

## **BARBADOS - FACT SHEET**

### **Passports & Visas:**

**Full passports are required by all British visitors and should be valid for the duration of your stay.**

Visas are not required by British or European Passport Holders, other nationalities please consult your embassy for details.

### **Health:**

Recommended immunisation against Hepatitis A, polio, tetanus and typhoid. Please consult your G.P. for further information. A reciprocal health agreement exists with the U.K. See health leaflet T6 for further details.

Please be wary of the sun and its detrimental effects. It can cause the skin to burn which can increase the risk of skin cancer and premature ageing, it can cause sunstroke and exposure to the sun can result in sickness and stomach upset. Avoid such problems by staying out of the sun, wearing protective clothing or sun block when in the sun. To guard against sunstroke avoid becoming overheated and replace lost body fluid by drinking plenty of water or soft drinks.

### **Currency:**

The US dollar is widely accepted in Barbados and the Barbados Dollar is tied to the US dollar at a rate of \$1.98 Bds to \$1.00 usd. Consequently we recommend that you take US dollar travellers cheques with you. Commercial banks give a better rate of exchange than hotels or shops.

### **Economy:**

The economy of Barbados is based on tourism, light manufacturing, agriculture and financial services.

### **Government:**

The Parliament of Barbados is 350 years old, second only to Britain and Bermuda. H.M. The Queen is also the Queen of Barbados, represented on the island by the Governor General. The legislature consists of the House of Assembly with 28 elected members and the Senate with 21 appointed members. The Prime Minister is usually the leader of the majority party. Barbados had unbroken British rule from its beginning until it gained independence in 1966. This provided the foundation for the stability that Barbados is known for.

### **Climate:**

Sunshine and sea breezes. 3,000 hours of sunshine each year with constant North-East Trade Winds usually keeping the daytime temperatures in the low 80's. Relative humidity is a pleasant 65 degrees. Rainfall is just enough to keep things green, but more plentiful from July to November. Barbados is lucky, most hurricanes pass the island, and they have not been hit by one since 1955, and before that in 1898.

### **General information on Barbados:**

Location	: Caribbean
Size	: Barbados is 166 square miles
Population	: 254,000
Local Time	: GMT -4 hours
Capital	: Bridgetown
Language	: English
Electricity	: 110V AC
Airport	: Barbados Grantley Adams International, Christ Church
Flight time	: approx 9 hours from UK
International dialling	: 1 246
Tap Water	: drinkable
Taxis	: plentiful (look for BTA badge)
Driving	: left hand side of road. Local permits available from car hire companies.
Credit Cards	: widely accepted
Departure tax	: Included in airline ticket
Average Costs	: Meal for 2 - £20. Beer £1.20. Soft drink £1. Taxi for 5 miles £10.00

**Clothing:**

A tendency towards the conservative remains associated with the island's lingering "Britishness". Bathing suits only to be worn on the beach and not in town. No topless or nude sunbathing is allowed! Some hotels require dinner guests to wear a jacket and tie on Saturday nights. You will need to take protection against the sun and so sun block, sunglasses, a sun hat and lip salve should be considered essential. Please note that fashionable army camouflage clothing is not permitted on the island due to Barbados law. Please ensure that upon entry into the country that all sports/walking shoes are clean and free of mud as they may be confiscated to be disinfected which may take several days and will incur a charge to the owner.

**Water:**

Fresh water is safe to drink and it tastes delicious. Rain water filters through the island's deep coral cap to underground streams and lakes on the impervious bedrock. It is then pumped pure and clean to the tap with a minimum of chemical treatment.

**Food:**

Most continental types available. Local specialities include spicy meats, flying fish, lobster and red snapper, in fact everything from fast food to gourmet.

**Religion:**

Bajans are, generally speaking, believers and practitioners. This strong tradition is dominated by Anglicanism, but includes about 100 other religions which have played a major role in the creation of Barbadian society. The Jewish Synagogue, lovingly restored in the 1980's dates back to the 1650's and represents an important link in Jewish history.

**A few don'ts:**

Despite its tropical location, Barbados is free of lethal insects and animals. Mosquitoes and sandflies are not a large problem but if you're sensitive to them, you'll find the local shops stock an armoury of effective creams and repellents. Avoiding picking apples is the main don't, they could turn out to be the blister causing Manchineal Apples which grow on large trees by beaches. Be careful not to tread on a black sea urchin, occasionally found on rocks: this can be quite painful. Centipedes are not common but the bite is painful and may need medical attention.

**Security:**

Barbados has a low crime rate. However, exercise caution. Keep hotel rooms locked. Use safety deposit boxes. Do not travel with an excess of valuables. Leave your key at reception.

**Baggage:**

Ensure all your bags including your hand luggage have your name and home address on the inside as well as your name and destination on the outside. The baggage allowance with Virgin is 23 kg. In this age of security do not pack any electrical/battery items or camera into your suitcase; put them into your hand luggage in order that they may be inspected easily. You will be asked at check in if all electrical items are in your hand luggage.