

beloved blanchards

COUPLE TOOK A TRIP TO THE BEACH
AND NOW RUN ICONIC ANGUILLA RESTAURANT
WHERE EVERY GUEST IS A VIP

WRITER JULIE GUAGLARDI
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THEY MET AS PSYCHOLOGY MAJORS AT UNIVERSITY IN VERMONT, USA. Now Bob and Melinda Blanchard are icons—and owners of Blanchards Restaurant on Meads Bay at the western end of Anguilla.

Blanchards, with its tall, teal shutters which open to the tropical gardens, has become one of the most beloved treasures in Anguilla. Melinda herself has remained the restaurant's head chef. Raised in New York City, she was an independent girl who developed a passion for cooking. Her mother loved to throw dinner parties and Melinda would often cater for the chic gatherings. Her recipes are bursting with Caribbean flavours infused with French flair.

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One of her signature dishes is Jamaican jerk shrimp, served with grilled cinnamon, rum bananas and cranberry chutney. She then bastes the dish with a hot-hot-hot island sauce made of herbs and spices and combines it with fresh orange juice, lime juice and scotch bonnet peppers and finally serves the dish with a sweet potato puree.

On the lighter side, the menu also includes a spicy dry-rubbed filet of snapper, with curried rice, sautéed wild mushrooms and tequila lime sauce made with roasted plum tomatoes.

Blanchards Caribbean Sampler is a must-try, as it represents all of the deep, rich flavours of the Caribbean. It includes oven-crisped mahi mahi with coconut, lime and ginger and grilled Anguilla crayfish with a fresh citrus sauce.

Bob and Mel's personal favourites include the braised lamb shanks with white bean puree simmered for hours with wine, onions, garlic, tomatoes, thyme and bay leaves and a bit of traditional Moroccan feta sprinkled over the top.

For dessert, there is the sinful cracked coconut—a faux coconut made of delicious, deep, dark chocolate dusted in freshly grated coconut, encasing Blanchards rich and creamy home-made coconut ice cream, then topped off with a splash of Baileys Irish Cream.



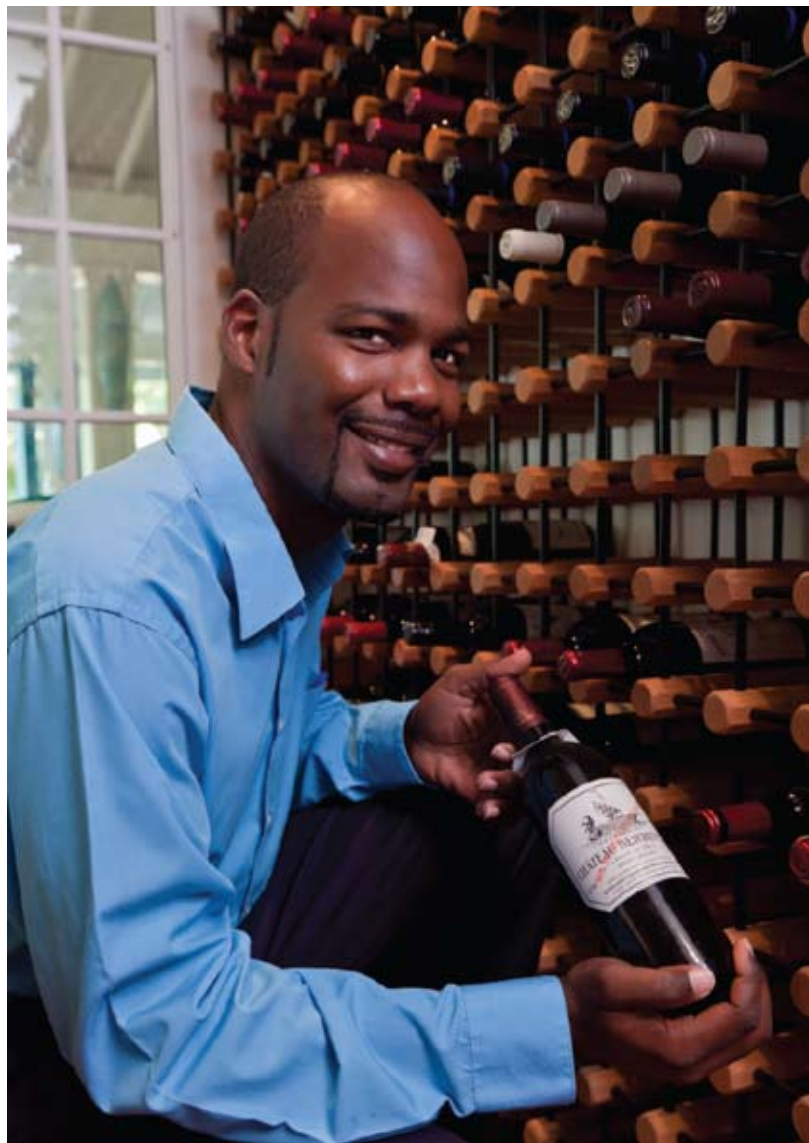
ABOVE P
BELOW K
RIGHT A





LEFT P
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Bob and Mel (who have been married for over 35 years) have published five books so far and they are in the midst of writing their sixth. *A Trip to the Beach*, which was their first, became a bestseller in the US and tells the story of how the couple left Vermont, headed to Anguilla and opened a restaurant in 1994. *At Blanchard's Table* and *Cook What You Love* are cookbooks, which combine restaurant recipes and recipes the couple has used at home for years.

Blanchards restaurant attracts visitors from all around the world. In high season, the restaurant sees some of the world's most well travelled, discriminating clientele, and at Christmas time, there are so many private jets at the airport, there's hardly enough tarmac left for parking.

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And when Bill and Hillary Clinton arrived in 2006 for a low-key vacation (with several secret-service men), they inevitably had dinner at Blanchards—where both celebrities and walk-in visitors get the presidential treatment. M