

Antigua

In 1493 Columbus landed and named the island Antigua, Spanish for “old”. Antigua changed hands several times, finally gaining its independence in 1981 from England. Antigua's current population is approximately 84,000. The island is 14 miles long and 11 miles wide, boasting 365 beaches.



Culture

Sailing and water sports are the most popular pastimes in Antigua. There are several large sport fishing competitions held yearly. Antigua's Sailing Week and Class Yacht Regatta bring in hundreds of yachts from around the world. Jabbawock Beach is popular for kitesurfing. The most popular land sport is cricket!

Food

- Saltfish and Fungee: a staple here! The saltfish is usually cod; fungee is a cornmeal and okra mix. Eaten for both breakfast and dinner.
- Pepperpot: A spicy stew, using the chef's choice of meats. Often paired with fungee.
- Ducana: Sweet, dumpling like, consisting of sweet potatoes, coconut, and spices. Then wrapped in banana leaves and steamed.
- Bun and Cheese: For breakfast; a sweet raisin bun filled with cheese.
- Goat Water: A goat meat stew seasoned with spices; often a celebratory dish for festivals and gatherings.
- Antiguan Black Pineapple: With a lower acidity than other varieties this pineapple is sweeter and richer. The pineapple is frequently served in a rich custard.
- Tamarind Balls - Sweet yet sour. Tamarind fruit combined with brown sugar and a pinch of hot pepper. Formed into balls, then rolled in sugar.



Animals

Antigua offers diverse and varied wildlife. In the sea you can find: whales, killer whales, dolphins, sea turtles, ospreys, spoonbills, flamingos, pelicans, manatees, anhingas, rays, reef and basking sharks, and too many varieties of fish to list. On land you can find: red tail hawks, bats, iguana, hummingbirds, nighthawks, and even fallow deer - they were brought over from Europe in the 18th century and thrive here.

Unique to antigua are: the antiquan racer, one of the rarest snakes in the world, and the griswold's ameiva, a lizard only found on Antigua and Barbuda.



Climate

Temperatures generally range from the mid-seventies in the winter to the mid-eighties in the summer.

Business

As is the case of many Caribbean islands in the 1800s, Antigua's main industry was sugar cane, boasting more than 150 plantations. Today "Betty's Hope", Colonel Codrington's original sugar estate has been fully restored and is open to visitors to experience the process and history. Evidence of the early industry can also be seen all over the island as the stone windmills that once powered the sugar processing are still standing - though they now serve as homes, bars, shops, and restaurants. Today Antigua's economy relies mostly on tourism, there is also a sizable online gambling and gaming industry here.

Language

Officially, English; with several creole dialects, southern Antiguan the hardest to understand for outsiders.

Currency

The East Caribbean Dollar is the official currency. In tourist areas you'll find prices listed and the USD accepted. Visa and Mastercard are widely accepted.



Cell Service

Widespread, 4G coverage.

Internet

Frequently available free with a purchase at restaurants and pubs.

Driving

On the left hand side of the road. You must be 21yo and obtain a visitors driving permit (\$20USD available at rental car agency). Roads are in poor condition with low speed limits.

What to see and do?

Popular attractions within walking distance of the port:

- Shopping
- Restaurants

Excursion or transportation needed attractions:.

- Beaches - too many to list.
- Fort James & Fort James Beach nearby
- Fort Barrington & Deep Bay Beach & Andes wreck nearby
- Homes of the Rich & Famous
- Devil's Bridge
- Snorkeling - too many locations to list.
- St John's Cathedral circa 1845 on the site of a 1600s church destroyed by earthquake.

