

Nassau, Bahamas

On May 7th, 2023 a brand new cruise port opened at Nassau. New piers, new shops, eateries, amphitheater, and even a brand new Straw Market. If you've been to Nassau in the past, you are in for an all new treat on your return!

The Bahamas consist of more than 3,000 islands and 180,000 square miles of ocean. Discovered in 1492 by Columbus, the first English arrived in 1648, becoming a British colony in 1718. The Bahamas was granted independence on July 10th, 1973.

History

Nassau is the largest city and capital of the Bahamas. It has a colorful history, being dubbed the "pirate republic" in the 1700s.

Food

- Conch Salad - fresh, diced conch, onion, bell pepper, cucumber, and tomato; seasoned with salt, pepper, fresh lime.
- Cracked Conch - conch, onion, bell peppers, celery, salt, and pepper; fried. (Cracked means coated in batter and deep fried.)
- Johnny Cake - a cross between bread and a cake; baked until golden brown.
- Conch Stew - conch boiled and a sauce of tomatoes, tomato paste, chopped potatoes, onions, salt, and pepper.
- Peas n' Rice - Salt pork, bell peppers, onion, and thyme are fried. Then salt, pepper, tomato paste, canned pigeon peas, and coconut milk are stirred in and brought to a boil, then rice is added.
- Goombay Smash - orange and pineapple juice, coconut-flavored rum, and light, gold, and dark rums. Garnished with slices of pineapple or orange.



Culture

Junkanoo is one of the most well known examples of Bahamian culture; a festival with music, dance, and colorful costumes. The Straw Market is a place to explore local crafts and visit. Try some traditional Bahamian Cuisine. Visit the historic forts of Charlotte, Fort Fincastle, and Fort Montagu. Tour centuries-old churches, colorful government buildings, and colonial structures.

Animals

Animals unique to the Bahamas are: bahamian rock iguanas, green sea turtles, bahamian oriole, collared peccary, guppies, harpy eagle, bahamian hutias, gecko, funnel eared bats, and flamingos.



Business

Tourism accounts for 70% of the Bahamian economy and brings 5.8 million visitors, most on cruise ships. In Nassau, the Atlantis resort alone employs 6,000 residents and is the largest employer outside of the government. Offshore banking accounts for 15% of the economy with the Bahamas holding the most offshore entities and/or companies in the world. Agriculture accounts for 7%, though 80% of the food supply is imported. Bahamians raise limes, lemons, grapefruit, oranges, tomatoes, sugar cane, cucumbers, sweet potatoes, onions, and okra.



Language

English is the official language, though you'll notice a creole influence.

Currency

The Bahamian Dollar, which is equivalent to the US Dollar. The USD is widely accepted. Major credit cards are accepted in many locations.



Cell Service

Widespread, fairly reliable cell service.

Internet

Available free in the port area, though quite slow. Frequently available free with a purchase at restaurants and pubs.

Drive

On the left hand side of the road. Cell phone use is prohibited. Your US license is valid here.

What to see and do?

Popular attractions within walking distance of the port:

- Shopping; the Straw Market just outside the port area is the traditional spot.
- Junkanoo Beach. Free beach access, snorkeling opportunities; calm, clear water. Multiple informal on-the-beach eateries, to try local flavors.
- John Watlings Distillery. Free tours, gift shop, bar, and food truck. Visit with their infamous free range chicken colony while sipping or snacking on the porch. (Our favorite drink here is their Pina Colada!) <https://www.johnwatlings.com>
- Graycliff Chocolatier. Tour and chocolate making class for a fee. Historic buildings and gardens to tour at your leisure. Specialty chocolates, 5 star restaurant, candles, cigars, and wines. Outside is Nassau's umbrella street. <https://www.graycliff.com/>
- Queen's Staircase. Hand carved from the limestone in 1793, this 65 step staircase was created for easier access to Fort Fincastle. Free, you may climb at your leisure.
- Fort Fincastle. Built in 1793 by Lord Dunmore this Fort and Lighthouse was erected to protect the island from pirates. Admittance at a nominal fee (\$3pp our last visit). Enjoy the historic building and the high overlook with a view of the waterfront district and your ship. Unofficial street market outside the fort, often with better pricing than the Straw Market.
- Fort Charlotte. 18th century fort also built by Lord Dunmore.
- Ardastra Gardens. Gardens and wildlife conservation center.
- Pirates of Nassau Museum
- Margaritaville - Day Passes available, [Waterpark Day Passes | Margaritaville Beach Resort Nassau](#)

Excursion or transportation needed attractions:

- Paradise Island & Atlantis (there is a fee to enter most of the facility).
- Blue Lagoon <https://www.dolphinencounters.com>
- Balmoral Island
- Cable Beach
- *(Bacardi Distillery is now closed.)*