



Suriname

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Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Kabalebo (p924)
- ➔ Greenheart Hotel (p919)
- ➔ Awarradam (p923)
- ➔ Tei Wei (p922)
- ➔ GuestHouse TwenTy4 (p918)

Best Tour Destinations

- ➔ Raleighvalle (p923)
- ➔ Palumeu (p922) & Awarradam (p923)
- ➔ Brownsberg Nature Reserve (p922)
- ➔ Commewijne River (p921)

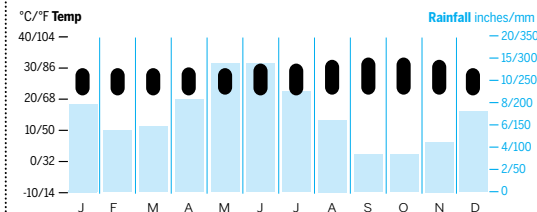
Why Go?

Suriname is a warm, dense convergence of rivers that thumps with the lively rhythm of ethnic diversity. From Paramaribo, the country's effervescent Dutch-colonial capital, to the fathomless jungles of the interior, you'll get a genuine welcome to this tiny country – whether from the descendants of escaped African slaves, Dutch and British colonialists, Indian, Indonesian and Chinese indentured laborers or indigenous Amerindians.

Paramaribo is loaded with interesting shopping venues, party-hard night spots and exceptional restaurants, while the untamed jungle, just a few hours away by road or boat, is utterly away from modern development. It's relatively easy to get around this river-heavy, forest-dense country. The mix of languages can make communications interesting, but there is almost always someone around who speaks some English. Don't forget that a meeting of culinary traditions means the food here is as spicy and rich as the country itself.

When to Go

Paramaribo



Feb–Apr The first dry season is slightly cooler than the second, and is the best time to visit.

Aug–Nov The second dry season is busier and hotter than the first.

Dec–Jan Paramaribo is known for its explosive New Year's Eve celebrations.

AT A GLANCE

- **Currency** Suriname Dollar (SR\$)
- **Languages** Dutch, Sranan Tongo (Surinaams/Taki Taki)
- **Money** Republic Bank ATMs accept most foreign cards; credit cards rarely accepted
- **Visas** 90-day tourist cards need to be obtained at Suriname embassies before arrival
- **Time** GMT minus three hours

Fast Facts

- **Area** 163,800 sq km
- **Population** 581,444
- **Capital** Paramaribo
- **Emergency** ☎ 112
- **Country Code** ☎ 597

Exchange Rates

Australia	A\$1	SR\$2.38
Canada	C\$1	SR\$2.53
Euro Zone	€1	SR\$3.70
UK	UK£1	SR\$5.03
USA	US\$1	SR\$3.25

Set Your Budget

- **Guesthouse in Paramaribo** US\$25
- **Chicken-and-vegetable roti** US\$3.50
- **One-day bike rental** US\$5

Resources

- **Suriname Tourism Foundation** (www.suriname-tourism.org)
- **Suriname Online Tourist Guide** (www.surinametourism.com)

Connections

Suriname's border crossings are at Corriverton (Guyana) and St Laurent du Maroni (French Guiana). Both of these crossings are made by boat across massive rivers that flow into the Caribbean. While Brazil borders the country to the south, there are no roads through the impenetrable jungle into Suriname and thus you can't cross the border here.

ITINERARIES

One Week

Spend three days exploring Paramaribo and the plantations of the Commewijne River by bike or on foot. On one afternoon be sure to take a sunset dolphin-viewing tour and, if you've still got energy, get out on the town for a night of dancing, Suriname style. Next head to the interior – either Raleighvallen, the Upper Suriname River or Brownsberg Nature Reserve – for your remaining days to look for Amazonian critters and meet the locals.

Two Weeks

Follow the above itinerary but take the trip further. You could make brief visits to Raleighvallen, the Upper Suriname River and Brownsberg Nature Reserve or visit several places on the Upper Suriname, 'island-hopping' along the river to different resorts. Taking the route south, you may be able to fly back to Paramaribo so you don't have to backtrack. If it's turtle season (April through August), consider substituting your time at either Raleighvallen or Brownsberg with a trip to the Galibi Nature Reserve.

Essential Food & Drink

- **Pom** Creole creation using grated tayer root, shredded chicken, onion and spices baked into a yummy casserole.
- **Roti** Indian flatbread stuffed with all sorts of curries, from potato-heavy vegetarian to chunks of beef.
- **Javanese food** Rice noodle and soup dishes are tasty and cheap.
- **Fish** A variety of fresh river fish is the staple in most of the interior and is often served fried or in soup.
- **Parbo** The local beer is quite good; it's customary to share a *djogo* (1L bottle) among friends.
- **Borgoe** The best local rum, with many types to choose from; the best seller is lethal Mariëburg White, which is 90% alcohol and flavorless in cocktails.
- **Pastei** A Creole-style chicken pot pie with peas and carrots.
- **Moksi-alesi** Mixed boiled rice with salted meat or fish and vegetables – the best include coconut cream.
- **Hagelslag** Dutch-style chocolate sprinkles to go on toast for breakfast.