

The Best Caribbean destinations for 2023

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The Best of the Caribbean

The Caribbean continues to be a coveted region among travelers from all over the globe as it boasts an ideal year-round climate which perfectly complements its world-class beaches and crystal clear waters as well as its award-winning hotels and resorts, friendly locals and rich history and culture. For many, a true getaway entails escaping to an island surrounded by nothing but the sea and the Caribbean provides plentiful opportunities to do just that while making lasting memories. What's more, Americans can explore this part of the world via a slew of convenient direct flights and without jumping multiple time zones or breaking the bank on accommodations and excursions.

Experiencing this special part of the world starts with having a plan though. Here's a helpful guide for travelers eyeing a getaway to the Caribbean in 2023.

Best Destinations

Travelers have dozens of spectacular destinations to choose from when eyeing a trip to the Caribbean but there are some destinations that stand out. The 2022 Travvy Awards, which are voted on by the industry's top travel advisors and designed to recognize the best of the best in the travel world each year, highlighted Jamaica, Puerto Rico and Aruba as the region's top destinations right now. All three of these islands check all of the necessary boxes. Visitors will find simple flight options and U.S. visitors to Puerto Rico won't even require a passport.

Additionally, these countries or territories are home to some of the region's top resort properties, including Sandals Royal Caribbean in Montego Bay, Jamaica, which offers guests access to a private offshore island. Beautiful beaches, tourist-friendly infrastructure and a vast array of activities and excursions ranging from kitesurfing and jet skiing to hiking and coffee tours help set these destinations apart.

Best Attractions

When it comes to the many tourist attractions in the Caribbean, Jamaica's mesmerizing Dunn's River Falls and Puerto Rico's charming Old San Juan neighborhood are not to be missed. The U.S. Virgin Islands' scenic Virgin Islands National Park is another gem highlighted by gorgeous bays, forests and wildlife.

In the Turks and Caicos Islands, Grace Bay Beach has long been considered one of the world's most beautiful stretches of shoreline. Finally, for those who really want to venture off of the grid and reconnect with nature, El Yunque National Forest in Puerto Rico is a sensational setting featuring photogenic waterfalls and

fascinating ancient petroglyphs.

Must See 2023 Events

The Caribbean comes to life for a plethora of can't-miss events every year, including vibrant Carnival celebrations, music festivals, sporting events and food competitions and conventions. Some of the notable Carnival festivities will be held in Guadeloupe (January and February), Trinidad and Tobago (February), Jamaica (April), Saint Lucia (July) and Grenada (August). Meanwhile, Jamaica's Reggae Sumfest is another reason to travel in July, as is Barbados' Crop Over Festival in August and the annual Pirates Fest in the Cayman Islands, which kicks off in mid-October.

June's St. Kitts Music Festival is another captivating event visitors will want to experience. The Saint Lucia Jazz & Arts Festival held in May is also an exceptional event and yet another reason to explore this epic eastern Caribbean island nation in 2023.

Best Places for Families

Families visiting the Caribbean in 2023 will have lots of awesome destinations to choose from. Locales ideal for visitors of all ages include the Bahamas and the Dominican Republic, more specifically Nassau and Punta Cana. Accommodations like the adrenaline-pumping Atlantis Paradise Island and kid-friendly Nickelodeon Hotels & Resorts Punta Cana are the perfect basecamp for families. Other family-friendly places include Jamaica, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

When it comes to Puerto Rico and the USVI, American families won't have to worry about any added headaches associated with securing passports. The Turks and Caicos Islands are another gem for families, who will feel right at home at the Travvy Award-winning all-inclusive Beaches Turks and Caicos.

Best Places for Couples

Few regions of the world ooze romance quite like the Caribbean does but nonetheless there are some places that stand out for visiting couples, including Saint Lucia and the Dominican Republic. The former's unrivaled Jade Mountain resort might just be the most romantic place on earth while the accessible adults-only, all-inclusive Sanctuary Cap Cana is another flawless setting for visiting couples regardless of whether they're looking to grow their relationship, tie the knot or simply celebrate their love.

Best Places for Group Travel

Groups visiting the Caribbean may consider targeting destinations boasting both accessibility and a diverse range of attractions to appease each and every guest. Fortunately, the Caribbean isn't short on these types of places and destinations like Aruba, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica and Puerto Rico are excellent examples. Not only are they easy to get to from the U.S. but groups of all sizes will be met with comfortable and wide-ranging accommodations as well as a variety of different excursion opportunities if and when they want to venture off property.

Best Places for Solo Travel

Solo travelers looking to experience a good time in the Caribbean have many options but for those with safety top of mind, destinations such as Anguilla, Aruba and Guadeloupe stand out as they each offer an ideal blend of quintessential Caribbean landscape and energy as well as opportunities to explore and adventure at your own

pace. Tourist-friendly places like the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico also can't be overlooked as individuals visiting these island settings by themselves are certain to make new friends, many of which are visiting as well.

Best Foodie Destinations

Foodies can't go wrong in the Caribbean as this part of the world is home to a proud cooking culture, award-winning and creative chefs and some of the freshest and best seafood around. Saint Lucia is arguably the top island for delectable cuisine highlighting vast flavors but there's so much to taste throughout this region, like the lively jerk chicken of Jamaica and the French-inspired bold flavors of Martinique cuisine. The diversity of influences throughout the Caribbean is showcased through its food and that all but guarantees travelers will be met with multiple pleasant surprises during their journey.

Best Places for Adventure Travel

There's no shortage of adventure awaiting visitors to the Caribbean this year, from eye-popping coral reefs off the coast of Belize to the aforementioned El Yunque National Forest in Puerto Rico. Visitors can also go cliff jumping in Jamaica, hike through the Virgin Islands and interact with stingrays in the Cayman Islands. The islands of Saint Lucia and Nevis are also ideal destinations for adventure seekers in search of pristine nature. Plus, there's a reason Dominica has been nicknamed the Nature Island as its 115-mile-long Waitukubuli National Trail will both test and reward ambitious hikers.

Best Places for Sports Enthusiasts

Depending on where your passions lie, the Caribbean offers a handful of exciting destinations for sports lovers, including marquee college basketball tournaments in places like the Bahamas and U.S. Virgin Islands. Soccer, baseball and cricket are other popular sports played throughout this region. The Dominican Republic Professional Baseball League annually showcases future Major League Baseball stars and few sports are as beloved in the West Indies as cricket. Here, visitors can cheer on "The Windies," which have won the ICC Cricket World Cup twice since 1975.

Unique to the Caribbean

While many travelers often associate the same things with the Caribbean such as gorgeous beaches, great weather and a laid-back vibe, the wide range of cultural influences truly separate this region from other parts of the world. No two islands are the same and each can be experienced through its food, music, sports, nature and history. Even those visitors who are content to remain on-site at their hotel or resort for the duration of their trip will certainly experience the Caribbean's uniqueness through its friendly people.

Safety Index Check-In

The Caribbean continues to be among the safest regions in the world, with a plethora of islands receiving Level 1 travel advisories (exercise normal precautions) from the U.S. State Department, including Anguilla; Antigua and Barbuda; Aruba; Barbados; Bonaire; British Virgin Islands; Curacao; Dominica; Grenada; Montserrat; Saba; St. Kitts and Nevis; Saint Lucia; St. Vincent and the Grenadines; Sint Maarten and the Cayman Islands. Meanwhile, other popular destinations, such as the Bahamas, Cuba, Dominican Republic, and Turks and Caicos are listed at Level 2 (exercise increased caution) due to crime that rarely impacts tourists visiting resort areas.

