



Guadeloupe

POP 405,700 / 590

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ La Touna (p473)
- ➔ Le Mabouya dans La Bouteille (p467)
- ➔ Iguane Café (p467)
- ➔ La Playa (p481)
- ➔ Couleurs du Monde (p478)

Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Tendacayou Ecolodge & Spa (p470)
- ➔ La Toubana Hôtel & Spa (p465)
- ➔ Auberge Les Petits Saints (p476)
- ➔ Hostellerie des Châteaux (p466)
- ➔ E.Gwada Hostel (p463)

Why Go?

Guadeloupe is an archipelago of over a dozen islands that combine to offer travelers a wealth of attractions from deserted beaches to soaring mountains. Guadeloupe's two main islands look like the wings of a butterfly and are joined together by just a couple of bridges and a mangrove swamp. Grande-Terre, the eastern of the two islands, has a string of beach towns that offer visitors marvelous stretches of sand to laze on and plenty of activities. Mountainous Basse-Terre, the western island, is home to the wonderful Parc National de la Guadeloupe, which is crowned by the spectacular La Soufrière volcano.

As well as the 'mainland' of Guadeloupe, there are a number of small offshore islands including Les Saintes, Marie-Galante and La Désirade, each of which gives visitors its own taste of Guadeloupe's yesteryear. These are some of the most evocative and untouched destinations in the French Antilles, and shouldn't be missed.

When to Go

Dec–May Guadeloupe's busiest time; the weather is warm and dry, and the average humidity is around 77%.

Jul–Nov The wettest period, when rain falls about 14 days a month and the average humidity reaches 85%. Try to avoid Christmas, the French February holidays and July and August, as prices are sky-high and rooms scarce at this time.

Jan–May The drier months are the best time for diving and snorkeling.



Guadeloupe Highlights

- 1 La Soufrière (p471)**
Hiking through the rainforest to the misty summit of this brooding, active volcano.
- 2 Deshaies (p470)**
Nourishing your inner gourmet and encountering boats from around the world in this charming fishing village.
- 3 Pigeon Island (p472)**
Touching the underwater

Jacques Cousteau statue at the reserve that bears his name.

- 4 Terre-de-Haut (p475)**
Discovering the gorgeous beaches of this mountainous island full of low-key sophistication and Caribbean history.
- 5 Chutes du Carbet (p471)**
Hiking through the rainforest on well-marked

trails to see these wonderful double waterfalls.

- 6 Marie-Galante (p479)**
Finding your own slice of beach heaven on the unspoiled sands of this much-overlooked island.
- 7 La Désirade (p482)**
Escaping the mainland's crowds for the day on the beaches of this little slice of paradise.

GRANDE-TERRE

Grande-Terre – which despite its name is far smaller than Basse-Terre – is the most visited island of Guadeloupe. Its southern coast, with its reef-protected waters and golden-sand beaches, is Guadeloupe's main

resort area, with a particular concentration in and around the town of Gosier.

By comparison the eastern side of the island is barely touched by tourism: it's largely open to the Atlantic's waves, and instead of beaches has crashing surf off much of its rocky coastline. It is popular