



Haiti

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Best Beaches

- » Port Salut (p516)
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- » Cormier Plage (p517)

Best Places to Stay

- » St Joseph's Home for Boys, Port-au-Prince (p510)
- » Hôtel Florita, Jacmel (p514)
- » Hôtel Oloffson, Port-au-Prince (p511)
- » Tamarin Place Charmant, Jeremie (p516)

Why Go?

Haiti continues to struggle with the aftermath of the devastating January 12, 2010, earthquake. But this is a proud country born of revolution, and its people are determined to rebuild for a better future.

With a modicum of stability, Haiti could yet become the Caribbean's alternative travel destination *par excellence*. It has palm-fringed beaches and rum punches aplenty, but its richness lies in its history and its culture, closer to its African roots more than any other Caribbean nation and ever present in its vibrant art and music scenes.

Haiti isn't the simplest country to travel in. You frequently need to keep an ear to the news, and it can be more expensive than you'd expect. But once you're there, travel is not only possible but also incredibly rewarding. It's truly an addictive country to visit.

When to Go

There's no particular season for visiting Haiti.

April to November are generally the wetter months, and hurricane season (August and September) can cause transport problems due to mudslides. From November to March it's hot and dry, and frequently rainy in the north.

The countrywide Vodou festival of Fet Gede is in November, and Carnival is celebrated in Port-au-Prince and Jacmel, usually in February. If you plan to visit during Carnival, book well in advance as a good hotel may be hard to find. Otherwise, hotel prices generally don't fluctuate through the year.

AT A GLANCE

- » **Currency** Haitian gourde (HTG); US dollar (US\$) widely accepted
- » **Languages** Haitian Creole, French
- » **Money** ATMs in Port-au-Prince; credit cards accepted in some hotels and restaurants; bring cash US dollars
- » **Visas** Generally not required for stays up to 90 days

Fast Facts

- » **Area** 27,750 sq km
- » **Population** nine million
- » **Capital** Port-au-Prince
- » **Telephone country code**
☎509
- » **Emergency** Police ☎122

Set Your Budget

- » **Budget hotel room**
US\$40
- » **Two-course evening meal** US\$25
- » **Beer** US\$1.40
- » **Motorbike taxi ride**
US\$0.50
- » **Internal flight** US\$90

Resources

- » **Haitian Footsteps** (www.haitianfootsteps.com) Coverage of Haitian travel, culture and history
- » **Haiti News** (www.haitinews.net) Useful news aggregator
- » **Haitian Magazine** (www.haitiantoday.com) Haitian news and entertainment

Itineraries

ONE WEEK

Spend a couple of days taking in Port-au-Prince, with a side trip to the artists' village of Croix des Bouquets. Take a flight to Cap-Haïtien and overnight before making a day trip to the Citadelle and Sans Souci palace as well as checking out the beach at either Labadie or Cormier Plage.

Fly back to Port-au-Prince, and travel over the mountains to the town of Jacmel on the south coast, for its historic quarter and to stock up on its famous handicrafts, before returning to the capital.

GETTING TO NEIGHBORING ISLANDS

There are no ferries to neighboring islands. There are flights from Port-au-Prince to Cuba, Curaçao, St Martin/Sint Maarten, Nassau and Guadeloupe, and from Cap-Haïtien to Providenciales. There are direct flights and overland coaches from Port-au-Prince to Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic (DR).

Essential Food & Drink

The main types of meat eaten are chicken, pork, goat and beef; conch is also popular. Fresh fruit abounds – mangoes and avocados are particularly good.

- » **Bannan** Fried plantain
- » **Barbancourt** The best locally produced brand of rum.
- » **Diri** Rice
- » **Fritay** Street snack of fried meat, fish or plantain.
- » **Griyo** Pork
- » **Kabrit** Goat
- » **Lambi** Conch
- » **Pate** Savoury pastries; a good street snack.
- » **Plat complet** A dish with the key elements of Haitian food – rice, beans and fried plantain – and meat, accompanied with a sauce.
- » **Poule** Chicken
- » **Prestige** The best locally produced brand of beer.
- » **Pwa** Beans
- » **Tasso** Beef