

ONE HAPPY ISLAND

So much to do, so little time
Come back soon



- Museum
- Casino
- Information
- Diving
- Cave
- Police Station
- Nature Site
- Government Office
- Historical Site
- Hill
- Shopping
- Gas Station
- Beaches
- Medical Service
- Church
- Synagogue



Roadmap

Bonbini Festival

The Bon Bini Festival takes place every Tuesday at 6.30pm in the outdoor courtyard of historical Fort Zoutman. An engaging emcee introduces traditionally costumed folkloric dancers, local musical genres such as the mazurka and the waltz, and instruments such as the cuarta, wiri, raspu, and caja di orgel, a barrel organ affectionately called the "ting- a-ling box". The Caribbean from oil drums, also adds a touch of local colour. The works of talented artists and artisans are on sale as are authentic culinary specialties.

Caribbean Festival

The Caribbean Festival takes place in San Nicolas every Thursday night from 6pm - 10pm, showcasing the multicultural charms of Aruba's "Sunrise City". The centre of activities is a stage area in which the audience can relax and enjoy some delicious Aruban and Caribbean food and a parade of local entertainers. Closed to traffic, the main street is a pedestrian street filled with colourful booths selling food, handicrafts and logo souvenirs with fun activities for the whole family. Packages including round trip transportation are sold at hotels.



ATA ARUBA
L.G. Smith Blvd. 172
Oranjestad, Aruba
Tel: (297) 582-3777
Fax: (297) 583-4702
E-mail: ata.aruba@aruba.com
facebook.com/Arubanized

ATA UK
Tel: +44 788591 3860
E-mail: ata.uk@aruba.com
Website: www.aruba.com
facebook.com/ArubaFansUK

ATA NORDIC
Peter Myrnes Backe 9
SE-118 46 Stockholm,
Sweden
Tel: + 46 (0) 8 556 007 56
E-mail: nordic@aruba.com
facebook.com/VBonbiniAruba

ATA EUROPE
R.J. Schimmelpennincklaan 1
2517 JN The Hague,
The Netherlands
Tel: +31 (0)70-3028040
Fax: +31 (0)70-3604877
E-mail: ata.europe@aruba.com
facebook.com/ArubaToerisme
facebook.com/BezoekAruba

ATA ITALIA
Via Boucheron 14
10122 Torino (TO)
Italy
Tel: +39 0114546557
Fax: +39 0110374844
E-mail: aruba@globaltourist.it
facebook.com/ArubaTurismo

ATA GERMANY
Sandweg 94C/ 3 Etage
D-60316 Frankfurt am Main,
Germany
Tel: +49 6924756182
E-mail: aruba@tame-creativelab.com
www.tame-creativelab.com/aruba
Facebook.com/ArubaVAdE
Twitter: @arubaVAdE

aruba.com



Download our mobile app for free!



Our Country...

Aruba is located in the heart of the southern Caribbean, 16 miles from the South American coastline. The island is 19.6 miles long and 6 miles across at its widest point, with a total area of 70 square miles. Aruba's topography and vegetation are unusual for a Caribbean island. On the south and west coasts are miles of pristine white beaches with calm turquoise seas that rank among the most beautiful in the world. The northeast coast along the windward shore is rugged and wild. The interior is desert-like, with a variety of cacti and dramatic rock formations. The island's most famous trees are the watapana (divi) trees, all permanently sculpted into graceful southeast-bending shapes by the constant trade winds.

Our weather...

Except for a few scattered weather events annually and perhaps some limited showers on some days (welcomed by our tropical plants!), the sun does indeed always shine here. The average temperature is 28 degrees C. The hottest months are from May through October and the coolest months are from December through March. The greatest likelihood of a shower is from October through January.

Our history...

Aruba's earliest inhabitants arrived in small vessels about 400 years ago from the South American mainland. These first Indians were hunters and gatherers who lived in small scattered groups. The crop-growing Caquetio Indians of the Arawak tribe arrived about 1000 AD and settled in three large villages.

A map of the Caribbean Sea showing the location of Aruba.

The first European to land on Aruban shores was the Spanish explorer Alonso de Ojeda, who is thought to have arrived about 1499. The Spanish had exported the Indians to Hispaniola and put them to work in the copper mines, although many later drifted back to work in the island's cattle- and horse-breeding industries. During the years that followed, ownership of the island changed hands several times. In 1636, near the culmination of the Eighty Years War between Spain and Holland, the Dutch took possession and remained in control for nearly two centuries. In 1805, during the Napoleonic Wars, the English briefly took over Aruba, but it was returned to Dutch control in 1816.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

In 1824, gold was discovered in Rooi Fluit on the north coast. Mining was done by hand until machinery was imported. In 1872, a large smelting works was built in Bushiribana, followed by another site twenty-five years later in Balashi. Gold mining ended in 1916 when World War I broke out.

Money

The local currency is Florins, however, US dollars are widely accepted. The current exchange rate to for US dollars is Awg 1.77 for cash and Awg 1.78 for travellers cheques. (Awg 1.75 at supermarkets and gas stations / Awg 1.80 at shops and restaurants) All major credit cards and travellers cheques are accepted.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

Personal checks from out of Aruba are not accepted. Some shops will not accept US \$ 50 or US \$ 100 due to worldwide counterfeiting.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

Sun Protection

The sun is strongest from 11am – 3pm. Please be sure to reapply suntan lotion often and drink plenty of liquids. Sunglasses and a hat/cap are recommended.



A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

Time

Aruba is on GMT minus 4 hours.

Beaches

Sharp geographical differences create a unique combination of land and sea activities. Calm glittering turquoise waters fringed by marshmallow-soft ivory beaches neighbour a national park encompassing a wild windward coast and unsettled rugged interior. Test your endurance on 20 miles of rugged hiking trails at Arikok National Park, climbing rocks at Ayo and Casibari, climbing 500 steps to the top of the Hooiberg, Aruba's second highest peak. For off-road adventure, rent a jeep, all-terrain vehicle or mountain bike. Saddle-up for a scenic or challenging horseback ride.

Palm Beach

The renowned two-mile-long strip known as Palm Beach is home to glamorous high-rise resorts and dotted by watersports facilities, piers,

beach bars, restaurants and shops. Calm waters make this a comfortable haven for swimmers and snorkellers. Enjoy a walk along the coast at dawn or sunset, viewing the magnificent sunset and enjoy candle-lit, barefoot dining on the beach.

Eagle Beach

Acclaimed as one of the world's most beautiful beaches, Eagle Beach is a long, uninterrupted stretch of glittering ivory sand with ample parking and thatched palapas for shade. Some nearby hotels provide cabanas and lounges for their guests. During Easter week, tents dot the coastline as local families enjoy the tradition of camping out.

Baby Beach

Baby Beach is located in Seroe Colorado at the southeastern tip of the island. It is a sandy half-moon expanse in a calm lagoon, with a refreshment stand and huts. The waters are shallow; swimmers can wade out for a long distance and still touch the sea bottom. Where the bay opens out to the sea, snorkellers should watch out for strong currents.

Rodgers Beach

Rodgers Beach is a narrow powdery white strip close-by where fishermen anchor their boats, protected by the calm waters of the bay.

Malmok Beach

Malmok Beach is a narrow sandy stretch that is home to sprawling homes and a variety of modest windsurfing residences; its shallow clear waters make it a popular snorkelling spot. Here catamarans and sailboats stop for a daytime snorkelling stop just off the shoreline. Reefs and sunken wrecks nearby afford excellent diving. Boca Catalina is a small, secluded bay accessible by steps, perfect for a private swim.

Druif Beach

Druif Beach, a long, narrow oval-shaped stretch of ivory sand, is home to the casual low-rise resorts. Here, rooms are just steps away from the relatively calm Caribbean waters. Though not too far from bustling downtown Oranjestad, Druif Beach is a quiet and relaxing spot for sunning and socialising.

Manchebo Beach

Just past the low-rise resorts is Manchebo Beach, a very private, undisturbed area named after an Arawak chief. This very wide stretch of flat beach is dotted with swaying palms and the occasional beach lounge. Jutting out at the island's most western point, it has some exciting surf resulting from converging currents.

Hadicurari Beach

Hadicurari Beach (Fisherman's Huts), is a rocky strip out past the Aruba Marriott Resort, it is a popular spot for windsurfing and kitesurfing enthusiasts and the venue for many sporting events and tournaments throughout the year.

Mangel Halto

Mangel Halto is located in Pos Chiquito on the southeast coast just south of the Spanish Lagoon. It is a perfect picnicking, sun bathing, shore diving and snorkelling spot with calm, shallow waters rich in sea life supported by an intriguing network of mangroves.

Arikok Nationaal Park

Arikok, a nature reserve covering almost one-fifth of Aruba's surface area, contains historical sites as well as Aruba's three geological formations that support unique, indigenous plants and wildlife and have influenced human settlement. It is on the great granite rocks of Arikok that the island's earliest inhabitants left their mark.



Painted by Caquetio Indians, the drawings are at least 1,000 years old. Twenty-one miles of well-marked trails await hikers. The park encompasses Mount Jamanota, Aruba's highest point reaching 620 feet, underground Indian caves and everything in between. Sand dunes and limestone cliffs are found along the coast. Among the desert vegetation in the park are divi-divi trees, rare and exotic cacti, aloeplants, and colourful tropical flowers. Wildlife includes the cascabel (local rattlesnake) and santanero (cat-eyed snake). The shoco (burrowing owl), prikiichi (Aruban parakeet), kododo blaww (whiptail lizard) are among its residents. Iguanas and many species of migratory birds live in the park as well, and goats and donkeys graze on the hills.

Historical Sites

Alto Vista Chapel

Known as the Pilgrim's Chapel, the small, bright yellow Chapel of Alto Vista is the picture of tranquility in its dramatic setting on a high coastal plain. The chapel was the island's first Roman Catholic Church, built in 1750 and reconstructed in 1953. It is reached by a winding road lined with white crosses marking the Stations of the Cross. It is a special place for peace and contemplation in a magnificent natural setting.

Santa Ana Church

When it was constructed in 1776, Santa Ana Roman Catholic Church in Noord was the island's second most important religious meeting place (the first being Alto Vista Chapel). It was rebuilt twice during the 19th century and a final renovation was made in 1916. Its solid oak, hand-carved altar is a recognised work of art in classic neo-gothic design.

Frenchman's Pass

French pirates attempted to invade Aruba during the first quarter of the 17th century. When an Indian tribal head and his group tried to stop them in this narrow passage, they were killed. Legend has it that their ghosts preside over this tranquil scenic spot.

California Lighthouse

More than ninety feet high, the imposing California Lighthouse overlooks both a barren lunar landscape and a glittering Palm Beach panorama. It was built in 1914 of local stones and is named after an English steamship that was shipwrecked off the coast.

Balashi & Bushiribana Gold Mills

In 1824, gold was discovered on the north coast by a young boy. Ultimately, the search turned to gold bearing quartz and mines were created with dynamite. The Balashi gold mill was built at the tip of the Spanish Lagoon near Frenchman's Pass. In 1872, Aruba Island Gold Mining Company built a large smelting works at Bushiribana on the north coast. Though only in use for a decade, Bushiribana's construction was so solid that impressive ruins still remain.

Attractions

Ostrich Farm

Located on the road to the Natural Bridge, this large ostrich farm provides an educational experience with an incubator and hospital (on-site). Guided tours operate every half hour from 9am to 4pm. Features also include the Savanna Lodge bar and restaurant and Art of Africa shop.

Butterfly Farm

Step into a tropical garden teeming with butterflies from around the globe. Tour guides provide commentary on butterfly life. Your admission ticket gives you a free pass for the rest of your holiday. The Butterfly Farm is located at Palm Beach across from the Divi Aruba Phoenix Beach Resort. Open daily from 9am – 4.30pm

Donkey Sanctuary

Home to about 100 endangered donkeys; this guest-friendly sanctuary in Santa Lucia provides the opportunity to interact with these harmless animals in a fun environment. Stop for a snack and purchase a donkey-themed gift or souvenir; you can even adopt your own donkey! Volunteers care for the donkeys and organise activities and fundraising events.

Bubali Bird Sanctuary

Also known as Bubali Plas, this is an official nature reserve. This fresh water lagoon located close to the high-rise hotel strip is an important nesting site for many bird species. A tower located just at the edge of the cattail marsh across from the Mill Resort offers a vantage point for bird watching especially exciting during late fall when the birds migrate to the south.

Cultural Pursuits



Bonbini Festival

The Bonbini Festival takes place every Tuesday at 6.30pm in the outdoor courtyard of historical Fort Zoutman. An engaging emcee introduces traditionally costumed folkloric dancers, local musical genres such as the mazurka and the waltz, and instruments such as the cuarta, wiri, raspu, and caja di orgel, a barrel organ affectionately called the "ting- a-ling box". The steel pan, originally developed in the English Caribbean from oil drums, also adds a touch of local colour. The works of talented artists and artisans are on sale as are authentic culinary specialities.

Carubbian Festival

The Carubbian Festival takes place in San Nicolas every Thursday night from 6pm - 10pm, showcasing the multicultural charms of Aruba's "Sunrise City". The centre of activities is a stage area in which the audience can relax and enjoy some delicious Aruban and Caribbean food and a parade of local entertainers. Closed to traffic, the main street is a pedestrian street filled with colourful booths selling food, handicrafts and logo souvenirs with fun activities for the whole family. Packages including round trip transportation are sold at hotels.

Aruba Aloe Factory & Museum

(Pitstraat, Oranjestad)

Tour the state-of-the-art Aruba Aloe Factory and see the production process first hand from aloe vera leaf to finished products. The tour guides will explain all about the aloe plant and its uses. Learn all about the 160-year old aloe history of Aruba in the museum, a national depository for ancient tools and equipment. Aruba Aloe products can be purchased here.

Mon - Fri 8am - 4pm • Saturday 9am - 1pm Free tours every 15 minutes.

www.arubaaloe.com

Historical Museum

Downtown Oranjestad between two of Aruba's oldest monuments, Fort Zoutman and the Willem III Tower. The collection consists of artefacts acquired since its opening in 1983. There are audio-visual programs on topics related to Aruba's history and a permanent exhibition outlining main events in Aruban history. Smaller, themed exhibitions are on periodic display. If visiting the museum on a Tuesday, stay in town for the Bon Bini Festival.

Open Mon - Fri 9am - 12pm • 1.30pm - 4.30pm

museohistoricoarubano@hotmail.com

Archaeological Museum

(Schelpstraat, downtown Oranjestad)

This state-of-the-art museum is housed in the restored historic Ecury family home complex in downtown Oranjestad. Three periods of Amerindian habitation are documented through artefacts from various digs around the island and presented through film and audio presentations, exhibits and interactive technology. The museum sheds light on the cultural and religious practices of the Amerindians. Highlights include a reproduction of a maloca, a hut where natives lived 1000 years ago, and an exposition of history-themed artwork by contemporary artists. Public programs include lectures, education projects, temporary exhibits and workshops.

archoe@setamet.aw

Food & Beverage

Hot Sauce

Pica di papaya, light orange in colour, is a hot sauce made with locally grown green papayas. It is less potent than Hot Delight, made of Madame Jeanette scotch bonnet peppers that far exceed the jalapeno in intensity. These sauces are all natural and contain no preservatives. Hot Delight gourmet products have won national acclaim and are found in most homes and restaurant all over Aruba. These condiments are made by Aurelio Ruiz, using a recipe that his grandfather developed in 1880.

Sweets & Snacks

Arubans prepare treats such as cocoda (coconut candy) and tamarind balls as well as rich desserts such as pan bollo (bread pudding) and cashew cake. Try a pastechi, the national snack, a deep-fried half-moon pastry with a savoury filling (chicken, chop suey, tuna, beef, cheese or ham).

Aruba's "Balashi Cocktail"

AWA (Papiamentu: water) is a clear, refreshing liquid in the blue-labelled bottle. Aruba has some of the best-tasting drinking water on the planet, produced in the desalination process utilizing coral rock as filters.



Balashi Beer

Balashi is Aruba's national beer, produced in a fully-automated brewery with cutting edge technology. Built in 1998 at a cost of about US \$12 million, the state-of-the-art facility is equipped with special computer software from Germany that controls the quality of the brew during the entire process. The beer is a deep golden colour and easy on the foam. It has a soft bitterness, an aroma of fresh hops and a short after-taste.

Palmera Rum

Palmera Quality Products imports raw materials for rum and other alcoholic beverages and use their own formulas for blending. They have the most extensive line of locally bottled alcoholic products sold on Aruba and seven different flavours of liqueur including the Palmera, Bon Bin and Taste of Aruba labels.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.



A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.



Coecoei & Ponche Crema

Playa Liquor & Bottling Company produces coecoei, a deep red alcoholic beverage used in many tropical cocktails. The recipe is centuries old, originally made by an Indian tribe from Venezuela and introduced on Aruba some sixty years ago. Ponche crema is a creamy, smooth and refreshing beverage made of egg yolks, cream, rum, and a variety of spices.



A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

Weddings & Honeymoons

Aruba is the ideal venue for a unique and unforgettable destination wedding. You don't have to do it all yourself! Independent and resort wedding planners provide valuable advice about documentation and legal matters as well as coordination on the ceremony day. Every minute detail about the ceremony and reception can be arranged, from officiator, witnesses, flowers, mementoes, gifts, and wedding certificates, to limousine service, photography and video, rehearsal dinners, wardrobe, and personal attendants - even a butterfly release! Visit www.aruba.com for listing of Wedding Planners.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.

A view of the Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, Aruba.