

ISLAND GUIDE



San Salvador, Bahamas



MORLEY

Table of Contents

<u>Page 1</u>	Welcome to San Salvador
<u>Page 2</u>	Getting Here
<u>Page 3</u>	Car Rentals / Scooters Rentals
<u>Page 4</u>	Where to Stay
<u>Page 5</u>	Where to Stay cont.
<u>Page 6</u>	Where to Stay cont.
<u>Page 7</u>	Diving & Snorkeling Sites
<u>Page 8</u>	Diving & Snorkeling Sites cont.
<u>Page 9</u>	World Class Fishing
<u>Page 10</u>	Kite Surfing
<u>Page 11</u>	Things To Do
<u>Page 12</u>	Things To Do cont.
<u>Page 13</u>	Things To Do cont.
<u>Page 14</u>	Things To Do cont.
<u>Page 15</u>	Things To Do cont.
<u>Page 16</u>	Things To Do cont.
<u>Page 17</u>	Gerace Research Institute (GRI)
<u>Page 18</u>	Where To Eat
<u>Page 19</u>	Island Essentials
<u>Page 20</u>	Island Essentials cont.
<u>Page 21</u>	Island Essentials cont.
<u>Page 22</u>	Exciting New Infrastructure Investment in San Salvador
<u>Page 23</u>	The Beauty of the San Salvador



Welcome to San Salvador

Welcome to San Salvador, a quiet jewel of The Bahamas steeped in history, natural beauty, and island charm. Known as the first landfall of Christopher Columbus in 1492, this remote outpost offers pristine beaches, world-class diving, and a tight-knit community of under 1,000 residents. For the discerning traveler or future homeowner, San Salvador is a rare opportunity to experience the Bahamas the way it once was—unspoiled, authentic, and unforgettable.

Stretching 7.5 miles North to South and 3 miles East to West.

Getting Here



Traveling to the destination is easy with several convenient flight options.

From Paris (ORY), weekly flights operated by Air Caraibes.

From Montreal (YUL), weekly flights operated by Air Canada.

Miami (MIA) offers weekly flights via BahamasAir,

Nassau (NAS) provides daily domestic connections through

BahamasAir,

Nassau also serves as a major international hub, with direct flights from cities such as New York, Miami, Toronto, Atlanta, and London. Major airlines flying into Nassau include BahamasAir, JetBlue, Delta, American Airlines, United, Air Canada, and British Airways. For UK travelers, there are direct flights from Nassau to London operated by British Airways, offering a smooth and efficient travel experience.



Car Rentals/ Scooter Rentals

C & E Rent A Car

(242-331-2350)

Nat Walker's Car Rental

Kateferguson@hotmail.com | 242-452-0594

K's Scooter Rental

242-331-2350

<https://www.kssscooters.com>

We encourage you to rent a car on the island as taxis are limited. In the Bahamas we drive on the left-hand side of the road.



Where to Stay

Whether you're coming for a week or house hunting for good, the island offers a range of accommodations.

THE BOHEMIAN

Tucked away on the pristine shores of San Salvador, The Bohemian is a private beachfront retreat offering a true escape from the everyday. With panoramic views of crystal-clear turquoise waters, this serene getaway is perfect for those who love swimming, snorkeling, fishing, kite surfing, diving, golfing, or simply unwinding in peace. Guests can choose to enjoy three meals daily, making it a seamless, all-in-one experience.

Stefan Bommerer

(242) 357-6028 | Bommerer@aol.com |

<https://bohemianbahamas.com>



RIDING ROCK INN RESORT & MARINA

Family-owned oceanfront resort on San Salvador, just minutes from the airport. Built in the 1960s by the Williams family, it caters to boaters, divers, and fishermen. The resort features a full-service marina with 25 slips, accommodating vessels up to 140 feet. On-site amenities include a popular restaurant serving American and Bahamian dishes—especially fresh fish—and the laid-back Driftwood Lounge bar, both offering beautiful ocean views

<https://ridingrock.com>



CLUB MED COLUMBUS ISLE

A premier all-inclusive resort located on the beachfront of San Salvador, offering a wide array of both water and land-based activities in a tropical, tranquil setting. Guests can enjoy scuba diving, snorkeling, sailing, kayaking, windsurfing, year-round jet-skiing, and paddleboarding, along with seasonal waterskiing and wakeboarding. On land, the resort features fitness and yoga classes, tennis, team sports, bocce ball, table tennis, cycling, and more. There's also access to fishing and guided excursions for those looking to explore beyond the resort. The property includes two on-site restaurants, serving international and Bahamian cuisine, making it an ideal choice for travelers seeking both adventure and relaxation.

<https://www.clubmed.us/d/the-caribbean/the-bahamas>



If you are not staying at Club Med Day Columbus Isle: Limited day pass access for non-guests are available. Please inquire in advance regarding these prices.

GUANAHANI BEACH CLUB

An intimate luxury resort located on the secluded southeast coast of San Salvador, Bahamas, nestled on pristine Snow Bay beach. With just four elegant white-washed villas—including three one-bedroom and one two-bedroom—guests enjoy ultimate privacy and harmony with nature. The resort blends relaxation and adventure, featuring a gourmet beachfront restaurant serving Italian-inspired cuisine, spa and wellness treatments, and a full water-sports center offering kiteboarding, catamaran sailing, snorkeling, kayaking, diving, and deep-sea fishing. Ideal for adult travelers (15+), this sophisticated retreat emphasizes personalized service, vibrant turquoise waters, and uncrowded beaches—promising a rejuvenating getaway off the beaten path

<https://www.guanahanibeachclub.com>
info@guanahanibeachclub.com | 242-452-0438



THE SANDS HOTEL

The Sands Hotel in Cockburn Town, San Salvador, Bahamas, is a laid-back, boutique beachfront retreat featuring 20 stylish cottages and rooms right on a private white-sand beach with bright turquoise waters. Guests enjoy sea-view accommodations—many with kitchenettes, balconies, or separate living areas—plus free WiFi, air-conditioning, and thoughtful amenities. Property highlights include an outdoor pool, spa services, a beachfront bar/restaurant with Bahamian dishes, free airport shuttle, private check-in/out, and 24-hour desk. It's an ideal spot for relaxation, water activities, and exploring San Salvador's historic sites.

<https://sandshotelsansalvadorbahamas.com/>
[242-331-1018](tel:242-331-1018) | sandsresortandspa@gmail.com



MARINE LIFE & CONDITIONS

San Salvador offers crystal-clear waters with over 100 feet of visibility and vibrant marine life, including sea turtles, rays, groupers, and the occasional hammerhead shark. Its dramatic drop-offs, coral gardens, and gorgonian forests make it a paradise for divers and photographers. Visitors may also spot migrating humpbacks, pilot whales, dolphins, and whale sharks during the winter months.

DIVE SITES

Most dive sites are just 10–15 minutes from the resort, offering easy access to San Salvador's top underwater spots like La Crevasse, Double Caves, Black Forest, Sandy Point Cave, Orbit's Canyon, and Shark Alley. Known for its dramatic wall dives—rare in the Bahamas—San Salvador is rated among the best Caribbean destinations for spotting large pelagic species. Sites feature swim-throughs, coral tunnels, deep walls, and impressive reef structures.

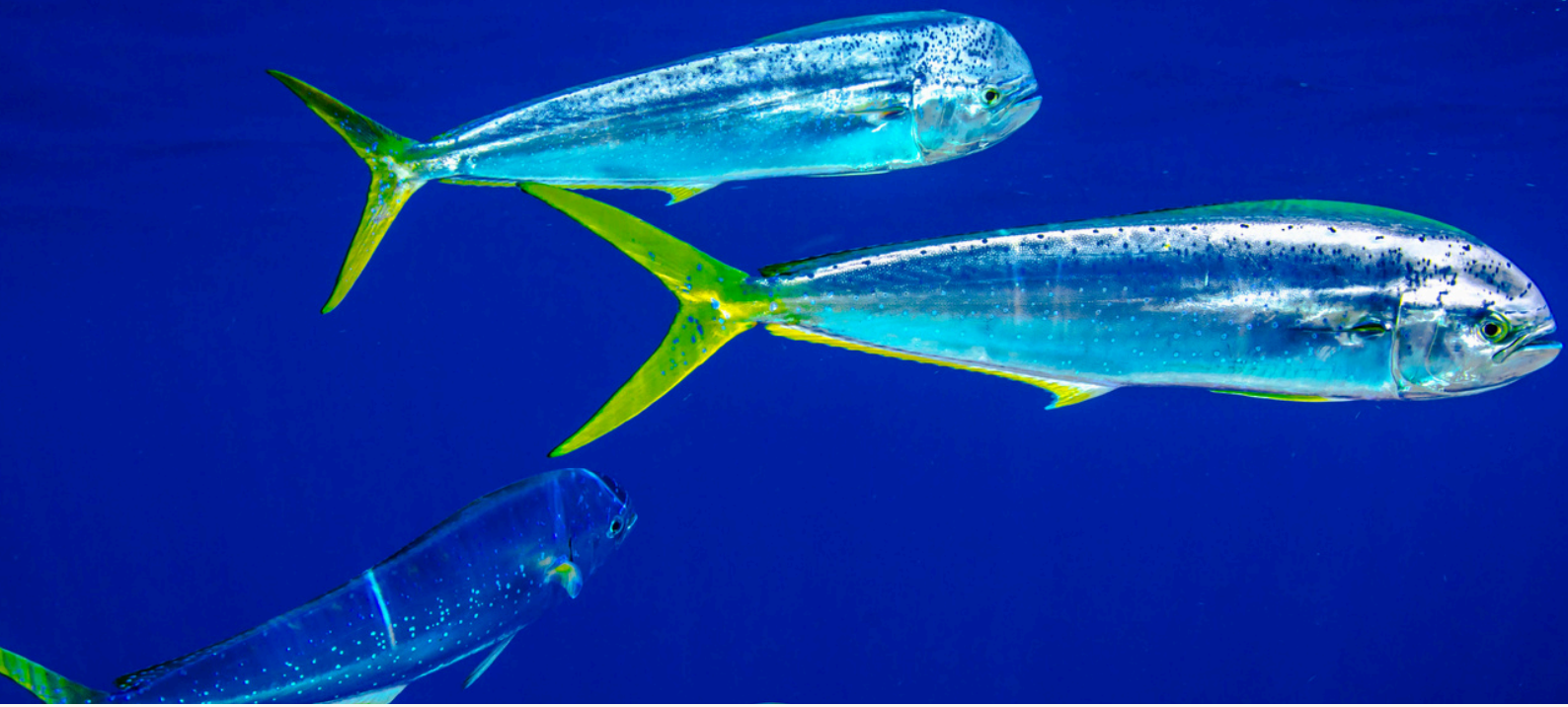
DIVE CENTER & BOATS

Guanahani Divers, based at the Riding Rock Marina, manages all diving operations. They run two well-maintained dive boats and provide rental gear, including regulators, BCDs, and dive computers. The dive center is geared toward a smooth and safe diving experience, with experienced staff available to assist both beginners and seasoned divers.

Visit <https://ridingrock.com/bahamas-diving/> for more details.



World Class Fishing



San Salvador, Bahamas is a world-class fishing destination for sports fishing famed for its trophy-grade pelagic and inshore species. Anglers flock here for giant wahoo—frequently 100–140 lb monsters—over the island’s offshore humps just minutes from Riding Rock Marina. It also boasts prolific Blue Marlin, Yellowfin Tuna, Dolphin (mahi-mahi), Kingfish and Snapper. Seasonally, winter months (Nov–Feb) yield record wahoo; spring (Apr–Jun) brings marlin and tuna; flats and bonefish thrive in March–July. Guided charters operate half- or full-day trips, many promoting catch-and-release for conservation. With both deep-sea and fly-fishing options, San Sal is an angler’s paradise offering unforgettable sport-fishing adventures.



Kite Surfing

San Salvador's Snow Bay is a premier kitesurfing hotspot in the Bahamas—renowned for its uncrowded, flat-water lagoon protected by reefs, stretching roughly 1.5–2 km with sandy, obstacle-free bottoms. From November through May, steady side-onshore trade winds from the north-east (15–30 knots) create ideal conditions for all skill levels—freeride, freestyle, speed, slalom, and hydrofoil. Equipment, rescue and instruction services are available via local operators like Bahamas Kitesurfing, offering high safety standards and a friendly community atmosphere. Warm tropical waters (mid-20s °C), protective reefs, and nearly empty beaches make San Sal a true kiting paradise—perfect if you want to “feel the only one in the world”.

For kite surfing we recommend staying at Guanahani Beach Resort in Snow Bay.

<https://www.bahamaskitesurfing.bs>

info@bahamaskitesurfing.bs. | 242-808-1121



Things To Do

MINISTRY OF TOURISM OFFICE

Speak to Velda Knowles at the Ministry of Tourism office for local insights and suggestions. Vknowles@bahamas.com, Vblack@bahamas.com, 242-331-1928/29

NORTH POINT CLIFFS

A scenic coastal hike featuring dramatic limestone cliffs, rugged terrain, and ocean views. The trail winds through dense scrub and rocky paths, offering a glimpse of the island's unique geology and history, including old shipwreck remnants. It's a moderately challenging walk, ideal for nature lovers and those seeking a quiet, panoramic adventure along the northern tip of the island

SNOW BAY

Snow Bay on San Salvador's southern coast is a quiet, crescent-shaped beach known for its soft white sand and clear turquoise waters. Located near Pigeon Creek National Park, it's perfect for swimming, snorkeling, kitesurfing, or simply relaxing in a peaceful, uncrowded setting. With minimal development and few amenities, it's ideal for visitors seeking natural beauty, tranquility, and a touch of adventure.



GROTTO BEACH

Grotto Beach is a scenic beach on the western coast of San Salvador, Bahamas, known for its wide stretch of soft white sand and calm, clear waters. What makes it unique is the way the point naturally shifts with the seasons—summer swells tend to push the sand westward, forming sandbars and shallow pools, while winter tides gradually reshape the shoreline again. This constant movement creates a dynamic and ever-changing landscape, making each visit feel slightly different. It's a peaceful spot perfect for swimming, beachcombing, or simply enjoying the natural beauty.

HIGH, MIDDLE & LOW CAY

A trio of small islands off the coast of San Salvador, Bahamas, known for their natural beauty and excellent snorkeling. High Cay is the largest, with rolling terrain, three white-sand beaches, and sweeping ocean views—believed by some to be the first land sighted by Columbus in 1492. Middle Cay is a smaller, rocky islet often used by nesting seabirds. Low Cay is flatter, with long sandy stretches and shallow reefs rich in marine life, perfect for snorkeling and exploring. Together, they offer a peaceful and scenic escape ideal for boaters, beach lovers, and nature enthusiasts.





DIXON HILL LIGHTHOUSE

Dixon Hill Lighthouse, built in 1887 on San Salvador's highest point, is one of the last hand-operated kerosene lighthouses in the world. Standing 72 feet tall, it emits two white flashes every 10 seconds and is visible up to 19 miles away. Operated manually by lighthouse keepers, it offers stunning 360° views and serves as a historic symbol of the island's colonial maritime heritage—making it a must-see landmark for visitors.

COLUMBUS MONUMENT

The Columbus Monument on San Salvador Island is a white stone cross located at Long Bay, marking the spot where Christopher Columbus is believed to have first landed in the New World on October 12, 1492. Erected in 1956, the monument commemorates this historic event and stands as the island's most iconic landmark. Set within Landfall Park, it offers visitors a peaceful beachfront location to reflect on the significance of the moment and enjoy scenic ocean views.



PIGEON CREEK NATIONAL PARK

Pigeon Creek on San Salvador is a peaceful tidal lagoon surrounded by mangroves and seagrass beds, serving as a vital nursery for marine life like grouper, lobster, and reef fish. It's also a historic site with ancient Arawak settlements. Visitors can enjoy eco-tours, snorkeling near High Cay, wildlife spotting, and bonefishing. The area offers a rich blend of nature, culture, and quiet adventure—ideal for those seeking an immersive, low-impact experience. Our favorite outing is to drift with the current with your mask and snorkel down Pigeon Creek.

CHURCH RUINS

The church ruins on San Salvador Island, Bahamas, are the remains of old colonial-era churches that reflect the island's religious and cultural history. These stone structures, often overgrown with vegetation, date back to the 18th and 19th centuries and were built by early settlers, including Loyalists and freed Africans. Though roofless and weathered by time, many of the ruins still feature altar bases, arched windows, and grave markers, offering a quiet and atmospheric glimpse into the island's past spiritual life. They are scattered across the island and often visited for their historical significance and serene beauty.

MEXICO OLYMPIC MONUMENT

The Mexico Olympic Monument on San Salvador Island is a circular black-tiled structure located at Landfall Park, near the site where Columbus is believed to have first landed. It commemorates the 1968 Mexico City Olympic Games and marks a historic moment when the Olympic torch passed through San Salvador. As part of a symbolic route retracing Columbus's journey from Europe to the New World, the flame traveled from Greece to Spain, then to San Salvador, where it paused for a ceremonial relay before continuing to Mexico. The monument stands as a tribute to global unity and the island's role in that historic Olympic journey.



WATLING'S CASTLE

Watling's Castle on San Salvador Island is the remains of an 18th-century Loyalist plantation house located near French Bay. Despite the name, it was never a true castle and has no connection to the pirate John Watling. Built by Loyalists who settled in the Bahamas after the American Revolution, the site once included a main house, kitchen, slave quarters, and barns. Today, visitors can explore the stone ruins and a restored lookout tower that offers sweeping views of the coastline. It serves as an important historical and archaeological site reflecting the island's colonial past.





BEACHES

San Salvador is home to a stunning variety of beaches, each offering its own distinct beauty and experience.

- Grotto Beach (Sandy Point) is famous for its shifting sandbar and offshore reef, making it ideal for both relaxing and snorkeling.
- Bonefish Bay Beach is a long, open stretch perfect for peaceful walks and flats fishing, especially at low tide.
- Snow Bay Beach, located on the southeastern coast, is remote and known for its powder-soft sand and crystal-clear water—perfect for kayaking or simply soaking in the views.
- Dim Bay is a vibrant blue cove that's calm, scenic, and ideal for swimming.
- Long Bay, near the historic Columbus Monument, offers a quiet, reflective space with beautiful ocean vistas and a deep sense of history.
- East Beach, outside United Estates settlement, leads to the 1891 Chicago Herald Monument commemorating Columbus' landfall. Accessible only by beach, some stretches glow pink, making it especially stunning at dawn and dusk.

Together, these beaches showcase the raw, natural charm of San Salvador.

Gerace Research Institute (GRI)



Located on the site of a former U.S. Naval Base, the Gerace Research Institute (GRI) has operated for over 40 years as a hub for education and field-based research. Each year, groups focused on geology, marine biology, and archaeology visit the island to study its rich tropical environment. GRI provides accommodations, labs, transportation, and logistical support for students, teachers, and researchers, offering hands-on courses in geology, biology, ecology, archaeology, and even the arts. Study settings range from coral reefs and mangroves to historic ruins and hypersaline lakes.

The Institute works closely with the Bahamian government to support environmental and cultural research, emphasizing fieldwork, intercultural exchange, and research training. Facilities include multiple labs, lecture rooms, specimen collections, and a wet lab with seawater aquaria. On-site housing is available for students, faculty, and researchers, with daily meals served in a cafeteria that accommodates up to 90 people. Field equipment, boats, SCUBA gear, vehicles, and Wi-Fi are all available to support studies across the island. GRI remains a vital educational asset for San Salvador and a compelling destination for science and nature-focused travelers.



Where To Eat



1

COLUMBUS TAVERN

A popular choice known for its cracked conch, BBQ ribs, and pizza, and can be reached at (242) 331-2612

2

RIDING ROCK INN RESTAURANT

A casual seaside eatery popular with divers and anglers, offering a blend of American and Bahamian dishes-with oceanfront seating and a bar lounge upstairs. Reserve or inquire by calling (242) 331-2631 or toll-free at (800) 272-1492 .

3

WENDIE'S SNACK BAR & LIQUOR STORE

A laid-back local spot in Cockburn Town, offering small Bahamian snacks and cold drinks. It's a great spot to kill some time before your flight, with casual outdoor seating and a friendly, relaxed vibe.

4

SERENITY

A convenient take-out or dine-in venue located in the Shopping Plaza just three minutes north of the airport.

5

SUNSET BAR & GRILL

Serves grilled favorites and tropical drinks with outdoor seating, though it's cash only and seasonal

Opening hours often vary based on the time of year and island activity, we recommended calling ahead to confirm hours and availability before visiting.



Island Essentials

GROCERY STORES

**Island Distributors
(Russell's)**

242-331-2331

**Dorette's Grocery
(Cockburn Town)**

242-331-2688

**Sarah's Bargain Mart
(Long Bay)**

Grocery shopping on San Salvador Island is straightforward but limited due to its remote location. While you won't find a broad supermarket-style selection, essentials are available at several local stores.

LIQUOR STORES

700 Wines & Spirits

Located in the Plaza Shopping Center on Queen's Highway in Cockburn Town. Typically open Monday to Saturday from 9 AM to 6 PM and closed on Sundays.

MAILBOAT / FREIGHT

Two mailboats run from Nassau to San Salvador each week, though the schedule can vary. Additionally, King Ocean Services ships freight to the island every two weeks from Port Everglades in Fort Lauderdale.





MEDICAL COMMUNITY CLINIC

San Salvador Island is served by the Cockburn Town Community Clinic, located near the airport in the main settlement. This government-run facility provides primary care services and is staffed by registered nurses and a full-time San Salvadorian doctor. An ambulance is also available for local emergencies. Visitors are still encouraged to bring essential medications and basic first-aid supplies, and to call ahead if possible at (242) 331-2105. For serious medical issues requiring advanced care, patients are evacuated to larger hospitals on other islands.

A new clinic is set to open in United Estates in October 2025.

GYM Flex Gym

Located in Cockburn Town, has basic gym equipment.

GAS STATION

San Salvador is a small, remote island with very limited options when it comes to fuel—there's essentially just one main gas station serving residents and visitors. Located near Cockburn Town (and also servicing the Riding Rock Marina), this station typically carries both gasoline, diesel and propane gas, and operates on a cash-only basis.





THE HOME CENTER / M.T. HARDWARE STORE

Located in Victoria Hill Settlement and serves as the island's main hardware supplier. It offers a variety of tools, plumbing and electrical supplies, building materials, and boat repair essentials—making it a go-to for homeowners, handymen, and boaters.

TINY'S DRUG AND BEAUTY SUPPLY

Located near the entrance to the hardware store, is a small but convenient shop that stocks over-the-counter medications, personal care products, beauty supplies, cold drinks, and snacks. It's a useful stop for quick essentials.

LOCAL CURRENCY/ ATM/ BANKS

The official currency of The Bahamas is the Bahamian dollar (BSD), which is maintained at a fixed one-to-one exchange rate with the U.S. dollar. This means that \$1 BSD = \$1 USD, and the two currencies are used interchangeably across the country, including on San Salvador Island.

Both Bahamian and U.S. dollars are widely accepted for goods and services. It's common to receive change in either currency, or even a mix of both. Visitors don't need to exchange U.S. dollars before arrival, as there's no difference in value

However, because San Salvador is a remote island, cash is essential. Most local businesses, restaurants, and shops prefer or only accept cash, and credit card acceptance is limited. It's best to carry small denominations for easier transactions and to withdraw cash from the Bank of The Bahamas ATM in Cockburn Town if needed.



Exciting New Infrastructure Investment in San Salvador



San Salvador is entering a transformative chapter with a \$52.6 million infrastructure investment that promises to elevate the island's appeal for residents, investors, and visitors alike. This historic project includes the paving of 40 miles of roadways — the first of its kind for the island — delivering durable, all-weather roads built to last.

Safe pedestrian sidewalks will connect key areas, from Club Med through town and north to the clinic, improving walkability and safety for families, children, and seniors.

A full transformation of the Government Marina is also underway. Dredging, widening, and structural upgrades will allow vessels to dock safely in any tide or weather, ending long-standing limitations on supply and marine transport. The upgraded marina will support reliable shipping, boost economic activity, and provide a secure harbour during storms.

With 95% of the workforce being Bahamian — many from San Salvador — the project will create up to 60 jobs, injecting new energy and income into the local economy.

Set to begin within weeks and finish in 18 months, this development positions San Salvador for sustainable growth and new opportunity. For buyers, it's the right time to invest — the island's future is being built today.



The Beauty of San Salvador

San Salvador offers a peaceful, underdeveloped island lifestyle that feels worlds away from busy tourist destinations. It's a haven for unmatched diving and rich marine life, making it a top choice for underwater enthusiasts. Kite surfing, fishing, and exploring the uncrowded, crystal-clear waters add to the adventure. The island is home to a friendly community deeply rooted in Bahamian culture, where visitors are warmly welcomed. With incredible sunsets, shimmering seas, and star-filled skies, San Salvador delivers a truly authentic and unforgettable island experience.

LET'S STAY IN TOUCH



@lauramorley.agent



lmorley@morleyrealty.com



242-376-4788