



Aruba

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HISTORY

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Many of the people of Aruba are a combination of European, Caribbean, South American, and Far Eastern descent. As of 2018, there were 116,600 residents on the island. The seat of government for Aruba is Oranjestad, where the population is estimated to be around 30,000.

The island is mostly known for its pristine sandy white beaches, shipwrecks, and wind-blasted desert scenery.

In the Beginning

Aruba was first discovered in 1499 by Alonso de Ojeda, a Spanish explorer. After nearly 140-years of Spanish colonization, the Caquetio Indians, which were part of the Arawak Tribe inhabited the island after migrating from Venezuela to avoid attacks. For two centuries, starting in 1636, Aruba was under the rule of the Netherlands until about 1799 when it was under the ruling of the British Empire. Under the Dutch crown in 1986, Aruba finally became a self-governing member of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.



MONEY

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The currency in Aruba is florin (AWG). Aruban florin is divided into 100 cents. One florin is equal to 100 cents. In comparison to USD, 1 florin is equal to 0.56 in the U.S., or 1.79 florin is equal to \$1.00 USD. There are five coins, including 5, 10, 25 and 50 cents. Paper Aruban money comes in 5, 10, 25, 50, and 100 florin. You can receive current currency exchange rates at www.xe.com.

Credit Cards & ATMs

Most major U.S. credit cards are accepted on the island. While all small purchases you make will likely require that you pay in cash, Mastercard and Visa are taken by most places. American Express and Discover cards are typically not accepted, especially American Express, due to its higher fees.

There are many ATMs all around Aruba. Many of them disperse dollars and florin. Most of the ATM fees are around \$3.00.

Exchanging Currency

Although the airport and many of the hotels will exchange currency, there is almost no reason to worry. American dollars are widely accepted. Many restaurants and shops will list their prices according to the U.S. dollar.



HELPFUL INFO

Climate

The tropical climate in Aruba means it is hot all year-round. Although the air is quite sticky, you'll benefit from a constant breeze, especially on the East Coast, where the wind is strong and persistent. The precipitation received is only around 20-inches annually, and most of the rain occurs from October to December. The driest months are March, April, and May. With the sun being available from 7 to 10 hours all year, the waters are always warm enough to swim.

Electricity

The sockets and power plugs in Aruba are type A, B, and F. So, you will need a power adapter on the island to charge and use your electric components just in case. The standard frequency is 60-Hz, and the voltage is 127-V.



BUS
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S180P

Technology & Communication

In May of 2007, the entire island of Aruba gained access to 3G WiFi internet. There is also a fully automated telecommunication system, satellite connection, and three licensed wireless service providers. Overall, you can expect modernized technology and forms of communication on the island.

Infrastructure & Transport

While there are no waterways or railways in Aruba, there are highways, paved roads, and an airport. As for public transportation, there is plenty. Buses run about every 15-minutes. They start before 6 a.m. and end at 6 p.m., but then run every 40-minutes until 11:30 p.m.

The central bus station sits in downtown Oranjestad. A day pass for the bus is less than 10 USD.

Aside from buses, it is easy to take taxis and cruise ships, depending on where you're trying to go. There are also rental car options — the rates for a rental car run anywhere from around \$40.00 to \$90.00 daily. You can drive in Aruba with your U.S. license. An international license isn't necessary.



In Case Of An Emergency

Urgent Care Aruba (UCA)- +297-586-0448

General Emergency- 911

Police Oranjestad- 100

Police Noord- 107

Police San Nicolas- 104

Police Santa Cruz- 105

Coast Guard- 913

Information #- 118

Language

The official languages of Aruba are Papiamentu and Dutch. However, most Arubans speak at least four languages. English and Spanish are usually the other two languages spoken by the natives. Papiamentu is a language derived from French, Portuguese, English, Spanish, African, and Dutch dialects.



LGBT Travel

Unfortunately, there are some legal challenges for the LGBT community in Aruba. While it is legal to have same-sex relations, they may not marry within the island's borders. However, same-sex couples may register their partnership as of 2016.

Luckily, most Arubans are accepting of the LGBT community and welcome same-sex couples that come to visit the island. There are many gay-friendly lodgings, places of entertainment, and restaurants emerging at a rapid pace.

Religion

The most established and widespread religion practiced in Aruba is Catholicism. Around 85% of the population declares they're Catholic. Other religions exist and are practiced harmoniously on the island. In Aruba, there are Methodist, Catholic, Seventh-Day Adventist, Baptist, Jehovah's Witness, and Evangelical churches, as well as synagogues. There is also a Baha'i Faith house of worship in Oranjestad.



Getting There

There is one airport in Oranjestad, Aruba, the Queen Beatrix International Airport. For direct flights to Aruba, you can fly out of Philadelphia, Miami, Charlotte, Dallas, Chicago, Atlanta, Boston, Fort Lauderdale, Baltimore, Orlando, Houston, Newark, Pittsburgh, or New York depending on the airline you book your flights through. To get from the airport to your lodging, there are various forms of public transportation you can take.

Driving

It isn't difficult to drive around Aruba. Most of Aruba's roads are paved, and the speed limit is typically 35-km-per-hour or 18-mph unless posted otherwise. The fastest speed limit you'll find on the island is 80-km-per-hour or 49.7-mph. Most of the traffic in downtown Oranjestad is one-way, and there are some areas that you will need to slow down for, including school zones and residential areas. Traffic lights are used, but instead of yellow for caution, they use the color amber. Like in the U.S., red is for stop, and green is for go.

THE EXPERIENCE

Culture

Aruba is known for its friendly atmosphere and diversity. Depending on when you visit the island, various festivals are held each year. These festivals are often held in honor of Aruban history and mixed with modern influences. Music, dancing, traditional foods, and plenty of entertainment exist all over the island.

Bucket List

Sunbathe on Eagle Beach

Go snorkeling to see the shipwrecks

Explore the caves in Aruba's beautiful Arikok National Park

Visit Private Island

Walkthrough the mangroves and swim at the Spanish Lagoon

Catch a sunset over the Caribbean

Jump into the natural swimming hole near the Bushiribana Ruins

Windsurf and kiteboard at Hadicurari Beach

Check out the Ayo and Casibari Rock Formations



Family Travel Highlights

Go to the Butterfly Farm

Visit the Donkey Sanctuary

Wander through the Ostrich Founder water

See the California Lighthouse

Check Philips Animal Garden

Attend the Bon Bini Festival

Play in the sun and sand at Baby Beach

Get wild at the splash park at Surfside Beach

Take a submarine underwater

Dine at Buccaneer Restaurant for an aquatic view



Tourism Authority

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Oranjestad, Aruba

Aruba Tourism Authority
L.G. Smith Blvd 8
Oranjestad, Aruba
(297) 582-3777



SPARKLING WINE
CONCHA Y TORO
DEMI SEC

Sparkling wine in a flute glass.

Sparkling wine in a flute glass.

Foods To Try

Pan Bati

Cabrito Stoba

Keri keri

Pastechi

Keshi Yena

Ayaca

Funchi

Banana Hasa

Pan Bollo

Bolo di Banana

Caribbean Coffee

Hot papaya Sauce

Drinks To Try

Pina Colada

Aruba Ariba

Caribbean Coffee

Local Beer

Fresh Smoothies

Balashi Beer

Slippery Monkey

Brown Lady



Photography Hot Spots

Bushiribana Gold Mine Ruins

Divi Tree at Eagle Beach

The Natural Swimming Hole near the Bushiribana Ruins

Mangel Halto- Staircase to Paradise

The Mangroves

San Nicolas Street Art Murals

Flamingo Beach at Renaissance Island

The Red Anchor near Baby Beach

Souvenirs To Buy

A jar of the hot papaya sauce

Jewelry

Ceramics

Aloe products

Paintings

Dutch cheeses

Gourmet chocolates

Wind chimes

Stroopwafels

