

NORTH AMERICA · CULTURE · FOOD · NIGHTLIFE · WILDLIFE · BEACHES · DIVING

Trinidad and Tobago

Trinidad is the multicultural engine of this twin-island nation, home of Carnival, calypso, the steelpan and street food such as doubles; little Tobago is the place for quiet beaches, coral reefs and rainforest. Between them, scarlet ibis roost in the Caroni Swamp, leatherback turtles nest on northern beaches and the birdlife is outstanding.

 Before you go, read the UK government's travel advice for Trinidad and Tobago and entry requirements (visas, passport validity). Last updated by FCDO 21 September 2026.

 CAPITAL Port of Spain	 CURRENCY Trinidad and Tobago dollar (TTD) £1 ≈ TTD 9.30	 LANGUAGE English, Trinidadian Creole	 BEST TIME Jan–May
 DAILY BUDGET £55–£260 ££ Moderate	 PLUGS Type A, B 115V · adapter needed	 FLIGHT FROM LONDON 9h 20m direct ~£600–£1,100 return	 TIME ZONE UTC–4 standard time

Trinidad and Tobago lies just off the coast of Venezuela, and unlike most Caribbean nations its economy runs on oil and gas rather than tourism. Trinidad, the larger island, is the cultural heart, with Port of Spain's Carnival, Hindu temples and mosques reflecting its large Indian-descended population, and rainforest and birdlife in the Northern Range. Tobago, a short flight or ferry ride away, is quieter and greener, with coral reefs, fishing villages and the Western Hemisphere's oldest protected forest reserve. Many visitors pair a few days of Trinidad's food and nature with a week of beaches on Tobago.

Because tourism is a small part of the economy, Trinidad feels refreshingly unpackaged, but services can be patchy, so arrange transport and tours in advance. Costs are mid-range by Caribbean standards: street food is cheap, while Carnival season sends accommodation prices soaring. Tobago is more geared to visitors, with guesthouses and small resorts around Crown Point and Castara. The islands lie south of the main hurricane belt, though rain is heavy from June to December. They suit food lovers, birdwatchers, divers and music fans rather than all-inclusive seekers.

Top 5 highlights

1

WILDLIFE

Caroni Swamp

Boat trips leave in the late afternoon to watch thousands of scarlet ibis, one of the country's two national birds, fly in to roost on mangrove islands, turning the trees red at dusk.

2

NATURE

Buccoo Reef and Nylon Pool

Glass-bottomed boats from Buccoo and Pigeon Point cross Tobago's largest reef for snorkelling, then stop at the Nylon Pool, a waist-deep sandbar in the open sea. On Sunday evenings, Buccoo hosts the Sunday School street party.

3

BEACH

Maracas Bay

Trinidad's best-known beach curves beneath the forested Northern Range, about 40 minutes over the hills from Port of Spain. Eat bake and shark from the stalls by the car park, and swim near the lifeguards.

4

WILDLIFE

Grande Riviere turtle beach

One of the world's densest nesting beaches for leatherback turtles, which haul ashore at night from March to August. Viewing is by guided walk only; arrange it through the village's guesthouses.

5

NATURE

Main Ridge Forest Reserve

Protected since 1776, Tobago's rainforest spine is the oldest legally protected forest reserve in the Western Hemisphere. Walk Gilpin Trace with a local guide for motmots, hummingbirds and waterfalls.

Biggest cities

LARGEST CITY

Port of Spain

≈ 550,000 people

Rarely pretty, but the capital is the place for Carnival, the Queen's Park Savannah and its Magnificent Seven mansions, the Royal Botanic Gardens and late-night food on Ariapita Avenue.

2ND LARGEST CITY

Chaguanas

≈ 84,000 people

The country's fastest-growing town is central Trinidad's shopping hub; visitors come for its markets, Indo-Trinidadian food and the giant Hanuman statue at nearby Carapichaima.

3RD LARGEST CITY

San Fernando

≈ 49,000 people

Trinidad's southern hub sits beneath San Fernando Hill and makes the obvious base for the Pitch Lake at La Brea, the world's largest natural deposit of asphalt.

Port of Spain's figure covers its wider urban area along the coast and the East–West Corridor; Chaguanas and San Fernando figures are 2011 census borough and city populations, and San Fernando's built-up area extends well beyond its city limits.

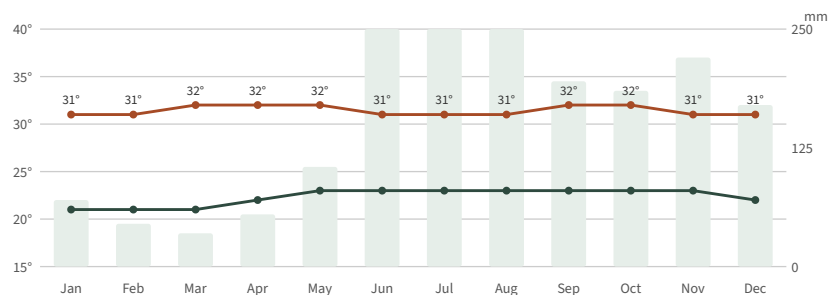
When to go to Trinidad and Tobago

Best time: **Jan–May**.



Average climate in Port of Spain

— High °C
 — Low °C
 ■ Rain (mm)



Festivals & events

Feb–Mar

Carnival

The Monday and Tuesday before Ash Wednesday bring J'ouvert's mud and paint at dawn, then costumed masquerade bands parading through Port of Spain, after weeks of calypso, steelpan competitions and fêtes.

Jul–Aug

Tobago Heritage Festival

From mid-July to early August, Tobago's villages stage traditional dance, drumming, storytelling and the Ole Time Wedding, celebrating the island's African heritage and folk customs.

Oct–Nov

Divali

The Hindu festival of lights is a public holiday: homes and temples glow with thousands of clay diyas, and the Divali Nagar site near Chaguanas hosts nights of music, dance and food.

How much does Trinidad and Tobago cost?

SHOESTRING

£55

per person / day

≈ TTD 512

hostels, street food, buses

MID-RANGE

£125

per person / day

≈ TTD 1,163

3-star hotels, restaurants, some taxis

COMFORTABLE

£260

per person / day

≈ TTD 2,419

4-star+, guided trips, private transfers

Estimates per person per day, excluding flights. Prices vary by season and city.

Food to try

Doubles

Two soft fried bara breads topped with curried chickpeas (channa), tamarind sauce, cucumber chutney and pepper sauce; a cheap breakfast sold from roadside stands island-wide.

Bake and shark

Fried shark in a puffy fried bread, piled with toppings such as shado beni sauce, tamarind and pineapple; Maracas Bay's beach stalls are the classic place to eat it.

Crab and dumpling

Tobago's signature dish: blue crab curried in coconut milk, served with dense flour dumplings for mopping up the sauce. Messy, and worth it.

Getting around

There is no railway. Locals use maxi taxis, minibuses colour-coded by route, and route taxis, shared cars with H number plates that run fixed routes. PTSC buses use a fast priority lane along the East–West Corridor. Caribbean Airlines flies between Port of Spain and Tobago in about 25 minutes, and fast ferries take around three hours. Hire a car for Tobago or Trinidad's north coast.

Practical information

PLUGS & VOLTAGE



A B

115V — bring a UK-to-A/B adapter

DIALLING CODE

+1-868

TAP WATER

Varies — bottled or filtered is safer

TIPPING

Many restaurants add a 10% service charge; if not, tip 10–15%. Tip guides and boat crews, but route-taxi drivers don't expect it.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Ambulance: **811**

Fire: **990**

Police: **999**

Source: FCDO “Getting help”

TIME ZONE

UTC-4 (standard time)

DRIVING

On the left

ETIQUETTE

Always say 'good morning' or 'good afternoon' before asking anything, as skipping the greeting is considered rude. Wear swimwear only on the beach, and dress modestly in temples and mosques.

MAIN AIRPORTS

Piarco International Airport (POS), Port of Spain; A.N.R. Robinson International Airport (TAB), Crown Point, Tobago

Visas & entry for Trinidad and Tobago

Shown for a British passport.

No visa needed

You can visit Trinidad and Tobago without a visa for up to 90 days.

You must have:

From the UK government's FCDO entry requirements for British passport holders — read the full page for passport validity, permits and exceptions.

Health & vaccinations

See a travel health nurse, GP or travel clinic **6–8 weeks before you go**. Make sure routine UK vaccinations (such as MMR and diphtheria-tetanus-polio) are up to date.

RECOMMENDED FOR MOST TRAVELLERS

Tetanus

SOMETIMES ADVISED — DEPENDS ON YOUR TRIP, ACTIVITIES AND HEALTH

Dengue Rabies Yellow fever

YELLOW FEVER CERTIFICATE

No yellow fever certificate is required to enter. There is a risk of yellow fever in parts of the country — vaccination may be advised.

MALARIA

No malaria risk

Source: TravelHealthPro (National Travel Health Network and Centre), checked 21 October 2026. This is a summary, not medical advice.

Public holidays in Trinidad and Tobago

The next 12 months. Banks, offices and some sights may close, and transport and hotels get busy around these dates.

Sun 8 Nov 2026	Diwali
Mon 9 Nov 2026	Diwali (observed)
Fri 25 Dec 2026	Christmas Day
Sat 26 Dec 2026	Boxing Day
Fri 1 Jan 2027	New Year's Day
Tue 9 Mar 2027	Eid al-Fitr (date may shift)
Fri 26 Mar 2027	Good Friday

Mon 29 Mar 2027	Easter Monday
Tue 30 Mar 2027	Spiritual Baptist Liberation Day
Thu 27 May 2027	Corpus Christi
Sun 30 May 2027	Indian Arrival Day
Mon 31 May 2027	Indian Arrival Day (observed)
Sat 19 Jun 2027	Labour Day
Sun 1 Aug 2027	African Emancipation Day
Mon 2 Aug 2027	African Emancipation Day (observed)
Tue 31 Aug 2027	Independence Day
Fri 24 Sep 2027	Republic Day

National holidays only. Dates based on lunar calendars can move by a day or two depending on official announcements.

Know before you go

For Carnival, book flights and accommodation six months or more ahead and expect minimum stays and steep surcharges; costumes with the major mas bands sell out early too.

Book the inter-island ferry or Tobago flight well ahead around holidays and Carnival, when locals fill every seat, and allow slack for delays to sailings.

Use registered taxis with H plates or drivers arranged by your accommodation rather than unmarked cars, especially at night, and check the FCDO travel advice before you go.

Visa, health and safety rules change. Before you book or travel, check the FCDO travel advice (gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice) and TravelHealthPro (travelhealthpro.org.uk). Costs are estimates. © 2026 Pick My Trip.