

Saint Lucia

A Volcanic Paradise



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WELCOME

We have compiled our experience and explored all the nooks and crannies of this stunning volcanic ocean wonderland to find the best of Saint Lucia for you! No matter your budget, activity level, or idea of an awesome island vacation, you'll find plenty of tips and tricks to make your Caribbean dreams come true. Pack your backs and start building tropical memories to last a lifetime!





Climate & Weather

The climate in St. Lucia is hot and tropical. Tradewinds from the northeast keep temperatures at a fairly consistent level. Average temperatures range between a low of 23°C and a high 31°C (73 °F - 88 °F). There is little variation throughout the year with January and February being the “coolest” months at an average high of 29 °C (84 °F). They distinguish two different seasons: a wet season between June and September with approx. 200 mm of rain per month on average and a dry season from January until May with the driest period in March. It is usually a lot drier along the coasts with significantly more rain in the mountainous inland. Due to its southern location, St. Lucia does not get hit by hurricanes frequently, but there have been devastating ones in the past. The last big hurricane to hit the island was hurricane Tomas in 2010, which killed 14 people and severely damaged buildings and agricultural areas.

Geography & Geology

St. Lucia is part of the “Windward Islands” of the Lesser Antilles with the neighboring islands of Martinique to the north and Saint Vincent to the south. From north to south St. Lucia is about 43.5 km (27 miles) long and 22.5 km (14 miles) wide (east / west). It is a volcanic island with a very distinct face dominated by mountains and high peaks complemented by pristine beaches. St. Lucia is famous for its twin peaks “Gros Piton” and “Petit Piton”. Geologically speaking the island is quite young. It was mostly formed by volcanic activity between 19 and 9 million years ago, with more recent volcanic activity forming the pitons and other landmarks less than 1 million years ago. Even today, the sulfur springs near Soufrière demonstrate the island’s active volcanic nature.

History

Early Amerindians settled on St. Lucia around 200 A.D. who called the island Hewanorra, meaning “Island of the Iguanas”. That is where the name of the international airport originates. The island was discovered by the Europeans around 1500. Although Columbus was believed to have “discovered” it in 1502, there is evidence that Juan de la Cosa may have set foot there first. European settlements were established around 1550 in the north around Pigeon island by the French. After a number of unsuccessful attempts by the British empire to settle on the island, the French established towns and settlements during the first half of the 18th century. Soufrière was established in 1746 and was the first capital until the British took over after a series of battles during the first years of the 19th century. St. Lucia remained British until its independence in 1979.

Despite lengthy British rule, the French legacy remains an important part of St. Lucia’s culture. The widely spoken French-based creole patois is a great example, but it is also evident in art, music, dance - and most obviously in the local cuisine. The British also influenced St. Lucia’s culture in a variety of ways during their more than 150-year rule. This is most apparent in the island’s education and political system. In addition to French and British, African traditions, which were brought by slaves working the sugar plantations, remain strong until today. And although the first Amerindian inhabitants were decimated by European settlers, a few of their traditions remain present through some craft items and recipes such as cassava bread.

In more recent years, St. Lucia showed its talent through two Nobel prize laureates: Sir W. Arthur Lewis who was awarded the Nobel Prize for economics in 1979; and Derek Walcott who won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1992. Religious believes in St. Lucia are mostly Roman Catholic following French influence, but there are also a number of Protestant churches.



Safety & Crime

There is little crime in St. Lucia when compared to other popular vacation destinations. Still, we recommend using regular precautions you would elsewhere in an unfamiliar area. Lock your door, do not carry big amounts of cash and do not wear expensive watches or jewelry when you go out. Especially at night, it is wise to stay in populated areas and not to walk alone or in small groups on beaches or empty streets. While St. Lucia is considered a safe destination, there are less privileged areas of Castries, Vieux Fort, and Soufrière, which we do not recommend for tourists. These areas can easily be identified by rundown buildings and less groomed surroundings. Also, you are unlikely to accidentally wind up there. If you are in doubt it is best to ask trusted locals or the front desk at your hotel. Furthermore, we do not recommend walking along windy roads with no sidewalks, as they are not suitable for pedestrians and people drive fast.

Health

When entering St. Lucia there are no special vaccines or other prerequisites required. However, you should be updated on your routine vaccines such as Hepatitis A&B and Typhoid. There is no Malaria or Yellow Fever in the area. Mosquitos are annoying pests especially in the dusk and night hours. Recently, Zika has become a risk in the Caribbean, including St. Lucia. It can be transmitted through mosquitos and can cause serious birth defects if infected during pregnancy. Therefore, pregnant women should consider not traveling to St. Lucia or consult with their trusted medical advisor prior to traveling. If you are the partner of a pregnant woman or are trying to become pregnant, talk about risks and preventions methods with your doctor. Some mosquitos also carry dengue fever, which is a viral infection that can last up to a few weeks with flu-like symptoms and can be dangerous especially for young children and older people. Since there is no vaccine against dengue fever or Zika, the safest way to avoid them is to avoid getting bitten by mosquitoes. Especially in the evening and night hours, it is wise to wear long sleeve shirts



ACCOMMODATION

The tourist hub of St. Lucia is Rodney Bay in the north-west of the island where many hotels, resorts and guest houses are located. The other touristic centers are Castries and Marigot Bay, as well as Soufrière in the west. Most options for accommodation can be found in and around these hubs. Most all-inclusive resorts in St. Lucia are quite pricey, especially during peak season. If you are looking for a less expensive option or for smaller and less crowded places to stay, we suggest boutique hotels and guesthouses.









TRA VENIUS TIP



For a true St. Lucia experience and to get in contact with locals more easily, we suggest considering places outside of the touristic centers, especially if you have a car and can get around. Many of the smaller places are locally owned and operated and hosts are happy to give suggestions for excursions and even help organize them. If you are looking for a more independent and self-contained vacation, private villas of various sizes are a great option. While prices range significantly, villas are a great option to reduce per person cost if you are traveling with a group.



Hotels & Resorts

WINDJAMMER LANDING



A superb option for couples and families alike, the Windjammer Landing Villa Beach Resort is located oceanfront between Rodney Bay and Castries - with fantastic views all over the resort! Unlike many other resorts, childcare, babysitting, and activities for guests of all ages are readily available. Hence, parents and children can both kick-back and enjoy their stay without having to be together 24/7. If you're up for it, try a wind sailing lesson in the water sports area! Accommodation ranges from ocean view rooms (ideal for couples) to 4-bedroom villas for groups or families. Compared to other similar resorts, prices are quite reasonable with standard rates for guestrooms starting at USD 200 per night and suites at USD 259 per night. All-inclusive rates and specials are also available.

+1 (877) 522 0722 • Labrelotte Bay, Castries • \$\$
 • Family Friendly • Beach Access • Pool • Ocean View • Near Beach
www.windjammer-landing.com

COCONUT BAY BEACH RESORT

Vieux Fort has the top spots for wind and kite surfing in St. Lucia. And Coconut Bay is known as the best of the best... While you can judge for yourself, this is without a doubt an ideal place for water lovers. The resort offers something for everyone! Families will enjoy the "splash area" water park, teenagers will get a kick out of paintball, and there are plenty of other activities for children of all ages. The adults-only section is great for couples and honeymooners and active travelers can enjoy water sports of all kinds.

+1 (758) 459 6000 • Vieux Fort • \$\$\$ • Family Friendly • Adults Only • Beach Access • Pool • Ocean View • Near Beach • Tennis Court
www.cbayresort.com

CALABASH COVE RESORT AND SPA



On St. Lucia's northwest coast, tucked away into the floral surroundings of Bonaire Bay's sloping tropical hillside, you will find understated elegance at Calabash Cove Resort and Spa. Tastefully designed with exotic natural materials, you can't go wrong no matter which room you choose. Select a Balinese-style mahogany cottage, luxury junior suite with unparalleled ocean views or, our favorite: A swim-up suite with private and round-the-clock access to the sunset view infinity pool directly from your patio. Only a few strokes away from the in-pool bar, you're never far from signature cocktails specially mixed for a romantic evening in your private Jacuzzi. With decadent yet fresh food, tranquilizing spa treatments and magnificent service, your only complaint will be that you can't stay forever. Of course, elegance comes at a cost... you'll have to shell out around USD 300-600, which can go up or down from there depending on suite, package and preferred dates. Perfect for honeymooners, Calabash Cove is now adults only.

(US): 1-800 917 COVE (2683) / (local): +1 (758) 456 3500 • Bonaire Estate, Marisule • \$\$\$ • Adults Only • Pool • Ocean View • Sunset View • Spa Services
www.calabashcove.com

BAY GARDENS BEACH RESORT



Bay Gardens Beach Resort is located right on the edge of Reduit Beach with many restaurant options, vendors and opportunities for watersport

activities. The resort offers all the amenities you would expect from a beachfront accommodation, such as a well-maintained pool area, eateries and a beach bar. It is a good place to stay with kids, especially you want to be close to the sand and fun activities. If you are looking for true relaxation, the hotel has good service and many opportunities for pampering. However, be aware that Reduit Beach can be a little overwhelming, especially during peak season since it gets very busy. The hotel is 3 floors without an elevator, so if you are unable to walk stairs, request a ground floor room. Rates vary around USD 190 per night. +1 (758) 457 8006 / 8007 • Rodney Bay Village, Gros Islet • \$\$\$ • Family Friendly • Beach Access • Pool • Water Front • Ocean View • Green Initiatives

www.baygardensresorts.com

BOUCAN HOTEL & RESTAURANT

Are you a chocolate lover? What can be more enticing than staying at a real cocoa farm! Let your sweet dreams come true at the Boucan

Hotel. Located outside of Soufrière, the hotel offers everything you can expect from a luxury resort in the very unique and relaxing atmosphere of St. Lucia's Rabot Estate plantation. Take a stroll through the estate and enjoy homemade chocolate and cocoa during your stay. The exotic infinity pool and lodges offer spectacular views of Petit Piton and some rooms even of both Pitons and the Caribbean Sea. We recommend this place if you want to go beyond the regular resort experience and never miss out on luxury, great service, and amenities.

+1 (758) 572 9601 • Rabot Estate, Soufrière • \$\$\$\$ • Adults Only • Pool • Ocean View • Travenius Favorite

www.hotelchocolat.com/uk/boucan



BUDGET TIP



APARTMENT ESPOIR

2 Check out Apartment Espoir for a great place to stay close to Rodney Bay and Castries (actually between the two towns) at an affordable rate (from USD 90 for a studio). Featuring self-catering apartments among flourishing tropical gardens with a great view of the Caribbean Sea, you are less than a 5-minute walk to the beach. To top it all off, major attractions of Castries and Rodney Bay can be reached in less than 10 minutes by car ... The owners are usually around and will be more than happy to recommend awesome things to do and places to see.



+1 (758) 452 8134 • 269 Labrolette Crescent, Castries • \$\$ • Pool • Near Beach • Ocean View • Travenius Favorite



EAT & DRINK

In St. Lucia you sure won't have to compromise on taste. The cuisine is a mix of French, Creole, and Caribbean. There is plenty of fresh produce, which includes locally grown fruits and vegetables such as mango, passion fruit, okra, lime, yam, papaya and of course coconuts. Cacao also grows on the island and many restaurants integrate chocolaty hues wherever they can.





Piton

LAGER BEER

Piton

CONT. 275 ml

ARTIFICIAL MOUNTAIN DRINK

BREWED AND BOTTLED BY

THE PITON BREWERY LTD., VIEUX-FORT, ST. LUCIA, W.I.

Local Cuisine

THE ORBIT RESTAURANT & BAR

Famous for the best fish sandwich on the island. The Orbit is located in the center of Vieux Fort. It is a quaint little restaurant with friendly service and really yummy authentic Caribbean dishes. They are open for breakfast, lunch and dinner. It is right in the middle of town, close to the fish market and other vendors. Don't expect any frills, but a relaxing place with good food in a welcoming atmosphere. The Orbit is open daily from 7:00 am - 10:00 pm.
+1 (758) 454 3061 • Commercial St., Vieux Fort • \$

THE OLD PLANTATION YARD

If you are looking for a place to experience true St. Lucian cuisine and want to try many different dishes, put The Old Plantation Yard on your list. They have a-la-carte as well as a buffet, which is a great way to taste a bit of everything without breaking the bank. The restaurant is located right in the center of Vieux Fort and is easily accessible. They are usually only open for lunch, but they do offer dinner options occasionally or upon request. Regular hours are Mon. - Sat. 8:00 am - 4:30 pm.

+1 (758) 454 6040 • Lower Commercial Street, Vieux Fort • \$ • Family Friendly • Locally Owned

WINGZ -N- TINGZ

Have a hankering for wings and beer? Wingz -N- Tingz is a small food joint in Rodney Bay with no frills or fancy toppings, just straightforward wings with fries at a decent price. Indoor and outdoor seating is available. Wings -N- Tingz is open Mon. - Thurs. 12:00 pm - 11:00 pm, Fri. & Sat 12:00 pm - 1:00 am and Sun. 6:00 pm - 11:00 pm.
+1 (758) 450 2744 • Rodney Bay, Castries • \$

MARIE'S FISH SHACK

If you are spending the day near Reduit Beach, head over to Marie's Fish Shack for some traditional and delicious Caribbean food. Fish comes with a variety of tasty sides like grilled plantain and cucumber salad. You will be eating (standing or sitting) with locals and visitors alike. The food is prepared in the oven or over a wood fire by



While many resorts have all-inclusive plans, we suggest going out at least a couple times to try some of the many options St. Lucia has to offer. There are many opportunities for local cuisine. One option that is not overly pricey is Coal Pot just outside of Castries at the Vigie Marina, where it has been for decades. If you are looking for some great street food check out the Friday Night Jump Up at Gros Islet. There, you can get tasty barbeque or grilled fish right from the grill for a low price and dance the evening away.

Marie or one of her family members. You may even find yourself grabbing your own drinks from behind the bar if everybody is busy; authentic St. Lucia - don't be shy!

+1 (758) 712 9992 • Reduit Beach, Reduit, Gros-Islet • \$ • Family Friendly • Water Front

[Facebook: Marie's Fish Shack](#)

BROWN SUGAR RESTAURANT & BAR

Surrounded by a lush garden overlooking the bay and marina of Castries, Brown Sugar Restaurant is a very reputable eatery in Vigie Cove. Frequented by locals and visitors alike, during the day you will see business people having a quick snack on their lunch break. In the evening, it transforms into a place for a leisurely dinner. Small plates are available for as little as ECD 10-20 (USD

4-8), e.g. chicken roti or mini burgers. Brown Sugar is a St. Lucia local gem with quality food, friendly service and low prices. It is open Tues. - Sun. for lunch from 11:00 am - 2:30 pm and dinner from 7:00 pm - 11:00 pm. The bar is open all day with happy hour from 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm.

+1 (758) 458 1931 • Vigie Cove, Castries • \$
www.brownsugarrestaurantandbar.com

THE REEF BEACH CAFÉ

The Reef is one of those rare spots where you can enjoy lunch or dinner right on the sandy beach and still pay low prices. Watch the kite and windsurfers, lean back in your chair and just let the day go by. They serve up “bar-food-style” Creole and international dishes. Popular are the mixed drinks and fresh fish. Perfect location to relax and take it easy, especially if you have a layover as it's only about a 5-minute drive from the airport. Especially around dusk, take precautions against sandflies.

+1 (758) 454 3418 • Anse De Sable Beach/Sandy Beach - Vieux Fort • \$ • Family Friendly • Water

Front • Free Wifi

www.reefstlucia.com

FLAVOURS OF THE GRILL

This little restaurant in Gros Islet is just a block away from the beach and has surprisingly low prices. With a friendly atmosphere and yummy meals, Chef O’Neil Daly has developed his restaurant with a lot of pride. It has a solid reputation with locals and visitors alike. Very authentic local food is cooked on outdoor grills and served in a small home-style restaurant. If they are available, don’t skip the cinnamon plantains! If you enjoy the relaxed St. Lucia vibe, this should definitely be on your bucket list. Flavours of the Grill is open Mon. - Thurs. (12:00pm - 10:00pm), Fri. (12:00pm - 1:00am), Sat. (12:00pm - 10:00pm).

+1 (758) 450 9722 • Marie Therese St., Gros Islet
 • \$ • Family Friendly

[Facebook: Flavours of the Grill](#)

MARTHA’S TABLES

Take a seat at Martha’s Tables and you will



TRAVENIUS FAVORITE



BOUCAN HOTEL & RESTAURANT

At the Boucan Restaurant, you can expect the same uniqueness and high-quality as at the hotel. It is located directly on a cocoa estate, which means many dishes include cocoa (sometimes in surprising yet very tasty ways). Local fishermen deliver the seafood fresh and the restaurant makes great use of its own on-site herb garden. It is not inexpensive, but definitely very unique and an uplifting experience. Especially if you are not a hotel guest, it's best to make a reservation. The Boucan is open every day for breakfast (7:00 am - 10:00 am), lunch (12:00 noon - 2:30 pm), and dinner (6:00 pm - 9:30 pm). The bar is open from 10:00 am - 11:00 pm.



+1 (758) 572 9600 • The Rabot Estate, Soufrière • \$\$\$\$ • Veggie Options

www.hotelchocolat.com/uk/boucan



February

INDEPENDENCE DAY

Join the people of St. Lucia for a proud day of celebrating on February 22nd.

May

ST. LUCIA JAZZ & ARTS FESTIVAL

Held during the first week in May, the festival features talented musicians from Jazz and many other genres.

July

CARNIVAL

Celebrated in mid-July, cultural festivities lead up to the 2-day colorful street parade.

August

CHOCOLATE HERITAGE MONTH

Island-wide and celebrated all month long - Every chocolate-lover's dream.

LA ROSE FESTIVAL

A friendly rivalry of two flower societies "La Rose" and "Les Marguerite" - singing, dancing and playful roasting of the opposing group. La Rose's event is held on August 30th.

October

LES MARGUERITE FESTIVAL

Friendly opposition to "La Rose Festival", on October 17th it's Les Marguerite's turn to strut their flower stuff.

JOUNEN KWEYOL

On the last Sunday in October, celebrate the Creole heritage with food, games, music and traditions.

Please note:

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Culture & Events: Fire Blower

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Heritage Month

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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.