



TRINIDAD & TOBAGO
THE TRUE CARIBBEAN
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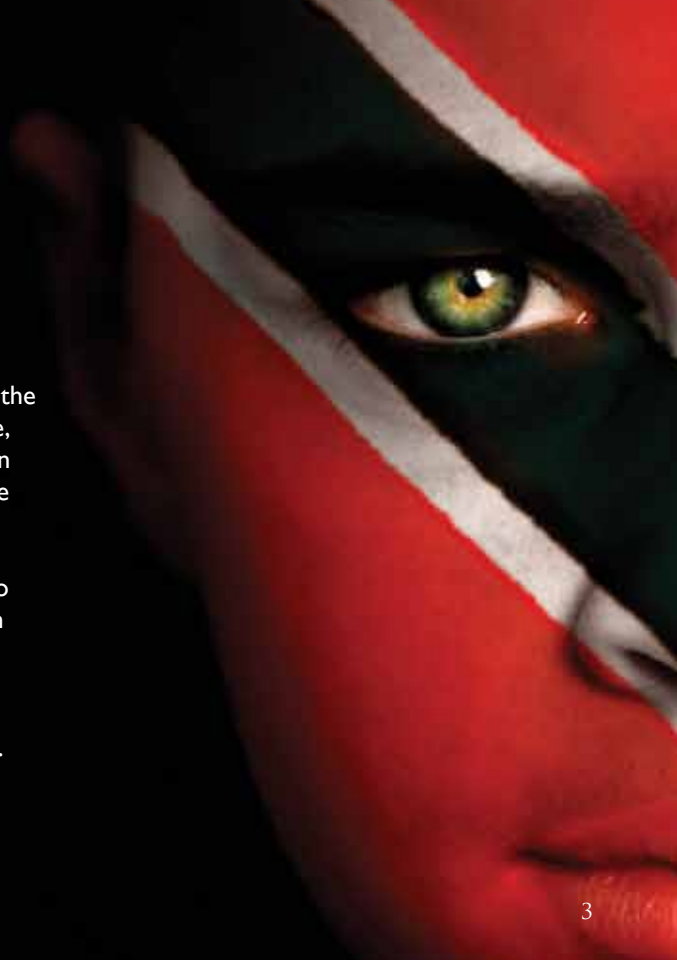


Trinidad & Tobago

TWO ISLANDS

ONE NATION

The twin-island republic of Trinidad and Tobago offers visitors the best of both worlds. This nation is bursting with a rich culture, stemming from a history of European colonialism, West African slavery and East Indian indentureship. Trinidad, the larger of the two islands, is an entertainment centre with a wide selection of nightspots, restaurants and shopping destinations. Coupled with world-famous ecotourism sites, Trinidad has something to offer the nature-seeker as well as the party animal. Tobago, on the other hand, is a wonder world for the nature enthusiast. A host of beautiful beaches, waterfalls, wetlands and diving sites await visitors. Tobago is T&T's tourist capital, with exotic accommodations and activities designed specifically for guests. The secluded beaches and overall slower pace of life have the ability to settle anyone's mood. Combined, these two islands undoubtedly offer a one-of-a-kind island escape.



HISTORY OF THE TWO ISLANDS

The history of Trinidad and Tobago begins with the settlement of the islands by Amerindians. Both islands were encountered by Christopher Columbus on his third voyage in 1498. Tobago changed hands between the British, French, Dutch and Courlanders but eventually ended up in British hands. Trinidad remained a Spanish colony until 1797 but it was largely settled by the French. In 1889 the two islands were incorporated into a single crown colony. Trinidad and Tobago obtained its independence from the British Empire in 1962 and became a republic in 1976.

FAST FACTS

Official Name:	The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Capital:	Port of Spain
Nationality:	Citizen of Trinidad and Tobago, Trinidadian(s), Tobagonian(s)
Official Language:	English
Total Population:	1,300,000
Currency:	Trinidad and Tobago dollar (TT\$)
Time Zone:	EST +1; GMT -4
Ethnicities:	The people are comprised of about 40% African, 40% East Indian, the remainder being of European, Chinese or mixed descent.
Climate:	The average temperature is about 30°C (89°F).



AT A GLANCE

TRINIDAD

Area: 1,864 square miles

Population: 1.3 million

Capital City: Port of Spain

Official Language: English

Strongest Industries: Oil, Natural Gas,
Financial, Insurance

Natural and Cultural Treasures: Carnival Festival, Calypso, Steelpan, Asa Wright Nature Centre, Point Cumana, Bake & Shark, Leatherback Turtle Nesting, Birdwatching, Hiking, Kayaking, Maracas Beach, Nobel Prize-winning Author V.S. Naipaul and Mas' Designer Peter Minshall.

TOBAGO

Area: 116 square miles

Population: 52,000

Capital City: Scarborough

Official Language: English

Strongest Industries: Tourism

Natural and Cultural Treasures: Tobago Heritage Festival, Tobago Jazz Festival, Tobago Rainforest Reserve, Coral Reefs, Diving Sites (Speyside, Buccoo Reef, Maverick Ferry), Sailing, Tranquil and Expansive Beaches, Birdwatching, Leatherback Turtle Nesting.



DISCOVER US



Discover Trinidad and Tobago, a unique True Caribbean paradise.

Bursting with spirit and a heady mix of cultural activities, eco adventure and culinary delights, there is no place in the world quite like our tiny twin-island republic of 1.3 million ethnically diverse people.

Our country presents a dual experience – from the cosmopolitan, bustling towns of Trinidad, to lazy days sunbathing on pristine beaches in Tobago.

The southernmost island in the Caribbean, Trinidad is an industrial giant boasting exciting nightlife, a robust energy sector and growing manufacturing industry.

Trinidad is also home to several spectacular ecotourism attractions, including the Caroni Bird Sanctuary, home of Scarlet Ibis and manatees, and the Asa Wright Nature Centre, a birdwatchers' paradise hidden under the thick canopy of our rainforests.

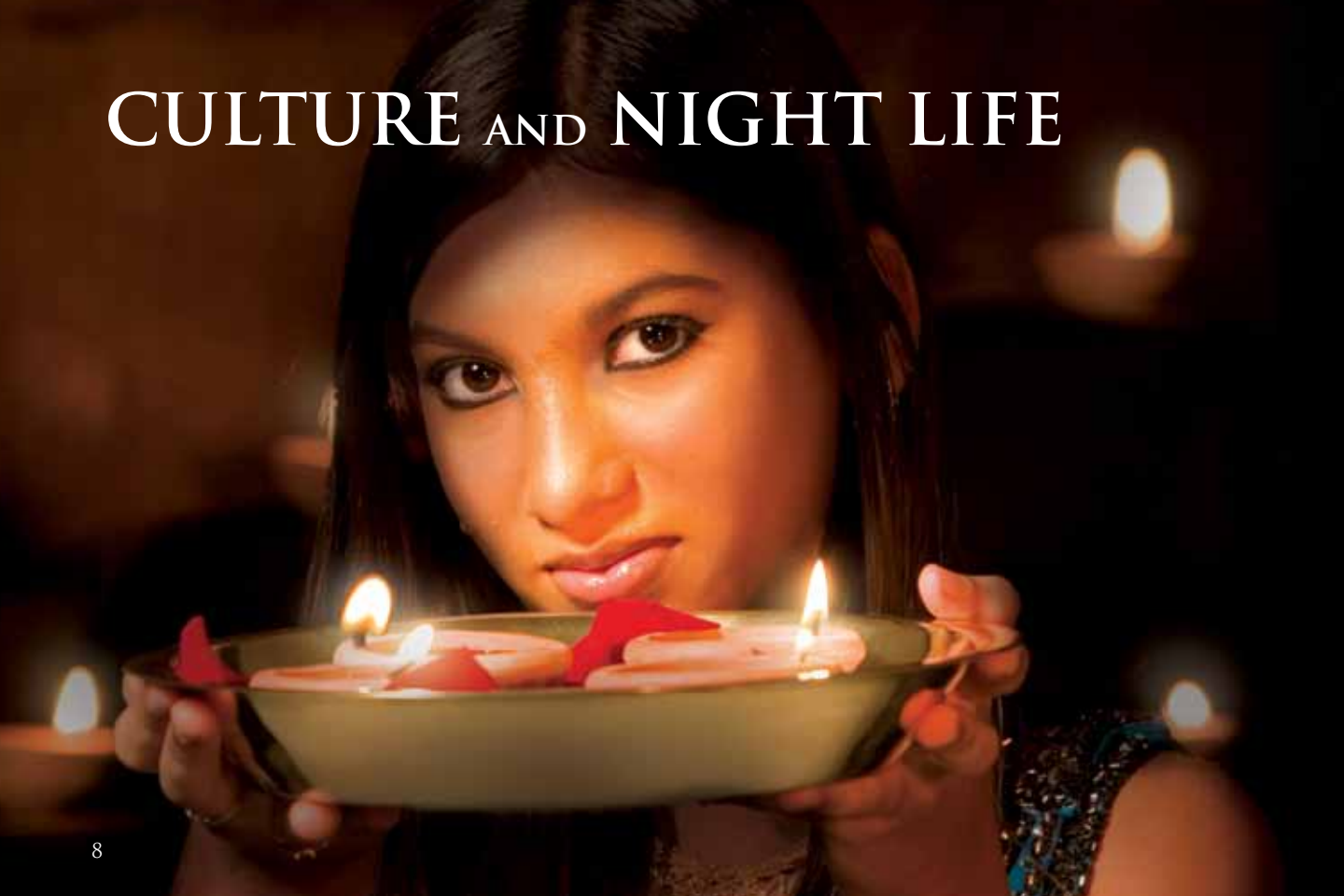
Alive with nightlife, Trinidad boasts myriads of options from Irish pubs, to live theatre and modern dance clubs. But if

Trinidad is the energetic heart of these islands, Tobago is its serene soul, just two hours away from Port of Spain by fast ferry, or 15 minutes by air.

Covered by lush forests and surrounded by sparkling blue bays, Tobago's waters are home to spectacular reefs, boasting 300 species of coral and colourful fish, while the island's rugged spine is home to the oldest protected rainforest in the Western Hemisphere.

From Carnival to calypso, steelpan to stick fighting, Trinidad and Tobago has a rich and expansive culture that represents its diverse peoples and history. Many countries in the world boast of Carnival celebrations, but none quite as stunning and all-embracing as Trinidad's national festival. Whether you decide to be a spectator on the sidelines, douse yourself in chocolate and join the J'ouvert revelry or don a fabulous costume and dance the day away, our Carnival is an unforgettable experience.

CULTURE AND NIGHT LIFE



The diversity of our people is reflected in the islands' numerous festivals, beginning with the two-day Carnival street festival before Ash Wednesday, where the music includes the exotic sounds of our national instrument, the steel pan – the only musical instrument invented in the 20th century.

In Trinidad and Tobago each individual culture is celebrated by our collective peoples. We celebrate Divali, the Hindu festival of lights; the Muslim festival of Eid-ul-Fitr and numerous Christian festivals.

At Christmas time the islands abound with cheery music – carols of Hispanic origin we call Parang – and sumptuous culinary delights and musical merriment.

Tobago's rich culture is as diverse as the many countries that fought to control the island – the Spanish, British, Dutch, Courlanders, French and even Americans. The various forts and historical sites that dot the island are testament to the island's former colonial masters and diverse history. The heritage of the enslaved Africans also heavily influenced the island's culture. Many of the folktales, superstitions, art, music and traditional dances reflect the island's European and African roots. These are celebrated annually during the Tobago Heritage Festival, which runs from early July to August.

Fishing, the mainstay of many of the island's inhabitants, is celebrated with parties, sports and other events on St Peter's Day. Tobago also celebrates an annual Jazz Festival, and the Tobago Blue Food Festival is one of our greatest expositions of local cuisine. The festival is the annual "fest ground" for creative indigenous cooks and chefs to demonstrate their expertise in local food preparation and explore new twists on our culinary staples.

The village of Buccoo, Tobago, can be described as the goat and crab racing capital of the world. During the Easter holidays this little village draws crowds of curious onlookers as specially trained goats sprint towards the finish line followed by jockeys clutching long ropes. In the crab race, jockeys have no easier task as they attempt to prod the stubborn crustaceans towards the finish line. But there is no glory for the winning crabs, just a place in a pot of spicy curry sauce.

ECOTOURISM

In Trinidad and Tobago there is an adventure for every day of the week, from hiking through rainforests on the trail of hidden waterfalls and exploring deep caves, to

cycling through verdant countryside, turtle watching and kayaking past wildlife-filled forests.

The two islands are blessed with an abundance of flora and fauna. They lie between latitudes 10-11°N and longitudes 60-61°W and the variety of habitats gives rise to a large and diverse list of species and acts as a gateway to the tropical ecology on the South American mainland.

For eco enthusiasts, Trinidad has more than 450 bird species, 108 types of mammals, 55 reptiles, 25 amphibians and 620 types of butterflies; ranking the island as one of the richest outposts of biodiversity in the Caribbean. Trinidad is home to some of the most diverse and spectacular bird life in the Caribbean, much of which can be spotted at the world-renowned Asa Wright Nature Centre. Trinidad's size and accessibility to popular sites ensures many species can be seen without long drives or treks. The islands are a birdwatcher's paradise and Trinidad also boasts the Pointe-a-Pierre Wildfowl Trust, the home to a large number of ducks and swimming birds, which has also become a major stopping point for migratory birds.

Tobago has over 200 bird species on just 116 square miles of land. The island has several great vantage points for birdwatching, including the Grafton Caledonia

Wildlife Sanctuary, the Main Ridge Forest Reserve and Little Tobago Island, a small offshore island located just off the village of Speyside.

Trinidad is also a sport angler's dream. Fed by the rich outflow of the Orinoco River, Trinidad's waters attract big game fish. Species such as Tarpon, Tuna and Shark are plentiful year-round with Sailfish, Marlin, Wahoo and Dolphin making seasonal appearances. Trinidad also plays host to several exciting international fishing tournaments, including the Kingfish Tournament in June, Tarpon Bash in August and Wahoo Tournament in early March.

ENTERTAINMENT AND NIGHT LIFE

The islands of Trinidad and Tobago offer different experiences in the realm of entertainment. Trinidad definitely offers a more fast-paced entertainment scene. Overall, in the last few years, the nightlife and entertainment in Trinidad and Tobago has grown to meet the tastes of an increasingly affluent and cosmopolitan population, with a range of settings and activities to keep you entertained all week long.

In Tobago, many restaurants, bars and other locations, especially in the Crown Point area, offer a variety of nightly live entertainment, including pool halls,



casinos with blackjack and roulette, karaoke nights and variety shows with live music. Sundays are a no-contest. All roads lead to Buccoo and its famous Sunday School street party. Each weekend in Buccoo the Sunday School Street Party ensures revellers party their way into the new week.

In Trinidad, the nightlife is hopping and you can enjoy fine dining, live music, theatre and dance performances at a great number of venues in and around the capital city. You can catch the most recent movies at several cinemas, including two multiplexes at MovieTowne in Port of Spain and Caribbean Cinemas 8 in Trincity.





BUSINESS TOURISM

While Tobago concentrates mainly on leisure tourism, Trinidad is rolling out the welcome mat for business travellers and investors, with expanding conference facilities, high-speed Internet access and hotels with all the amenities for a busy executive. Thanks to an extended period of economic growth driven mainly by the energy sector and an aggressive investment drive, Trinidad is solidifying its reputation as the business hub of the region. Its natural resources, location, communication links, financial system and strong democratic tradition have made it the Caribbean's most secure investment location. Dozens of the world's leading corporations are active here. The economy has been liberalised and virtually all barriers to trade and investment have been eliminated.





CUISINE

Trinidad and Tobago cuisine is a fusion of the very cultures that have made this nation the melting pot of the Caribbean, and exploring the local culinary fare can be a most pleasant adventure in itself. It is indicative of the blends of Amerindian, European, African, Indian, Chinese, Creole and Lebanese gastronomic influences. No trip to this twin-island nation is complete without samplings of the local cuisine. Popular names to look out for are benne balls, blue food, buljol, callaloo, coconut bake, cou-cou, crab n' dumpling, doubles, oildown, pacro water, pastelles, pelau, pholourie, pigeon peas, roti, choka, sno- cone and souse.

While the country has no official dish, Tobago is famous for crab and dumplings and no trip to Trinidad is complete without a trip to sample bake and shark on Maracas Bay or doubles at one of the popular spots along the East-West corridor.

CRUISE SHIPS

Cruises are a great way to see as many Caribbean islands as possible in one vacation and Trinidad and Tobago is a cruise destination fit for the traveller who's up for some fun, excitement, culture and adventure. The southern location of these islands, being just seven miles from Venezuela, means cruise ships do not stop there as frequently as other ports in the Caribbean. However, the number of cruise travellers to the islands has been increasing in the past 15 years and in the second half of the 1990s, the number of cruise ships visiting the islands nearly doubled.

Several cruise line companies offer excursions that stop in one of the two cruise ports on the islands. Passengers to Trinidad will stop at Port of Spain, while passengers to Tobago will stop at Scarborough. The port in Port of Spain, with the new Waterfront Facility, is home to the Hyatt Regency Hotel and offers transportation, shopping and communications

services for disembarking cruise ship passengers.

Your cruise around the world is not complete without a stopover at Trinidad and Tobago. Our beautiful twin islands are a bewitching mix of natural beauty and culture. You will be delighted to find that you can explore our wide and varied offerings within a relatively short space of time.



YACHTING SERVICES





Trinidad has been blessed with a natural advantage of being below the critical hurricane belt and there is room for the storage of over 1,000 yachts on land. The facilities and staff here are known throughout the Caribbean for their creativity and skill. Trinidad has evolved into the premier storage and repair centre for yachts and a quiet, laid back environment. It is the perfect weekend getaway.

With marinas, boatyards, support services and contractors all conveniently in one location – Chaguaramas Bay in Trinidad – you can be sure you will find somewhere to anchor or haul and whatever service you may need. Support services abound in Chaguaramas – banks, groceries, a post office, travel agents, souvenir shops, chandleries, tour companies, restaurants and Internet cafes are all located within walking distance. And Trinidad living is easy – a low cost of living makes everything affordable and the quantity and quality of available goods is excellent.

Moorings are also available from the Yacht Services Association of Trinidad and Tobago (YSATT). Contractors provide a wide range of repair and installation services – air-conditioning, refrigeration, pressure blasting, engine work, electrical, electronics, woodworking, yacht maintenance, sail and canvas work, welding, fabrication, painting, varnishing, life raft repair and upholstery services.

Immigration and Customs procedures are geared towards your needs – yachtsmen are granted a stay of up to six months and can apply for an extension, while marine-related goods can be imported duty free to in-transit yachts.



CONTACT INFORMATION

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Tourism Development
Company Limited
Level 1 Maritime Centre
Barataria
Trinidad and Tobago
Tel: (868) 675-7034 - 7
Fax: (868) 675-7377
Email: info@tdc.co.tt
Visit us @
www.gotrinidadandtobago.com

UNITED KINGDOM

Ms. Nadine Rankin
Managing Director
Advantage Management Group Ltd (AMG)
Suite 200, Parkway House
Sheen Lane, London
SW14 8LS, UK
Tel: 011-44 (0)-20-8487-9881
Fax: 011-44 (0)-2088-78-9124
Email: info@amglttd.biz

USA

Cheryl Andrews Marketing
Communications

331 Almeria Avenue
Coral Gables, FL 33134
Tel: 305-444-4033
Fax: 305-447-0415
Email: info@cam-pr.com

GERMANY

Alexandra Ehm
PR Manager
Julian Luther
Marketing Manager
AVIAREPS Tourism GmbH
Josephspitalstraße 15
D-80331 Munich, Germany
Tel. office: +49 (89) 55 25 33 800
Fax: +49 (89) 55 25 33 489
Email: trinidadandtobago@aviareps.com

CANADA

Ms. Reggie Kieda
General Manager Canada
AVIAREPS Tourism Canada
606-130 Spadina Avenue
Toronto
Ontario M5V 2L4
Canada

Tel: 416-561-8243
Fax: 416-323-9746
Email: rkieda@aviareps.com

SCANDINAVIA

Christine Engen
Creative Director
Spirit Company
CVR – nr: 29924627
Lille Strandstraede 22
1254 Copenhagen K
Denmark
Tel: 011-45-3311-5600
Email: info@spirit-company.dk

INDIA

Huzan Fraser
Beautiful Planet
No. 46 Grants Building Annexure
Next to Strand Cinema
Colaba, Mumbai – 400 005
India
Tel: +91 22 3296 1624/ +91 22 3296 1725
Fax: +91-22-2287-6355
M: +91 98201 90753
Email: huzan.fraser@gmail.com



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