

# ForbesLife

MARCH 2010

## ESCAPES

Debut

# Beach Resorts Reinvented

### THE ST. REGIS PRINCEVILLE, KAUAI

The Princeville Resort always had one big thing going for it: an enviable location with majestic views on Hanalei Bay. Its nine rambling stories are built into a hillside so that all the public spaces and most guest rooms overlook the water and the misty, emerald-carpeted mountains of the Na Pali Coast.

Now, after a 14-month, \$74 million renovation and rebranding as a St. Regis, the resort has even more to recommend it. Gone are the seas of black marble and baronial decor; it's been pleasingly enlivened in the international hotel vernacular of limestone and dark wood. The 252 rooms have been made over in shades of tasteful beige splashed with coral. (But they kept their most fun feature, nearly-floor-to-ceiling bathroom windows that "fog up" for privacy at the flip of a switch.)



*The St. Regis Princeville lightened up its rooms (right); its views (bottom) needed no improvement.*

Service has been kicked up a notch, with butlers for the top suites and "ocean butlers"—a.k.a. water-sports guides—for anyone who books them. But the biggest upgrades are physical: a large, handsome spa just off the lobby and an outpost of Jean-Georges Vongerichten's ever more far-flung culinary empire. The Kauai Grill's menu follows the chef's familiar French-Asian formula, but freshly caught fish and hours-old produce from Kauai's farmers markets made my meals memorable. The cuisine may not be surprising, but simplicity works here. You don't really want to be distracted from that view. —A.A.

➤ \$850-\$6,575. 877-787-3447, [www.stregis.com](http://www.stregis.com)

