



Montserrat

POP 5300 / 664

Includes ➔

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Pont's Beach View (p586)
- ➔ People's Place (p586)
- ➔ Olveston House Restaurant (p586)

Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Gingerbread Hill (p585)
- ➔ Olveston House (p586)

Why Go?

Before its lower two thirds became devastated by cataclysmic eruptions of the Soufrière Hills Volcano in 1995, Montserrat was a carefree little island paradise famous as the birthplace of the late Alphonsus Cassell, creator of the soca hit 'Hot, Hot, Hot,' and as the home of Air Montserrat, the famous recording studio founded by Beatles producer Sir George Martin. Sting and Eric Clapton were among the stars who recorded here.

Two decades later, this modern-day Pompeii is slowly recovering. The population is growing, and sand mining and geothermal energy provide new sources of income.

Tourists are returning too, a trickle to be sure, mostly for volcano-related day trips. Those who stay longer are drawn by the slow rhythm, the friendly locals, the fabulous hiking and birdwatching, and the blessedly tranquil ambience. The volcano is always a wild card, but by and large Montserrat is a safe place to visit.

When to Go

Mar Help locals paint the island even greener during St Patrick's Week (March 10 to 17), which celebrates Montserrat's Irish heritage.

Jul–Nov Hurricane season, although storms can disrupt transport to and from the island at any time. Runners can sweat it out during the Volcano Half Marathon in November.

Dec The Montserrat Festival, the local version of Carnival, runs from Christmas to New Year.



Montserrat Highlights

- 1 Rendezvous Bay** (p584) Swimming and snorkeling on Montserrat's only white-sand beach.
- 2 Exclusion Zone Tour** (p585) Getting close-ups of the destruction wreaked on Plymouth and the way nature is reclaiming the area.

- 3 Hilltop Coffee House & Family Center** (p584) Stopping by this nonprofit for unique art and memorabilia, a volcano video and fresh juices.
- 4 Montserrat Volcano Observatory** (p584) Enjoying panoramic views of the Exclusion Zone and

unraveling the mysteries of the volcano.

- 5 Oriole Trail** (p585) Plunging on through the rainforest on this moderate hike perfect for birders and nature lovers.