



# Luxury Events & International Travel

By Olivia Hsu Decker

## In Search of a Care-Free Vacation Homeownership



HISTORIC SAN FRANCISCO MANSION



LAKE TAHOE



THIS NAPA VALLEY ESTATE SITS ON 43 ACRES



PEBBLE BEACH VILLA

Over the holidays, I received an offer on my Paris chateau, which has been a vacation rental business since 1999. After 11 years the property's upkeep coupled with endless French staff management headaches caught up with me. It was time to sell and search for new vacation home options. What I was seeking was a property or properties where I could truly feel carefree and enjoy the escape as opposed to dealing with the headaches I'd faced in the past. I wanted a vacation home I can be an owner where I could check-in and enjoy a five-star hotel service. It turns out the travel industry has already birthed a

vacation trend—private residence clubs. Individual buyers can own the property outright sharing the use and cost with just a few others. I discovered Élan Collections, whose offerings is an outright ownerships of only 10 people in each homes instead of selling a membership of the club. They also provide a comprehensive service and management program. I liked the idea so much, I offered to be their exclusive agent! Currently, they are offering the California Lifestyle Collection at \$5,250,000 for each 10 percent ownership for the opportunity to own all four of the finest homes in Northern California. The collection includes

the glamour and sophistication of a historic mansion in the heart of San Francisco; the elegance and tranquility of a 43-acre wine country estate in Napa Valley; the world-class golf experience of a private villa overlooking the Pebble Beach Golf Course; and the excitement of skiing and boating at a waterfront retreat in Lake Tahoe. Each share comes with The Élan Collection's five-star concierge services and management package that are designed to give you a carefree vacation home ownership experience. For details, visit [www.SanFranciscoFineHomes.com](http://www.SanFranciscoFineHomes.com).





HOTEL GUANAHANI,  
ST. BARTS

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## St. Barts: A Winter Playground for the Rich and Famous

After a few months of what seemed to be endless cold and damp weather everywhere I went—West Coast, East Coast, Paris, London—I jumped on a friend's invitation to take a trip to St. Barts. In fact, I am writing this article as my Winair flight is landing at the tiny St. Barts airport right now. I am delighted at the sight of the pure, white sandy beaches stretch between an emerald sea and an azure colored sky in 73 degrees temperature having just left the below zero rainy Paris 8 hours ago! A little part of France, colonized by the British in the 17th Century, where a gentle way of life is jealously maintained, St. Barts is a gem. I will be heading over to Hotel Guanahani and Spa where I will be staying in a colorful cottage for the next 4 days. I was told this is the best hotel on the island. All their brilliantly colored cottages are scattered amongst bougainvilleas, hibiscus and a coconut grove that stretches between the ocean and the lagoon. It's the island's idyllic living at its finest. Besides sandy beaches and water sports, explore the stores at Gustavia where you will find stores ranging from all major designers to island specialties like Bijoux de la Mer, unique Tahitian sea pearls woven in leather and slung casually over the shoulder. Dinner at Maya's and fun beach lunch at Nikki Beach. There is even a lobster airline called

Lobstair, to fly in fresh lobsters for you from neighboring islands. This week, the island will be invaded by a group of San Franciscans attending the wedding of Omid Kordestani, Senior Advisor to the CEO and Founders of Google. I was told the wedding will be held at the home of Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich whose new yacht, Eclipse, I believe is the world's largest, measuring in at some 575 feet is anchored here. He also has one or two of his other mega yachts on the island. The locals told me he has bought multiple properties since making St. Barts one of his second homes a few years ago and has a cozy relationship with the former mayor, now president. His Russian billionaire friends are frequent visitors too, helping the price of real estate and the business at the up-scale luxury shops. The best way to St. Barts from San Francisco is to fly American Airlines to Miami and catch a flight to St. Maarten and a commuter flight on Winair to St. Barts.

Happy Travels,

*Olivia Decker*

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