

Barbados - OVERVIEW

Updated: June 19, 2014



Country Name Long Form: N/A

Government Type: Parliamentary Democracy and a Commonwealth Realm

Languages Spoken: English, Bajan

National Flag



Barbados is a Tier III Country. Significant security measures are necessary.

	Overall Assessment	Political Violence	Crime	Terrorism	Travel Safety
Barbados					
Key: (L) Low – (M) Medium – (H) High – (C)Critical					

POLITICAL CONDITIONS

Political Violence is assessed as LOW

The islands of the Eastern Caribbean have experienced little political violence or revolution. Historically, the islands of the Eastern Caribbean are tranquil. The political climates are stable with little threat of political violence. The labor riots of the 1930s were the last major upheaval to affect the entire Eastern Caribbean. The violent coup, which led to the 1983 murder of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop in Grenada, is the last occurrence of political uprising in the region.

Violent public protests and demonstrations are practically non-existent. Very little civil unrest occurs on the islands. Mostly unrest is connected to labor issues, which are usually settled by union and government intervention. Peaceful protests are only rarely directed at the U.S. Embassy in Barbados.

TERRORISM

Terrorism is assessed as LOW

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American citizens and American-owned businesses in the Eastern Caribbean have not been the focus of terrorist actions or political violence. The Eastern Caribbean remains relatively safe from regional terrorism. Most of the island nations are generally porous insofar as borders and transnational terror is concerned. Most ports of entry are easily accessible to would-be terrorists; however on most islands of the region, no terror related crime has been reported.

RULE OF LAW / CORRUPTION

The Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) for 2013 gave Barbados a score of 75, indicating that the country has low levels of corruption. The CPI rates countries by the perceived levels of corruption in the public sector, with the least corrupt countries receiving a maximum score of 100.

CRIME

Crime is assessed as **LOW**

American citizen tourists visiting the Eastern Caribbean are not targeted for crime to a greater degree than other Western foreigners. Americans who reside in the Eastern Caribbean region and live on local economies do not always enjoy the same level of police protection that regional governments provide to tourists who frequent a more narrow set of tourist areas.

Another common concern is visitor harassment. Beach merchants will offer a variety of items for sale, including drugs, and visitors should use caution in dealing with them.

KIDNAPPING

Kidnappings are rare in Barbados.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

Sexual Assault cases are rare in Barbados.

NATURAL DISASTERS

Barbados is susceptible to the North Atlantic hurricane season which generally runs from June to November. The hurricane season occurs near simultaneously with country's rainy season, which runs from May to October thus exacerbating the threat of flooding and landslides.

Earthquakes and low intensity tremors which cause little or no damage or casualties occur regularly in Barbados.

Barbados is also considered to be at high risk from tsunamis. Earthquakes, volcanic eruptions as well as a number of other underwater explosions can result in a tsunami. Tsunamis can move at very high speeds and threaten any low-lying coastal areas.

STANDING TRAVEL ADVICE

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- Resorts, hotels, and other businesses that cater to American tourists provide walled-in compounds with access controls; private security staffs that conduct background checks on employees; and hired drivers for safe transportation of guests.
- All beaches in Barbados are open to the public, even those at exclusive resorts.
- Uniformed police presence is higher in residential and business areas frequented by tourists. Police stations and police outposts are strategically located in those areas.
- Stay in groups, travel in a caravan consisting of two or more vehicles, and stay on the main roads.
- Ensure that someone not traveling with you is aware of your itinerary.
- Avoid hotels that do not have adequate security.
- It is preferable to stay in the main tourist destinations.
- Pay close attention to your surroundings, especially when walking.
- Official taxis are a suitable means of travel in daylight hours in urban areas. It is highly recommended that taxis be arranged through your hotel, or program office. Negotiate the price in advance.
- Women should be especially careful when traveling alone and avoid staying out late without a trusted male escort.
- Make sensible security precautions to mitigate the risk of petty crime, particularly pick pocketing and bag snatching.
- Carry a photocopy of your passport when traveling to avoid losing it in a robbery.
- Do not resist if you are being robbed and avoid eye contact and do not make any sudden movements.
- Be aware of your surroundings at all times and keep a low profile.
- Never leave your belongings unattended.
- Carry bags close to your body and make sure the fasteners are secure.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash or wearing expensive jewelry or valuables.
- Leave all important documents in a safe or safe deposit box at your hotel and only carry certified copies.
- Trust your instincts. If someone or something makes you uneasy, avoid the situation.

Important Contact Details:

International Dialing Code: +1246

International Dialing Prefix: 011

Victims of crime in Barbados should contact the following phone numbers for assistance:

POLICE: The local equivalent to the “911” emergency line in Barbados is 211

FIRE DEPARTMENT: 311

AMBULANCE: 511

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Note: Police, ambulance or fire department response may be unreliable in some parts of the country.

TRAVEL & ROAD SAFETY

- The standard infrastructure in Barbados is rated as moderate.
- The road infrastructure in the island's main cities and towns are adequate. However, this becomes limited outside the country's major urban center.
- Electricity infrastructure in Barbados is generally good; however, sporadic power outages and voltage fluctuations are known to sporadically occur across the island.
- Barbados has a well-developed telecommunications sector.

RECOMMENDED TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

- No use of ATMs after dark.
- No traveling alone after dark.

HEALTH

Medical facilities in Barbados are limited. Health infrastructure across the island comprises several public hospitals and a number of smaller private clinics, known locally as polyclinics. Public hospitals offer specialized care in a range of areas, while private clinics only have facilities to treat minor medical conditions.

- Tap water in Barbados is generally safe to drink.
- The limestone present on the island acts as a filter for underground water and it is therefore generally considered safe to swim in rivers and small lakes.
- Unpasteurized milk should be boiled before consumption, or powdered or tinned milk should be used as an alternative.
- Food from street vendors should be avoided as this carries a higher risk of causing infection. Some types of fish may contain poisonous bio toxins even when cooked and clients are advised to buy fish from reputable dealers and restaurants only.

The following vaccinations are recommended or required if travelling to Barbados:

- Hepatitis A (recommended)
- Hepatitis B (recommended)
- Typhoid (recommended)
- Yellow Fever (recommended for travelers arriving from a country where yellow fever is present)

It is also important to ensure that routine vaccinations are up to date for diseases including influenza, chickenpox (or varicella), polio, measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus.

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Significant Diseases –

- **Dengue Fever** – An infectious disease carried by mosquitoes that can be a problem in rural areas.
- **Leptospirosis** – A bacterial disease transmitted to humans through exposure to water contaminated by the urine of infected animals. The disease is endemic to rural areas of the island.
- **Diarrhea** – A common issue among travelers and can be caused by bacteria, viruses or parasites. One of the most common causes is a bacterium known as E. coli, which is transmitted by ingesting contaminated food and liquids.

HOSPITALS – Barbados

FMH Emergency Medical Clinic

3rd Avenue
Belleville, St. Michael
Tel: 228-6121 / 228-6120

Sandy Crest Medical Clinic

Sunset Crest, St. James
Tel: 246-419-4911

US EMBASSY – CONSULATE LOCATIONS

The US Embassy Barbados

Wilkey Business Park
Wilkey
Bridgetown
Tel: +1 246 227 4399
Fax: +1 246 431 0179
Email: consularbridge2@state.gov

USF INTERNATIONAL HOTLINE

USF 24/7 EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE LINE: 813-317-5815

AXA Assistance 24/7 EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE LINE: 1-877-577-9504 / +1-203-399-5130 (Call collect from abroad)

ASSIST ID #: GLMN 04983932. <http://www.culturalinsurance.com/resources/>

* Information derived from CIA World Fact Book, US Department of State, OSAC, and Travel Guard. This travel overview summarizes some of the most important concerns; however, it does not negate the need for detailed trip planning.