



# Cayman Islands

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## Best Beaches

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## Best Places to Stay

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## Why Go?

What's so surprising about the three Cayman Islands at first is how un-British they are for a British territory – Grand Cayman seems straight from the US, with ubiquitous SUVs jostling for space at upscale malls and US dollars changing hands as if they were the national currency. Think of it as a much more orderly version of South Florida.

But get away from the crowded commercialism of Grand Cayman's long western coastline and explore the low-key rest of the island. Or visit tiny Cayman Brac and Little Cayman. Here life runs at a slow pace and the natural delights that see people coming back again and again – from birdwatching and hiking to diving and snorkeling – are never far away.

While synonymous worldwide with tax havens and beach holidays, the Cayman Islands appeal to those who want to avoid gaudy diversions and stop worrying after applying their sunscreen.

## When to Go

The best time to visit is from December to April, when the temperature averages a pleasant 75°F (24°C) and humidity is at its lowest. During the low season, temperatures average 83°F (28°C), with July and August usually being uncomfortably hot. During these times crowds dissipate, particularly on Cayman Brac and Little Cayman, lodging rates fall and beaches are vast expanses of open sand. Rainfall is highest from mid-May through to October, with frequent afternoon showers that clear as quickly as they arrive.

## AT A GLANCE

- » **Currency** Cayman Islands dollar (CI\$)
- » **Language** English
- » **Money** ATMs all over Grand Cayman, some on Cayman Brac, none on Little Cayman; most dispense CI and US dollars
- » **Visas** Not required for citizens of the US, Canada and most European and Commonwealth countries (except Jamaica)

## Fast Facts

- » **Area** 100 sq miles
- » **Population** 55,000
- » **Capital** George Town
- » **Telephone country code** 1
- » **Emergency** 911

## Set Your Budget

- » **Budget hotel room** US\$80
- » **Two-course evening meal** US\$30
- » **Ironshore Bock Beer** US\$5
- » **Stingray City dive/snorkel trip** US\$65/45
- » **Bus around George Town and Seven Mile Beach** CI\$2

## Resources

- » **Dept of Tourism** ([www.caymanislands.ky](http://www.caymanislands.ky))
- » **Cayman News Service** ([www.caymannewsservice.com](http://www.caymannewsservice.com))
- » **It's Yours To Explore** ([www.itsyourstoexplore.com](http://www.itsyourstoexplore.com)) Official website of Cayman Brac and Little Cayman

## Itineraries

### THREE DAYS

Join the crowds on wonderful Seven Mile Beach, shop yourself silly in George Town and experience the extraordinary Stingray City. Head east to the quiet end of the island on a day-long driving circle tour.

### ONE WEEK

After several days in the west just beach-bumming, explore some of Grand Cayman's lesser-known attractions. Try the Botanic Park and Rum Point, and get some diving in. Take a day trip – or an overnight jaunt to either Cayman Brac or Little Cayman.

### TWO WEEKS

Add on Cayman Brac and Little Cayman for some nature hikes, superb diving, secluded beaches and a wonderful taste of the traditional Caribbean. And relax: don't be in a rush to see or do anything – the islands are small.

## GETTING TO NEIGHBORING ISLANDS

There is no ferry service within the Cayman Islands, nor is there a service to neighboring islands. To get any place you'll need to fly; air connections to Cuba and Jamaica are frequent and easy.

## Essential Food & Drink

You'll eat superbly almost anywhere in the Cayman Islands – the combination of a large international community and plenty of cash sloshing about means that no effort is spared to import excellent fresh food and specialties from around the world. Local foods are limited to some seafood. (Check out [www.nationaltrust.org.ky/seasense](http://www.nationaltrust.org.ky/seasense), which guides diners to sustainable seafood choices.) For casual meals, Jamaican-style jerk and barbecue are popular

- » **Conch** A popular item on restaurant menus – look for farm-raised versions as conch in the wild are endangered. This large pink mollusk is cooked with onion and spices in a stew, fried up as fritters, or sliced raw and served with a lime marinade.
- » **Mannish water** Stewy mixture of yams plus the head and foot of a goat; may cure impotency.
- » **Tortuga rum cake** A heavy, moist cake available in a number of addictive flavors; makes a great gift to take home.
- » **Jelly ice** Chilled coconut water sucked from the shell.
- » **Mudslide** A creamy cocktail combining Kahlua, Baileys and vodka – invented at Rum Point.