

# OMG

...a touch of heaven in St. Lucia

Owen Coleman, a world-class New York designer, discovered St. Lucia twenty-five years ago on a holiday with his wife and two-year old son, when they stayed at a well-known beach resort near the village of Soufriere. It was only by chance that they drove past a small white stucco villa that his wife had considered renting. The owner of Caille Blanc Villa happened to be home and invited The Colemans to come in. When the family stepped out on the cliff side of the charming two-bedroom villa, they gasped, "Oh, my God!"



View of Upper Level Terrace with Pool Suite,  
Temple Suite, Gourmet Dutch Kitchen  
and Treetop Dining Pavillion.

The majestic Pitons, twin volcanic peaks – part of a world heritage site, were on the same level as the villa’s cliff side living room. The scene took their breath away. Owen and Ellen, his wife, wanted to rent the villa for the following Christmas/ New Year holiday and were told that the property was already in contract for sale to two New York doctors.

The view from that villa kept them up all night and he went back the next day to see the British owner. Handing him his business card, Owen said, “Listen, when you’re finished selling your villa, please have the doctors call me so I can rent it.” As a joke, he added, “If the deal falls through, call me and I’ll buy your villa.”

When the owner called him three weeks later, he was running around working on a branding assignment for one of his clients and he couldn’t believe the turn of events.

It was a big romantic idea to own a place on a remote Caribbean island, where at the time, before direct flights, it could take easily 9 hours to get there from New York. The romance attracted Owen and Ellen and initiated their adventurous jour-

ney to becoming landholders in exotic St. Lucia.

For twenty years, the charming villa was a wonderful place for the family to escape for tropical getaways during chilly Manhattan winters. Only a five-minute drive away, the beautiful Anse Chastanet beach was a perfect place for their son, Bradford, to meet other children and build sand castles. Nonetheless, with their “Oh, my God!” view, they never stopped dreaming about building a cliff side infinity pool with the image of the spectacular Piton peaks reflected on its surface.

The pool buildout, which seemed like a daunting engineering project, requiring 2 tons of steel, launched a plan in 2007 to dramatically expand the original villa into a multi-villa compound. Raymond Gomez, a close friend of the Coleman’s and respected New York architect, came up with the “big idea” to build a group of villas around a 36-foot Treetop Pavillion and Gourmet Dutch kitchen in front of the pool. Raymond shared Owen’s love of St. Lucia and was able to look at the property from an architectural and engineering perspective to suggest

ways to maximize the landscape’s slopes and pitches to advantageous effect. He drafted a structural plan and sketches and with a team of 25 St. Lucian men recruited for the build-out and a capable local British manager, Brian Moss, the project was underway.

Owen had always felt that Caille Blanc’s original white stucco villa was reminiscent of Santa Fe, New Mexico, in the U.S. Hoping to import the Southwest’s vibrant colors and relaxed beauty to St. Lucia, he designed the villa exteriors and interiors to reflect the architecture of Santa Fe. As a tribute to the peaceful spirit of the ancient Pueblo Village in Taos, New Mexico, he included a kiva fireplace in one of his villa living rooms.

By luck, on one of his many trips to Santa Fe, Owen met a modern day Indiana Jones, Ira Seret, a collector of rare antiquities from India, Afghanistan, Tibet, China, Europe and other remote parts of the world. He was amazed by Seret’s enormous collection of Indian palace doors and decorative ironwork. His collection inspired him to import some of this

magical antiquity to St. Lucia and incorporate the unique hand-carved doors, decorative ironware and kilm textiles in the property’s architectural and design motifs. As a crowning nod to the majesty of India, Owen imported hand-painted, copper tiles to adorn the vaulted ceiling of the villa he named, “The Temple” – a stark white stucco building which features a mission bell in its crest.

The build-out was in many respects a creative work-in-progress, completed over a three-year period. While there was an original architectural plan in place, new ideas came up often, and Owen adapted the plans to incorporate new design directions. Raymond frequently teased him that he approached this project with the grandiose scale of an operatic production. There was no budget and certainly, no expense was spared. When an opening was discovered in a cave beneath the pool, Owen decided to craft a large suite within the cliff, which he called “The Grotto.” This suite, located 18-feet beneath the pool on its own level, has a terrace overhanging the cliff. A waterfall cascades into a small



**The Grotto Suite**  
The owner’s private Suite is located 18 feet beneath the pool level and constructed on the cliffside with a private stone and wood extended patio that cantilevers over the cliff. The waterfall, from the pool above, cascades into a wading pool on the terrace. The Suite has handmade wood paneling with a four-poster, King Size bed, Living Room, small Kitchen and an outdoor Japanese soak tub for your morning meditation. There are several ceiling fans, air conditioning and Safari style net for your comfort.



**Gourmet Dutch Kitchen & Outdoor Buffet Barbecue**  
Romantic dining under the Treetop Pavillion.

wading pool on the Grotto terrace from the 65-foot infinity pool above.

Though tons of steel and other materials were imported from China and the United States, Owen incorporated as many local materials as possible to lend an authentic St. Lucian quality to his creation. The earth tone stone-walls were sourced from a nearby quarry. A team of 7 men cut stones for over a year, to fit stone-on-stone across several exterior walls of the villas. All of the terra cotta tiles on the patios and interior floors were locally produced.

Quite literally, Caille Blanc Villas is a work of art. Bringing a sophisticated design sensibility and decades of professional experience, Owen has created a spectacular Caribbean paradise with an eclectic yet cohesive aesthetic. From luxurious interior fabrics and four-poster beds, to the iridescent glass pool tiles and stunning ceramic fountains and statues, to sophisticated lighting and koi pond, no detail has been overlooked in what's become a place unlike any other. In a creative collaboration of architecture and design, with a bit of serendipity and a fusion of cultures and inspirational locales, Caille Blanc Villas is, as one guest remarked, "a passage through paradise."

Today, guests of the villa simply enjoy the magical spirit of a wondrous place, as they absorb the pristine beauty of Caille Blanc and sink into its blissful Caribbean pace. Lounging in the refreshing water of the villa's cliff side pool, guests experience the same "Oh, my God!" moment each time they behold the spectacular views of the Pitons overlooking the Caribbean Sea. Caille Blanc is a place that stimulates the senses and invigorates the spirit, an inspirational retreat where guests come to recharge, frequently surrounded by friends and family. The villa has been the site of weddings, honeymoons, fitness getaways and family vacations. Guests tell us that the staff are wonderful, friendly, courteous and "make them feel like they're the center of the universe." The Coleman's cook of over twenty-years, Magdalene, lovingly prepares the daily meals for villa guests as if she were hosting her own family. Josephine, a seasoned bartender, pampers our guests daily with her famous tropical cocktails. Though visitors frequently enjoy snorkeling, catamaran boat sails, ziplining, soaking in purified volcanic waters nearby, and sampling the local cuisine, the property is so incredible that many guests never leave. Owen calls Caille Blanc, "St. Lucia Heaven!" which is what he named the website he created to assist guests in planning the perfect getaway. He warmly invites you to visit Caille Blanc and take a closer look at this stunning property, which is best captured in pictures at:

[www.stluciaheaven.com](http://www.stluciaheaven.com)



65 foot Infinity Pool with waterfall facing The Majestic Pitons.

The Temple Suite (2 levels) is our most elaborate building design. Though simplistic with whitewashed exterior walls, it has antique, decorative hand-carved teak wood Palace Doors from India. The interior living room includes stone carving motifs and hand-painted ceiling tiles from India.