

# ST. LUCIA

SPRING & SUMMER GUIDE 2012



## The best places to eat, sleep and play in St. Lucia this spring and summer

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# INTRODUCTION



TripAdvisor, the most trusted source for where to eat, sleep and play in thousands of destinations around the world, has collected the best insider tips from its 50 million monthly visitors to produce a unique series of travel guides. In addition to the best hotels, restaurants and attractions for every type of traveler, you'll get great advice about what to pack, how to get around and where to find the best views. Be sure to check out the guides at [www.tripadvisor.com](http://www.tripadvisor.com).



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## PACKING TIPS

1. Don't forget your **passport**—even for travel from the United States. It's required for all air and sea border crossings.
2. "**Swimsuits** take a long time to dry out in the tropics, so take as many different ones as possible. You'll want to put on a dry suit each day."—TripAdvisor Member, Alabama
3. Take a box of **pencils and pens** to donate to a local school.
4. Bring **bug repellent!**

## Inside ST. LUCIA

Riches abound for explorers of St. Lucia, home to unspoiled wilderness and the majestic Pitons, quaint villages and vast working plantations. The capital city, Castries, contains several historic sites, including the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception and the remains of Fort Charlotte. Choiseul, to the south, features a lively crafts market and petroglyphs from some of the earliest inhabitants, while picturesque Marigot Bay attracts both honeymooners and Hollywood to its aquamarine waters. Soufriere, one of the oldest towns, is a quiet counterpoint to Gros Islet, where locals dance in the streets every Friday.

The most energetic travelers will find ample adventure on the Windward Island, from parasailing and rainforest hiking to mountain biking and scuba diving. It's even possible to drive through a volcano! But if lounging on a patio and watching the sunset sounds more appealing, countless seaside hideaways await.

# Top VIEWS



## ST. LUCIA'S BEST VIEWS

"The beach goes on forever" at Rodney Bay. "**Pigeon Island** is a must. The views are spectacular."—TripAdvisor Member, Washington

**Pigeon Island National Park, Pigeon Island**

"It was well worth the climb of **Gros Piton** to see the view of a lifetime. Once at the top there are two summits: one giving you a view of the south and then two minutes to the other side, another point with an awesome view of Petit Piton."—TripAdvisor Member, Toronto, Ontario

**Gros Piton**

"Stop at **Morne Fortune**," aka Hill of Good Luck, the home of Fort Charlotte. "That's where you get the most incredible view of Castries."—TripAdvisor Member, Canada

**Morne Fortune, Castries**

# Where to PLAY

## TOP 10 Attractions

1. Anse Mamin, Soufriere
2. Our Planet, Jeremie St., La Place Carenage, Castries, 758 453 0107
3. Tet Paul Nature Trail, near Fond Doux Plantation, Soufriere
4. The Pitons
5. Pigeon Island National Park, Pigeon Island, 758 452 5005
6. Reduit Beach
7. Gros Islet Street Party, Gros Islet
8. Diamond Botanical Gardens, Soufriere Estate Soufriere, 758 459 7565
9. Sulphur Springs, Soufriere
10. Rodney Bay Marina, Rodney Bay



## FAMILIES

"**Island Riders** is suitable for almost everyone – young and old, novice to experienced -and is an absolute MUST for your holiday in St Lucia. Where else could you ride a horse bareback in the sea, overlooking a beautiful sunset?"—TripAdvisor Member, Sevenoaks, U.K.

**Island Riders, Gros Islet, 758 584 7555**

"**Our Planet** is a fascinating and interactive attraction. The Mirror Sphere, Science-on-a-Sphere and Hurricane Island are all fantastic exhibits. From our observations, in particular the obvious delight of the children, there is plenty for everyone."—TripAdvisor Member, Haywards Heath, U.K.

**Our Planet, La Place Carenage, Castries, 758 453 0107**

"The top trip is the pirate family day on the **Brig Unicorn** (as seen in 'Pirates of the Caribbean'). Expect to get very wet!"—TripAdvisor Member, England

**Brig Unicorn, Reduit Beach Ave., Rodney Bay, Castries, 758 452 8644**

"The water is a million shades of blue."

"Expect to get very wet!"



## ROMANCE

Stroll along **Marigot Bay**, "a quiet, friendly and extremely lovely place. The water is a million shades of blue."—TripAdvisor Member

**Marigot Bay**

**Serenity Tours** "was the best part of our honeymoon trip. The flight over the islands, the catamaran, swimming with the turtles and the gorgeous blue water on Palm Island were just breathtaking. It was pure paradise!"—TripAdvisor Member, Atlanta, Ga.

**Serenity Vacations & Tours, Gros Islet, 301 576 2288**

"Make sure you take a **sunset sail** around the island."—TripAdvisor Member, Detroit, Mich.

**Sunset sail, various companies offer these – check with your hotel**

# Where to **PLAY**



## BUDGET

Cooks will love the **Castries Market**. "Sample some of the fresh local fruits, and take home some of the local spices."—TripAdvisor Member, New York

**Castries Market, Castries**

"Hang out with friends and listen to very lively music" at the **Gros Islet Street Party** on Friday nights. "The streets are blocked off, and everyone is eating, dancing and drinking."—TripAdvisor Member, Atlanta, Ga.

**Gros Islet Street Party, Gros Islet**

Soak up the sun on **Reduit Beach**, a long stretch of golden sand considered one of the island's best.

**Reduit Beach, Castries**

"...everyone is eating, dancing and drinking"



## ADVENTURE

Climbing **Petit Piton** requires a local guide, "some upper body strength for the rope passages and full concentration," but it's "worth every straight step up."—TripAdvisor Member, Washington

**Petit Piton**

"The 'Dive and Drive' with **Scuba Steve's Diving Ltd.** was the highlight of the week: two dives off the Pitons, lunch at the fabulous Ladera Resort and a driving tour of the island."—TripAdvisor Member, Stilwell, Kan.

**Scuba Steve's Diving Ltd., Rodney Bay, corner of Coral Ave. and Marina Road, 758 450 9433**

Hit the island's snaky jungle paths with **Bike St. Lucia**, which offers Tinker's Trail to challenge die-hard mountain bikers.

**Bike St. Lucia, Soufriere, 758 457 1400**

"...worth every straight step up."



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## EDUCATIONAL/HISTORICAL

The **Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception** has an unassuming exterior, but inside it's filled with paintings by native artist Dunstan St. Omer.

**Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Micoud Street, Castries**

"**Pigeon Island National Park** could well be one of the most interesting aspects of St. Lucia. There are many ruins of facilities built by the British military several centuries ago. It's worth the additional fee for the illustrated guidebook."—TripAdvisor Member, Denver, Colo.

**Pigeon Island National Park, Pigeon Island, 758 452 5005**

"**Balenbouche Estate** along the south coast road, with its lovely old ruined waterwheel and aqueduct, is well worth a historical visit."—TripAdvisor Member, St. Lucia

**Balenbouche Estate, Choiseul, 758 455 1244**



## RELAXATION

"Stroll through a streamside garden of heliconia, ginger lilies, orchids and tropical fruit trees" to the **Diamond Mineral Baths**, "three clean, tile-lined, chest-deep tubs filled with soothing warm water."

"Listen to the wind in the coconut palms" while soaking.—TripAdvisor Member, Washington, D.C.

**Diamond Mineral Baths, Soufriere, 758 459 7565**

Named for the bird that roosts on its rocky shores, the **Fregate Islands Nature Reserve** is an ornithologist's paradise.

**Fregate Islands Nature Reserve, Praslin, 758 452 5005**

"Listen to the wind in the coconut palms"

The beach at **Anse Chastanet** "was both peaceful and breath-taking, highlighting the best of St. Lucia: lush vegetation, steep hillsides, clear warm water and abundant sealife."—TripAdvisor Member, Hershey, Penn.

**Anse Chastanet**

# What's the **TOUR**

## How to Get Around



Rent a **four-wheel drive vehicle** to see the island without a timetable.

**Buses** (minivans) are an inexpensive way to get around. Look for the letter "H" in the middle of the license plate, denoting it's a bus.

A **helicopter tour** "is a great way to see the island. The Pitons are simply stunning from the land; from the air, it's breathtaking."—TripAdvisor Member, St. Lucia

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# WHERE to eat



"Some restaurants require 'Resort Evening Attire,' which means dress pants for gentlemen, shirts with sleeves and a collar and dress shoes."—TripAdvisor Member, Phoenix, Ariz

## FAMILIES

On Friday nights, the **Anse La Raye Fish Fry** features "vendors grilling lobster, conch, snapper, kingfish, flying fish, crayfish and countless other things. This is great fun for everyone at any age. Very safe, extremely friendly and a culinary adventure!"—TripAdvisor Member, Madison, Wis.

**Anse La Raye Fish Fry, Anse La Raye**

"**Key Largo Pizzeria** is a gem. Really fantastic pizza from wood-fired ovens. Yummy carbonara and meatballs, too. Really good value and a perfect place for people with kids or anyone who wants a casual meal out."—TripAdvisor Member, Dublin, Ireland

**Key Largo Pizzeria, Gros Islet Highway, 758 452 0282**

"If you want friendly service (without being intrusive), excellent quality food at an affordable price, then I thoroughly recommend the **Big Chef Steak House**. Don't let the name put you off—the fish is great, too. And so fresh!"—TripAdvisor Member

**Big Chef Steak House, Rodney Bay, Gros Islet, 758 450 0210**

"...kingfish, flying fish, crayfish"

## ROMANCE

"Looking for a special splurge-worthy restaurant?" **Rainforest Hideaway** wows with "exquisite presentation, bold and flavorful food, nice live jazz music on Wednesday and Thursday evenings and outstanding service."—TripAdvisor Member

**Rainforest Hideaway, Marigot Bay, 758 286 0511**

"**Buzz** was one of our favorites and the only place where we ate twice! The atmosphere is great, the service is exceptional and the food is fantastic. My husband loved the pepper pot. I had great snapper, made two ways. A very nice place."—TripAdvisor Member, Ann Arbor, Mich.

**Buzz, Opposite the Royal St. Lucian Hotel, Gros Islet, 758 458 0450**

"The owners have created a delightful atmosphere at **La Terrasse** and, whilst it's not waterfront, we dined in a beautifully romantic garden setting. The dishes, including desserts, were all homemade and delicious."—TripAdvisor Member, Crowthorne, U.K.

**La Terrasse, Rodney Bay, Gros Islet, 758 572 0389**

# WHERE to eat



## BUDGET



Dig into local cuisine at **Jambe De Bois**, which has “a beautiful wood setting, sea view and divine food, like seafood lasagna.”—TripAdvisor Member

**Jambe De Bois, Pigeon Island, Gros Islet, 758 450 8166**

Head to **Camilla’s** for Caribbean-style breakfast or lunch. “It’s a good local place with big portions and good prices.”—TripAdvisor Member, Long Island, N.Y.

**Camilla’s Restaurant and Bar, 7 Bridge St., Soufriere, 758 459 5379**

“If you want to eat a big hearty platter of food and don’t care so much about a ‘fancy’ dining experience, **Martha’s Tables** is your spot. It’s charmingly simple, like eating at a family reunion, and the food is very home-style and tasty. Not too expensive, either.”—TripAdvisor Member, Portland, Ore.

**Martha’s Tables, Malgretoute, Jalousie Road, Soufriere, 758 459 7270**

## HEALTH-CONSCIOUS



“The food at **Delirius** was excellent on all occasions, especially the fish dishes. The vegetarian options were also very good and not just an add-on like in many other restaurants.”—TripAdvisor Member, Sheffield, U.K.

**Delirius, Rodney Bay Village, Rodney Bay, 758 451 3354**

“We had a great vegetarian dinner at **Jacques Waterfront Dining**. The stuffed pepper was awesome, and so was the goat cheese salad and the portobello mushroom. Best veggie food on the island!”—TripAdvisor Member, Germany

**Jacques Waterfront Dining, Vigie Cove, Castries, 758 458 1900**

For fresh Caribbean-Asian fusion, saunter into **Tao**. “It’s a clean, Zen-type atmosphere, and the food is not diner style; the portions are just enough and the presentation is great.”—TripAdvisor Member, New York, N.Y.

**Tao, TheBodyHoliday at LeSport, Gros Islet, 758 457 7800**

## HIDDEN GEMS



“**Trios** is the best kept secret in Rodney Bay. Greeted by a champagne cocktail on arrival, we were treated to one of the best meals we had on holiday. The scallops in a gentle spicy sauce offered a generous and delicious portion for a main course, whilst my partner was very happy with steak in a coffee marinade.”—TripAdvisor Member, Edinburgh, Scotland

**Trios, Main Street, Rodney Bay Village, Gros Islet, 758 457 8599**

“Located on the water with outdoor seating and views of downtown Castries, **The Coal Pot** is an all-around great experience. The food is wonderful. A hidden treasure that everyone should make a point of going to!”—TripAdvisor Member, Washington, D.C.

**The Coal Pot, Vigie Marina, Castries, 758 452 5566**

“The food was fantastic at **‘Aunt’ Debbie’s**, with several different kinds of seafood and about eight homemade side dishes with Caribbean flare to choose from. It’s in the front of a house decorated with plants, in a village neighborhood.”—TripAdvisor Member, Wisconsin

**Debbie’s Restaurant, Vieux Fort area/Laborie, 758 455 1625**

## SPECIAL EVENTS



Tuck into the day’s catch or a plate of locally caught squid, octopus, shrimp or lobster while an array of Caribbean sounds plays during west coast village **Anse-la-Raye Seafood Friday**. (Fridays)

**Anse-la-Raye Seafood Friday, Anse-la-Raye**

The island’s longest running street party, **Gros Islet Friday Night Street Party**, attracts visitors and residents with its sounds and flavors. DJs and local artists play as crowds sample local delicacies and dance. (Fridays)

**Gros Islet Friday Night Street Party, Gros Islet**

The **Dennery Fish Festival** is a celebration of everything the Atlantic has to offer. The event includes an all day fish market, as well as local rowing, swimming and tug-of-war competitions. (Sundays in June)

**Dennery Fish Festival, Dennery, 758 453 4010**

Warm, island breezes and cool jazz combine during the **St. Lucia Jazz Festival**, an annual event that features performances by R&B and jazz artists from around the world. (April 30 - May 13)

**St. Lucia Jazz Festival, Various venues, 758 452 4094, <http://stlucijazz.org>**

Immerse yourself in local culture during the **St. Lucia Carnival**, a celebration featuring elaborate costumes, beauty competitions and plenty of soca and calypso music. Don’t miss the crowning of the Carnival Queen. (May 28 - July 17)

**St. Lucia Carnival, Castries, 758 452 1859, <http://luciancarnival.com/>**

Celebrate the classic beauty of the rose during the **St. Lucia Rose Festival**, an event held every year during the Feast of Saint Rose De Lima. The festival includes a series of street parades, near-endless parties and a king & queen coronation. (August 30)

**St. Lucia Rose Festival, Island-wide, 758 452 4094**

# Where to **STAY**



## FAMILIES

“Water sports were excellent at **Windjammer Landing**. All equipment was in good condition and staff was on hand to give lessons if needed; great for children.”—TripAdvisor Member, Dublin, Ireland

**Windjammer Landing Villa Beach Resort**, Labrelotte Bay, Castries, 758 456 9000

“My family and I stayed at the **Oasis Marigot**, and it was paradise. Our villa was landscaped beautifully. The views from the upper porch were unbelievable. This is not to be missed!”—TripAdvisor Member, Winston-Salem, N.C.

**Oasis Marigot**, 177 Seaview Ave., Marigot Bay, 800 263 4202

“**Coconut Bay Resort** was clean, tidy and spacious, and the staff was very good, especially the staff at the kids’ club.”—TripAdvisor Member, United Kingdom

**Coconut Bay Resort & Spa, Vieux Fort**, St. Lucia, 758 459 6000

Have questions about St. Lucia? Get insider advice from local experts in our forums. The majority of questions are answered within 24 hours.



## ROMANCE

“There’s so much lush vegetation surrounding **Nature’s Paradise** that you feel like you’re in the middle of your own personal rainforest! The views of the ocean and countryside from the large pool are amazing.”—TripAdvisor Member, Calgary, Alberta

**Nature’s Paradise**, Marigot Bay, 758 458 3550

Nestled in seven acres of lush tropical gardens on a two-mile stretch of beach, the **Rendezvous Resort** is a couples-only, all-inclusive that’s “a fantastic romantic getaway.”—TripAdvisor Member, Shipley, U.K.

**Rendezvous Resort, Malabar Beach**, Castries, 758 457 7900

A 2010 Traveler’s Choice Award winner for Best All Inclusive in the Caribbean, “the positive and friendly attitude of all staff at the **East Winds Inn** was inspiring” and “geared toward you having the best possible time.”—TripAdvisor Member, Surrey, U.K.

**East Winds Inn, Labrelotte Bay, Gros Islet**, 758 452 8212

## BUDGET

“A quality medium-size hotel where you aren’t just a number,” the **Coco Palm Resort** is a pleasant change of pace. “It was nice to be able to walk around the local area, rather than be tucked away in an all-inclusive resort where you’re stranded from the outside world.”—TripAdvisor Member, Aberdeen, U.K.

**Coco Palm Resort, Rodney Bay Village, Gros Islet**, 758 456 2800

“**Bay Gardens Hotel** had more of a local feel but provided all the necessary amenities. The on-site restaurant was excellent and the poolside BBQ, Manager’s Rum Punch Party and Caribbean Buffet were fun diversions.”—TripAdvisor Member, Syracuse, N.Y.

**Bay Gardens Hotel, Rodney Bay Village, Gros Islet**, 758 452 8060

“The **Villa Caribbean Dream** is ideal for solo travelers, couples and small families. One of the finest beaches in St. Lucia is nearby. The owner’s breakfasts of fresh tropical fruits are luscious, and her occasional dinners are among the island’s best.”—TripAdvisor Member, Charlottesville, Va.

**Villa Caribbean Dream, Moule a Chique, Vieux Fort**, 758 454 6846

“It was truly a special experience.”

## LUXURY

“**The Landings** is amazing, with a staff that goes above and beyond. They even set up a dinner table right on the beach for us one night, complete with candles and flowers!”—TripAdvisor Member

**The Landings St. Lucia, Rodney Bay, Castries**, 758 458 7300

“First-class service from a dedicated, long-term team and consistently ingenious, ‘tropical world’ cuisine in a staggering mountain rainforest and beach setting. These are the defining hallmarks of **Anse Chastanet**.”—TripAdvisor Member, England

**Anse Chastanet, Old French Road, Soufriere**, 800 223 1108

“From the architecture to your room to the celestial terrace, beauty surrounds you at **Jade Mountain**. I absolutely loved the food: great gourmet dinners with amazing views. The rooms are extremely roomy and spacious with slick, posh decor. Very sophisticated. In short, it was truly a special experience.”—TripAdvisor Member, Chicago, Ill.

**Jade Mountain Resort, 100 Anse Chastanet Road, Soufriere**, 758 459 4000

# Where to **STAY**



## HIDDEN GEMS

Honored as the Caribbean's Best for Romance in TripAdvisor's 2008 Travelers' Choice Awards, **Ti Kaye Village Resort** "is oceanfront at its finest. The beach was nice, the water was fantastic and the Friday Night Fish Fry is a must!"—TripAdvisor Member, New Jersey

**Ti Kaye Village Resort, Anse Cochon, Castries, 758 456 8101**

"How can you describe a place like **Fond Doux**? Incredible, beautiful, friendly, family! The whole plantation is fantastic to visit and walk around. When you stay there, you can just walk up to your cottage and pick some mangoes, bananas, passion fruits, lime and so on to snack on! No place can equal their friendliness."—TripAdvisor Member, London, England

**Fond Doux Holiday Plantation, Chateaubellie, Soufriere, 758 459 7545**

**The Ginger Lily Hotel** "is peaceful, yet not far from the busy main strip," with "big, bright, clean rooms and a lovely swimming pool."—TripAdvisor Member, United Kingdom

**The Ginger Lily Hotel, Rodney Bay, 758 458 0300**

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