

Population	280,000
Capital	Bridgetown (other important towns – Holetown, Oistins, Speightstown)
Area	430 sq km/166 sq miles; 34 km/21 miles long 23 km/14 miles wide
Geography	<p>Barbados is predominantly composed of limestone-coral. The island was created less than one million years ago by the collision of the Atlantic crustal and Caribbean plates which merged together and formed the base for an accumulation of 300 ft of coral. It is primarily low-lying, rising gently to the central highland region; the highest point is Mount Hillaby in the Scotland district - 340metres. The island has 62 miles of coastline - the beaches are white sand composed of finely ground coral.</p> <p>The island has 11 administrative parishes - Christchurch, St Andrew, St George, St James, St John, St Joseph, St Lucy, St Michael, St Peter, St Philip, St Thomas</p>
Time difference	GMT -4
Language	Official language is English; the local dialect is Bajan English
Monetary unit	Barbados dollar (fixed to the US dollar); US dollars are widely accepted
Airport	There is one major airport – Sir Grantley Adams International Airport (GAIA)
Flight times	8.5 hours from London - BA & Virgin fly daily; Virgin & BMI fly direct from Manchester; 3.5 hours from Miami and 5 hours from New York – American Airlines fly daily
Climate	Tropical climate with little seasonal temperature variation averaging 27°c; average daily sunshine is 8 – 9 hours; seasonal rainfall between June and October
Location	Barbados is the most easterly Caribbean Islands and part of the Lesser Antilles. Located where the Atlantic Ocean meets the Caribbean Sea, with the Atlantic Ocean on the east coast and the Caribbean Sea on the west coast
Government	Barbados is an ex-British colony and has been an independent state in the Commonwealth since November 1966; Governor General - Sir Clifford Husbands; Prime Minister - David Thompson
Economy	Barbados is one of the most developed countries in the Caribbean with a market based economy and capital growth of 12%. The island is highly rated for the quality of its educational, social and healthcare services and ranks in the top 30/31 countries in the Human Development Index (HDI) rankings. Its economy is driven by business and financial services, tourism, agriculture and manufacturing. Large corporates are investing in Barbados e.g. PWC, KPMG, Barclays
Tourism	Barbados is one of the most established tourist markets in the world. It's been a tourist destination since the early 40's and has experienced a boom since the 60's with the majority of visitors coming from the UK, the US and Canada. It was one of Concord's most profitable routes, with daily flights in the winter months. In 2001 it welcomed 1 mn visitors who spent in excess of US\$700 mn; in 2004 tourism accounted for 12.4% of GDP. High season - mid Oct to mid March