LOCATION

Aruba is an island in the southern Caribbean Sea, located 27 km north of the coast of Venezuela. The island is 19.6 miles (30 km) long and 6 miles (9 km) wide, at its widest point, with an area of approximately 70 square miles (184 square kilometers).

CLIMATE

Aruba has a semi-arid climate and a cactus-strewn landscape. Temperature varies little from 28 °C (82.4 °F) to around 33 °C (91 °F), moderated by constant trade winds from the Atlantic Ocean. It's always summer in Aruba!

Clothing: Visitors can wear casual and informal summer clothes. It is recommended to wear elegant clothes and cocktail dresses to spend a night in one of the elegant restaurants, nightclubs or casinos. Most casinos require jackets for men. Visitors are not allowed to wear swimming trunks in the business and shopping districts.
CITIES
Oranjestad (Capital city), San Nicolas, Santa Cruz and Noord.

ECONOMY
Currently the economy is booming mainly to tourism and the oil refinery, as gold mines are closed. Small industries are limited to the production of tobacco and drinks. Aruba has one of the highest standards of living in the Caribbean region.

TOURISM
The most important productive sector that dominates daily life in the Caribbean is tourism. Many islands depend on the income generated by the flow of visitors they receive from all over the world. For the inhabitants of the island of Aruba, tourism is the mainstay of its economy, which is the major source of income and employment. The rapid growth of tourism during the 1990s has led to a substantial expansion of other economic activities like house building.

CULTURE
Aruba is a Dutch island with a lot of foreign influence. This particular island has been dominated by American influence for nearly 100 years. The nature of Arubans is to serve their visitors the best as possible. When a visitor requests a specific service, without doubt, they ensure that the service is available to make the visitor's stay as pleasant as possible.
Papiamento, which are used in schools. However, the most widely used language is Papiamento, which is the mother tongue of the majority of the population (about 70%).

Papiamento is a creole language resulting from the combination of Portuguese, Dutch, Spanish, Arawak, French and English.

In Aruba, there are many Spanish speakers. Its proximity to Venezuela has placed the Spanish language as the second most spoken language, and it is taught in schools from fifth grade.

It is possible to watch several Venezuelan TV channels on the island. There is a minority that speaks Portuguese and French.

POPULATION

In Aruba the majority of the population is a mix of Spanish ancestors and descendants of the Dutch who ruled the island, along with the Arawaks, who were natives of the island.

Aruba’s population, which has about 102,000 inhabitants, is composed of an extensive international mix of people (approx. 40 different nationalities).
CURRENCY

The Aruban Florin is the official currency of Aruba. It is divided into 100 cents. The pennies are in denominations of 5, 10, 25 and 50 centavos, 1, 2 ½ and 5 florins. The square coin of 50 cents called "yotin" is the most popular coin of Aruba.

The exchange rate with the U.S. dollar is 1 U.S. $ = 1.75 Florins.

RELIGION

Although the predominant religion in the island is the Catholic (about 82%), there are also practiced many other religions (Protestant 8%, Hindu, Muslim, Confucian, and Hebrew).

POLITICAL SYSTEM

As a constituent country of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Aruba’s politics take place within a framework of a 21-member Parliament and an eight-member Cabinet.

The governor of Aruba is appointed for a six-year term by the monarch, and the prime minister and deputy prime minister are elected by the Staten (or "Parlamento") for four-year terms.

The Staten is made up of 21 members elected by direct, popular vote to serve a four-year term.

STANDARD CURRENCY

Euros and US dollars are widely accepted and easily exchanged for Aruban Florins.

CREDIT CARDS

American Express, Visa / Master Card

TRAVELERS CHECKS

American Express
ATMS
Travellers who have ATM cards of the CIRRUS or Plus systems can get Aruban Florins from the ATMs.
The accounts of banks in the countries of origin will be debited in dollars at a favourable exchange rate and will apply a service charge.
Before leaving for Aruba, it is important to check if the card PIN number will work in Aruba, calling 1-800-4-CIRRUS.

MONEY EXCHANGE HOUSES
It is possible to exchange money in banks, exchange houses authorized by the Government and hotels.

TRADING HOURS
Stores are open from Monday to Saturday, from 08:00 hrs. to 12:00 hrs., and from 14:00 to 18:00.
Shopping centers are open from 10:00 hrs. to 18:00hrs.
In the evening the Alhambra Bazaar is open, from 05:00 hrs. to 24 hrs.

BANKING HOURS
The opening hours of banks are from 8:00 hrs. to 12:00 hrs. and 13:30 hrs. to 16:30hrs., from Monday to Friday.
Most bank branches remain open during lunch hours.
The Aruba Bank branch at the airport is open daily from 8:00 hrs. to 14:00 hrs., except on public holidays.
HOURS OF RESTAURANTS
They are generally open from 08:00 hrs. to 14:00 hrs. and from 18:00 hrs. to 23:00 hrs.
There may be variations depending on the restaurant.

NATIONAL MUSEUM HOURS
Museums are generally open from Monday to Friday from 08:00 hrs. to 12:00 hrs., and from 13:00 hrs. to 16:30 hrs., but there can be variations.

TIPS
The restaurants usually add 15% service charge to your account, but it is still customary to tip the head waiter, the wine and bar manager.

VACCINES
None

AIR TRANSPORT
Aruba has an international airport, Queen Beatrix, which receives large commercial jets. Aruba Air offers daily flights to the island, Bonaire and Curacao.

ROAD NETWORK
The road network of the island is very good and they are marked with international traffic signals.
BUS TRANSPORTATION
The bus service is cheap and efficient. Buses run daily, every 30 minutes and on Sundays and holidays, every one hour from all districts and resort areas. Please ask your hotel for schedules and itineraries.

DRIVING
Right hand drive

DRIVING LICENCE
People must have the international driving license or valid license with a minimum of two years.

CAR RENTAL (which we recommend booking in advance):
It is the most advisable means of transport to move around the island. There are some car rental agencies in the island. The minimum age to rent a car is 22/25 years and the maximum age of 65/70 years. To get the address of car rental agencies, please contact ARUBA TOURISM AUTHORITY.

TAXIS
The taxi service for tourists is located at the Dispatch Office, phone 22116 and 21604, and there are also taxis in the street.
Taxis are not equipped with a taximeter. Please verify the rate before taking the taxi.
All taxi drivers have a guide certificate that certifies them to perform this work.
ELECTRICITY
The electricity is 110 volts, 60 cycles AC, equal to U.S. model. Visitors from other countries with different electrical systems need adapters. Most hotels provide hairdryers, check with your hotel for details.

TAXES
There is a 5% tax on rooms and hotel service charge of 10 to 11%. The charge for food and beverage service is generally 15%.

TELEPHONES
Call abroad from the hotel, through an operator. Please provide the operator with all codes to avoid any problems.

It is possible to make phone calls from other locations:

- Teleshop offices in Palm Beach, or at the beginning of the main street of Oranjestad.
- Mail offices in San Nicolas and Oranjestad.

Local calls can be made from any telephone booth of the island with a phone card, which are available in service stations, shopping centers, restaurants and Setar Teleshops, or through hotel operators.

SAFETY
Public safety is guaranteed, the police controls crime and especially the flow of drugs to the island, since drug use is criminalized in Aruba.
NATIONAL TOURIST OFFICE

- **Aruba Tourism Authority (Hague)**

  **Central Address:** Badhuisweg. No. 173
  **Phone/Fax:** 70-3512811
  **Office Hours:** Monday to Friday from 09:00 hrs. to 17:30hrs.
  **Language:** English

- **Aruba Tourism Authority (Oranjestad)**

  **Central Address:** Smith Boulevard. No. 172
  **Phone/Fax:** 8-21019/23777  8-34702
  **Office Hours:** Monday to Friday from 09:00 hrs. to 17:30hrs.
  **Language:** English
MAIN TOURIST ATTRACTIONS AND ENTERTAINMENT

- **Palm / Eagle Beach**

  Eagle Beach is an idyllic Caribbean beach, with white sand and crystal clear water, which is visited by lovers of water sports.

  Palm Beach, located on the west side of the island, is a sandy beach that offers perfect conditions for swimming.

  Those who prefer underwater adventures can’t miss the Pedernales wreck of a ship that sank after being hit by a torpedo, now considered one of the most popular dive sites.

  Aruba is only 32 miles long, so it's very easy to get around by bicycle or motorcycle.

- **Oranjestad**

  Boutiques, exclusive stores and street vendors, as well as casinos and a variety of restaurants, nightclubs and bars, make Oranjestad in Aruba a popular destination.

  The capital city of the island not only offers places to shop, dine, or entertainment, but also offers museums, a butterfly farm, art galleries, golf, historic sites and a spot port.

  The colonization of the island by the Netherlands shows Dutch colonial architecture in Oranjestad, while the bright colors of the buildings are typical of the Caribbean.
- **Noord**
  It is possible to visit the church of Santa Ana, which is the oldest church in Aruba.

- **Santa Claus**
  It is possible to visit Charlie's bar, the most frequented place for 50 years.

Visitors stop to eat and leave some memories.

- **Bushiribana**
  It is located on the center of the island, where the ruins of the mines of Gold

- **Sea Star Park**
  It is a marine park with 20 aquariums and 3 large ponds with sea lions, flamingos and sharks.

- **Fontein and Quadirikiri**
  They are the caves where Caiquetios Indians defended Aruba from the French.
  It is possible to see ancient Indian drawings.

- **Aruba Ostrich Farm**
  Although Africa is the land of origin of ostriches, these birds have found a perfect home in Aruba. This tour will give you the opportunity to learn about the behaviour and instincts of these wonderful creatures.
  This attraction is different from what visitors can usually enjoy on a vacation to the Caribbean.
Water sports

Aruba offers a variety of water sports and activities such as jet skiing, tubing, parasailing and snorkelling, among others.

There are many companies located in the beaches Las Palmeras and the Eagle that offer these activities without having to make a reservation.

Aruba has the best winds of the world for these sports and has the most qualified instructors and shops of windsurfing and kite surfing.

Also, visitors can get lessons and rent the appropriate equipment.

NIGHTLIFE ACTIVITIES

Aruba offers a variety of places for fun: casinos and discos.

Visitors can have a tropical drink on a patio or have a nice dinner at a restaurant.

Most hotels offer cocktails, barbecues, dances, fashion shows, performances by musical groups, etc.

CASINOS

- **Palace Casino**
  Americana Aruba Beach Resort
  Boulevarg LG Smith, 81

- **Seaport Casino**
  Aruba Sonesta Suites & Casino
  LG Smith Boulevard, 9

- **Casino Masquerade**
  Radisson Aruba Caribbean Resort
  LG Smith Boulevard, 81
DISCOTHEQUES

- **Cheers Cafe Bistro**
  Port of Call Marketplace
  LG Smith Boulevard, 17

- **Chesterfield Night Club**
  Zeppenfeldstraat, 57
  Santa Claus

DANCING

- **Music Hall**
  Wyndham Aruba Beach Resort & Casino.
  LG Smith Boulevard, 79

- **Garden Brasilien**
  Americana Aruba Beach Resort & Casino.
  LG Smith Boulevard, 83

- **Players Club & Lounge**
  Holliday Inn Aruba Beach Resort & Casino.
  LG Smith Boulevard, 230
An activity that tourist cannot miss **BON BINI FESTIVAL**. The Institute of Culture and Education offers visitors crafts centers, food, music and folklore shows in Aruba.

Visitors can see North American and occasionally European and Latin American movies at the Drive Inn Theatre in Balashi and at four cinemas in the Seaport Marketplace.

**MAIN AREAS OF PURCHASE**

- **Aruba Artesanis**
  
  LG Smith Boulevard, 178.
  
  Tamarjin Beach Front Hotel.
  
  Instead find artisan pottery and folk objects.

- **Wulfsen’S**
  
  Caya. Betico GF Croes, 52
  
  Fashion has Italian, French, German and Dutch.

- **Seaport Village Mall**
  
  LG Smith Boulevard
  
  It is a shopping center which has more than 85 stores
Other places are: Artistic Boutique, Palais Oriental and malls as Harourtown and Port of Call Marketplace.