



Survival Guide

DIRECTORY A–Z . . . 868

Accommodations	868
Business Hours	869
Climate	869
Customs Regulations . . .	869
Electricity	869
Embassies & Consulates	869
Gay & Lesbian Travelers . .	870
Insurance	870
Internet Access	871
Legal Matters	871
Money	871
Public Holidays	872
Safe Travel	872
Telephone	872
Time	872
Tourist Information	873
Travelers with Disabilities	873
Visas	873
Volunteering	873
Weights & Measures . . .	874
Women Travelers	874
Work	874

TRANSPORTATION . . 875

GETTING THERE & AWAY .	875
Entering the Caribbean Islands	875
Air	875
Sea	876
GETTING AROUND	876
Air	876
Bicycle	877
Boat	877
Bus	877
Car & Motorcycle	877
Hitchhiking	878

HEALTH 879

LANGUAGE 882

Directory A-Z

See the Directory A–Z sections in On the Road chapters for details specific to each island.

Accommodations

A wide range of accommodations awaits travelers in the Caribbean, from inexpensive guesthouses and good-value efficiency apartments (apartments with fridge and partial kitchen), to elaborate villas and luxury beachside resorts. And there are also plenty of midrange options in between.

'Private bath' in this book means the room has its own toilet and shower – it does not necessarily mean that it has a bathtub.

Prices

Each sleeping option has an indicative price category next to it (from **\$** to **\$\$\$**) – these correspond to the price of

the room relative to that country's price breakdown (given in each chapter's directory). Note that not all islands have rooms in all price categories – many have no budget accommodations at all, while other islands are less expensive across the board.

Seasons

Throughout the book we've listed high-season rates unless otherwise noted. High season corresponds to mid-December to April; the low season is May to mid-December. Keep in mind that hotel rates can be up to 40% cheaper in the low season and in most places they'll fluctuate with tourist traffic.

Some hotels close for a month or so in late summer, usually around September. Some of the smaller hotels and guesthouses might even

close down from June to September.

Camping

Although a good way to save money, camping is limited in the Caribbean and on some islands freelance camping is either illegal or discouraged – usually to protect nature or because of crime. Check with the local tourist office for rules and regulations.

There are a number of camping possibilities throughout the US Virgin Islands and on Puerto Rico. The former is well known for its affordable ecocampgrounds.

Guesthouses

The closest thing the Caribbean has to hostels, guesthouses are usually great value. Often in the middle of a town or village and rarely alongside a beach, they offer good opportunities for cultural immersion. Rooms usually have a bed and private bath and some have communal kitchens and living rooms. In some areas you can arrange private homestays with a local family. These are most readily available in Cuba, where they are known as *casas particulares*.

Hotels

Across the Caribbean, hotel rooms can range from humdrum to massive 1000-room resorts to glorious villas hovering over the sea. Islands often have clusters of one type of hotel. Aruba, for example, has resorts aimed at mass-market tourism, while nearby Bonaire has plenty of great-value resorts catering to divers.

All-Inclusive Resorts

Born in Jamaica and now prevalent across the Caribbean, all-inclusive resorts allow you to pay a set price and then nothing more once you arrive. You usually get a wristband that allows you free access to the hotel or resort's restaurants, bars and water-

BOOK YOUR STAY ONLINE

For more accommodations reviews by Lonely Planet authors, check out hotels.lonelyplanet.com/Caribbean. You'll find independent reviews, as well as recommendations on the best places to stay. Best of all, you can book online.