

## Overview of Bermuda

Bermuda is a land of pink sandy beaches, clear turquoise seas and picturesque old colonial towns. Britain's oldest colony was once known to fearful sailors as Devil's Island, its shallow waters and coral reefs claiming many shipwrecks. Today, these reefs and wrecks provide a wonderful playground for swimming, snorkeling and diving.

The archipelago of Bermuda lies 650 miles (1,046km) off the east coast of America in the Atlantic Ocean, forming one corner of the legendary Bermuda Triangle. The seven main islands are linked by causeways and bridges, and stretch just 20 miles (32km) from tip to tail.

The majority of American visitors think of Bermuda fondly as being English in character. British visitors, by contrast, seem to feel that it has a strongly American flavour. The reality is somewhere in between. Bermuda has a unique culture that draws influence from both British and American traditions. Business attire on the island might constitute a jacket and tie with Bermuda shorts, while bikinis are banned further than 25 feet (7.6m) away from the water!

Not just a coveted holiday destination, Bermuda has become a centre of high finance thanks largely to generous tax advantages and advanced satellite communications. Major corporations have flocked to set up shop on the island, helping the country become one of the richest, per capita, in the world.

With its stunning natural beauty and close proximity to Florida, Bermuda has become a popular destination for cruise ships and yachts, with over 200,000 people visiting the islands from cruise ships every year.

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## Key Facts

### **Language:**

English is the official language.

### **Passport/Visa:**

All visitors must hold a return or onward ticket and any documents required for further travel, as well as a valid passport. We recommend that passports be valid for six months after arrival at destination. As part of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI), all travellers travelling between the United States and Canada, Mexico, Bermuda, and the Caribbean region are required to present a passport or other valid travel document to enter or re-enter the United States. If departing from the USA, a valid passport will be required by immigration authorities. Visa requirements vary according to country.

### **Currency:**

The Bermudan Dollar (BMD) is divided into 100 cents, and is tied to the US Dollar (US\$1=BD\$1). US currency is accepted almost everywhere and other major currencies can be exchanged at banks and bureaux de change. Banking hours vary, though most are open weekdays from 9am to 4.30pm. Visa, MasterCard and American Express are widely accepted and ATMs are easily available. Visitors are advised to exchange all their Bermudan Dollars before leaving, as it is impossible to exchange once outside the country.

### **Electricity:**

Electrical current is 110 volts, 60Hz. US flat, two-pin plugs are used. Power outages and surges are common, as a result visitors should bring surge protectors for the safety of their devices.

# Travel to Bermuda

## Overview

'You go to heaven if you want - I'd rather stay here in Bermuda.' gushed Mark Twain in the 19th century, and Bermuda's promise of sun, sea and paradise still lures thousands of vacationers to its shores year after year. The island is surrounded by a fantastic coral reef that harbours colourful fish and has ensnared scores of shipwrecks, making for memorable diving and snorkelling at spots like Elbow Beach in Paget Parish. Elsewhere, the crystal-clear waters of Southampton Parish provide the perfect conditions for kayaking and yachting.

The offerings on land are splendid as well. Visitors can play a round at one of nine world-class golf courses, including the Belmont Golf Club, Ocean View Golf Course, Port Royal Golf Course, St. George's Golf Club, and The Fairmont Southampton Golf Club. Booking ahead in summer is advised. Tourists can also hike peaceful trails and sunbathe on glorious, pink-sand beaches, or stroll the crooked streets of the colonial settlement of the Town of St George, Britain's oldest surviving town in the New World, which is so well preserved it has been designated a World Heritage site.

Bermuda boasts a balmy climate that's comfortable for most of the year and friendly people who readily strike up conversations with strangers. There is plenty of distinctive local colour as well, from a landscape of tidy pastel houses to dapper businessmen dressed in Bermuda shorts.

## Climate in Bermuda

Bermuda weather features a very mild climate with very little cold. Temperatures average 68°F (20°C) in winter and 86°F (30°C) in mid-summer, although they have been known to soar far higher in summer when humidity can become uncomfortable. The best time to visit Bermuda is March or April, as the temperatures are moderately warm and islands are yet to see the full rush of high season.

Some facilities are limited in the winter months but room rates are much cheaper over this period. For those primarily interested in playing tennis or golf, winter is the time to come. Short but heavy showers can occur during any time of the year so it is advisable to bring suitable clothing.

## Health Notes when travelling to Bermuda

There are no specific health risks for visitors to Bermuda and medical care is of a high standard. Health insurance is recommended, as medical treatment is expensive. Food and water are considered safe for consumption.

## Safety Notes when travelling to Bermuda

Bermuda is relatively crime-free but visitors should exercise the necessary precautions to safeguard personal possessions. Care should be taken after dark, avoiding quieter, poorly lit streets in particular. Hurricane season normally runs from June to November.

## Customs in Bermuda

As a general rule, dress conservatively. Bathing suits are acceptable only on the beach, and it is considered an offence to appear in public without a shirt. Casual sportswear can be worn in restaurants during the day, but in the evening men should dress more formally with slacks and a shirt. Good manners are expected, and asking a question without first offering a proper greeting is considered extremely rude. Nude or semi-nude bathing is not permitted in Bermuda.

## Duty Free in Bermuda

Travellers to Bermuda over 18 years do not have to pay duty on 200 cigarettes, 50 cigars and 500g tobacco; and 1 litre liquor and 1 litre wine. However, duties may have to be paid on perfume and certain gifts. Spearguns are prohibited.

## Doing Business in Bermuda

Bermuda's economy is dominated by tourism and international financial services. Business etiquette is conservative, and businessmen and women should stick to formal dress or lightweight suits. For meetings, punctuality is important, people are greeted with handshakes, and business cards are exchanged. Business hours are generally 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

## Communication in Bermuda

The international access code for Bermuda is +1, in common with the US, Canada and most of the Caribbean, followed by 441. The outgoing code is 011 followed by the relevant country code (e.g. 01144 for the United Kingdom); no outgoing code is needed to call the US. Mobile phones operate on a GSM 1900 network. Free wifi is

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happening before making travel arrangements. We cannot accept any responsibility for any loss or inconvenience to any person as a result of information contained above.



## Tippling in Bermuda

If not included in the bill, a 15 percent tip is generally expected at restaurants and hotels. Taxi drivers are usually tipped 10 percent, and all Bermuda hotels add a hotel tax of 10 percent to the bill at check-out.

## Passport/Visa Note

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## Entry Requirements

### Entry requirements for Americans:

United States passport holders must have a valid passport. No visa is required.

### Entry requirements for Canadians:

Canadian nationals require a valid passport. A visa is not required for stays of up to six months; period of stay will be decided by immigration officials upon arrival.

### Entry requirements for UK nationals:

UK nationals require a valid passport. A visa is not required for stays of up to six months; period of stay will be decided by immigration officials upon arrival.

### Entry requirements for Australians:

A valid passport is required for Australian nationals, but a visa is not required for stays of up to six months; period of stay will be decided by immigration officials upon arrival.

### Entry requirements for Irish nationals:

Irish nationals must have a valid passport. A visa is not required for stays of up to six months; period of stay will be decided by immigration officials upon arrival.

### Entry requirements for New Zealanders:

New Zealanders require a valid passport, but a visa is not necessary for stays of up to six months; period of stay will be decided by immigration officials upon arrival.

### Entry requirements for South Africans:

South African nationals require both a visa and a valid passport for entry to Bermuda. Passports should be valid for at least 45 days beyond intended period of stay.

## **Tourist Offices**

Bermuda Department of Tourism, Hamilton: +1 441 292 0023 or <http://www.gotobermuda.com>.

## Bermuda Embassies

### **In the United States:**

Embassy of the United Kingdom, Washington DC, United States (also responsible for Bermuda): +1 202 588 6500.

### **In Canada:**

British High Commission, Ottawa, Canada (also responsible for Bermuda): +1 613 237 1530.

### **In Australia:**

British High Commission, Canberra, Australia (also responsible for Bermuda): +61 2 6270 6666.

### **In Ireland:**

British Embassy, Dublin, Ireland (also responsible for Bermuda): +353 1 205 3700.

### **In New Zealand:**

British High Commission, Wellington, New Zealand (also responsible for Bermuda): +64 4 924 2888.

### **In South Africa:**

British High Commission, Pretoria, South Africa (also responsible for Bermuda): +27 12 421 7500.

## Foreign Embassies in Bermuda

### **American Embassy**

United States Consulate, Hamilton: +1 441 295 1342.

### **Canadian Embassy**

Canadian Consulate General, New York City, United States (also responsible for Bermuda): +1 212 596 1628.

### **Australian Embassy**

Australian High Commission Ottawa, Canada (also responsible for Bermuda): +1 613 236 0841.

### **Irish Embassy**

Honorary Consul for Ireland, Hamilton: +1 441 295 6574.

# Currency

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## Exchange rate for 1 BMD - Bermudan Dollar

<b>inf</b> EUR Euro	<b>inf</b> USD U.S. Dollar	<b>inf</b> GBP U.K. Pound Sterling	<b>inf</b> JPY Japanese Yen	<b>inf</b> CAD Canadian Dollar	<b>inf</b> CHF Swiss Franc
<b>inf</b> AUD Australian Dollar	<b>inf</b> UAH Ukrainian Hryvnia	<b>inf</b> KZT Kazakhstani Tenge	<b>inf</b> LBP Lebanese Pound	<b>inf</b> LYD Libyan Dinar	<b>inf</b> BOB Bolivian Boliviano
<b>nan</b> NPR Nepalese Rupee	<b>nan</b> OMR Omani Rial	<b>nan</b> QAR Qatari Rial	<b>inf</b> SGD Singapore Dollar	<b>inf</b> SEK Swedish Krona	<b>nan</b> TTD Trinidad Tobago Dollar
<b>nan</b> VEF Venezuelan Bolivar	<b>inf</b> DOP Dominican Peso	<b>nan</b> HRK Croatian Kuna	<b>inf</b> MXN Mexican Peso	<b>inf</b> XOF West African CFA Franc	<b>nan</b> PGK Papua New Guinean kina
<b>nan</b> BSD Bahamian Dollar	<b>nan</b> FJD Fiji Dollar	<b>nan</b> HNL Honduran Lempira	<b>inf</b> DZD Algerian Dinar	<b>nan</b> MMK Myanma Kyat	<b>nan</b> BWP Botswana Pula
<b>inf</b> PEN Peruvian Nuevo Sol	<b>inf</b> CLP Chilean Peso	<b>inf</b> AMD Armenia Dram	<b>inf</b> CZK Czech Koruna	<b>inf</b> MDL Moldova Lei	<b>inf</b> ISK Icelandic Krona
<b>inf</b> UZS Uzbekistan Sum	<b>inf</b> ILS Israeli New Sheqel	<b>inf</b> JOD Jordanian Dinar	<b>nan</b> KWD Kuwaiti Dinar	<b>inf</b> UYU Uruguayan Peso	<b>nan</b> MUR Mauritian Rupee
<b>nan</b> NIO Nicaraguan Córdoba	<b>inf</b> NOK Norwegian Krone	<b>inf</b> PLN Polish Zloty	<b>inf</b> SAR Saudi Riyal	<b>nan</b> LKR Sri Lanka Rupee	<b>inf</b> THB Thai Baht
<b>inf</b> AED U.A.E Dirham	<b>inf</b> BRL Brazilian Real	<b>inf</b> RON Romanian New Leu	<b>inf</b> HKD Hong Kong Dollar	<b>inf</b> XAF Central African CFA Franc	<b>inf</b> VND Vietnamese Dong
<b>inf</b> ARS Argentine Peso	<b>nan</b> XCD East Caribbean Dollar	<b>nan</b> GTQ Guatemalan Quetzal	<b>inf</b> MAD Moroccan Dirham	<b>nan</b> BHD Bahrain Dinar	<b>inf</b> PAB Panamanian Balboa
<b>inf</b> AZN Azerbaijan Manat	<b>inf</b> COP Colombian Peso	<b>inf</b> KGS Kyrgyzstan Som	<b>inf</b> HUF Hungarian Forint	<b>inf</b> TJS Tajikistan Ruble	<b>inf</b> IDR Indonesian Rupiah
<b>inf</b> EGP Egyptian Pound	<b>inf</b> KRW South Korean Won	<b>inf</b> PYG Paraguayan Guaraní	<b>inf</b> MYR Malaysian Ringgit	<b>inf</b> CRC Costa Rican Colón	<b>inf</b> NZD New Zealand Dollar
<b>inf</b> PKR Pakistani Rupee	<b>inf</b> RUB Russian Rouble	<b>inf</b> ZAR South African Rand	<b>inf</b> TND Tunisian Dinar	<b>nan</b> BBD Barbadian Dollar	<b>inf</b> BGN Bulgarian Lev
<b>inf</b> TRY Turkish Lira	<b>inf</b> PHP Philippine Peso	<b>inf</b> TWD New Taiwan Dollar	<b>inf</b> NGN Nigerian Naira	<b>nan</b> XPF CFP Franc	<b>nan</b> GHS Ghanaian Cedi
<b>nan</b> JMD Jamaican Dollar	<b>nan</b> ANG Neth. Antillean Guilder	<b>nan</b> BND Brunei Dollar	<b>inf</b> RSD Serbian Dinar	<b>inf</b> CNY Chinese Yuan	<b>inf</b> DKK Danish Krone
<b>inf</b> TMT New Turkmenistan Manat	<b>inf</b> INR Indian Rupee				

## Port of Call - Hamilton

Hamilton, port city and gorgeous capital of Bermuda, is a small and picturesque pastel-coloured town retaining the strong character of its English colonial roots. Hamilton is a small town, which burgeons with regular influxes of visitors, and is home to clear waters and a sophisticated approach to island living. There are many things to see and do in Hamilton and it is relatively easier to venture out into the rest of Bermuda from this central point. Visitors will find themselves sampling the local cuisine and cocktails, visiting craft markets or enjoying the spectacular natural beauty of the islands. For those interested in learning, the Bermuda Underwater Exploration Institute is sure to captivate, although it competes with historic Fort Hamilton and the natural beauty of Shelly Bay and Elbow beaches, as well as many golf courses. Post-Panamax ships (more than maximum dimensions for the Panama Canal) cannot enter Hamilton Harbour making it less visited than it once was and often a ferry excursion from the King's Wharf which was built to accommodate larger vessels. Yet cruise liners less than 700 feet can enjoy Hamilton Harbour's central location at the heart of town.

## Shopping in Hamilton

The best place for shopping is directly off the cruise ship at Front Street. Hamilton has duty free shopping although high prices may negate the tax free benefits. A trip over to King's Wharf offer some additional shopping opportunities.

**Best Buy:** Local Bermudan crafts are a must for visitors looking for souvenirs. Highlights include fine, glass jewellery and excellent products carved from local cedar wood.

## Dining in Hamilton

Blue Bar and Grill serves a range of fine, international, bistro-level fare. Baracuda Grill offers classic surf and turf options in Hamilton's centre. Hog Penny is a local hangout with pub food and a delicious, south Asian menu.

**Best Dish:** Bermuda's best dish is also its national dish, fish chowder. Originally considered a meal for those lower financial standing, today it is embraced by everyone as simply delicious cooking.

## Overview of the Attractions in Bermuda

'You go to heaven if you want - I'd rather stay here in Bermuda.' gushed Mark Twain in the 19th century, and Bermuda's promise of sun, sea and paradise still lures thousands of vacationers to its shores year after year. The island is surrounded by a fantastic coral reef that harbours colourful fish and has ensnared scores of shipwrecks, making for memorable diving and snorkelling at spots like Elbow Beach in Paget Parish. Elsewhere, the crystal-clear waters of Southampton Parish provide the perfect conditions for kayaking and yachting.

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# Public Holidays in Bermuda