



Trinidad and Tobago Resources



By Mary Adams for HI-MN Travelers Circle Nov. 20, 2008

Trinidad & Tobago ("T&T") are the southernmost Caribbean islands. They lay just 7 miles off the coast of Venezuela. The last hurricane to hit the islands was hurricane Flora in 1963.

History

- Trinidad - Columbus landed in Trinidad in 1498 and came under Spanish rule until 1797, when the island was conquered by the British.
 - The Carib and Arawak Indians were wiped out by the Europeans.
- Tobago – Settled by the British in 1508 and over the next centuries, the island change hands 22 times before returning to Britain in 1814.
 - 1888 – The two islands merged into one crown colony.
 - 1962 – Independence was achieved and in 1976 the islands became an independent republic.

Population: 1.3 million

- Many people are descendants of African slaves or of indentured East Indian laborers, who worked the plantations in the 19th century.
- 40 % Indian
- 39% black
- 18.4% mixed-race
- 0.06% white
- 0.04% Chinese

Religion – a theologically diverse nation

- 26% Roman Catholic
- 24.6 Protestant
- 22.5% Hindu
- 5.8% Muslim
- 3.3% Presbyterian
- 5.6% African-based religions



Economy

- Export fruit, vegetables, sugar cane, and manufactured goods.
- Produce daily average of 144,000 barrels of oil
- Produce four billion cubic feet of natural gas per day.
- Produce Asphalt – Trinidad contains world largest natural reservoir, called Pitch Lake.



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WHAT TO DO AND SEE:

Sports – cricket and soccer (known locally as “football”)

Music – steel band/pan.

Birdwatching – more than 430 species of birds, 600 species of butterfly, along with reptiles and mammals.

- Leatherback turtles from March to August during nesting times.

Hiking

Snorkeling and scuba diving. The best is in Tobago.

Beaches – white or yellow sand, blue water, and palm trees.

Festivals

Religious/Ethnic diversity – from Anglican to Spanish churches, from Hindu temples to Muslim mosques.

Cities: Port of Spain

- Queen’s Park Savannah, great place to walk, jog, people-watch, or watch soccer and cricket games.
- Magnificent Seven which are a series of eccentric and ornate colonial buildings from the early part of the 20th century. None of the buildings are open to the public; all are in serious need of repairs.
- Woodford Square (a.k.a. the University of Woodford Square) This area is where many of the people come to express opinions, along with the soapbox and gospel speakers.
 - This is where Dr. Eric Williams, who became the 1st prime minister, lectured on the importance of impendence.
- National Museum and Art Gallery. (It’s little on the dusty/tatty side.)
 - Extensive collection of the island oil history.
 - Old Carnival Costumes and photographs.
 - History of the steel pan music.

Outside the city

- Hanuman Murti or Hindu Monkey-God
- Waterloo Temple or Temple in the Sea
- Several Bird Sanctuary/Nature Centres
- Pitch Lake (World’s finest asphalt, largest natural deposit)
- Maracus Bay
 - Best shark & bake on the island



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GETTING AROUND

City and surrounding areas

- Buses
- Maxi taxis
 - Usually prefer passengers traveling the full distance
 - Start only when the van is full
- Route Taxis – license plate begin with an “H”
 - Can be flagged down on the street
 - Some might be willing to make off-route drops
- Private taxis – license plate begin with an “P”
 - Usually ordered by phone

How to get to Port of Spain, Trinidad from the USA

American Airlines (www.aa.com), flies twice-daily

- Non-stop from Miami
- Connections flies from New York and Washington

Continental Airlines (www.continental.com), flies daily

- Non-stop from Houston
- Newark via Houston

Delta Airlines (www.delta.com), flies four times (Mon, Wed, Sat, and Sun) a week from Atlanta

Caribbean Airlines (www.caribbean-airlines.com)

- Daily from Miami to Port of Spain
- From New York, Monday to Saturday
- Several flights daily between Trinidad and Tobago.



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WHERE TO STAY?

Trinidad – Port of Spain: Besides the downtown area, check out places in the Woodbrook and St. James or Newtown and St Clair areas.

Budget guesthouses:

- Alicia's House - www.aliciashouse.com
- Sundeck Suite - www.sundeck.co.tt
- *** Par-May-La's Inn - www.parmaylas.com
- Gingerbread House - www.trinidadgingerbreadhouse.com

Mid-range:

- Chancellor Hotel & Conference Center - www.thechancellorhotel.com
- Courtyard Marriott - www.marriott.com

Top-end:

- Kapok Hotel - www.kapokhotel.com
- Trinidad Hilton - www.hiltonCaribbean.com

Accommodations Outside the city:

Mt. St. Benedict is a great place for people coming to bird-watch or hike in the rain forest.

- Pax Guest House (www.paxguesthouse.com) which is adjacent to a monastery.
- Asa Wright Nature Centre –accommodations and birdwatching or hiking (www.asawright.com)

Tobago – Crown Point

Mid-range to high

- Conrado – www.conradobeachresort.com
- Crown Point Beach – www.crownpointbeachhotel.com
- Kariwak Village – www.kariwak.com

Guesthouse/budget

- Merle's House – www.tobagoplacetostay.com
- Surfside – www.surfsidetobago.com

TOURIST INFORMATION:

- Tourism Development Company
- Trinidad - www.tdc.co.tt
- United States – www.tourism-solution.com