



**Barbados**

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# Barbados

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## Introduction

Barbados is the most easterly of the Caribbean islands, and just 270 miles / 434 km north-east of South America.



## Barbados is ...

- 22 miles / 34 km long
- 14 miles / 23 km wide at its widest point
- 166 sq miles / 430 sq km in area
- divided into 11 “parishes”, 9 of them named after male saints.

Population 280,000  
90% African origin

Capital Bridgetown

Currency Barbados Dollars

Traffic Drives on the left

### Major industries

- tourism, and
- agriculture (sugarcane cultivation, sugar and rum exporting).

The permanent population and tourist accommodations are concentrated on the west and south coasts, away from the more severe Atlantic weather.



# Barbados Sightseeing Map



**Sightseeing will  
start at Bridgetown  
and go counter-  
clockwise around  
the coast.**



## **Introduction**

**Barbados is relatively flat.  
It is the only non-volcanic Caribbean island.**





## **Introduction**

It consists of seabed deposits pushed up to the surface by tectonic movement.





**Blue Orchids  
Beach Hotel**

**My hotel was on the south shore,  
about 3 miles / 5 km east of Bridgetown.**





**Blue Orchids  
Beach Hotel**

**My balcony looked out over the Caribbean.**





**Blue Orchids  
Beach Hotel**

**The waves came in constantly.  
Unique lullaby for going to sleep.**





**Blue Orchids  
Beach Hotel**

**The hotel had a pool ...**





**Blue Orchids  
Beach Hotel**

**... and a stretch of beach.**





## **Bridgetown**

Bridgetown is the capital of Barbados, and the island's commercial hub.





## **Bridgetown**

**Parliament Buildings. Barbados was a British colony from 1627 until it gained its independence in 1966.**





**Bridgetown**

**National Heroes Square**





**Bridgetown**

Thus far the only national hero statue  
is of British Admiral Lord Nelson.





## Bridgetown

The Carenage, in the heart of Bridgetown, was once the island's main dock area.





**Bridgetown**

It's now home to deep sea fishing  
and tourist excursion boats ...





**Bridgetown**

... and some pleasant dock-side restaurants and bars.





## **Bridgetown**

Up to six cruise ships at a time dock at Bridgetown for their 8-hour visits.





## Bridgetown

Caribbean street markets and vendors are adjacent to the Careenage ...





**Bridgetown**

... but Broad Street is Bridgetown's major commercial district.





## Bridgetown

Things are chaotic when cruise ships are in port and Barbadians are trying to get their own business done.





## Bridgetown

The Boatyard is a beach-adventure tourist attraction for cruise ship passengers.





## **Bridgetown**

An admission fee gets you a beach chair, an umbrella, and access to pricey bars and restaurants.





**Bridgetown**

At the Barbados Hilton things are  
just like they are back home.





**South Shore**

This public beach at **Rockley** is an easy walk to the west of my hotel.





## South Shore

**St. Lawrence Gap**, to the east, is one of the main tourist areas on the south shore.





## South Shore

St. Lawrence Gap has the highest concentration of fine restaurants and exciting night life on the south shore.





## South Shore

**Oistins** is the largest town on the south shore, and the home of most of the island's relatively small commercial fishing fleet.





## South Shore

Oistins holds popular “fish fry” nights on Fridays and Saturdays.





## South Shore

There aren't many water sports centres on Barbados.  
"Beach Culture" is at **Silver Sands**.





**South Shore**

The winds and waves at Silver Sands  
are great for kitesurfing,





**South Shore**

Smooth moves are possible  
under the right conditions.





**South Shore**

I'm happy to relax and  
watch others do their stuff.





**South Shore** Crane Beach is as famous for its luxury cliff-top resort.





## East Coast

Heading north along the east coast we see the more rugged Atlantic coastline, seen here from **St. John's Church**.





**East Coast**

**St. John's Church is situated on a cliff  
1100 feet / 335 m above sea level.**





**East Coast**

**Bathsheba**, about half way up the east coast





**East Coast**

**Public park in Bathsheba**





**East Coast**

The view from **Cherry Tree Hill**, further north





**East Coast**

North Point, at the tip of the island,  
is rugged and picturesque ...





**East Coast**

... and inhabited only by  
tourism operators and fish.





**West Coast  
Sailing**

**West coast sightseeing is best done by sea,  
sailing north from Bridgetown.**





**West Coast  
Sailing**

**This trip is aboard one of the boats  
operated by Cool Runnings.**





**West Coast  
Sailing**

**Most of the trip is under sail.**





**West Coast  
Sailing**

The most expensive homes and resorts are on the west coast where the seas are calmest.





**West Coast  
Sailing**

**This resort, Sandy Lane,  
has its own golf course.**





**West Coast  
Sailing**

Next door, along “the platinum coast”,  
is a new development, The Sands.





**West Coast  
Sailing**

**Day sails make stops at  
popular snorkeling sites.**





**West Coast  
Sailing**

**Two of the stops are over coral  
beds and a ship wreck.**





**West Coast  
Sailing**

**Cruise staff guide swimmers  
to the interesting spots.**





**West Coast  
Sailing**

**Another highlight is  
“swimming with the turtles”.**





**West Coast  
Sailing**

**A tastefully designed yacht**





### Attractions

**Orchid World** is a heavily-promoted tourist attraction which features 30,000 orchid plants.





**Attractions**

The orchids are indeed gorgeous ...





**Attractions**

... and there are also flowering trees.





### **Attractions**

The individual orchids are beautiful, but they are almost all in enclosures, with flowering and dormant plants intermixed.





### Attractions

The most-promoted tourist attraction is **Harrison's Cave**, an underground cavern of crystallized limestone with flowing streams and a tram route.





### Attractions

Water seeping into the cavern from above forms deposits hanging from the roof and rising up from the floor.





### Attractions

A little artificial lighting in the right places shows off the underground streams in Harrison's cave to advantage.





**Attractions**

Time to move on before anyone starts making rude jokes.





### Attractions

The **Barbados Wildlife Reserve** provides a refuge for exotic animals. They are not fenced in, and are free to explore the island and return.





### **Attractions**

I thought the expression “a herd of turtles” was a joke, but there were dozens of them here, all over the place.





### Attractions

This crocodile wasn't going anywhere in a hurry either, just waiting for lunch.





### Attractions

Seeing monkeys was novel for us, but this one was apparently bored by the sight of more tourists.





### Attractions

One of the 14 commercial service Concorde is now housed at the **Barbados Concorde Experience**.





### Attractions

Barbados was one of only four scheduled destinations for Concorde, along with London, Paris, and New York.





### Attractions

The weekly British Airways flights brought wealthy Brits to sunny Barbados.





**Attractions**

Visitors get to sit where celebrities and the very rich once sat.





### Attractions

The Concorde was designed in the 1960s. Its instruments were all analog, and there was no on-board computer.





### **Economy**

Barbados was a profitable colony, with a rich economy based on sugar and slavery. Agriculture remains important.





## **Economy**

Barbados has limited natural resources,  
so much has to be imported.





### **Economy**

Barbados has six banking companies, three Caribbean and three (like Scotiabank) Canadian.





### Economy

KFC outlets are here in abundance,  
but there are no McDonald's.





## Economy

The Cheffete chain is the drive-through giant, helping promote an automobile culture ...





**Economy**

... which is growing faster than  
the supporting infrastructure.





## Economy

Traffic is heavy, aggressive, and moves as fast as possible when it has the chance.





## Economy

Barbados has a good education system, a stable government, and relatively little severe poverty. But ...



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**Economy**

... abandoned projects seem as common  
here as in other Caribbean islands.





## Economy

This restaurant, TGI Boomers, is still featured on an official tourist map. Not the only slip like this.





## Economy

This is the dock yard at Oistins, centre of the island's commercial fishery.





Economy

We're not real busy today.





## **Economy**

There are lots of expensive condos and resorts, but also many people whose circumstances aren't great.





Economy

Barbados in a nutshell.





**Sunsets**

**Sunset at the hotel, March 9.**





Sunsets





**Sunsets**





## Sunsets

One of the best ways to see Caribbean sunsets is to go for a sunset dinner cruise. You get a good on-board buffet meal, and great opportunities for pictures.





Sunsets





Sunsets





## Sunsets

Heading back into the Careenage in Bridgetown at the end of our sunset cruise. Good night.



## Trip Notes

I went to Barbados for a winter break as a change from my repeat visits to St. Maarten.

The weather was great, I saw some beautiful places, and I bagged a few good pictures.

I didn't plan to drive in Barbados, and that was the right decision for me. Traffic drives on the left. There are highway numbers on the maps, but not on the highways. There are few direction signs. But not driving meant that getting around was more difficult. Taxis are expensive. There are no maps of the bus routes. Walking is good.

Although Barbados is generally more advanced and developed than St. Maarten, its tourism industry didn't function as well.

I booked to go on nine major activity outings, but only three operated. Service is sometimes extremely slow. Closed businesses and out-of-stock situations are relatively common.

Barbados would be fine for a week or two to be spent just relaxing on the beach or by the pool with one or more friends. But I wanted to go places and see things and keep busy, and Barbados didn't work well enough for me to want to repeat my visit.



< End >

**Barbados**