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Caribbean Elegance



Synopsis

This will be a gorgeous, heavily illustrated book on the uniquely refined and aristocratic style of living that has flourished on the islands of the Caribbean from the late 18th century to the early 20th century. The book will be organized by related island groups: the French Islands (Martinique and Guadeloupe); the Dutch Islands (Aruba, Bonaire, and Curacao); the Spanish islands (Cuba, Santo Domingo); the English islands (Jamaica, St. Kitts, St. Lucia); and the Danish islands (St. Thomas, St. John, Ste. Croix). The text will explore not only the beauty of the landscape, the houses, and the works of art and furniture, but also something of the historical background and the manner of life in the islands.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

After having lived in the Caribbean islands for fifteen years I can say that this book really captures the easy yet refined feel of the fine local furniture, as well as the homes. I think most people think of beach shacks being down there, and don't realize how the local craftsman have perfected their art over the centuries. It's a pleasure to see once again the graceful native mahogany furniture, and the lovely homes open to the trade winds. Mr. Connors has captured the island ambiance, and explains in an easily understandable manner some of the reasons the local art forms developed as they did in relationship to their surroundings.

Doing research for island living and furniture, for clients here in the Bay Area, I found this book

extremely helpful. Mr. Connors kept me reading, wanting to understand more of that wonderful period. Mr. Buck's photos were exquisite. Through both of their works, the understanding I received regarding that period of time in the Caribbean was and will be very useful to me. Thank you both.

Reading this book is like being invited to an elegant house party in the Caribbean. You then enter a world of magical realism, in which you sit in the veranda of an 18th century "Great House" with beautiful ocean views, and your pick of antique "planters' chairs," with cool drinks waiting on a "cupping table." You listen to tales of planters and merchants, of sugar cane fields and slaves turned artisans. The material culture of the Caribbean is presented here, seen through the lens of historical events, the experiences of the wealthy and those who served them. You learn wonderful details about the subtle differences of styles on the Spanish, Dutch, English, French and Danish islands. The photographs are beautiful and range from vistas to architecture to furniture and their details. It is also a very scholarly work, of interest to anyone who loves antiques, craftsmanship, history and the Caribbean. This book is truly an experience you can come back to again and again, and discover something new (or old...).

This book has great pictures of West Indian furniture and its focus is only on the furniture. I was looking for some ideas on how to design using this style, but not much can be gotten directly on how to do this from this book. However, I did come away with a good sense of the various influences on the West Indian style.

Michael Connors and Bruce Buck have given me a fun and educational experience in their creative endeavor "Caribbean Elegance". I hope to see more of each individual island's gift to its historical history provided by their craftsman and furniture makers. Especially fascinating were their fabulous Cuban ventures, which makes me feel they only scratched the surface leaving lots to encounter in future. This one is an asset to any coffee table collection!

As a writer, I was impressed by the quality of the prose, and as a researcher, I appreciated the wealth of information Connors has managed to succinctly convey to give readers a good understanding of the history and other forces shaping this stunning style of furniture. To top off the intellectual feast, we get delicious and evocative photographs which make us feel we are actually there in these beautiful homes on the gorgeous islands of the Caribbean.

Caribbean Elegance, how the title is only the tip of what lies between the cover as it is such a wonderful book to always have at hands reach for small mind vacations after a long day of work! The author has done a fantastic job of educating one about the Caribbean islands' history as well as the furniture. It is the only book that lives on my coffee table, and every person that visits is sure to pick it up and become so mesmerized by the writing and captivated by the photographs! It is impossible to not fall madly in love with this amazing find of a book! It is so easy to read be it that the author is obviously passionate about his work, as he leaves the reader feeling the island warmth from his detailed writings of Caribbean history. The photographs are so well placed, and beautiful! What a tasteful, well written, and charming book! Well done!! One must be careful though, as you will be sure to want your house filled with Caribbean antiques as I am now doing!

Life in the Colonial Antilles, a subject that has languished in relative obscurity for too long, is given wonderful exposure in Michael Connors' gorgeous new book. Connors' well researched and superbly written narrative, along with Bruce Buck's compelling photography combine in a charmingly designed book that will enhance coffee tables and libraries of everyone from antiques aficionados to anyone with even a passing interest in the islands of the Caribbean. I highly recommend Caribbean Elegance. Once you get it, you'll see that it has been well worth the wait.

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