



Haiti

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Papaye (p234)
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- ➔ L'Estaminet (p233)
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- ➔ Café 36 (p233)

Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ El Rancho (p230)
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Why Go?

The most common phrase in Haiti might surprise you. It's '*pa gen pwoblem*,' and it translates to 'no have problem.' Haitians use it in a dizzying array of contexts: responding to thank-yous, asserting well-being, filling awkward silences. Despite Haiti's well-documented struggles, exacerbated lately by natural disasters, proud Haitians use the phrase sincerely, conveying an uncanny ability to live in the moment and appreciate what they do have, which is quite a lot.

Tranquil beaches, tumbling waterfalls and pine-tree-capped mountains dot the varied and striking landscape, easily rivaling the natural beauty found anywhere else in the Caribbean. The world's only successful slave rebellion happened here, and the music, art and culture that came with it make Haiti entirely unique. As those who come to assist Haiti often learn, an encounter with the soul of this fascinating, beautiful country often benefits a traveler far more than one could ever hope to help it.

When to Go

- ➔ November to March sees the hottest, driest days in most of the country (with the exception of some rain in the north); these months are also ideal for travel due to attractions such as the countrywide Fet Gédé Vodou festival (November), and Carnival in Port-au-Prince and Jacmel (February).
- ➔ The shoulder season (April to June) sees quite a bit of rain in the south, as well as in Port-au-Prince.
- ➔ Hurricane season stretches from August to October, and many days are humid with considerable rainfall. Still, travel is perfectly feasible if there are no big storms.

Haiti Highlights

1 Jacmel Carnival (p252)

Joining the country's most theatrical parade and street party, which celebrates Vodou, sex, death and revolution.

2 Citadelle Laferrière

(p246) Discovering a mountain fortress above a ruined palace – a symbol of the world's first black republic.

3 Parc National la Visite

(p238) Hiking past weird broken rock formations with views out to the Caribbean Sea

4 Vodou Ceremony

(p248) Plugging into Haiti's subconscious by attending

a Souvenance or Soukri with drums, sung prayers and imagery.

5 Île-à-Vache (p255)

Kicking back on this white-sand silver of paradise, splashing around in

turquoise shallows and feasting on fresh lobster.

6 Port-au-Prince (p225)

Exploring the soul of the buzzing capital via thriving art, music and cultural scenes.

