



BARBADOS FERTILITY CENTER

“Barbados has long been established as a tourist destination, but now is also on the map for providing exceptional medical treatment as well, all thanks to Barbados Fertility Center.”

—ABENG NEWS MAGAZINE,
February 21, 2009



“YOU MAY NOT THINK YOU’RE MUCH OF A POET,” says traveler Tom McIntyre, “but Barbados will turn you into one.” He may be right. Were this tropical paradise not so genuinely a tropical paradise, its admirers might be accused of hyperbole. But they speak the truth when they laud the island’s sparkling beaches and its charming, cottage-dappled hillsides.

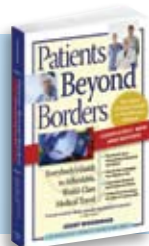
Half a million people can’t be wrong. That’s the number of visitors Barbados attracts annually, and it doesn’t take long to see why they come: the coasts are ringed by the kinds of azure-water and white-sand visions that fuel the fantasies of Brits, Americans, and Canadians shivering away in some snowy winter clime.

Many visitors to Barbados just want to relax and soak up some sun, but others have a more serious goal in mind. Couples who have been unable to conceive a much-wanted child travel to Barbados in search of high-quality infertility treatment at a price they can afford. They find what they are looking for at Barbados Fertility Center.

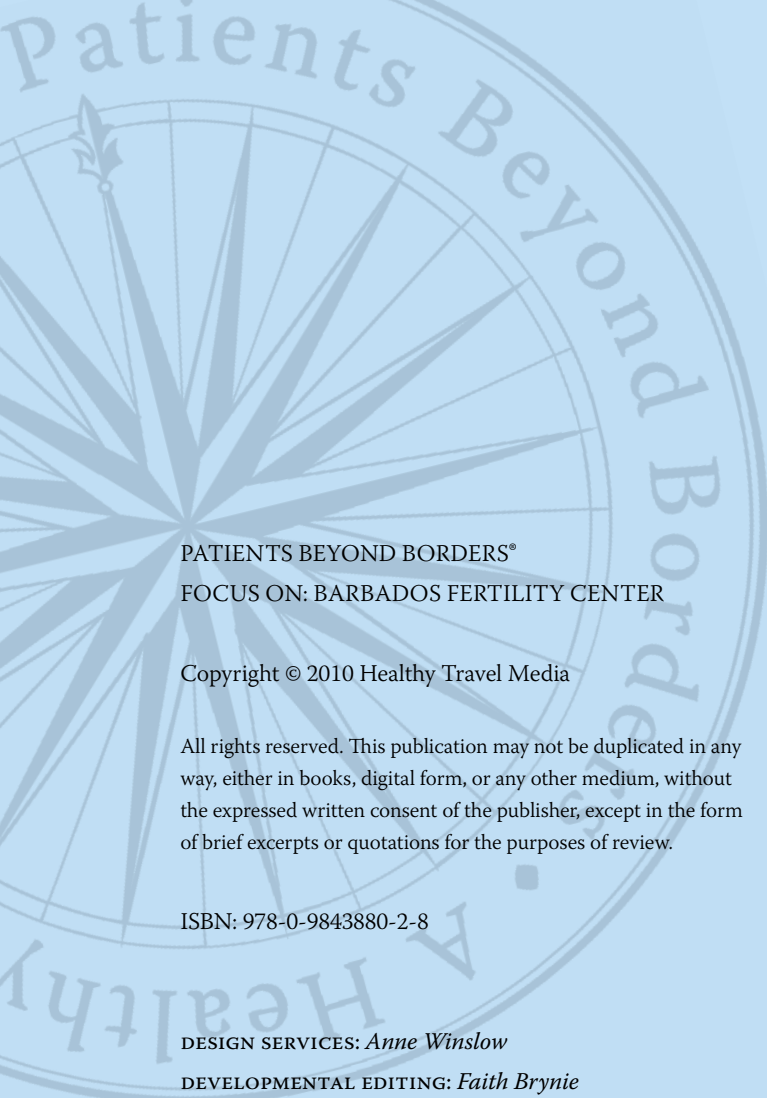


CONTENTS

- » Introduction
- » About Barbados Fertility Center
- » Staff and Management Team
- » Leading Specialties
- » Technology and Innovation
- » Facilities and Signature Services
- » Patient Stories
- » Patient and Visitor Guide
- » International Patient Resources



The *Patients Beyond Borders Focus On™* series gives patients an in-depth look at the facilities and medical offerings of leading international hospitals and specialty centers. Visit www.patientsbeyondborders.com for more information and additional patient resources.



PATIENTS BEYOND BORDERS®
FOCUS ON: BARBADOS FERTILITY CENTER

Copyright © 2010 Healthy Travel Media

All rights reserved. This publication may not be duplicated in any way, either in books, digital form, or any other medium, without the expressed written consent of the publisher, except in the form of brief excerpts or quotations for the purposes of review.

ISBN: 978-0-9843880-2-8

DESIGN SERVICES: *Anne Winslow*
DEVELOPMENTAL EDITING: *Faith Brynie*
COPYEDITING: *Kate Johnson*
PROOFREADING: *Barbara Resch*

Published by
Healthy Travel Media
P.O. Box 17057
Chapel Hill, NC, UNITED STATES 27516
+1 919 370.7380
info@patientsbeyondborders.com
www.patientsbeyondborders.com

LIMITS OF LIABILITY AND DISCLAIMER
OF WARRANTY

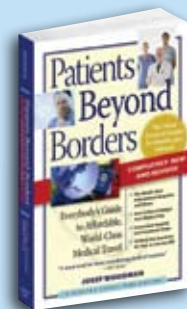
This publication is intended as a reference guide and should not be used as a substitute for advice from a medical professional. While the intent of *Patients Beyond Borders Focus On: Barbados Fertility Center* is to provide useful and informative data, neither the publisher nor any other party affiliated with this publication renders or recommends the use of specific hospitals, clinics, professional services, third-party agencies, or any other source cited throughout this publication.

Patients Beyond Borders
Focus On: Barbados Fertility Center

is a collaboration between Healthy Travel Media and Barbados Fertility Center. Special thanks to Anna Hosford, Dr. Juliet Skinner, Rachel de Gale, Veronica Little, the wonderful staff at Barbados Fertility Center, and all the babies who have brought so much joy. We are especially grateful to the families who shared their inspiring stories with us.



The *Patients Beyond Borders*® series offers comprehensive information for patients considering medical tourism. Less about travel and all about healthcare choices, *Patients Beyond Borders* provides practical answers for the increasing number of healthcare consumers seeking access to the best, most affordable hospitals in the world.



FOCUS ON:

BARBADOS FERTILITY CENTER



INTRODUCTION

ONCE UPON A LONG TIME AGO, in another life that preceded my healthcare career—1978, to be exact—I remember what I was doing when Louise Brown, the world’s first “test-tube baby,” was born. I was working at IDG-Computerworld in Newton, Massachusetts. It was my job to promote *Computerworld*, *Infoworld*, and nine international startup magazines—all related in some way to computers. While at the time I was well aware of the revolution that computers were destined to bring into our lives, the significance of the world’s first successful in vitro fertilization (IVF) was lost on me. A biomedical revolution was commencing, but if I reflected upon Louise Brown, it was probably, *Hey! I’m a guy! What do I know about birthing babies?*

Today, I’m older and wiser and working in international healthcare. I look back and recognize what started that summer’s day more than 30 years ago. Now not a month goes by without my running into a couple who—for one reason or another—has been unable to conceive and bear the child they so desperately want. Before Louise Brown, childless couples faced a single choice: adopt or remain childless. After Louise, new technologies developed rapidly for giving nature a reproductive nudge.

Because most big cities around the world have at least one fertility clinic, you might wonder what makes Barbados Fertility Center (BFC) special—and why we at *Patients Beyond Borders* have decided to feature this center in our *Focus On* series. There are many answers to those questions, and you’ll read some of them on the pages that follow. Here I’ll summarize just a few. For starters, BFC is accredited by the Joint Commission International (JCI), the same agency that accredits such prestigious US hospitals as Harvard, Johns Hopkins, and the Mayo Clinic. Thus, BFC meets international standards of medical practice comparable to the standards that patients can expect in the US. BFC is one of the world’s few JCI-accredited specialty fertility clinics.

Second, the cost of fertility treatment at the center, even including two plane tickets and a beachfront vacation, is considerably less than is typically charged in North America and Europe.

Third, BFC has a proven record of success, with pregnancy rates equal to or greater than those achieved in the US, UK, and Europe. The biggest reason, I’m convinced, is the center’s commitment to providing a patient experience of low-stress, personal, supportive care—a far cry from the aggressively clinical, often arms-length approach practiced in many other fertility facilities. As you’ll read in the patients’ stories featured in these pages, BFC can point with pride to its contribution in bringing many little Louise Browns into the world. We share in that pride, and we hope couples who are praying and planning for a baby Louise of their own will find the information they’re seeking in this *Focus On*. Let’s get started.

Josef Woodman
North Carolina, US, 2010

ABOUT BARBADOS FERTILITY CENTER

WHAT JCI ACCREDITATION MEANS TO YOU



When you walk into a hospital or clinic in the US and many other Western countries, chances are good

that it's accredited, meaning that it's in compliance with standards and "good practices" set by an independent accreditation agency. In the US, by far the largest and most respected accreditation agency is the Joint Commission. The commission casts a wide net of evaluation for hospitals and other healthcare facilities and services throughout the US.

Responding to a global demand for accreditation standards, in 1999 the Joint Commission launched JCI, its international affiliate accreditation agency. In order to be accredited, an international healthcare provider must meet the rigorous standards set forth by JCI. At this writing, more than 300 hospitals, laboratories, and special programs in 39 countries outside the US have earned JCI accreditation. Those who can display the gold seal of JCI have reason to be proud. They have proven their excellence in patient care and service, while at the same time gaining access to a variety of resources that connect them with the international healthcare community.

JCI accreditation is the only medically oriented seal of approval for international hospitals and clinics. Knowing that BFC is JCI-approved should give you, the medical traveler, an assurance of quality. You can learn more about JCI and its accreditation process at www.jointcommissioninternational.org.

BARBADOS FERTILITY CENTER is a JCI-accredited center of excellence, specializing in all aspects of infertility management. BFC opened its doors in 2002. Exactly nine months later, its first IVF baby was born. And in 2008, the center celebrated its thousandth egg collection.

BFC treats couples ages 26–46 who have been unable to conceive a child for a year or more. Infertility has many different causes, and BFC tailors its treatments to meet individual needs. The center's unique approach combines rest, relaxation, and holistic therapy with medical intervention. BFC's cutting-edge technology and stress-reducing environment give couples the best possible chances of conception.

BFC's high success rates and relatively low treatment costs attract regional and international patients in growing numbers annually; couples travel from Europe, the UK, the US, and Canada to seek treatment. However, the center has not forgotten its closer-to-home clientele—BFC's main facility is located in Christ Church, Barbados, and partnerships with gynecologists on other islands have made assisted reproduction accessible to couples throughout the Caribbean. Satellite offices also operate in Antigua, St. Martin, and Trinidad.

The Center's History

Dr. Juliet Skinner, BFC's medical director, is Barbadian by birth. She trained as an obstetrician/gynecologist at Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland. "I returned to Barbados [after my training]," she says, "and it was obvious that choices for couples with infertility were very limited." Using her connections to the largest IVF unit in Ireland to provide early technical support, Skinner seized an opportunity to develop an IVF unit on the island.

Not satisfied with establishing merely a good clinic, Skinner and her business partner, clinic director Anna Hosford, discussed how they could make their Barbados clinic the best in the world. "That was our vision," she says. "The idea of having an excellent center in the Caribbean could be an added value for any patient, anywhere in the world: marrying the idea of stress reduction at the same time, being able to put things in the place where you designed your clinic—the absolute top-of-the-line of everything."

Over the years, Skinner and Hosford assembled what they call "the right team of individuals," progressively developing their center into the outstanding facility it is today. From 2005 onward, BFC achieved success rates comparable to, if not better than, those in the US—and twice those achieved in the UK. "Ironically," Skinner notes, "that's where the first IVF baby was born."



The reasons for BFC's success? "Our philosophy, our team, our approach, anything that can make a difference," Skinner says. "The most important message we can get out there is that infertility is common. It affects one in six couples. There is a host of reasons why it may occur—and the vast majority of them have a solution. Treatment options are effective, especially if we are treating a couple early on."

Environment, Infertility Services, and Competitive Pricing

Tourists return home from Barbados smitten by the island nation's pristine beaches, crystalline waters, charming architecture, and friendly people. Medical travelers return home from BFC full of praise for the center's up-to-the-minute technologies, high success rates, warm and welcoming staff, and stress-busting services.

Offering "a holiday with a purpose," the center strives to provide the latest and best in assisted reproductive technologies with a focus on physical, mental, and emotional balance. Research has shown that learning to deal with stress can greatly increase a couple's chances of conceiving. BFC alleviates stress through its Healthy Mind and Body Program, which provides counseling, reflexology, therapeutic acupuncture, and massage for both partners. While relaxing in the inviting tropical environment of Barbados, BFC couples learn how to dispel both physical tension and mental anxiety.

BFC's international couples usually find that their infertility treatment costs less in Barbados than it would at home. Patients from the UK report that their public health system funds only 25 percent of the cost of IVF treatments. Patients' out-of-pocket costs may run as high as £5,000 (about US\$7,600)



for a single cycle. Patients from the US often report cost estimates as high as \$30,000. Average costs at BFC are far less, as the following table shows.

Procedure	Average Estimated Cost*
In vitro fertilization (IVF)	US\$5,750
IVF with intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI)	US\$6,750
Egg donor IVF	US\$7,500
Blastocyst embryo transfer	US\$250
Preimplantation genetic screening (PGS)	US\$3,750
Egg vitrification cycle	US\$7,000

*Estimates include in-cycle blood tests, ultrasounds, egg-retrieval theater charges, anesthesia, doctors' fees, and IVF laboratory fees, including vitrification of remaining embryos. The costs of medication, pre-cycle tests, counselor's fees, and travel packages are NOT included. (Prices are subject to change.)

Barbados Fertility Center in the News

If you are like many couples who travel to Barbados for infertility treatment, you first ran across BFC in the news. Perhaps you read a newspaper account or caught a report on the radio or television. There have been many such reports, all offering high praise for BFC.

For example, in 2006 the center was featured on the educational television series *Pulse on America*. Its report on BFC was aired nationwide in the US. That same year, the center was featured on the Discovery Health channel in a documentary titled *How to Choose a Fertility Clinic*. The program was aired internationally, attracting couples from Canada, the Netherlands, the UK, and the Caribbean region to BFC.

In 2007 several UK patients went public with their success stories in the magazine *Real* and in such newspapers as the *Daily Express* and the *Daily Star Sunday*. That same year, BFC also appeared in *Medical Tourism Association Magazine*. The magazine's second issue, titled "A Complete Guide to Low Cost Surgery and Medical Care Overseas," featured an American couple who, after two unsuccessful treatments at home in Utah, traveled to BFC. Their beautiful son was the result.

In 2008 *USA Today* featured BFC in an article on IVF treatment and pinpointed the center on a world map of places to travel for assisted reproduction. That same year, the UK magazine *Woman* published a story about a British couple who, after three unsuccessful IVF attempts in the UK, achieved pregnancy on their first try in Barbados.

In 2009 monthly editorial features in the *Voice* probed female and male perspectives on infertility and featured personal stories of patients treated at BFC. In 2010 headlines lauded BFC's year-after-year increases in success rates—rates that surpass the national averages in both the US and the UK. "Every 0.1-percentage-point increase is more than a number to us," says BFC's medical director, Dr. Juliet Skinner. "It is a baby for our patients."

Dos and Don'ts for the Smart Health Traveler

Before Your Trip

Do plan ahead.

The farther in advance you plan, the more likely you are to get the lowest airfares and the best availability and rates on hotels.

Do be sure about your diagnosis and treatment needs.

Do work closely with your local doctor or medical specialist, and make sure you obtain an exact diagnosis and recommendations—in writing, if possible.

Do research BFC thoroughly.

Don't be afraid to ask questions, lots of them, until you feel comfortable that you have chosen the right facility for you.

Don't rely on a single source of information.

Get second opinions on medical questions. Don't stop with an Internet search. Obtain information from print references, newspapers, magazines, and health travel agencies.

Do consider engaging a good health travel planner.

BFC can assist you with your travel and lodging plans, but so can a good health travel agent.

Do get it in writing.

Whether it's cost estimates, appointment schedules, treatment recommendations, second opinions, or airline and hotel reservations, the more you get in writing, the less chance of a misunderstanding.

Do insist on using a language you understand.

BFC staff members are primarily English speakers. If you need another language, ask about arranging for interpretation services.

Don't plan your trip too tightly.

Allow a little extra time for relaxing in Barbados. You'll be glad you did.

Do alert your bank and credit card companies.

To avoid card cancellation or unexpected rejections, inform financial institutions of your travel plans prior to your trip.

Do learn a little about your destination.

Spend a little time getting to know something about the history and geography of Barbados. Your hosts will appreciate your interest.

Do inform your local doctors before you leave.

Your local healthcare providers need to know what you're doing, so they can continue your care and treatment once you return home.

While in Barbados

Don't be too adventurous with food and drink.

Queasy tummies dampen spirits and make treatment uncomfortable. Stick with familiar, easy-to-digest foods.

Don't scrimp on lodging.

Unless your finances absolutely demand it, avoid hotels and other accommodations in the "budget" category. You don't want to end up in uncomfortable surroundings when your mind is on conception.

Don't stay too far from BFC.

The center's staff can help you select a convenient, nearby lodging.

Going Home

Do set aside some of your medical travel savings for a vacation.

If not now, later. You and your partner deserve it!

Do get all your paperwork before leaving BFC.

Get receipts for every payment. Get copies of all your medical records.

Do follow your doctor's instructions to the letter.

You'll go home with a plan. Follow it.

Do follow up with your doctor at home.

If you're pregnant, seek good prenatal care. Your family is worth it!

Above All, Trust Your Intuition

Your courage and good judgment have set you on this path. Rely on your instincts. Hundreds of couples have benefited from assisted reproductive technologies at BFC. Using good information and common sense, you can, too! Safe travels and happy outcomes!



STAFF AND MANAGEMENT TEAM



**Medical Director:
JULIET SKINNER, MD**

Dr. Juliet Skinner is the gynecologist who leads the BFC team. She trained as a physician at Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland, where she specialized in obstetrics and gynecology and worked as a perinatal research fellow. During that time, she developed and evaluated a number of ultrasound diagnostic tests, both for fertility and for obstetrics. In 1999 she returned home to Barbados, where she has since dedicated her time to her main interests, fertility and IVF. She has built BFC to become a center of excellence, serving patients from the Caribbean region and all over the world. Dr. Skinner is a member of the Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynecology and of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland.



**Clinic Director:
ANNA HOSFORD, RN**

Anna Hosford, originally from Ireland, gained extensive experience in the treatment of infertility while working on both sides of the Atlantic. After completing her nursing training in Dublin, Ireland, she moved to San Francisco, California, where she worked with Dr. Christo Zouves and Dr. Geoffrey Sher at the Pacific Fertility Center (PFC). Hosford spent four years managing the daily clinical operations at PFC, where she specialized in coordinating overseas couples for IVF cycles. She returned to Ireland in 1999 and introduced the high American standard of fertility care to an Irish startup unit, which she managed for more than four years before accepting the opportunity to create a fertility clinic in Barbados along with Dr. Skinner.



**Senior Embryologist:
DAMIAN PIKE**

Damian Pike hails from the UK, where he gained 17 years of experience working in IVF units. He also held the position of inspector for the Human Fertilization and Embryology Authority (HFEA), which is the statutory body in the UK that regulates and inspects clinics that provide IVF, artificial insemination, or the storage of eggs, sperm, or embryos. Pike's work at BFC involves fertilizing eggs and caring for embryos during their incubation period.



**Clinical Psychologist:
LAUREN MARSHALL**

Lauren Marshall holds a master's degree in clinical psychology from the University of Central Florida, Orlando, Florida, and Barbados is her home. She returned to the island in August 2006, where she has been in private practice ever since. Marshall leads BFC's Healthy Mind and Body Program, which is designed to help the center's clients optimize their general health and well-being, as well as their reproductive health.



**Patient Liaison Manager:
RACHEL DE GALE**

Rachel de Gale coordinates the travel and nonmedical aspects of treatment for international medical travelers to BFC. She does everything from helping couples decide which travel package suits them to arranging flights, reserving hotel rooms, coordinating transportation needs, and scheduling Healthy Mind and Body Program appointments.

Focus On interviewed Dr. Skinner to get her answers to the questions patients most frequently ask.

Q: How did you become interested in performing IVF?

A: During my medical training, obstetrics and gynecology always interested me and thus became my chosen specialty. Infertility and the factors that impact on human reproduction were always huge interests of mine. IVF as a treatment is phenomenal and immensely fascinating to me.

Q: What prompted you to establish Barbados Fertility Center?

A: Following my training and specialization in obstetrics and gynecology in Ireland, I returned to Barbados and quickly recognized a lack of options available for couples with infertility. Together with colleagues from Ireland, Anna Hosford and I set up Barbados Fertility Center with two aims: providing an IVF service to the island, and improving IVF results by creating an environment for our couples that is as stress-free as possible.

Q: How many patients do you see each month? How many IVF procedures have you performed since BFC opened?

A: I see or speak to about 120–150 patients a month, not all of whom need IVF. With respect to IVF procedures performed at BFC, the number now totals approximately 2,000.

Q: What are BFC's fees for an initial consultation?

A: Initial telephone consultations for all international patients are free at BFC.

Q: Can patients call you on your cell phone before, during, and after treatment?

A: Of course. We also give our patients an emergency number where I can be reached.

Q: What medical and personal health records do you need in order to assess a couple's condition and treatment needs?

A: A detailed medical history will be taken at the initial phone consultation. Medical records pertaining to past tests on infertility or previous treatment cycles are important; ideally, we obtain them by fax or email following the initial inquiry and before the formal new patient consultation. This allows us to review the records in detail and offer our best advice and recommendations for each patient or couple.

Q: Do you perform IVF procedures yourself, or do you have assistants do the job?

A: I perform all egg retrievals and embryo transfers myself.

Q: Is there anything we didn't ask but should have?

A: Not that I can think of for now, but we make sure to answer all our patients' questions during their consultation and treatment with us!

LEADING SPECIALTIES



BFC'S 2009 SUCCESS RATES

Treatment Type	Pregnancy Rate (CPR)*
Blastocyst (day five) Embryo Transfer	
Under 35	71%
Under 40	56%
IVF and ICSI Combined	
Under 35	50%
35-37	42%
38-40	33%
41 and over	
All	14%
Four embryos for transfer	25%
Frozen Embryo Transfer	
All ages	26%

*Clinical pregnancy rate per embryo transfer

Because of its effect on egg and embryo quality, maternal age has a significant impact on success rates. The statistics above are for all women treated at BFC. For women within any age category who produce good-quality eggs, success rates are higher. In addition, the availability of larger numbers of embryos increases the chance of pregnancy.

INFERTILITY TOUCHES MANY LIVES. While it affects as many as one in every six couples, no two couples are the same. At BFC, every couple's medical care is managed individually. Decisions are made collaboratively on a step-by-step basis, as BFC's staff assesses how the woman's cycle is progressing and how embryos are developing. For example, for some women, a transfer of the embryo on day three with assisted hatching (see "[Technology and Innovation](#)") is the best option. For others, a transfer on day five is the best choice. Couples are part of the decision-making process; they are informed of their progress at every stage. For many couples, being so involved and informed helps to alleviate stress and increase the chances of successful IVF treatment.

What's involved in that treatment? Your case manager and physician at BFC may discuss with you some or all of the following specialties.

In Vitro Fertilization (IVF): This is the process of combining an egg and sperm not in the body, but in a laboratory dish. When the IVF procedure is successful, the process is continued with a procedure known as embryo transfer, which physically places the embryo in the uterus. IVF is an effective treatment for infertility when other treatment methods have failed.

Blastocyst Culture: The usual IVF procedure involves a transfer of the embryo to the womb on day two or three after fertilization, but for some women, BFC may recommend a blastocyst embryo transfer. A blastocyst is an embryo five to six days after fertilization. It develops in a laboratory incubator and is then transferred to the womb. Blastocyst culture can increase the chances of a pregnancy by 10–20 percent (depending on maternal age). The procedure is particularly beneficial for couples with five or more good-quality embryos on day three, as the extension of the culture to day five will significantly improve embryo selection.

Intracytoplasmic Sperm Injection (ICSI): This is an IVF procedure in which a single sperm is injected directly into an egg. This procedure is used to overcome male infertility problems. It is also used to fertilize eggs that are not easily penetrated by sperm. BFC uses ICSI along with IVF in about 80 percent of cycles.

Egg Vitrification: Egg vitrification is a procedure to extract, freeze, and store a woman's unfertilized eggs for future use. This treatment can benefit women who want to preserve their chances of having children after undergoing such fertility-impairing treatments as chemotherapy or radiotherapy. Vitrification is a fast-freeze method, which is essential to preserving the integrity of the egg; slow freezing produces ice crystals that would destroy the cell. Vitrification's rapid freezing results in a solid, undamaged, glasslike cell, free of ice crystals.



Embryo Vitrification: This is the fast-freeze method to store embryos for future use. It is far more effective than the slow-freeze method previously used in IVF. Vitrification gives couples an opportunity to freeze fresh embryos on their first treatment cycle.

Preimplantation Genetic Screening (PGS): This technique offers couples the opportunity to have their embryos screened prior to implantation, in order to ensure that the best grade and quality of embryo is transferred. This may further improve a couple's chances of success. PGS is not available in some other clinics; it's an option that enhances BFC's unique approach to individual patient care.

How Is IVF Done?

In vitro is Latin. It means "in glass," as contrasted with *in vivo*, meaning "in life." In vitro fertilization (IVF) is the union of sperm and egg achieved not in a fallopian tube, but in a laboratory dish. To accomplish this, doctors first prescribe hormonal drugs that stimulate the ovaries to release more than one egg. The next step is egg retrieval. Using ultrasound images to guide a probe, doctors remove eggs from the ovaries. They place the eggs in a laboratory dish for insemination. Fertilization occurs naturally, but outside the body.

The resultant embryos then go through their normal cycle of cell division for a few days. When the embryos are at the right stage and the woman's body is ready, two or more healthy embryos are introduced into the woman's uterus. Any remaining healthy embryos can be frozen for future use. That way, if pregnancy doesn't happen on the first try, implantation can be attempted again later, without the need for another cycle of egg retrieval and fertilization.





More about Preimplantation Genetic Screening

As mentioned, PGS is a procedure used to check the genetic makeup of embryos, so only healthy ones are selected for placement in the uterus. Typically, one or two cells are removed from a three-day-old, eight-celled embryo. This microsurgical removal does not harm the embryo or affect its development.

Some couples request PGS because of advanced maternal age, a history of miscarriages, or repeated failures of embryo implantation. Other couples want testing because of a family history of an inherited single-gene disorder, such as cystic fibrosis, Tay-Sachs disease, thalassemia, or sickle cell disease. The procedure can also detect abnormalities in chromosome number, which are the cause of Down's syndrome and the most frequent cause of miscarriages.

Some studies suggest that PGS can increase the chances of successful implantation and reduce the risk of spontaneous abortion, but the procedure isn't for everyone. It must be planned during careful consultation between potential parents and their IVF physician.



Continuity of Care—Critical to Success

Continuity of care can be a challenge for patients who travel for medical procedures. Don't make the mistake of too little communication—either with your hometown doctors or with BFC. Make sure your local doctors understand your plans before you schedule your travel. Make sure, also, that your physician at BFC has access to all your medical records. Complications and misunderstandings can arise if information is missing or incomplete. Be proactive! At home and in Barbados, make sure that your physicians know anything and everything that is relevant to your case.

Have Your Most Current Medical Records

Once you have established contact, provide your BFC physician with any medical records that are requested. If necessary, visit your local physician to obtain up-to-date laboratory tests or scans—whatever your BFC doctor needs. Medical records can be transmitted in two ways: you can send paper copies or disks by postal service, or you can send electronic documents via a secure online service.

Collaboration Among Doctors

Transferring your medical records may get your local doctor communicating with your IVF physician at BFC. You may think your IVF case is closed when you return home—but in fact, you continue to be in contact with BFC, and you'll continue your care under the watchful eye of your local ob/gyn. BFC will notify your local physician of the details of the treatment and your after-IVF protocol.

Complete Documentation

Too often, patients return home lacking the complete documentation their local physician needs to oversee ongoing care. The absence of information compromises the physician's effectiveness and threatens the patient's health. Make sure you take copies of your treatment records with you when you return home. Make sure also that your local physician is fully informed about your BFC treatment. Good continuity of care is essential for a successful outcome.

Remember, as a patient, you need to take responsibility for the quality and consistency of the care you receive. If you don't, no one else will!

TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

RESEARCH HAS SHOWN THAT MANY COUPLES are uncertain, even intimidated, about initiating infertility treatment. Fears about treatment are often based on outdated or erroneous information. Recent improvements in medication, microsurgery, and advanced fertility treatments have made healthy pregnancy a possibility for the majority of patients who seek expert infertility advice.

The following are some state-of-the-art treatment options to discuss with your local doctors, your partner or spouse, and your BFC physician.

Ovulation Induction (OI): OI is the controlled administration of fertility drugs to stimulate the ovaries to produce mature eggs. It is typically applied to couples in which the woman has irregular menstrual cycles and in which investigations indicate that she may not be ovulating on a regular basis. Ultrasound scans and blood tests are performed to ensure that OI is both safe and effective. Once a mature follicle is produced, couples are advised about the best time for intercourse to achieve a pregnancy. Typically, couples need only a few months of OI in order to conceive.

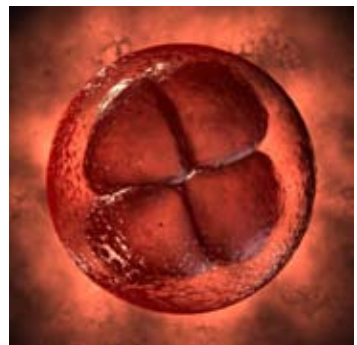
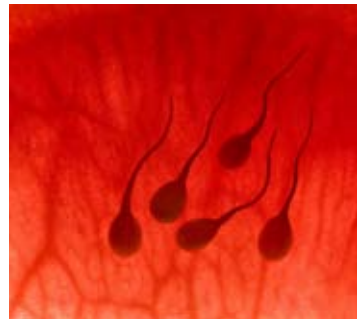
Intrauterine Insemination (IUI): IUI is the introduction of prepared sperm into the uterus to improve the chances of pregnancy. IUI is applied to couples in which the woman has unobstructed fallopian tubes and the man has normal semen parameters. This treatment involves tracking the progress of the menstrual cycle using ultrasound scans and blood tests.



For women who do not have regular cycles, OI may also be employed to help stimulate the production of a mature follicle. The IUI procedure is performed on the day of ovulation. Once ovulation has been confirmed, the male partner produces a semen sample. This semen sample is then prepared in the laboratory by the embryologist. The aim of the preparation process is to harvest a large number of healthy, motile sperm. The prepared sperm are then introduced, through a fine catheter, into the woman's uterus.

Assisted Hatching: The zona pellucida (ZP) is the dense membrane that surrounds the egg. Normally, it prevents fertilization by more than one sperm, and after fertilization, it keeps the cells of the embryo together during development to the blastocyst stage (the sphere of 150–300 cells that forms by about five to seven days after fertilization). At that time, the embryo has enough structural integrity that it no longer needs the protection of the ZP, and the embryo opens, or “hatches.” Opening the ZP by laser or mechanical means is termed “assisted hatching,” and it may be used as part of IVF treatment for women older than 36 years, women with elevated levels of follicle stimulating hormone (FSH), couples with previous IVF failures, embryos with an abnormal-appearing ZP, and cases using frozen embryos.





Testicular/Epididymal Sperm Aspiration (TESA): TESA is used to collect sperm directly from the testis or from the tubes that convey sperm from the testis. It is employed for men whose testes produce sperm but whose sperm are not ejaculated with the semen. This may occur in men who have had vasectomies or in whom infection or disease has produced a blockage. Two common approaches are percutaneous epididymal sperm aspiration (PESA) and testicular biopsy. PESA uses a fine needle inserted into a particular area of tubing called the epididymis, a natural reservoir for sperm and therefore a good place from which to aspirate them. If PESA is not possible or not successful, a testicular biopsy is performed. This procedure involves the removal of tiny pieces of tissue from the testis. The embryologist then processes the tissue to extract motile sperm.

Donor Egg Program: This program assists women who need donated eggs, perhaps because of premature ovarian failure, genetically transmissible disease, or advanced maternal age. Donors give their eggs voluntarily after a series of drug treatments that stimulates the ovaries to develop mature follicles. Once mature follicles have been produced, eggs are collected using an ultrasound-guided needle inserted through the vaginal wall and into the ovary. This procedure is performed under sedation/local anesthetic.

The collected eggs are then placed into culture in the embryology laboratory and inseminated using the recipient's partner's sperm. The development of fertilized eggs into embryos is monitored. The recipient's menstrual cycle is synchronized with that of the donor, so her uterus is ready to receive embryos after 24–48 hours of development. At BFC, the pregnancy rate for women using donated eggs is 55 percent per treatment cycle. However, the chance of success for any individual couple depends on many factors, such as the number and quality of the donated eggs and the age of the recipient.

Donor Sperm Program: Anonymously donated sperm may be used when the woman has unobstructed fallopian tubes, but the male partner's semen is unsuitable for use in fertility treatments. The use of donated sperm means that the woman can experience a pregnancy, carrying a child whose genetic makeup is half her own. The procedure for the woman's insemination is IUI (described on [page 14](#)). The success rate for IUI with donor sperm is 50–60 percent over the course of six to nine treatment cycles.



FACILITIES AND SIGNATURE SERVICES

HEALTHY MIND AND BODY PROGRAM

Scientists have long suspected that stress contributes to infertility, and in recent years, clinical studies have provided evidence that a causal relationship indeed exists. The staff of BFC has long recognized that reducing stress increases the chances of a successful IVF procedure. That's why staff members at BFC do everything they can to reduce stress for their clients.

One important tool for reducing stress is the center's Healthy Mind and Body Program. It incorporates massage, reflexology, acupuncture, and counseling to help couples deal with the negative emotions that may arise before, during, or after IVF treatment. The program helps couples achieve the optimal frame of mind to promote a successful outcome from their assisted reproductive treatment.

The first step begins at the airport in Barbados, when each couple is met upon arrival and taken by private luxury vehicle to the hotel of their choice. The couple is then encouraged to relax, enjoy island life, and stroll down the beach to begin their relaxing Caribbean vacation.

For those couples who choose the Healthy Mind and Body Program (either as part of their package or as an add-on), a holistic treatment that alleviates stress is scheduled for every two days of the visit. These appointments include two one-hour sessions of reflexology treatment, two one-hour acupuncture treatments, and two couple's massages in the privacy of their hotel room. Included in the program is a session with a specially trained counselor who teaches couples how to alleviate the negative emotions and stresses associated with infertility. Program participants learn new ways to restore their sense of control over anxiety and physical tension.

BFC IS BASED AT SEASTON HOUSE in Hastings, Christ Church, Barbados. In planning the center, the design team melded the classic elegance of a traditional Barbadian home with state-of-the-art medical facilities. The work areas are ergonomic and patient friendly. The clinical and laboratory facilities are first-rate—from the reception area to the consultation rooms, and from the ultrasound-monitoring suites to the fully equipped egg-retrieval theater and the four-bed recovery room. BFC is especially proud of its laboratory, which was specially designed and custom-built with positive-pressure air-conditioning and air-filtration systems to provide the best possible environment for embryo culture.

Signature Services

BFC's patient liaison manager, Rachel de Gale, caters to couples' every need, including selecting an affordable travel package, booking flights and accommodations, and coordinating airport transfers via luxury car.

The trip to Barbados is a continuation of a process that begins weeks, perhaps months, earlier—when the couple first contacts Anna Hosford, the center's clinic director and IVF nurse specialist. Hosford takes a detailed account of both partners' medical and fertility history. Then she schedules a telephone consultation with Dr. Juliet Skinner, the center's medical director and chief gynecologist. Infertility has many causes, and each couple's needs are different. Dr. Skinner offers her appraisal and explains the course of treatment she thinks will best suit the couple's particular needs. If the decision is made to go ahead with the treatment plan, patients may be required to undergo tests and treatment in their home country. De Gale then makes all the necessary travel arrangements, while Hosford takes care of all the medical planning.

Upon arrival in Barbados, the couple is met at their hotel by a BFC staff member, who provides both a mobile telephone and a carefully planned itinerary of medical and health-promotion/stress-reduction appointments. Most couples stay in Barbados for 14 days while their treatment is performed. The BFC patient liaison manager arranges a private luxury vehicle for the return trip to the airport. Back home, the couple receives a followup call to confirm their safe arrival. Then everyone waits eagerly for the results of a pregnancy test.



Travel Packages

The BFC patient liaison manager can tailor-make travel and housing plans to meet the needs and budgets of individual clients. For couples who would like a predetermined travel package, BFC has four plans available. All include two round-trip tickets between home and Barbados. BFC's airline partners of choice are British Airways, American Airlines, and Air Canada. Also included in package costs are airport transfers in a private luxury car, as well as private transportation between lodgings and medical appointments at BFC. (Treatment costs are not included. Package prices are subject to change.)

The Comfort Package: (US\$5,500) provides accommodations at a newly built, apartment-style, self-catering (with kitchen), beachfront hotel. The Healthy Mind and Body Program can be added to this package for an additional US\$1,500.

The Luxury Package: (US\$6,500) provides lodging in a three-star beachfront hotel. The Healthy Mind and Body Program can be added for an additional US\$1,500.

The Premium Package: (US\$10,000) provides accommodations in a four-star beachfront hotel on the prestigious west coast of Barbados. The Healthy Mind and Body Program is included.

The Elite Package: (US\$30,000) is the crème de la crème of BFC's packages. Guests enjoy expedited clearance through customs and immigration upon arrival at the airport. They are then driven in a Bentley to the exclusive, five-star Sandy Lane Resort. This package includes daily breakfast, business-class fares, and the Healthy Mind and Body Program.



David and Heather D., Washington, US

AFTER TRYING TO CONCEIVE FOR OVER TEN YEARS, David and Heather visited their local fertility doctor. “The experience was appalling,” says David. “We paid US\$500 for a consultation and exam and were treated with impersonal, hard-sell tactics. They followed our exam with a chat with the financial person, who was obviously trying to close the deal and get us to agree to a three-IVF package at a cost of more than US\$25,000. We felt as though we were talking to used-car salesmen. We left discouraged and humiliated. Heather cried.”

Luckily, that same week, David and Heather were talking to some friends who had moved to Honduras. The friends asked if the couple had considered medical treatment outside the US. Their curiosity aroused, David and Heather did some research on the Internet and found Barbados Fertility Center. They contacted Anna Hosford, BFC’s clinic director, who explained the center’s approach. She suggested that the couple contact a former BFC patient who lives in Canada.

The couple called the former patient and enjoyed a pleasant talk with her. She had nothing but good things to say about her experience. “After that chat, we felt comfortable with the idea, so we made our arrangements with BFC,” says David. “We received a well-organized packet of information from BFC and chatted many times with [BFC’s medical director] Dr. Juliet Skinner and Anna Hosford. They were friendly, helpful, and understanding,” he reports.

To prepare Heather’s body for IVE, BFC sent hormone medications to Spokane by mail. “The medications arrived from Italy and Canada, at half the US cost,” says David. David gave the shots to Heather at home, carefully following Dr. Skinner’s instructions. “The process seemed daunting at first,” David admits, “but with kind help from the BFC staff, it was really quite easy.”

After a month of injections, the couple was ready. The IVF treatment requires two weeks, but David and Heather booked their trip for three, allowing time for a relaxing vacation. They flew to Barbados and stayed at a BFC-recommended hotel, just a short walk down a white-sand beach from the clinic. After the exams and successful egg extraction, gestation, consultation, and embryo implantation, the couple stayed in Barbados for another week and toured the island.

“Our experience in Barbados was wonderful,” says David. “The island is so gorgeous, and the people are so kind and easygoing. We drove around, saw beautiful sights, towns, and people. We sailed, swam in the ocean with turtles, and enjoyed the warm tropical sun. It was truly a relaxing and memorable experience worth telling—not just a cold hospital procedure.”

BFC attracted the couple with its high success rates, beautiful location, and comparatively low prices. David and Heather saved money by using

flight miles from their credit card to pay for their plane tickets. Beyond that, the cost of their trip—including hotel, food, tourism, medications, and all clinic charges—totaled approximately US\$12,000. The treatment was, in David’s words, “better than in the US.”

Back home in Spokane, Heather’s pregnancy was confirmed, and her local obstetrician provided routine care throughout her pregnancy. In February 2009, David and Heather welcomed a healthy baby girl into the world. “Our daughter is so sweet, smart, and beautiful,” says David. “We have a wonderful story to tell her about how she was conceived. We are blessed.”

Catherine M., Ontario, Canada

“I WENT THROUGH A NUMBER OF FAILED IVF CYCLES here at home,” says Catherine, whose local doctor had diagnosed bilateral tubal blockage. Unwilling to give up, Catherine and her husband resolved to seek a second opinion and perhaps try again, although they had not yet decided when or where.

Then, in 2005, while planning a business trip to Barbados, the couple found the BFC Web site. They contacted the center and consulted with Dr. Skinner. As discussions continued, Catherine became convinced that BFC might be a good choice for her. “We were confident that we, as patients, were being fully informed of our options,” she says.

After deciding that BFC was the right choice for her, Catherine started her treatment at home, with the preparatory hormonal medications and monitoring that Dr. Skinner prescribed. Catherine arranged for blood testing through her local clinic. During a ten-day stay in Barbados, she underwent her IVF procedure and returned home pregnant, although at the time she was unaware that her treatment had been successful. “Even thinking we hadn’t achieved a pregnancy, we were so happy.”

Catherine was especially pleased with the timely manner in which she received treatment compared to the wait she would have endured at home. “I contacted BFC in May of that year and received my treatment in July. At home, I was waiting to go to our hospital-based clinic, where there wasn’t an opening for me until the fall. I had done five cycles with them already, without success. BFC agreed to try something different with me, and it worked.”

Catherine says she received excellent, prompt treatment while saving money, too. “A cycle here in Canada at the time was about US\$8,500, plus almost US\$3,000 in drug costs,” she reports. “As I recall, BFC cost about US\$6,000, plus US\$2,000 in drug costs, so I saved nearly US\$4,000. That doesn’t include travel, because we were traveling for business anyway, so flights and lodging were not an issue.”

During their time both at home and abroad, Catherine and her husband felt very comfortable with the center’s level of care. “The staff was always available to answer questions. They were extremely responsive to telephone calls and emails. The BFC team made me feel a part of my own treatment,” she says.



Bella R.*

BELLA WAS IN HER EARLY FORTIES when she became pregnant for the first time. Two years and three miscarriages later, she had learned that becoming and staying pregnant was not easy. She and her husband sought fertility help in New York City at a reputable clinic. “It was typical New York,” says Bella, “large and tightly wound, patronized by high-octane, nervous clients whose anxiety, like mine, was palpable and contagious.” Staff members at the clinic informed Bella the treatment she needed was not covered by her insurance. Her out-of-pocket cost estimate might run as high as US\$26,000, not including medications.

Bella’s parents live in Barbados, and her mother suggested BFC, which was getting stellar reviews. Bella and her husband visited the facility; they found it both comfortable and attractive. “BFC just felt right to us,” Bella says, “equally professional compared to New York, but far less stressful.”

After undergoing a preliminary examination at BFC, Bella heard the same diagnosis she had received in New York: unlikely to bear a child without a donor egg because of maternal age and a high FSH level. Although the assessment was the same, the cost of the recommended treatment was less. Including travel costs (but avoiding lodging costs, because she stayed with her family), Bella’s estimate ran about US\$16,000, plus the cost of medications.

“My treatment started before we arrived in Barbados,” Bella reports, “and we were in constant email contact with the BFC staff. Once on the island, we found the team supportive, patient, and kind—willing to take stressed-out calls, hold hands, and explain procedures. The treatment was a two-week process, but we stayed longer, relaxing and soaking up the sun. By the time we returned home, I was pregnant.”

Now mother to a wonderful baby boy, Bella is still happy with her BFC experience. “I am certain that the relaxed environment of Barbados played a major part in our success,” she says. Bella’s obstetric care was proceeding well under the supervision of her hometown physician, but she remained in contact with BFC. “My husband, who is not a fan of doctors, had nothing but praise for the clinic and its staff. We will definitely return there should we decide to try for a second baby,” she says.

Michelle W.*

MICHELLE’S INFERTILITY TREATMENT JOURNEY began when a specialist told her she could not conceive naturally because of blockages in her fallopian tubes. Michelle was healthy and only 32 years old, so her doctor was optimistic that IVF would work for her. “You’re the perfect candidate,” he said.

Michelle and her husband made arrangements to undergo IVF at a highly rated fertility clinic in their Canadian city. The first cycle attempt, using fresh

embryos, failed. The next attempt, using frozen embryos, resulted in a pregnancy, but Michelle miscarried at eight weeks. The next implant of a frozen embryo failed to result in pregnancy, as did several more attempts over the next several years. Michelle experienced several early miscarriages, too, despite the fact that she and her husband were producing what the specialists judged “excellent” five-to-six-day blastocysts.

Michelle was bothered by the fact that her IVF doctor was doing the same thing over and over each time. “No further investigations, no changes in protocols,” says Michelle. “My attempts to discuss other approaches were not entertained.”

During that time, Michelle developed several large uterine fibroids that she thought needed attention, but her IVF doctor refused to discuss them. Her gynecologist said bluntly that her infertility was not a result of fibroids; therefore, no surgery should be done to remove them. “That was when I knew I had to take matters into my own hands,” Michelle says.

In 2006 she joined an online IVF discussion forum and discovered that many women in North America were seeking fertility treatment overseas. “That was news to me,” she says. “I thought Canada and the United States had the best doctors!” As Michelle learned more, she began to think that treatment outside the country might be right for her. “Barbados was on the top of my list,” she says. “The doctor and the staff at BFC were rated as topnotch.”

Michelle’s first consultation at BFC was promising. Dr. Skinner’s first recommendation was removal of the fibroids, which she accomplished successfully with no complications. “This gave me a lot of confidence and trust in Dr. Skinner,” says Michelle. Next came fertility treatment. Given Michelle’s history of miscarriages, Dr. Skinner was open to an alternative treatment that Michelle had researched. Intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIG) is a blood product sometimes used to treat inflammation and autoimmune disorders. Its use in the treatment of repeated miscarriages is controversial, but Michelle and Dr. Skinner agreed it was worth trying.

The treatment, along with another cycle of IVF, worked. Michelle was delighted when she became pregnant, but she was in for an unhappy surprise—she could not find a doctor in her home city who would agree to continue her IVIG treatments. She had to travel back to Barbados three times, but she never complained, either about the inconvenience or about the cost. “Even with the extra trips back to Barbados, we were able to save about US\$20,000–25,000 off the cost of IVF in the US,” she explains.

As of this writing, Michelle is eight months into her pregnancy. She’s carrying twins. Boys? Girls? One of each? She and her husband have chosen not to know. It’s more fun that way. As for the future, Michelle is optimistic. She found a listening ear and competent medical treatment in Barbados. “I would definitely recommend BFC to anyone who is considering fertility treatment abroad,” she says.

*Patient’s actual name and location withheld by request.



Travel Planners

You may find the services of a health travel planner useful when arranging your treatment at BFC. Health travel planners (also called brokers, facilitators, agents, or expeditors) specialize in helping patients obtain medical treatment abroad. Many arrange everything from flights and hotels to appointments with doctors, hospital check-ins, local transportation, and onsite concierge services. The following agency sometimes assists BFC's clients in making their plans. You may wish to contact them or contact BFC directly for more information.

Surgical Escape

Suite 212 - 1935-32nd Avenue NE
 Calgary, Alberta, CANADA T2E 7C8
 Tel: 866 205.8855 (US and Canada toll-free)
 Fax: 866 205.8854 (US and Canada toll-free)
 Email: customerservice@surgicalescape.com
 Web: www.surgicalescape.com

Accommodations

A large number of self-service apartments, luxury hotels, and moderately priced lodgings are available to serve BFC couples during their stay in Barbados. The four hotels most often recommended by BFC are as follows:

LUXURY

Sandy Lane Resort

Sandy Lane, St. James
 Barbados, WEST INDIES BB24024
 Tel: +1 246 444.2000
 Fax: +1 246 444.2222
 Email: reservations@sandylane.com
 Web: www.sandylane.com

Sandy Lane is a premier address in the Caribbean, preferred by royalty, celebrities, and many of the world's business leaders. Located on the west coast of Barbados, it provides high-end accommodations, fine dining, and excellent sports and leisure facilities, including the world-class Sandy Lane Golf Course.

Little Arches

Enterprise Beach Road, Christ Church
 Barbados, WEST INDIES
 Tel: +1 246 420.4689
 Fax: +1 246 418.0207
 Email: paradise@littlearches.com
 Web: www.littlearches.com

Nestled on a south coast bay next to the white sands of Enterprise Beach, Little Arches is one of the most distinctive boutique hotels in Barbados. With only a handful of rooms and a no-children policy, this hotel is an excellent choice for couples seeking a romantic getaway.

MODERATE

Rosebank Apartments

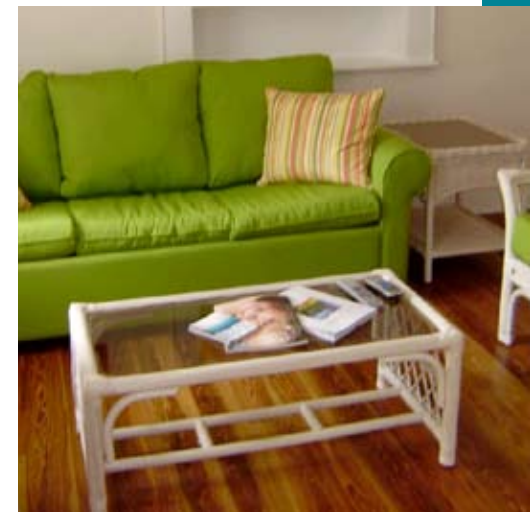
Hastings, Christ Church
 Barbados, WEST INDIES
 Tel: +1 246 271.0141
 Fax: +1 246 271.0142
 Email: info@rosebankbarbados.com
 Web: www.rosebankbarbados.com

Rosebank is a restored sugarcane plantation house that's been converted into apartments, each with its own kitchen. Studios, one- and two-bedroom units (some with private patios), and a two-bedroom cottage are available. In proximity to all the south coast beaches, Rosebank is located only five minutes away from BFC.

Bougainvillea Beach Resort

Maxwell Coast Road, Christ Church
 Barbados, WEST INDIES
 Tel: 800 495.1858 (US and Canada toll-free); +1 246 418.0990
 Fax: +1 246 428.2524
 Email: res@bougainvillearesort.com
 Web: www.bougainvillearesort.com

This south coast, 138-suite hotel offers ocean, pool, and garden views; water sports, pools, tennis, a fitness center, and spa treatments; plus a choice of meal packages. Bougainvillea is a good choice for couples traveling with family.





Seeing the Sights in Barbados

Barbados is the easternmost Caribbean island, and a young one at that. It formed less than a million years ago when a collision of the Atlantic crustal and Caribbean plates resulted in volcanic eruptions. As its two landmasses formed and subsequently merged, a coral reef grew, accumulating to approximately 300 feet (about 91 meters) today.

History

Fragments of shell tools, utensils, refuse, and burial places lead archaeologists to conclude that Barbados was first settled around 1623 BC. The first indigenous people may have been Amerindians who paddled dugout canoes across the ocean from Venezuela. These earliest settlers were farmers who grew cotton, cassava, corn, peanuts, guavas, and papayas. They made harpoons, nets, and hooks, and used them to fish.

In AD 1200, the original tribes were conquered by the Caribs, reputed to be savage cannibals who, according to the Barbados Tourism Authority, “barbecued their captives and washed them down with cassava beer.” But the Caribs were no match for the Spanish, who conquered the island in 1492. The tuberculosis and smallpox the conquistadors brought with them wiped out the Caribs they enslaved.

After that, Spain showed little interest in Barbados, and the stage was set for English colonization. The first English ship landed in 1625, and its captain claimed the island on behalf of King James I. In 1627, a party of 80 settlers arrived. They cut down the island’s trees and established tobacco and cotton plantations. During the 1630s, sugarcane was introduced, and the island became a booming market for slaves conveyed by Dutch merchants from West Africa. For decades, sugar and slavery prevailed, but a series of natural disasters and bad investments led to a decline of the enterprise, and by 1720 Jamaica, not Barbados, was the sugar capital of the Caribbean.

Slavery was abolished in 1834. After that, educational opportunities expanded for local people, and the Barbados tourism industry began to thrive. Travelers sought out Barbados for its mild climate and its relaxed way of living. Some journeyed to Barbados to treat “the vapors,” an archaic term covering a broad array of mental health issues from clinical depression and bipolar disorder to fainting and mood swings.

Barbados remained a British colony until autonomy was granted in 1961. The island nation gained full independence in 1966, but it maintains ties to Britain through membership in the British Commonwealth. Today, vacationers flock to Barbados to enjoy its unique blend of colonial charm and breathtaking



natural beauty. Its beaches, coral reefs, tidepools, cliffs, and underground lakes and caves are all there for the exploring. The island is home to many indigenous and migratory species of wildlife, birds, and mammals, including endangered green turtles, which can still be seen laying their eggs along the shore.

Local Attractions

Many BFC patients choose to spend most of their nontreatment time relaxing on one of the island’s white-sand beaches. Golf courses, tennis courts, and health-promoting spa treatments are attractive, too, as are the many available sightseeing tours. The staff at BFC also recommends the following four local attractions, well worth an afternoon of strolling and picture-taking.

Bridgetown: Bridgetown is the capital city of Barbados, with two cathedrals and one of the oldest Jewish synagogues in the Western Hemisphere, all open to the public. Visitors are spoiled for choice when shopping in Bridgetown. All tourist shopping is duty-free, which can mean substantial savings on more expensive items, such as jewelry and electronic devices.

Sea Turtle Tours: Barbados is home to a healthy population of hawksbill and leatherback turtles. Once endangered by overfishing, these great creatures are now protected and monitored throughout the island. Turtles are sociable and, in certain monitored areas, they have become accustomed to humans and are relatively tame. You can swim or snorkel with them in the pristine, warm Caribbean. A good way to do this is with a day cruise on a catamaran.

Concorde Experience: One of the retired Concorde airplanes was donated to the island when the aircraft made its last flight there. Visitors can board the plane and enjoy the luxury of leather Conran seats, while imagining what a three-hour flight from London to Barbados must have been like.

Garrison Savannah: This historic racecourse is one of the most prestigious in the Caribbean, with regular large races held frequently, including the Sandy Lane Gold Cup in March. A day at the races is a must to complete any vacation in Barbados.



INTERNATIONAL PATIENT RESOURCES

“Our experience in Barbados was wonderful. . . . It was a truly relaxing and memorable experience worth telling—not just a cold hospital procedure.”

—DAVID AND HEATHER D.,
Washington, US

BARBADOS FERTILITY CENTER PROVIDES a unique approach to IVF. The center’s stress-reducing vacation environment and its individualized treatment program have produced success rates equal to, or greater than, those achieved in the UK, US, Canada, and Europe. BFC is the only JCI-accredited IVF clinic in the Caribbean. Focused on individual care, the center is committed to providing the highest-quality medical services with an established, internationally trained medical team.

BFC is dedicated to serving all couples. Dr. Juliet Skinner, BFC’s medical director, emphasizes that couples should not wait. The longer infertility goes on, the more damage it can do to a relationship, and lengthy infertility can lower the medical chances of success. Call BFC or visit its Web site now.



Barbados Fertility Center

Barbados, WEST INDIES

www.barbadosfertility.com

contact@barbadosfertility.com

+1 246 435.7467

866 246.8616 (US and Canada toll-free)



Visit Barbados Fertility Center
on Facebook.

Healthy Travel Media

North Carolina, UNITED STATES

www.patientsbeyondborders.com

info@patientsbeyondborders.com

+1 919 370.7380



Visit *Patients Beyond Borders*
on Facebook.

US\$9.95

UK£6.75

CAN\$10.25

ISBN: 978-0-9843880-2-8