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Population

Approx: 36,000 - French St Martin. Approx: 41,000 - Dutch St Maarten

Currency

Euro, €1 = 100 cents. Netherlands Antilles florin or guilder, 1 guilder = 100 cents. Dollars, \$1 = 100 cents

Opening hours

Shops are generally open 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. with a lunch break of around two hours. Banks are generally open on the French side Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., and on the Dutch side Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Some banks are open on Saturday 8:30 a.m. to noon.

Internet

www.st-martin.org
www.st-maarten.com
www.visitstmarteen.com

Newspapers

The Daily Herald is the main daily.
Other publications include Le Pelican
St Martins Week magazine
St Maarten Nature Magazine
St Maarten Events

Emergency numbers

911

Tourist information

Office du Tourisme St Martin/St Maarten
Address: Route de Sandy Ground, Marigot 97150, St Martin
Tel: +590 590 875721 or +590 590 875643
Email: info@st-martin.org or info@st-maarten.com

ST MARTIN

PUBLISHING DATE: **2011-10-31** | COUNTRY CODE: **SX**

Contents: The Island, Do & See, Beach Life, Eating, Cafes, Bars & Nightlife, Shopping, Sleeping, Essential Information, Maps

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Sun-drenched and palm-fringed, the island of St Martin/St Maarten is one of the most beautiful in the eastern Caribbean. It also has a dual personality: the north of the island is a little outpost of France, and the south side oozes the warmth of the Dutch. The border between them is basically non-existent, and visitors are free to enjoy everything from watersports and cultural festivals to shopping.

THE ISLAND



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Hundreds of islands form the Caribbean, but none are quite so enigmatic as St Martin and St Maarten. The island is one of the smallest to ever be divided, with residents of both the French and Dutch sides working together in mutual friendship and respect. Culturally St Martin and St Maarten, which caught the eye of the Dutch and the French after Columbus discovered the island in the 15th century, are quite different. St Martin has some of the most chic fashion shops and restaurants in the Caribbean, and beaches elegant enough to rival those in Cannes and St Tropez, while St Maarten has the serious work and play ethics of its fellow countrymen. For the visitor, this means there's lots to do, such as dining out on French à la carte cuisine and wines one day and sample fresh pastries inspired by the finest Dutch chefs the next, or enjoying activities like horseback riding, watersports and exploring breathtaking beaches and scenery.

DO & SEE



© maza34

Fort St. Louis

Fort St Louis is the largest historical monument in St Martin, and is named after King Louis XVI of France, who built a settlement to protect Marigot during his

reign. It is located at Marigot Bay.

Address: Marigot Bay

Philipsburg

The capital of St Maarten, Philipsburg, is tucked in the southeastern part of the island and is the centre for shopping and the local cultural scene.

Address: Philipsburg

Marigot

The capital of St Martin, Marigot has rows of patisseries and smart bistros that sit side by side with luxury fashion houses. Buildings are reminiscent of Colonial architecture.

Address: Marigot

The Butterfly Farm

The Butterfly Farm in St Martin has rare varieties of butterfly like the Tree Nymph and Blue Morpho, which can be seen flying in a tropical landscape within a mesh compound.

Address: Le Galion Beach Road
Phone: +590 590 873121
Internet: www.thebutterflyfarm.com

Orleans

Orleans is a little piece of 17th century France. A quiet fishing village also known as the French Quarter, it is located on the east coast and is believed to be where the French first settled.

Address: Orleans

BEACH LIFE

Ranging from long stretches of sand fringed by palm trees to coves and dunes that attract families and sun worshippers, the beaches on St Martin and St Maarten are white, sandy and inviting. The largest are on the French side, and many are naturist, while St Maarten

has many pretty coves.

Maho Beach

Along the coast from Fort Amsterdam in St Maarten, Maho Beach is surrounded by rocks, which make for some fun exploration.

Address: Maho Beach
More Info: Near Fort Amsterdam hire car or taxi

Simpson Beach

Those who love secluded beaches will love Simpson Beach. Shaped like a half moon and covered with the finest white sand, the beach is reached from Simsonbaai, St Maarten.

Address: Simsonbaai
More Info: Hire car or taxi

Orient Beach

Orient Beach, known as the St Tropez of the Caribbean, is a sweep of sandy beach where rows of coloured sunloungers signal an affinity with tourism.

Address: Orient Beach
More Info: Near Orleans hire car or taxi

EATING



© krisspao

Visitors to St Martin and St Maarten will be spoilt for choice when it comes to eating out. For lovers of French cuisine, there's probably nowhere else in the Caribbean – if not the world – where you can dine on à la carte and French inspired gourmet food at such reasonably inexpensive prices – and usually al fresco or on the beach, too. Fine wine lists are usually in

plentiful supply to accompany the food. Eating out is not so much a luxury as a way of life and can take hours. It is always a sociable event.

Most restaurants have a good menu of meat, fresh fish and shellfish dishes, and look out for the wonderful aromatic Creole and Caribbean cuisine. Other popular cooking styles include Mexican, Indonesian, American and Italian. For diners looking for a quick snack, there are plenty of beach bars which have almost non-stop barbecues going with spicy chicken and fish dishes cooked with traditional Caribbean recipes. The aroma alone captivates the senses.

Antoine Restaurant

A waterfront restaurant serving traditional French cuisine with a strong fish influence. Known for its Lobster Thermidor.

Address: 119 Front Street, Philipsburg
Phone: +599 542 2964
Internet: www.antoinerestaurant.com

Temptation

A nouveau Caribbean restaurant in the Dutch lowlands, with an expansive menu of gourmet style cuisine and wines.

Address: Cupecoy
Phone: +599 545 2254
Internet: www.rareandtemptation.com/EN/temptation
More Info: The Lowlands

L'Escargot

The colourful Creole style building tempts diners inside to a menu of fine seafood cuisine complemented by a French wine list.

Address: 96 Front Street, Philipsburg
Phone: +599 542 2483
Internet: www.lescargotrestaurant.com

Restorante Laguna

Decorated to a style reminiscent of Italian architecture and decor, this restaurant serves fine Italian cuisine, including authentic pasta dishes with sauces, all

prepared and cooked using ingredients imported from Italy.

Address: 102 Airport Road, Simpson Bay
Phone: +599 545 2011

Citrus at Cupecoy

Elegant surroundings provide the setting for a menu inspired by French à la carte with a strong fish presence. A good wine list is offered.

Address: 130 Lowlands, Cupecoy.
Phone: +599 545 4334

CAFES



© kkanouse

Throughout St Martin and St Maarten there are cafés and informal restaurants to enjoy snacks and beverages, while most of the busier beaches have their own cafés, usually offering good, local fresh produce.

Bikini Beach Cafe

Café serving fresh snacks and beverages right on the beach.

Address: Orient Beach, St Martin
Phone: +590 590 874325

Coco Beach Café

Serves fresh snack food and beverages throughout the day.

Address: Esmeralda Resort, Orient bay, St Martin
Phone: +590 590 873462

Joes Grill & Ribs

Informal restaurant serving snacks and meals of ribs, beefburgers and kebabs straight from the grill.

Address: Simpson Bay, St Maarten
Phone: +599 557 9954

Top Carrot

Informal café/restaurant with a terrace complete with palms and shrubs, serving international cuisine.

Address: Simpson Bay Road, St Maarten
Phone: +599 544 3381

Cafe de Paris is a welcoming cafe/restaurant in the Marina, boasting a varied menu full to the brim with mouth wateringly delicious food. The staff is helpful and pleasant and the desserts are out of this world.

Address: Marina Port la Royale, Marigot
Phone: +590 590 87 55 81

BARS & NIGHTLIFE



© krisspao

Nightlife in St Martin and St Maarten tends to mean long, cool cocktails on the terrace before dinner, followed by relaxing meals of French and Caribbean inspired cuisine. Although, visitors often head for the casinos and beach bars for a livelier evening of music and local drinks. The island has 12 casinos – all on the Dutch side.

8 Ball Pool Room & Bar

Bar offering a chance for all the family to learn pool in a fun atmosphere. All day breakfast and meals served.

Address: Sister Modesta Road, Simpson Bay, St Maarten
Phone: +599 545 5624

The Gizmo Overlounge

A new, modern nightclub with a resident DJ playing the latest sounds, often accompanied by bongo drums. The Gizmo has one of the biggest bar areas around.

Address: Maho Beach Resort, St Maarten
Phone: +599 557 1995

Sint Rose Café

An arcade in the centre of Philipsburg open throughout the day and into the evening on selected nights.

Address: Front Street, Philipsburg
Phone: +599 542 5101

Diamond Casino

A casino in the heart of the St Maarten town for anyone who loves a flutter.

Address: Front Street, St Maarten
Phone: +599 543 2583
Internet: www.diamondcasinosxm.com

Bamboo Bernies

A popular Tiki garden, Bamboo Bernies serves more than 30 exotic cocktails, including a lethal concoction called Shark Bite, which can be enjoyed during evenings looking out over the Caribbean. It also has a sushi bar.

Address: The Caravanserai Resort, St Maarten
Phone: +599 545 3622
Internet: www.bamboobernies.net

Kontiki Bar

Long days and evenings can be spent at the bar sipping cocktails and relaxing to music on the beach. The aroma from a grill often entices.

Address: Orient Bay, St Martin
Phone: +590 590 874327

Cabana Beach Bar and Restaurant

The Cabana is a lively venue with local musicians providing the entertainment for dancing until dawn.

Address: Sunterra Resort, Royal Palm Beach, Simpson Bay, St Maarten
Phone: +599 544 3737
Internet: www.cabanabeachsxm.com

SHOPPING

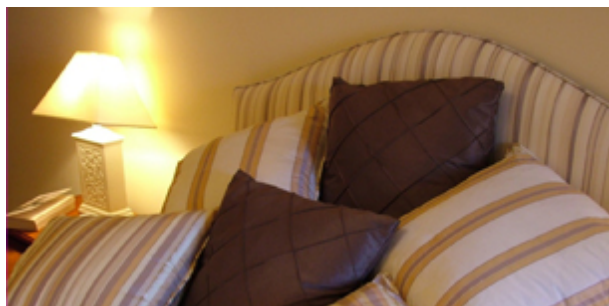


© benny_lin

St Martin and St Maarten are a shopper's paradise, especially for high couture fashion from French and Italian houses, gold and gems, luxury electronic items from the Far East, leather goods such as handbags and cases, watches, fragrances from the world's top perfumery companies, fine porcelain and crystal, and specialised crafts such as Chinese and Caribbean goods. It's all duty-free shopping, too!

Shopping in St Maarten centres around Front Street in Philipsburg, close to where cruise ships arrive. Passengers from ships touring the Caribbean are drawn to the shops, especially at the point where they disembark. In St Martin, shopping tends to be focussed on Marigot, where numerous chic shops and boutiques, and the air-conditioned waterfront West Indies shopping mall prove a temptation for shoppers. Markets hold a fascination for visitors, too, especially if looking for local crafts and produce. At The Marigot Market for instance, visitors rub shoulders with residents as they purchase tropical fruits and spices, freshly caught fish and crafts. It is a great way to experience the informality of the St Martin and St Maarten and people-watch.

SLEEPING



© ccreations

St Martin and St Maarten are popular destinations for affluent holiday makers and, as such, have seen many elegant hotels built. They range from town centre hotels to those overlooking the crystal clear waters and beaches.

Alamanda Resort

A 42-room hotel situated next to the beach at Orient Bay. Activities include watersports and fine dining.

Address: Baie Orientale, St Martin
Phone: +590 590 528740
Internet: www.alamanda-resort.com

Esplanade Hotel

A night in this architectural hotel located in the fishing village of Grand Case will be one to remember.

Address: Grand Case, St Martin
Phone: +590 590 870655
Internet: www.lesplanade.com

Beach Plaza Hotel

Walking distance from Marigot town centre and right on the ocean beach, this 4-star hotel offers the chance to watch the sunrise on its waterside terrace.

Address: Baie de Marigot, St Martin
Phone: +590 590 878700
Internet: www.hotelbeachplazasxm.com

Colombus Hotel

Located right on the beach at Dawn Beach with views out over the marina, this hotel is a place to relax and enjoy some fine food.

Address: Oyster Pond, St Martin
Phone: +590 590 874252
Internet: www.colombus-hotel.com

Hotel Love

Hotel Love is a boutique hotel right by the beach, offering clean rooms in a hip environment. There is also a restaurant and bar with an impressive tapas menu.

Address: 140, boulevard de Grand Case

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION



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Exchange Office

There are more fun things to do on your holiday than look for exchange offices or ATMs. Exchange your currency before you leave and get time to do things that you really want. At Forex Bank you can always buy foreign currency free of charge, at hours that suits you. For more info about Forex Bank visit our website or click:

<http://www.forex.se/sv/Om-FOREX/Bankbutiker/>

Airport

St Martin and St Maarten are served by the Princess Juliana International Airport in the south near Simpson Bay, with small planes only arriving at L'Esperance airport in the north.

Cars can be hired from the airport, although taxis take visitors anywhere on the island. Approximate fares from Princess Juliana International Airport are to Marigot €10, Grand Case €16, Nettle Bay €12 and Orient Bay €20.

Phone: +599 545 2060
Internet: www.pjiae.com

Public Transport

Hiring a car is the best way to get around. Motorcycles and mopeds are also available for hire, or visitors can hop on jitneys – the usual mode of transport for islanders, which is an inexpensive way to explore the island. You can hail a jitney and they will have signs as to where they are heading.

Taxi

Taxis can be hired at Princess Juliana International Airport and at all major hotels. They have no meters, but drivers must follow official rates for travel throughout the island. Rates rise 25 percent after 10 p.m. and 50 percent after midnight.

Phone: +599 545 4317

Post

Post collections and delivery times vary, but are always displayed at post offices.

Pharmacy

Pharmacies are located throughout the island. Tel: +599 542 2222 for emergency information.

Dentist

Dentists are located throughout the island. Tel: +599 542 2222 for emergency information.

Telephone

When calling from abroad, the country code for French St Martin is +590 590 followed by the local number which is six digits long.

The country code for Dutch St Maarten is +599 5 followed by local number which is five digits long.

Calls between the two countries are international.

From St Martin to St Maarten use the prefix +599 54 followed by the fixed phone number or +599 55 or +599 5 followed by the cellular number.

Calling from St Maarten to St Martin use the prefix +590 590 followed by the fixed phone number or +590 690 followed by the cellular number.

Phone cards, which must be used for all public phones, are prepaid and bought at the post office and some stores in downtown Marigot.

Electricity

220 volts (50 Hz) in St. Martin, and at 110 volts (60 Hz) in St. Maarten.

Tourist Traps

Visitors need to buy a phone card if planning to use public telephone boxes, which must be prepaid. They can be bought from post offices or some stores in

Marigot.

When out exploring, keep well away from the Manchionneel tree because it's extremely poisonous and should not be eaten or its caustic sap exposed to the skin. It tends to grow alongside beaches and has deep green leaves and little fruit, which look rather like green apples. Contact a physician or a pharmacist immediately if eaten or contact with the skin.



Atlantic Ocean

Caribbean Sea

