



Graycliff

THE ESSENCE OF THE ISLANDS

*A heritage of pirates, privateers
and royal patronage*

The Graycliff Hotel and Restaurant in Nassau has been a witness to, and a participant in, the history of the Bahamas for longer than the United States has existed. In 1740 Graycliff Mansion was first constructed by Captain John Howard Graysmith—one of the most successful, and feared, pirates in the entire Caribbean. It was later converted to

a naval garrison and became Nassau's first inn before being converted back into a private residence and receiving visitors such as the Duke and Duchess of Windsor. And when the property was reopened to the public in the 1970s, it offered a truly lucky few the opportunity to experience, and even contribute to, the history that still seeps from its walls.

Graycliff takes pride in showing not only the diverse offerings of this island paradise, but in providing guests with the absolute pinnacle of the Bahamian experience. With a mere 20 exquisitely appointed guest rooms and suites, exclusivity is felt in every moment, with special rooms named for those who have contributed to the island's history. The centerpiece of the property's culinary offerings is the five-star Graycliff Restaurant. Upon arrival in the parlor, guests are supplied with their preferred cocktail before being led into one of five dining areas. Each dining room pays homage to the building's colorful history.

Most recipes at Graycliff may remain closely guarded secrets, but the word is definitely out, the result of traditional Bahamian cuisine being treated, and executed, with the utmost sophistication, creativity and refinement. For those who need time to fully appreciate (and digest) such a meal, guests are welcome to enjoy an after-dinner cigar or perhaps a cognac with friends, be they old or recently made around one of the property's two pools.

At a place like Graycliff, that's only the beginning. The property is also home to not only an expansive wine cellar with more than 250,000 bottles, the third-largest private wine collection in the world, but to some of the rarest vintages on Earth, such as a 1727 Rudesheimer Apostelwein and an 1865 Château Lafite. Even the most discerning oenophile would be overwhelmed by the breadth, and depth, of the collection, offering everything from the perfect casual pour with dinner to a once-in-a-lifetime bottle to be uncorked for a truly special occasion.

In addition to the practically mandatory tour of the cellar, it would be a crime to miss the wine and cheese pairing, offering an education as well as a chance to sample wares from throughout the cellar, which has held a Wine Spectator Grand Award since 1988. Let an expert walk you through a minimum of eight tastings, and perhaps find a new favorite, as the collection caters to any preference, or price range.

Not to be outdone by its award-winning, globally renowned sibling, the Graycliff Cognateque brings the study, collection, and yes, drinking, of cognac to similarly atmospheric heights. Home to Graycliff's 9,000 bottle collection of cognacs, Armagnacs, ports and other spirits, the Cognateque's offerings range from immaculate post-prandial options to museum-quality investments like the 1893 Bottle #1 from A.E. Dor. True aficionados should have the Graycliff's expert team guide you on a private tasting, pushing the limits of your palette, and potentially your wallet. But it's unlike almost anywhere else on Earth for those that appreciate these oft-misunderstood bedrocks of cultured imbibing.

Of course, if you're going to be experiencing some of the best food, wine and spirits to be had anywhere on the planet, it wouldn't be quite complete without an accompanying cigar that can match these levels of craftsmanship, quality and exclusivity. And while any luxury property can boast of an impressive humididor, as usual Graycliff takes it to an



Graycliff's esteemed maître d' Anthony Laing

even more exalted level, producing their own cigars on the premises to the same exacting standards that have crafted their restaurant, wine cellar and Cognateque.

Starting with a single Torcedore (cigar roller) working in the foyer of the restaurant more than two decades ago, the Graycliff Cigar Company has, perhaps unsurprisingly, grown into an award-winning outfit employing 16 highly skilled master rollers. Producing five brands of cigar, Graycliff's smokes are highly desired around the globe, but are best enjoyed in the same place as their creation, at the Graycliff itself. Watch the Torcedores work, their fingers flying with the dexterity and purpose of true artisans, before lighting up one of their creations on a walk around the property.

For a more hands-on experience, have a cigar rolling lesson, where you can not only learn the intricacies of the materials and process, but actually roll your own high-quality cigar under the watchful, yet patient, eye of the masters. The combined cigar rolling and rum tasting session is perhaps our favorite offering at the hotel, giving one a chance to find the perfect pairing with the fine tobacco you just watched rolled in front of you. Simply, whatever your flavor of choice, from food to wine, cognac, rum or even tobacco, Graycliff offers world-class options and the opportunity to both learn about, and experience, the very best in each of these specialties.

Graycliff is an icon of Bahamian luxury, uncompromising in its goal to provide the most magnificent guest experience imaginable after nearly three centuries of upgrades and evolution. Yet, it also works to not only bring awareness to the exquisite creations of the islands, but to continuously elevate them to even grander levels of quality and craftsmanship. Graycliff is indisputably intertwined in the history of the Bahamas as a whole, and so it seems, is intent on remaining historically influential now and in the years to come.



Opposite page: An intimate dinner in Graycliff's famed wine cellar; Above left: Hand-rolled smokes at the Graycliff Cigar Company; Above right: Rare vintages in one of the world's largest private wine collections