

# PORTS



## San Juan, Puerto Rico

Old San Juan is rich in Spanish tradition, with iconic blue cobblestone streets and colonial architecture. This historic section of the Puerto Rican city is easily seen on foot, and cruise passengers can shop for handcrafted works, relax in a shaded park, or tour El Morro, a 16th-century Spanish

fortress overlooking the sea. New San Juan is distinctly elegant with lavish resorts, great restaurants, and grand casinos. Visitors can enjoy an outing to El Yunque, the only tropical rain forest in the U.S. national forest system or join in on shore excursions that include the likes of deep-sea fishing, snorkeling, diving and even kayaking on a bioluminescent bay.

**Language:** English/Spanish

**Currency:** US Dollar (US\$)

## St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands

St. Thomas is a Caribbean paradise where white-sand beaches are gently lapped by azure waters and mountains are topped with verdant crowns of vegetation. Boasting a cosmopolitan flair, the island offers an abundance of duty-free shopping, top-notch eateries, and cultural experiences.



In the harbor city of Charlotte Amalie, find the famed 99 Steps, a scenic staircase constructed by the Danes in the 1700s that starts the journey to a 1679 castle. For a dose of heritage, visit the 17th-century Fort Christian, a National Historic Landmark that houses a museum, Virgin Islands exhibits, an art gallery and a furniture collection from the Danish period. Popular excursions include island tours, scuba diving and snorkeling expeditions and a trip to Magens Bay Park, with its mile-long shoreline and 6-acre arboretum.

**Language:** English

**Currency:** US Dollar (US\$)

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## St. Maarten

Christopher Columbus' sighting first brought European attention to this island in 1493. Today, St. Maarten flies two flags, making the island part-French and part-Dutch. Cruise ships more commonly call on the Dutch side of St. Maarten, known for its year-round sunshine, slew of shopping

centers and buzzing nightlife. Visitors can voyage the Caribbean aboard a catamaran, kayak, or Jet Ski. Island outings include all-terrain vehicle adventures, culinary tours and snorkeling or scuba diving trips. Walking and biking tours explore the historic capital, Philipsburg, and luxury yachts and sailboats offer private charters for enhanced relaxation.

**Language:** Dutch

**Currency:** Euro (EUR), US Dollar (US\$)

## Aruba

Aruba's landscape is one of contrasting terrain, from its white-sand southern shoreline to its rugged north coast. Buffeted by breezes and surrounded by turquoise waters, this port is a hot spot for aquatic activities like sailing, deep sea fishing, kayaking and kitesurfing. Snorkelers can discover sea creatures at various coral reefs and at the shipwreck of the SS Antilla, a German vessel from World War II. Visit the Alto Vista Chapel, Aruba's first church, and the aloe vera factory and museum, where you can learn about the plant's healing powers, or navigate your own Jeep to the ruins of a gold mill and the remains of the Natural Bridge, which was carved out of limestone cliffs by wind and waves. Hikes, trail rides and off-roading adventures in Airikok National Park promise interesting wildlife sightings, while stops at the California Lighthouse afford some of the best views on the island.



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**Language:** Dutch (Official) and Papiamentu

**Currency:** Florin (AFL), US Dollar (US\$)

# PORTS



## Curacao

One of the Caribbean's most delightful ports, colorful Curacao is famed for its blue-tinted liqueur, partially made from the island's oranges. Distillery tours sample the spirit, and other outings explore capital Willemstad, the salt flat's wild flamingos or the 300,000-year-old Hato Caves. Curacao has the

Western Hemisphere's oldest continuously inhabited Jewish community, and some shore excursions visit the historic Jewish neighborhood and a cemetery consecrated in 1659. White-sand beaches and swimmable bays abound on the island's less developed western side. For water activities, choose between renting a Jet Ski or kayak or booking a private yacht or fishing trip. The crystalline waters are home to an expansive underwater park, with miles-long reefs hosting barracudas, sea turtles and manta rays. Inspect the pirate-deterring Fort Beekenburg or Queen Emma Bridge, a floating pontoon bridge. One must-see is Boca Tabla, a coastal cave created from the sea and wind.

**Language:** Dutch

**Currency:** Netherlands Antilles Guilder (ANG), US Dollar (US\$)

## Bonaire

Sitting atop a coral reef, Bonaire is a prime location for snorkelers and divers. The adventurous traveler will be in paradise. In addition to the underwater experiences, the island is ideal for hiking and birdwatching, with its bright pink flamingos, Amazon parrots and native parakeets.



**Language:** Dutch

**Currency:** Netherlands Antillean Guilder (ANG), US Dollar (US\$)

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## St. Lucia

St. Lucia is home to the majestic Piton Mountains, the twin volcanic peaks rising thousands of feet above the island. Sightseeing tours offer a look of the island's rugged beauty, including the tropical rain forests. Most also visit Le Soufriere, the world's only drive-in

volcano. Water lovers will find a variety of water sports at Marigot Bay.

**Language:** English

**Currency:** Eastern Caribbean Dollar (XCD), US Dollar (US\$)

## St. Kitts

St. Kitts is home to some of the best examples of West Indian architecture, all of which is set amid a dramatically beautiful landscape. The best shore excursion is a well-organized island tour, featuring a visit to the 17th-century British fortress at Brimstone Hill and the sites of the capital. The beaches here are magnificent, including Friar's Bay, which opens to the Atlantic and the Caribbean.



**Language:** English

**Currency:** Eastern Caribbean Dollar (XCD), US Dollar (US\$)