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MARELLA CRUISES

Explore Ashore

Castries, St Lucia

Port information

Currency	The official currency is Eastern Caribbean Dollar XCD , however US Dollars are widely accepted.	Language	French Creole is spoken by the locals but English is widely spoken and understood.
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Getting around

Distance to town centre	If we dock at Queen Elizabeth II it's a short walk into town. If we dock in Pointe Seraphine there's a water taxi, which is around \$5 US return.	Main highlights	Diamond Falls Botanical Gardens , Three attractions in one: lovely, well-maintained and well-labelled gardens; an impressive waterfall; and historic mineral baths fed by sulphur springs that you can bathe in. Rainforest walking , One thing you should definitely do on St Lucia is walk through the island's 19,000 acres of rainforest. You'll come across ferns as big as a house, wild orchids, perhaps waterfalls, and may hear (and could be very fortunate to spot) the endangered St Lucia parrot. Trails range from easy 90-minute strolls to challenging day-long hikes. The Millet trail is the best for birdwatching, though it is best done very early in the morning. The spacious Derek Walcott Square is the central point of Castries, named for the town's famed son who won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1992. The town's only architectural points of interest are to be found on this square. On the outskirts to the south of Castries, accessed via Bridge Street, stands the hill of Morne Fortune , 'Hill of Good Luck', where some violent battles were waged between the French and British in the 18th and 19th centuries in their quest to control the island. A visit to Castries' fruit and vegetable market is highly recommended on a Saturday morning, when it is at its most colourful and lively, and dozens of stalls are piled high with bananas, plantains, coconuts, limes, breadfruit, soursop, dasheene and much else besides. In the tourist-oriented craft market alongside (open Monday to Saturday), cinnamon sticks, nutmeg balls, sticks of cocoa (for making hot chocolate) and bags of spices make affordable, easily portable souvenirs to take home. For any more going ashore information pass by the Destination Services Centre located on Deck 5. We're always happy to help make the most of your time ashore.
Getting About	Normal taxis are more reliable than the water taxis or why not follow the waterfront for a nice 25 minute stroll.		
Taxis	Trained and licensed taxi operators are sometimes available from the port depending on our docking location. Prices are regulated for common destinations and the island tours by taxi. It's strongly recommended, however to agree on a specific fee and the currency you wish to pay in before getting in the taxi.		
Main highlights	The main city of St Lucia is worth a stop, with its best feature being the soaring Morne Fortune (2795ft), which serves as Castrie's scenic backdrop. While most of the city's old wooden buildings have been destroyed by fire at one time or another, an eye-catching selection, with ornate fretwork and galleries protruding over the pavement, remain on Brazil Street on the south side of the square. It's worth looking inside the 20th-century cathedral, on the square's eastern side: its walls are coated in brilliantly coloured murals painted by the island's leading artist, Dunstan St Omer. Mamiku Gardens , Set back from the east coast, this 12-acre botanical garden is a scenic and tranquil spot. Paths meander through the grounds to a ruined cottage and a stream tumbling down a wooded hillside. You're provided with a booklet to identify the 300 numbered trees and plants. Marigot Bay , Fringed with mangroves and surrounded by lush, steep hills, this deep natural harbour is remarkably beautiful, and fancy yachts often moor in the so-called hurricane hole. Lap it all up from the Capella Marigot Bay hotel, or head over to the palm-dotted sand bar that pokes out in to the bay on the go-on-demand little ferry from the marina below.		

Essential information

Tourist information	St. Lucia Tourist Information Office can be found in Sureline Building on Vide Boutielle.	Shopping	Some of the best shopping can be done right outside the pier, in the red-roofed Spanish style duty-free shops of Pointe Seraphine.
Internet access	Wi-Fi is available in the cruise terminal and in the town area.	IMPORTANT: As with all tourist destinations, please keep a close eye on personal valuables.	
Nearest beaches	One of the major draws for tourists to St. Lucia are the beaches and there are several near Castries. Virgie Beach , Malabar Beach and La Toc Beach are all within easy reach. The cost per taxi is approx. \$25.00 US one way. Most popular is Rodney Bay is around 20 minutes in a taxi.		There are also many duty free shops within the town itself. Shopping in downtown Castries is found on William Peter Boulevard and Bridge Street. Bone china, jewellery and crystal are the best options in St. Lucia.

Your Destination Services team would like to wish you an enjoyable day in St Lucia

There can be last minute changes. Please check *Cruise News* for the latest information before you go ashore.