



# BARBADOS

Bajan Charm on a Coral Island



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# WELCOME

*Oh Barbados! Inhale that first breath of salty ocean air as you step off the plane and we're sure you'll immediately fall in love with the unique charm of this tropical playground. Barbados has everything you could ever want in a Caribbean vacation. We don't want you to waste a minute of your well-deserved holiday, which is why we've scouted the island to give you the inside scoop - and we're not only talking about ice cream... So, grab your swimsuit, don't forget your camera and get ready to be bedazzled Barbadian style!*





NO SWIMMING

## Climate & Weather

Pack the sunscreen and leave those vitamin D tablets at home! With over 3000 sunshine hours each year and an average daytime high of 30°C / 86°F, Barbados is the perfect sun & sand destination - no matter when you visit! Trade winds from the northeast provide a steady breeze and at night temperatures drop slightly. Year-round the ocean remains delightfully warm and inviting at 26-29°C / 79-84°F. It's the ideal climate for playing in the sun during the day and enjoying a rejuvenating sleep at night. The majority of rainfall comes in the summer months. Showers are generally quick, refreshing and followed by sunny skies. This freshens up the day without spoiling plans. Hurricane season runs between June and October. However, it is nothing to be all too alarmed about. Tropical rainstorms can be spectacular and due to the island's porous geology, heavy rainfall quickly fills underground lakes or drains into the ocean. The geographical location also means that hurricanes tend to avoid Barbados - arising off the coast of Africa and swinging north of the island up the Caribbean chain. The most recent major hurricanes to hit Barbados were recorded in 1955, 1898 and 1831.

## Geography & Geology

Barbados is a Caribbean island nation. Although, its easternmost location means it is surrounded exclusively by the Atlantic Ocean and not the Caribbean Sea. The island is located east of the Lesser Antilles, neighboring Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (about 100 miles / 170 km west) and Trinidad and Tobago (about 250 miles / 400 km southwest). Barbados falls within Atlantic Time Zone GMT -4. With a land surface area of 166 square miles (431 sq.km), it stretches 21 miles long and 14 wide. You will need about 4 hours to drive around the island, not accounting for beautiful stops along the way - which we highly recommend leaving time for! Unlike most of the Lesser Antilles, Barbados is quite flat with its highest point being Mount Hillaby (335 meters / 1,120 feet above sea level). This is a result of the island's geological history.



It lies right on top of the boundary between the South American and Caribbean plates and mostly consists of sediment and coral remains. The rather unique landscape with many caves and gullies remains from millennia of primarily limestone rock erosion. In recent years, some of these areas have been converted into popular tourist attractions such as Harrison Caves and Welchman Hall Gully.

## Barbadian History

Barbados was first discovered in the late 15th century. Although it was claimed by the English Crown, the Spanish and Portuguese were first to visit the island. The first European settlers were from England and came to the island in 1627. Barbados remained a British colony until gaining independence in 1966. This makes it the only Caribbean island that did not change colonial powers over the centuries. Barbados is now part of the Commonwealth of Nations. The origin of the name "Barbados" is not completely clear. Although most sources agree that it refers

to “the bearded”. Many speculators say the name describes the roots of the fig tree, which is very common in Barbados and resembles a beard. However, it may also stem from the beards of the Carib and Arawak Native Americans who formerly inhabited the island. During your trip, take some time to learn more about Barbados’ rich history by visiting places like the Parliament Buildings in historical Bridgetown, Gun Hill Signal Station and the George Washington House.

## People & Culture

It is not just some advertising campaign when you see that Barbadian people are exceptionally friendly and warm. With their energy, smiles and love for life you cannot escape the charm of the island and its people. Whether it is a vendor on the beach or a fellow passenger on the bus, you will always find someone in the mood for a chat and willing to share their inspired view on life. Barbadians speak English. However, it is spiced with a distinct accent and incorporates words from a dialect of West-African Pidgin known as Bajan. Two unique parts of Bajan culture are the Tuk Band and the Landship. The Tuk Band is a collection of musicians playing drums and a whistle, which creates an extremely infectious rhythm. The Landship can be described as a “theatrical group” who perform popular dances in traditional attire. Don’t miss the chance to experience both at local festivals.

## Transportation to Barbados

Barbados can be easily accessed from North America and Europe. A number of international airlines offer service to the island from the US and Canada as well as many European countries. Direct flights from several major North American airports such as Miami and Toronto are available with e.g. Caribbean Airlines, American Airlines and JetBlue. British Airways has direct flights from London Gatwick almost daily and Condor has service from Frankfurt twice a week. Also, GOL offers direct flights from Brazil (Sao Paulo)

every Saturday. Many Caribbean islands can easily be reached with Caribbean Airlines or LIAT. The sole airport in Barbados is Grantley Adams International (BGI), which is located southeast approximately 13km (8 miles) from Bridgetown. Its modern infrastructure and quality services have led it to be recognized by World Travel Awards as the “Caribbean’s Leading Airport” on more than one occasion. When approaching Barbados, you will likely fly along the island’s beautiful west coastline. To soak up this incredible view, ask for a seat on the left side of the aircraft. Especially if you are arriving in the evening (when the currency exchange counters are closed), make sure to have some local or at least US currency. You will need it for a taxi and if the airport ATM is out of service, you may be out of luck. Porters will gladly help you with your luggage but be sure to agree on a price first. If you are travelling by cruise ship, the main arrival and departure points are located in the harbor just outside of the Bajan Capital of Bridgetown. All travelers to Barbados must be in possession of a valid passport and return ticket.

## On-Island Transportation



There are several ways to get around Barbados including taxi, rental car, public transportation and in some cases water taxi. The entire island is accessible by a good network of roads. Don’t forget that traffic drives on the left. Barbados taxis are marked with the letter “Z” on their license plates. After exiting customs, you will see a board with standard taxi fares from the airport. Review this list and agree on a price and currency (USD 1 = BDS 2) before departing. Public transportation



# ACCOMMODATION

Barbados has so many different options to suit your particular needs and budget. Keep things simple with a quaint beach house tucked away behind tropical gardens or be wined and dined in a luxury oceanfront resort. Experience the tranquility of a pristine tropical hideaway or get the party started on the bustling St. Lawrence Gap. Either way, with the wide array of accommodation options and variety of areas, you are sure to find the perfect place for the perfect vacation.







## WEST & SOUTH COASTS



Each area of Barbados has its own unique charm. The majority of hotels are located on the west and south coasts. Both have access to great beaches. The romantic west coast (aka the platinum coast) is the more prestigious and calm area with long white sand beaches, exclusive getaways, large hotels and all-inclusive resorts. You are never far from classy restaurants, spas and crystal-clear ocean waters. The south coast (especially south-west) is packed full of action and more densely developed with smaller hotels, guesthouses, condos, restaurants, bars and stores. Here locals and travelers mingle and enjoy everything Bajan life has to offer. It is a great place to meet people, party with your friends and explore the town.

## EAST COAST

It calms down as you head east with several more exclusive properties. The third option is the east coast. It has much fewer accommodation options, yet still some really cute cottages, apartments and villas, which are perfect for escaping the touristy areas. The rugged coastline and Atlantic swells mean that it is not really safe for swimming, but the lush shores are far less developed and offer dramatic views you won't find on the rest of the island. No matter which coast you prefer, you're never more than a short drive away from the other areas and the activities you fancy.





## Hotels & Resorts

### BLUE ORCHIDS BEACH HOTEL

Nestled among the tropical vegetation of Worthing Beach on the South Coast, the friendly staff will welcome you to your home away from home. This 31-room quaint hotel located on the island's south coast offers travelers a choice of 1, 2, or even 3-bedroom studio apartments. All rooms come fully equipped with a kitchen, private ocean-view balcony and air-conditioning for those extra fiery Caribbean nights. Work up your appetite with a game of beach volleyball, cricket or a variety of water sports before visiting the on-site restaurant & bar, which features a range of rustic dishes sure to satisfy the whole family's tastes.

+1 (246) 435 8057 • 18 Worthing, Christ Church • \$\$ • Family Friendly • Pool • Water Front • Ocean View • Restaurant on Site • Veggie Options  
[www.blueorchidsbarbados.com](http://www.blueorchidsbarbados.com)

### BOUGAINVILLEA BEACH RESORT

Let your cares float away into the Caribbean allure of this 138-room oceanfront resort. Endless options like watersports, massages, pools, live entertainment, spa, restaurants and a swim-up bar make it just the place for honeymooners, friends and families. Don't get too comfortable in your colorful room or private balcony because

the lively nightlife of Oistins and the St. Lawrence Gap is only 5 minutes away. Nature lovers should explore the nearby Graeme Hall Nature Sanctuary, which occupies nearly half of the Ramsar Wetland. Choose from a range of packages, rooms and suites from USD 190.

+1 (246) 628 0990 • \$\$\$ • Maxwell Coast Road, Christ Church • Family Friendly • Beach Access • Pool • Water Front • Ocean View • Restaurant on Site • Veggie Options  
[www.bougainvillearesort.com](http://www.bougainvillearesort.com)

### THE CRANE RESORT

Once your feet hit the pink powdered sand of world-renowned Crane Beach you'll never want to leave. You don't have to! The stunning resort not only offers rooms, restaurants, shops and pools, but also permanent residences! Why not soak up the natural beauty and serenity of the lush coconut grove at an establishment that boasts outstanding reviews from international travel organizations. Crystal clear waters and all you can ask for beach services make it the ideal place for individuals, couples and families. Prices range from USD 200-500. Make sure to check the website for special deals and offers.

+1 (246) 423 6220 • Crane, St. Philip • \$\$\$ • Family Friendly • Beach Access • Pool • Water Front • Ocean View • Veggie Options  
[www.thecrane.com](http://www.thecrane.com)

## MANGO BAY



Love being greeted with a smile and a rum punch? Mango Bay combines all-inclusive convenience with the truly genuine, friendly service you can only find at a small resort. Located directly on the beach in St. James and footsteps away from the fashionable charisma of Holetown and the Limegrove Lifestyle Center, you can really experience the true vibe of Barbados. All 76 delightfully appointed guestrooms are kept fresh and have their own private patios or balconies. The restaurant is open all day for you to choose tasty local and international food and drinks whenever hunger calls. Also included are the various beach activities like kayaking and snorkeling. We love it when hotels take extra care of their special island ecosystems! Visit the website to read about their environmental policy or ask upon arrival. Prices for chic all-inclusive fun range around USD 300–700.



+1 (246) 432 1384 • 2nd Street, Holetown, St James • \$\$\$ • Family Friendly • Pool • Water Front • Ocean View • Sunset View • Green Initiatives

[www.mangobaybarbados.com](http://www.mangobaybarbados.com)

## HILTON BARBADOS RESORT



We surely don't have to tell you that the Hilton won't let you down. Surrounded by lush tropical settings with a white sand beach at its doorstep, this property lives up to its top-notch reputation. From infinity swimming pools to tennis courts, casual and fine dining to shipwrecks, rejuvenation spa and the rich history of the Charles Fort UNESCO World Heritage site – you may find it hard to leave. If you do muster up the courage in between cocktails and foot massages, check out the local museums, bars and restaurants of Bridgetown and the St. Lawrence Gap. Just around the corner, the Brown Sugar Restaurant offers delicious Bajan cuisine including lots of veggie options to satisfy everyone's tastes. Just make sure you make it back in time to catch the live action of Jazz night at the resort! Rooms and suites vary around USD 150 – 600 (vacation packages available).

++1 246 426 0200 • Needham's Point St Michael, Bridgetown • \$\$\$ • Family Friendly • Beach Access • Pool • Near City Center • Tennis Court  
[www.hiltonbarbadosresort.com](http://www.hiltonbarbadosresort.com)



**BUDGET TIP**



Some smaller hotels may give you a discount outside of peak season if you book directly with them - since they do not have to pay a commission to international booking portals. The best way to find out is to call them and ask.



## EAT & DRINK

Barbados is a true culinary delight. From finely prepared eloquent dishes to beach inspired bites deep-fried with local ingredients. The overwhelming variety in culture and history is reflected in taste bud tantalizing dishes from one coast to the other. The main places serving up food and drinks on the island are casual and fine dining restaurant, sports bars, fast food joints, rum shops and beach bars, as well as convenience stores and of course super markets. No matter which direction your hunger or thirst takes you, you're sure to be satisfied.





## Local Cuisine

Classic Bajan dishes, which you shouldn't pass up, are things like macaroni pie, breadfruit cou cou, rice and peas and all kinds of soups and stews.



### CUZ'S FISH SHACK

Famous for the best fish sandwich in Barbados! This may look like just a shack on the beach – but Cuz's legendary fish "cutters" are known far and wide. Tucked between a packed car park and the crystal clear Caribbean seas right off the Hilton Resort, the shack draws in tourists and locals with the seducing smell of freshly grilled fish. Choose your favorite variety wedged between a soft warm bun with egg and/or cheese and drizzled with local pepper sauce or honey mustard. At great prices, you cannot go wrong with a cutter in one hand and a cold Banks beer in the other. Sandwiches go for around USD 5-8. The friendly owner loves what he does, but his philosophy is "Work to live. Not... live to work", so his hours vary. During the week, as well as on some Saturdays he generally kicks into gear around 9:00 am and stays until early evening (or until sold out).  
\$ • Garrison, Bridgetown • Family friendly • Locally owned • Water Front • Ocean View • Near Beach  
[Facebook: Cuzs Fish Shack Barbados](#)

### FRED'S BAR & RESTAURANT OISTINS

Home-cooked Bajan specialties by day – vibrant bar by night. No matter when you go, Fred's is the place to be! When not rocking the karaoke machine, the always-lovely Angela works her magic in the kitchen. She

mixes up a medley of traditional dishes like souse, buljol, jerk pork and breadfruit – always piping hot and tasty for the whole family to enjoy. Kick back day after day and choose from the never-ending list of cocktails and crisp cold beers. This is not your typical over-priced tourist trap. You can always count on a great deal, refreshing drinks, the perfect home-made meal and attentive genuine friendly service. Want to place an order? Call 254-3202 and ask for Glen. Meals cost between USD 10-25. Fred's is open Mon. - Wed. 6:00 pm - 11:00 pm / Thurs. 4:00 pm - 11:00 pm / Fri. 5:30 pm - 2:00 am / Sat. 10:00 am - 11:00 pm / Sun. 11:30 am - 11:00 pm.

+1 (246) 254 3202 • Oistins Bay Garden, Christ Church • \$ • Family Friendly • Locally Owned • Veggie Options • Cash Only

[Facebook: Freds Bar Restaurant Oistins](#)

### LEFTIES

Among palm trees swaying beside crystal blue waters, you'll find the Lefties breakfast stand/ Grab a coffee and casually delicious sandwiches and rolls filled with your choice of eggs, bacon, cheese and freshly caught fish. With its laid-back island vibe, this is a perfect inexpensive alternative to your hotel breakfast. Officially open every day from sunrise until 10:30 am - but make sure you get there early! The great food, prices and ideal location mean he sells out quickly and often packs up around 9:00 am. Sandwiches cost around USD 5.

Needhams Point, Bridgetown • \$ • Family Friendly • Near City Center

### SHAKERS BAR & GRILL

Tucked away in Browne's Gap on the island's South Coast (just up the coast from Bubbas and Scotia Bank), the quaint and cozy eatery is also a cherished rum shop. A refreshing cocktail like the Bahama Mama is the perfect treat to wash down hearty island-inspired mains, snacks and sandwiches. With great prices and all kinds of beer-battered options, it's no wonder this place is often packed with locals and well-informed travelers. Reserve first and don't tell too many people as tables are getting harder to book! You'll see that no matter how busy,

the food remains finger licking good and staff is always friendly and efficient. Shakers is open Tues. to Sat. 6-10pm.

+1 (246) 228 8855 • Brownes Gap, Rockley • \$  
• Family Friendly • Locally Owned • Reservations  
Recommended • Cash Only  
[www.shakersbarbados.com/visit](http://www.shakersbarbados.com/visit)

### CHILLIN AND GRILLIN

You chill while they grill! Nestled within the lively fishing village and tourist hang out of Oistins Bay Gardens, the island-style restaurant is a popular place for locals and travelers to join together for Fish Fry and “Lime”, especially on Friday evening. If you don’t spot it at first, keep looking and avoid being diverted by pushy vendors on the way. You won’t regret it. Well-priced entrees feature a selection of tasty meats and fish prepared in front of your eyes on the flaming outdoor grill. Each is complemented by salads and savory sides like sweet potato, breadfruit and plantain. They don’t skimp on the portions so make sure you come hungry! Hefty helpings with all the trimmings range around USD 30-40. Download your 5% discount coupon on the website. Chillin and Grillin is open Mon. - Sat. 5:00 pm - 11:00 pm / Sun. 12:00 pm - 10:00 pm.

+1 (246) 231 1633 • Oistins Bay Garden, Oistins, Christ Church • \$\$ • Family Friendly • Locally Owned • Near Beach  
[www.chillinandgrillinbar.com](http://www.chillinandgrillinbar.com)

### SHARKEY’S TROPICAL CAFÉ

If you love vibrant colors, reggae music, and two-for-one frozen daiquiris, Sharkey’s Tropical Café is the place to be. This street-side bar perfectly captures the vibe of the always-bumping St. Lawrence Gap. Off to a late start? No problem. Hearty breakfast with all the trimmings can be ordered every day until 3:00 pm! Casually pop in and enjoy specialties like Bajan Fish Cakes for lunch or Pan-seared Prawns Coated with Passion Fruit White Wine Sauce for dinner. We can’t get enough of the Frozen Coffee Cocktails made with Italian Espresso – The perfect pick-me-up before an exciting night on the town! Dinner Mains between USD 20-50. Sharkey’s is open every day from 8:00 am - midnight (dinner until 10:00 pm).

+1 (246) 234 6527 • St. Lawrence Gap, Payne’s Bay • \$\$ • Family Friendly  
[www.sharkeysbarbados.com](http://www.sharkeysbarbados.com)

### THE BEACH HOUSE

Located beachfront with breathtaking views of Barbados’ Platinum Coast, The Beach House serves Caribbean food elegantly infused with Mediterranean flavors. A charming tent set up along crystal clear waters and live music help create the perfect vacation ambiance. Whether browsing from the Beach Menu at lunch or the Evening Menu at dinner, you’ll find a mixture of hearty and healthy local and international dishes always prepared with finesse and a tropical flair. Don’t miss the Sunday Buffet, which highlights the best of Bajan cuisine every Sunday from 12:00 – 3:00 pm! Feel free to also enjoy the atmosphere over hot coffee, a crisp wine or an ice-cold beer. Gluten free and veggie options are available. Sunday Buffet around USD 43. Evening Mains between USD 22 – 50. The Beach House is open from 11:00 am daily. Lunch served from 12:00 pm.

+1 (246) 432 1163 • Holetown, St. James • \$\$  
• Family Friendly • Water Front • Reservations  
Recommended • Veggie Options  
[www.thebeachhousebarbados.com](http://www.thebeachhousebarbados.com)

### CARIBA RESTAURANT & BAR

In a big Chattel House with a little sign hidden off the main road, your only disappointment will be that you didn’t find Caribia sooner! The Executive Chef and Owner, trained in five-star restaurants around the globe, will whip you up the most delicious Caribbean Cuisine with an Asian twist. With its traditional Barbadian feel and warm hospitality, you can enjoy long-lasting yet delicate flavors without breaking the bank. While we don’t want to discourage you from trying other playful dishes, we just wouldn’t feel right without saying: The Curry with Coconut Rice is AMAZING! Mains around USD 24 – 38. Cariba is open Daily: 6:30pm - 9:30pm.

+1 (246) 432 8737 • 1 Clarke’s Gap Derricks, St. James • \$\$\$ • Family friendly • Locally owned • Veggie Options  
[www.caribarestaurant.com](http://www.caribarestaurant.com)



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### Bonnie Lewtas

Fascinated by coastal ecology and a passion for travel, Bonnie discovered her passion for small islands with a focus on sustainable tourism. In recent years she has been exploring the ins and outs of the BVI, Barbados, Grenada, and Dominica and helps us highlight sustainable options and recommendation in our Travenius guidebooks. Bonnie now lives in Amsterdam and has her eye set on heading to the Dutch Caribbean's ABC islands for our upcoming book - we can't wait!

### Matthias Eden

Born and raised in Germany traveling has always been a passion of Matthias. Introduced to the Caribbean by his wife Makeesha he has been visiting Caribbean destinations for many years always on the hunt for new hidden gems and exciting things to do. Matthias knows Trinidad and Tobago inside out as well as Saint Lucia and Barbados through numerous visits. With Travenius and in our products he is looking to highlight local businesses in our featured destinations and support local communities.

### Makeesha Eden

Born and raised in Trinidad and Tobago Makeesha holds many of the Caribbean destinations close to her heart. Supported by her network of family and friends she ensures that we can put the latest and greatest into our guidebooks and keep them updated. Through our products she hopes to give our readers and visitors an essence of the true warmth and energy of the Caribbean people while showcasing each island's uniqueness.