

# Grenada

*A dream come true in a vegan tropical paradise*



Way back in 2003 our Christmas Campaign booklet ('Snow Problem' – A Caribbean Christmas) included a competition to win a holiday at The Lodge, a vegan guesthouse in Grenada. The lucky winner, **Ruth Lewis**, shares her experience.

I won the Vegetarian Society prize of a holiday for two to The Lodge on the Caribbean island of Grenada back in January 2004, but due to the devastation that Hurricane Ivan caused to the island in September 2004, this had to be postponed. We were finally able to take up the prize in June this year, thanks to the flexibility of The Lodge's owners and the Grenada Tourist Board. It was great to see that the island is getting back to life as usual, although there are still a few signs of the devastation caused.

The Lodge is run by Mark and Mary Hardy, a British couple who have chosen Grenada as their home. The building is a 'great house' on a hill above St George's, the capital, which provides a stunning backdrop for an evening drink while enjoying the sunset in the company of the fireflies, or lounging on the veranda (that goes right the way around the house) during the heat of the afternoon. The house itself really makes the most of local resources, including some beautiful recovered timber, and the breezy hilltop location.

We stayed in the Dragon Room, which had amazing views from the veranda. It was tastefully furnished with a four poster bed and his and hers sinks in the bathroom. We shared the room with our very own friendly lizard.

The Lodge is a great location for relaxing, sitting on the veranda or enjoying the chemical-free swimming pool. Mark

and Mary are great hosts and we had lots of enjoyable conversations. The highlight of our stay, however, was the food.

The Lodge is probably the only vegan guesthouse in the whole of the Caribbean. As lacto-ovo vegetarians, we had been a bit apprehensive about being vegan for a week. Our hosts soon managed to challenge these preconceptions in a very positive way. Drawing on the produce available locally, much of which is grown in the grounds of The Lodge, we were treated to a week's worth of gourmet vegan food.

Breakfast included an array of tropical fruit, fresh bread rolls, cereal and homemade soya milk. For lunch, we either ate at The Lodge or drew on our hosts' excellent local knowledge as to where we could find good veggie/vegan food in the local restaurants. My one regret is that I didn't get to try a potato roti! I will save that for next time. Each night we enjoyed a sumptuous three-course dinner back at The Lodge, accompanied by wine or beer. Highlights included a vegan lasagne, a millet, coconut, rice and raisin 'pudding' served with tomato and shallot sauce, polenta served with a beetroot and orange coulis and tempura with a tahini dip, all expertly cooked and beautifully served. Mark was responsible for the fantastic deserts, which included a coconut glaze, flambéed

The combination of **flavours and textures** was amazing. Not once did I miss cheese, yogurt or milk, which feature heavily in my usual diet.

