



Eastern Caribbean Vacation Guide

Discover Beautiful Beaches, Historic Islands & Tropical Paradise

For many travelers, the Eastern Caribbean is the picture-perfect tropical vacation they've always imagined. Crystal-clear turquoise water, powder-soft white sand beaches, colorful island towns, and breathtaking mountain views combine to create one of the world's most popular cruise destinations.

While the Western Caribbean is known for adventure and ancient ruins, the Eastern Caribbean shines with world-famous beaches, colonial history, incredible sailing, duty-free shopping, and lush volcanic landscapes.

Whether you're visiting for the first time or returning to explore more islands, every stop offers something uniquely memorable.



What is the Eastern Caribbean?

The Eastern Caribbean includes many of the islands located east of Puerto Rico and throughout the northeastern Caribbean Sea.

Popular cruise ports include:

- St. Thomas (U.S. Virgin Islands)
- St. Maarten / St. Martin
- Puerto Rico (San Juan)
- Tortola (British Virgin Islands)
- Antigua
- St. Kitts & Nevis
- Dominica
- Martinique
- Guadeloupe
- St. Lucia
- Barbados (sometimes included)

Most cruises depart from:

- Miami
- Fort Lauderdale
- Port Canaveral
- New York
- Baltimore
- San Juan

Typical cruise lengths range from **7–10 nights**, although shorter itineraries are also available.



Home to Some of the World's Most Beautiful Beaches



The Eastern Caribbean is home to many beaches consistently ranked among the best in the world.

Some favorites include:

Magens Bay (St. Thomas)

Often listed among the world's top beaches, Magens Bay offers calm waters, soft white sand, and beautiful mountain scenery.

Trunk Bay (St. John)

Famous for its underwater snorkeling trail and crystal-clear water, Trunk Bay is one of the Caribbean's most photographed beaches.

Orient Beach (St. Martin)

Known for its lively atmosphere, beach clubs, and long stretch of golden sand.

Dickenson Bay (Antigua)

One of Antigua's most popular beaches with calm waters and excellent opportunities for paddleboarding and watersports.



The Sailing Capital of the Caribbean



Many travelers don't realize the **British Virgin Islands** are considered one of the premier sailing destinations in the world.

With steady trade winds, protected waters, and dozens of nearby islands, Tortola is a paradise for sailors.

Popular sailing destinations include:

- Virgin Gorda
- The Baths
- Jost Van Dyke
- Norman Island
- Cooper Island

Many cruise excursions feature catamaran sails, snorkeling, and secluded beaches.



Walk Through Caribbean History



The Eastern Caribbean is rich in colonial history.

Explore:

Old San Juan

Founded in the early 1500s, Old San Juan features colorful streets, blue cobblestones, historic plazas, and impressive forts.

Fort San Felipe del Morro

One of the most famous Spanish fortresses in the Americas, overlooking the Atlantic Ocean.

Fort Christian

Located in Charlotte Amalie, this Danish-built fort is the oldest standing structure in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Brimstone Hill Fortress

A UNESCO World Heritage Site in St. Kitts, often called the "Gibraltar of the West Indies."



Volcanic Islands & Rainforests



Unlike the flatter islands of the Western Caribbean, many Eastern Caribbean islands were formed by volcanoes.

This creates spectacular scenery featuring:

- Towering mountains
- Lush rainforests
- Waterfalls
- Botanical gardens
- Scenic overlooks

Don't Miss

- The Pitons (St. Lucia)
 - Dominica's rainforests
 - Sulphur Springs (St. Lucia)
 - Botanical gardens throughout the region
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Duty-Free Shopping Paradise

The Eastern Caribbean is one of the world's best destinations for duty-free shopping.

Popular purchases include:

- Jewelry
- Watches
- Perfume
- Electronics
- Designer handbags
- Local rum
- Caribbean crafts

Some of the best shopping can be found in:

- Charlotte Amalie (St. Thomas)
 - Philipsburg (St. Maarten)
 - Old San Juan
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Every Island Has Its Own Personality

St. Thomas

Shopping, beaches, Paradise Point, and island views.

St. Maarten

Dutch and French cultures on one island, famous beaches, and Maho Beach, where aircraft fly dramatically overhead.

Puerto Rico

Rich history, colorful architecture, vibrant nightlife, and delicious cuisine.

Tortola

Sailing, secluded beaches, and access to Virgin Gorda's famous Baths.

Antigua

Known for having **365 beaches**—one for every day of the year.

St. Lucia

Home to the iconic Pitons, waterfalls, mud baths, and lush rainforests.

Dominica

Nicknamed the "**Nature Island**" for its untouched beauty, waterfalls, hiking trails, and volcanic landscapes.



Incredible Water Activities

The Eastern Caribbean offers outstanding:

- Snorkeling
- Scuba diving
- Catamaran cruises
- Deep-sea fishing
- Paddleboarding
- Kayaking
- Sea turtle encounters
- Sunset sailing

Calm, clear waters make this region ideal for families and first-time snorkelers.



Caribbean Flavors

Eastern Caribbean cuisine blends African, European, and Caribbean influences.

Local favorites include:

- Fresh seafood
- Conch fritters
- Johnny Cakes
- Roti
- Callaloo
- Flying fish
- Rum cake
- Tropical fruit
- Island rum

Every island offers its own culinary traditions worth exploring.

Weather Throughout the Year

The Eastern Caribbean enjoys warm tropical temperatures all year.

Average daytime temperatures:

- Winter: **80–84°F (27–29°C)**
- Spring: **82–86°F (28–30°C)**
- Summer: **86–90°F (30–32°C)**
- Fall: **84–88°F (29–31°C)**

Trade winds help keep many islands pleasantly comfortable, even during the warmer months.

Why Cruise the Eastern Caribbean?

Cruising allows you to experience multiple islands without the hassle of changing hotels or arranging inter-island flights.

In just one week you could:

- Shop in St. Thomas
- Explore centuries of history in Puerto Rico
- Sail around Tortola
- Relax on the beaches of Antigua
- Stand beneath the Pitons in St. Lucia

Every day brings a new culture, landscape, and adventure.

Premium Travel Group Tip

The Eastern Caribbean is ideal for travelers who love beautiful beaches, history, scenic island drives, and relaxing days by the water. It's an excellent choice for first-time cruisers because it offers a little bit of everything—from world-class shopping and historic cities to breathtaking natural beauty and unforgettable shore excursions.



Continue Exploring

Ready to plan your Eastern Caribbean adventure? Be sure to explore our detailed destination guides for:

- St. Thomas
- Tortola
- Puerto Rico (San Juan)
- St. Maarten
- Antigua
- St. Lucia
- Dominica
- Barbados
- Martinique
- Guadeloupe