

Spectacular Anniversary on

By Jill Weinlein



Silver Bora Bora







Celebrating our silver anniversary, we flew to Tahiti and took a smaller plane to one of French Polynesia's most desirable Leeward Islands, Bora Bora. We enjoyed exploring the bucolic French Polynesia Leeward Island 25 years ago for our honeymoon. We made a vow that if our marriage lasted 25 years, we would come back.

The only way still to arrive at any of the resorts on the island is by boat. Our first stop was at the private Motu Tehotu, a reef islet formed by broken coral and sand surrounding an atoll. The sand is powdery white and the water surrounding the resort is

aquamarine blue, home to the Four Seasons Resort.

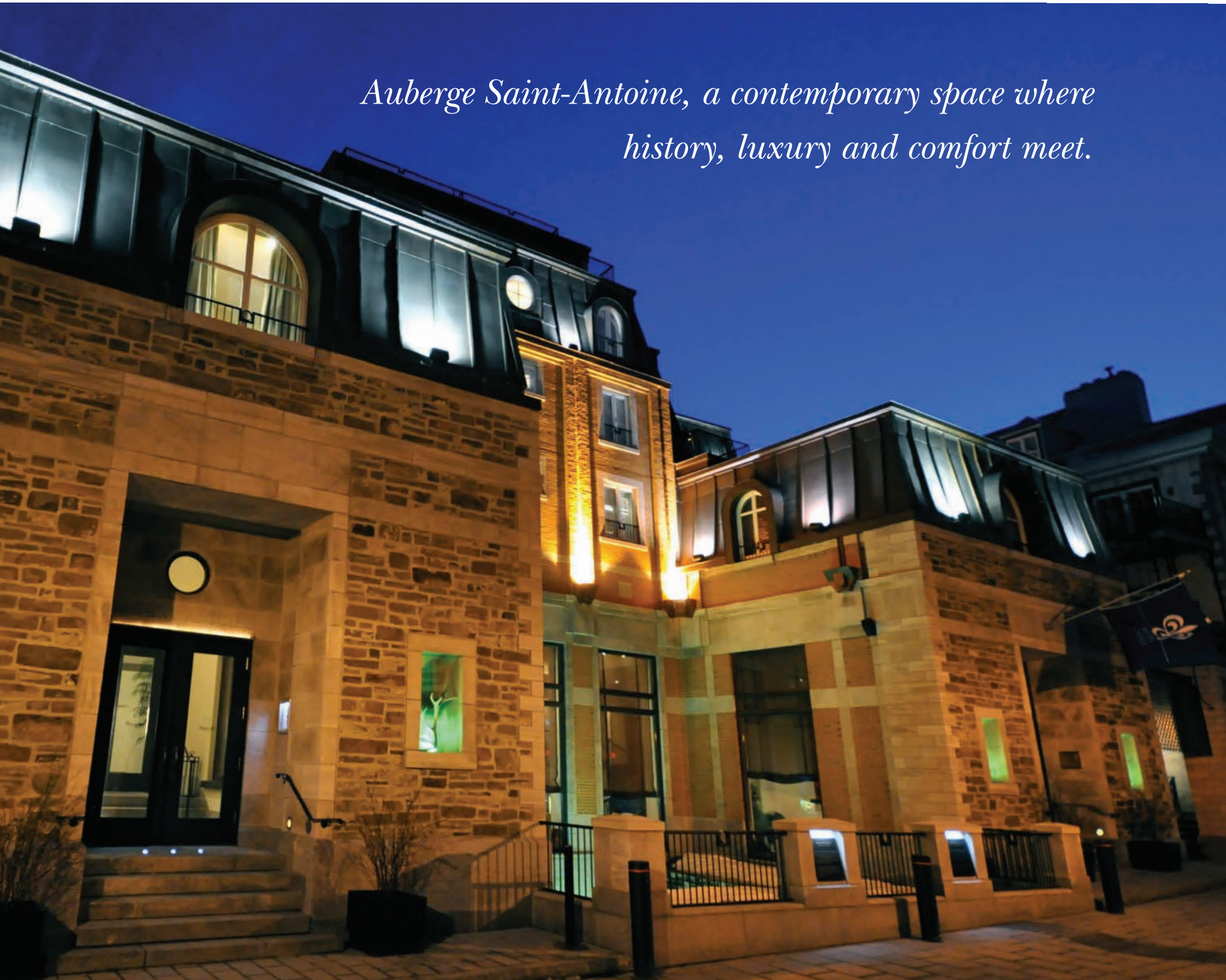
The Four Seasons Bora Bora has 100 overwater bungalows with thatched grass roofs resting on stilts. Once off the elegant wood boat, my husband and I met with Cindy Grigaut, the Catering & Conference Services Manager, as she met us at the dock, placed floral leis over our heads, gave us a shot of fresh mango juice and a cool washcloth. Then she whisked us away in a golf cart to see our accommodations.

While driving on the wooden pathway above clear blue water, we saw one luxurious bungalow with a



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plunge pool on the deck. "They sell out all the time," said Grigaut. "Our guests like the comfort of being in the water to relax and enjoy the views and sun, without having to worry about the current." There are four bungalows with plunge pools and direct lagoon, and mountain views of majestic Mount Otemanu.

Most of the overwater bungalow suites are identical, except for the views - There are beach, lagoon and mountain views. Bungalows will accommodate three adults or two adults and two children under 12. There is one king size bed and one queen size sofa bed with one bedroom and approximately 1120 square feet. Beds have down or hypoallergenic pillows. Rooms offer Internet access, multi-line telephones, refrigerator in the private bar, CD and DVD player, satellite television, complimentary coffee and tea and twice-daily housekeeping service. There are snorkel equipment and life preservers in a wooden storage unit on the deck.

They also offer family bungalows that have two bedrooms connected by a deck. They will childproof the decks with plexiglass so a young child can't fall into the lagoon.

The resort offers 6 private beach villas that are over 3,000 sq. ft. The Presidential Suite is 5,000 sq. ft. with three bedrooms and an infinity pool.

The clientele for Four Seasons Bora Bora are mostly Americans, ranging in age from 35 to 50 years old. The resort is known for hosting small weddings in the breathtaking chapel on a lagoon overlooking Mount Otemanu.

Guests can take a complimentary boat ride to the main island of Bora Bora at 11:15 a.m. to enjoy lunch, shopping or a tour. The Four Seasons boat waits at 2:45 p.m. to take guests back to the private motu. For those who would like to go to world renowned Bloody Mary's at night for cocktails and dinner, a boat leaves the resort at 6:45 p.m. and delivers guests to Vaitape by 7:20 p.m.. A complimentary cab ride whisks guests to the restaurant, 10 minutes away and returns them to the dock at 9:45 p.m. for a boat ride back to the Four Seasons. In the evening, the boat ride is \$35 per person roundtrip.

Guests enjoy the cathedral style spa

at the Four Seasons. It is the soul of the resort, made of teak wood with 7 treatment rooms using French brand products. Separate ladies' and men's locker rooms offer relaxing infinite pools with Polynesian views.

Love to snorkel? Nestled within the grounds of the Resort is an inner lagoon, The Sanctuary is teeming with exotic marine life with over 100 colorful species, including the octopus, eagle ray, lizardfish, Picasso trumpetfish, soldierfish, firefish, unicorn fish, spotted pufferfish, parrotfish, peacock damselfish, clownfish and butterfly fish, sea urchins, anemones and shrimp. It's also a fish-and octopus-feeding spot, and area for open discussions with guests on the Polynesian ecosystem. The Sanctuary is maintained in partnership with the Pacific Eco-World Initiative, a non-profit organization committed to learning more about the changing marine environment and working to conserve it.

While exploring the resort, we watched guests skim the pristine turquoise lagoon on complimentary stand-up paddle boards, sitting in paddle boats, or in single or double kayaks.

We learned that the all weather surface tennis courts can be lit for night play, and accessories are complementary upon request.

Feeling hungry, we took a stroll hand-in-hand to the Sunset Restaurant and Bar. We watched two staff members getting into an outrigger canoe full of silver containers, to set up a private dinner for two on a tiny motu 100 paddles away from the shore. There were also tables set for two on the beach for intimate and romantic dinners.

We opted to sit on a cozy couch, while sipping a pineapple mojito and glass of Tattinger Brut Rose. For appetizers we ate a Thai beef salad with cucumbers, peppers, tomatoes, red onion and mint and 12 pieces of sushi that included salmon, tuna, swordfish, eel, octopus Nigiri, and California rolls.

Walking back to the bungalows, we admired the stars and constellations in the black night sky. It was an extraordinary evening and we wished we could stay longer than just one night. We stood on the beach, renewing our vows with a promise to come back before our golden anniversary.

