

The Current

✱ WHAT'S HAPPENING RIGHT NOW IN THE BEST CORNER OF THE WORLD ✱

SNORKEL OFF THE SAND

A vacation in the Caribbean without snorkeling is like a weekend in Napa Valley without wine. Seventy-five bucks or so buys you a decent mask, snorkel and fins — though plenty of hotels have loaner gear for guests — and the act itself is as easy as falling in the water. And though there's a world of dazzling sites that can be reached only off the deck of a boat, some of the region's very best snorkeling is waiting to happen only a few steps off your beach blanket. — MP



NO BOAT REQUIRED

Five favorite
beaches for
snorkeling

1

The Baths

VIRGIN GORDA, BVI

The three beaches that comprise this iconic boulderscape — particularly pretty Devil's Bay — are a snorkeler's paradise. Just get here before 11 a.m. or after 3 p.m. to avoid the crowds.

2

Playa de la Chiva

VIEQUES, P.R.

Also known as Blue Beach, Playa de la Chiva is actually three crescents that front little Isla Chiva, 250 yards offshore. Fin out, stay close to the islet and soak in the undersea sights.

3

Trunk Bay

ST. JOHN, USVI

There's more to CT•L's favorite cover beach than its snowy sands. Aquatic life abounds in these waters, and a marked trail in just three to 18 feet makes it an ideal playground for newbie snorkelers.

4

West Bay Beach

ROATAN, HONDURAS

Divers adore Roatan, but snorkelers will find plenty to love off this sweet stretch of sand on the island's west coast, courtesy of a vast and thriving reef that's an easy swim from the beach.

5

Playa Kalki

CURAÇAO

The flourishing reef that lies off this tiny beach on Curaçao's craggy northwest coast is called Alice in Wonderland, thanks to the larger-than-life mushroom-shape corals that grow here.