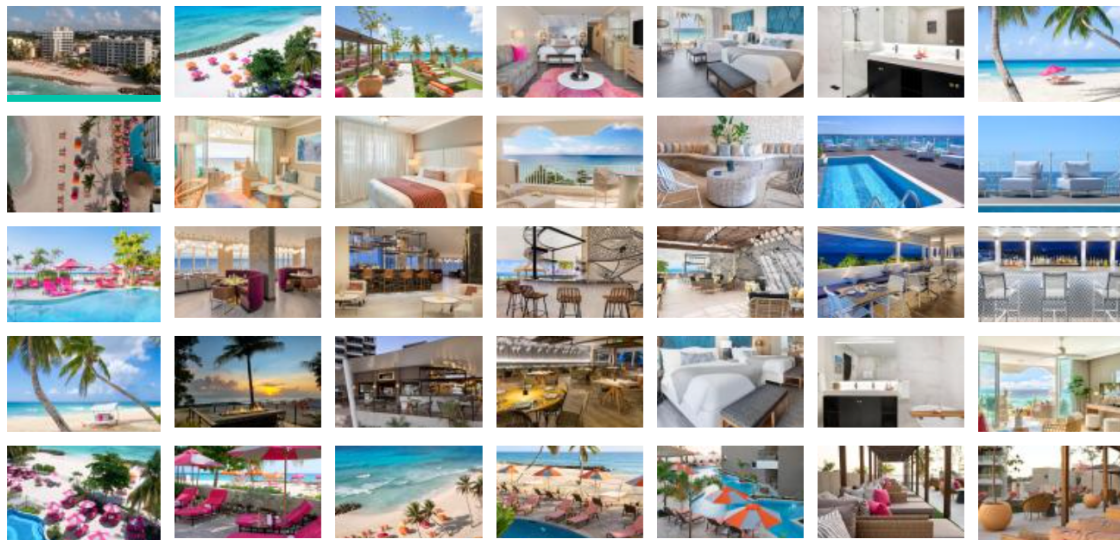


Style and Character

All-inclusives in Barbados can lean traditional, but O2 feels noticeably more current. It's split across two buildings, and there's a clear contrast in style: the original block is more classic in feel, while the newer, adults-only tower brings a brighter, more contemporary aesthetic.

Across both, the mood is relaxed and unpretentious, with playful touches like hot pink and orange loungers, and umbrellas dotted around the pools and beach. Interiors are lifted by artwork from local artists, while hummingbirds flit between the greenery, adding to the laid-back atmosphere.

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Service and Facilities

Service is generally good, if occasionally a little inconsistent. While many staff are warm and attentive, I thought a handful lacked the polish found at some of the island's more established hotels. That said, things run smoothly where it counts, particularly around the pool where drink orders are taken regularly, meaning you rarely need to leave your sunbed.

Guests are welcomed with a rum punch on arrival, setting the tone for a sociable (and if the mood takes, boozy) stay. There's a full programme of daily activities, from mixology classes to sip-and-paint sessions, aqua aerobics, beach volleyball and DIY body-scrub workshops.

Despite a policy against reserving loungers, it's not strictly enforced, though the variety of spaces – including a quieter rooftop terrace with hot tubs – means it rarely becomes an issue. Guests can also make use of complimentary shuttles to sister properties, with access to Hobie Cats and other watersports, such as kayaking. The spa, perched on the seventh floor, is a highlight, with sweeping ocean views and a relaxation room complete with an unusual but effective head massage device. A well-equipped gym is also available.

- ✓ Bar
- ✓ Fitness centre
- ✓ Parking
- ✓ Restaurant
- ✓ Sauna
- ✓ Steam room/hammam
- ✓ Beach
- ✓ Laundry
- ✓ Pool
- ✓ Room service
- ✓ Spa
- ✓ Wi-Fi

8/10

Rooms

This 130-room property offers a mix of styles depending on where you stay. Rooms in the newer building, where I stayed, are bright and airy, with large terraces overlooking the sea and interiors that blend marble, pale wood, rattan and soft coral and botanical accents. Bathrooms are particularly well done, with marble finishes, sleek black fittings, walk-in showers and freestanding tubs, alongside toiletries from The White Company. Minibars are stocked daily with soft drinks, water and beer.

Rooms in the older building feel more traditional, with darker woods and bolder colour accents, though still well maintained and comfortable, with sliding doors opening onto bathrooms fitted with rain showers.

Food and Drink

Elements is the main restaurant, offering buffet lunches and themed à la carte dinners – I dined during an Italian evening, when chefs served up dishes like orecchiette al pomodoro alongside classics such as lasagne and chicken parmigiana. For something lighter, Bluefin is open for lunch, serving salads, poke bowls, sandwiches and pizzas in a more casual setting.

A standout for an all-inclusive is the more formal dining option at Oro, which requires booking and comes with a dress code (men must wear a shirt with long or short sleeves and a collar, or a polo-style shirt, with no shorts allowed). It's worth making the effort: starters, such as burrata with grilled peach and octopus skewers are followed by well-executed mains, including lobster thermidor, red snapper and peppercorn-crusted beef fillet.



The writer's pasta dish at O2 Beach Club & Spa

There's also a rooftop tapas bar, but it's best reserved for drinks rather than dinner – while the setting is ideal for sunset cocktails, the food didn't quite hit the spot.

Between meals, snacks such as fruit, yoghurt and sandwiches are available, while breakfast is a standard but solid buffet of international staples alongside local dishes, plus made-to-order eggs. Guests can also opt for a newly introduced à la carte breakfast at Oro, with dishes including shakshuka, avocado toast and pancakes with berry compote. Be sure to book in advance.

Value for Money

Double rooms from \$783 (£591) in low season; and from \$1,282 (£968) in high. All-inclusive.

Access for guests with disabilities?

Guests using wheelchairs can access most of the property (with the exception of the sun terrace and Brisa pool). There are no specifically adapted rooms but they are generally spacious (including the bathrooms) with wide doors. There is a small step to get into the shower but chairs can be provided.

Family-Friendly?

The focus here is really on adults and older teens, with a teen lounge and easy access to the bars and clubs of St Lawrence Gap.

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