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## 40 REASONS TO VISIT BARBADOS!

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*Two of the most magnificent Baobab Tree's with the widest tree trunks in the Caribbean can be found in Barbados. The largest can be seen at Queen's Park in Bridgetown. It takes 15 adults joining with outstretched arms to cover the circumference of this massive tree. The other can be found on Warren's Road in St. Michael. This tree is believed to have been brought from Guinea, Africa around 1738 making it over 250 years old.*

*Morgan Lewis Mill is one of only two intact and restored sugar mills in the Caribbean. The Morgan Lewis Mill includes an exhibit of the equipment used to produce sugar at a time when the industry was run by wind power generated from mills such as this one.*

*Harrison's Cave, a magnificent crystallized limestone cavern, is said to be one of the wonders of the world. Its pure clear water and flowing streams have helped to create stalactites and stalagmites which promulgate the cave. Visitors will be amazed by nature's mastery as they journey through this living cave.*

*The Nidhe Israel Synagogue and Museum, built in 1654 was one of the two temples built in the Western Hemisphere.*

*St. Nicholas Abbey & Drax Hall, built in the 1650's, there are only three remaining Jacobean Mansions left in the Western hemisphere and these two can be found in Barbados.*

*Barbados was the only place visited outside of the United States by President George Washington, and his experiences may have changed the course of history. It marked a turning point in the young man's life. A stay in Barbados was prescribed as a possible cure for his ill brother Lawrence, whom he accompanied. In 2007, the plantation house that George and Lawrence rented was restored and is now a museum open to the public. Named George Washington House, it commemorates George Washington's stay and shows what he encountered in—and learned from —18<sup>th</sup> century Barbados.*

*Originally a harbor, the Crane Beach is considered by many to be one of the island's most beautiful beaches. Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous rated it as "One of the ten best beaches in the world."*

*The Flower Forest, which spans 50 acres, was originally cultivated as a botanical garden; however, high levels of rainfall long since caused its trees to outgrow the original confines. Today it is a genuine rain forest. The site is also home to a conservatory garden, containing a wide collection of tropical plants, 50% of which have medicinal value; 25 varieties of palm trees; and is home to some of the largest palms on the island.*

*Oistin's Fish Fry is not to be missed. This local gem, typifies the casual, relaxed spirit of the rum shop. It is best on Friday evenings!*

*The Atlantis*, an air-conditioned submarine allows the whole family to see the wonders that Barbados offers below the sea, even if you don't like to get wet! Passengers are taken by boat to the submarine, which is moored about half a mile off the west coast of the island.

*Swim with the turtles*, visitors can get up close and personal when they swim and snorkel alongside hawksbill sea turtles during a Tiarni Luxury Catamaran cruise.

*Barbados has the world's rarest collection of 17<sup>th</sup> century English iron cannons.* Currently, more than 400 guns are included in this National Ordnance Collection.

*St. John's Parish Church (Anglican)* is one of the major tourist attractions of the island because it is over 150 years old; because of the spectacular views from two different angles; and, because Ferdinand Paleologus, direct descendant of the last Byzantine Emperor, Constantine the Great, is buried there.

*St. James Parish Church (Anglican)*, its front and south entrances are over 300 years old; its bell, cast in 1669, predates the famous American Liberty Bell by 54 years.

*National Heroes Square*, is a tribute to the heroes of Bajan society. Until April 1999 it was called Trafalgar Square, and the statue of Lord Nelson was erected there in 1813. Nelson had sailed to Barbados in 1805, only months before he died in the battle of Trafalgar.

*Queens Park*, a sanctuary in the midst of a bustling city. The two-storey house in the park was once the home of the commander of British troops stationed in the West Indies. It was built in 1786 and it now houses a theatre and art gallery. In the playground there is a massive Baobab tree, which is 18 meters in circumference, and probably came from Africa during the days of slavery.

*Cricket at Kensington Oval*, cricket is one of the leading sports played in Barbados. The largest cricket ground in Barbados is the Kensington Oval, Pickwick Gap, St. Michael. This ground is approximately a 15-minute walk from the Cruise Terminal.

*Pelican Village*, just a five-minute walk from the Cruise Terminal Pelican Craft Center is dedicated to the arts and crafts of Barbados comprised of 25 retail shops, a gallery and annex, a wine bar and bistro, a restaurant and an artist wall. The Pelican Workshops are where visitors can see firsthand the creativity of our craftsmen including pottery, woodcarving, basketry and straw work, fine art, glass blowing, weaving, moulded figure-making, sewing and cigar making. The Center is also the home of the Pelican Dooflicky, a festive carnival event replete with pageantry and culture, staged weekly during the tourist season.

*Chattel House Village*, outside the main entrance to the cruise terminal is a village made up of Barbados' historic chattel houses. The small, brightly painted houses are now filled with artists and small business entrepreneurs who sell tee shirts and handicrafts to cruise passengers. The unique village also includes two restaurants, perfect for lunch, or that late afternoon snack on your way back to the ship.

*Bridgetown*, the island's capital, is said to have been founded in 1628 when 64 settlers first arrived to claim 10,000 acres of land. Some of Bridgetown's first streets survive today and bear their original names, notably High Street, Palmetto Street, Swan Street, James Street, Reed Street, Tudor Street and White's Alley. The best time to head into Bridgetown is around 9:00am before the midday heat and after the morning rush hour traffic. You can spend the morning shopping, enjoy a lunch in town and still have the afternoon free to relax on the beach.

*Only Zagat rated island*, whether you crave traditional Bajan fare or inventive cuisine, you'll find it at one of the island's many restaurants, each surveyed and rated by Zagat. Since 1979, this esteemed dining guide has been rating restaurants worldwide, based on the unbiased reviews of locals and visitors who contribute opinions on everything from food and service to decor and cost. The Zagat Survey now counts Barbados among its roster of notable destinations-making it the first and only Caribbean island with its own Zagat Survey guide.

*The Run Barbados Series* takes place on the first Sunday in December and includes a full marathon, half-marathon, 10k run, 5k run and toddlers' walk. Now in its 23rd year, it is a weekend-long sporting event accredited by the International Association of Marathons and is surrounded by much entertainment and festivities.

*Festival Cricket*, taking place all year long, various Cricket Festivals are populated by players from all over the world, with Barbados representing the home of West Indies cricket. Festivals include the highly-anticipated Sir Garfield Sobers International Schools Tournament, ladies tournaments, youth tournaments, Universities tournaments, Masters tournaments, police tournaments, blind cricketers tournaments and of course the feather in the cap of the Caribbean cricket calendar, the Test Match Festival.

*Schools Festival*, the Sir Garfield Sobers Schools International Tournament is a 17-year-long tradition that exposes school children to the best of Barbados cricket. Taking place in July, the festival is by invitation of Sir Garfield (Sir Gary) only and affords the boys two weeks of cricket as well as a chance to explore their country, its people and its culture.

*Festival Football*, the football season culminates with the Barbados International Masters Football Festival held on the Whitsuntide weekend in early June. The tournament has grown continually over the past few years and has invited teams from all over the Caribbean, Europe and America. Although a few of the matches take place at Dover on Friday, most of the action centers around the Wanderers Club at Daryll's Road.

*Celtic Festival*, lasting for two weeks around the end of May, Barbados plays host to a number of visiting Celtic dancers, musicians and singers as well as many rugby exchanges, golf tournaments and a humorous Caribbean take on the famous Highland Games. The true heart of the festival is the rugby match. Matches take place around the Garrison on Saturday and the winners take part in the Highland Games the following day.

*Gold Cup Festival*, in late February and early March, the Gold Cup Festival annually attracts some of the most exciting names on the Caribbean horseracing circuit. This thoroughbred horse race and one-day event is now surrounded by a wealth of social and cultural activities. Racing at the Garrison usually takes place on Saturday with a 1:00 pm start. Other highly publicized and well-attended races include the Barbados Triple Crown, the Pinnacle Feeds Midsummer Creole Classic, the United Insurance Derby and the Diamonds International 2-Year-Old Challenge Series.

*Polo Open*, the Barbados Open is an important date on the polo calendar and interest in this event continues to grow. Smaller traditional competitions are continuing to fill key spots in the Bajan polo season as well. One new series recently added to the season was the Colombian Emeralds Barbados Open that matched six teams led by Bajan polo celebrities.

*Field Hockey Festival*, the Banks Hockey Festival has a 19-year history, lasts for a week and includes men's, ladies', mixed and men's veterans competitive streams. Matches throughout the week are at fields all over the island but the first and final games take place at the famous cricket pitch of Kensington Oval.

*Rally Carnival*, Barbados is home to some serious car aficionados and the motorcar rally is one of the most eagerly anticipated festivals on the island. Rally car racers love to entertain on the course and impressive cornering on the tight roads frequently has spectators holding their collective breath. The award presentation takes place at the Boatyard, a popular club in the midst of the beach party circuit. Fans and drivers alike toast the day's entertainment far into the next day.

*The Waterman Festival*, the Waterman Festival lasts for three weekends around February and celebrates surfing, windsurfing and kite surfing with an exciting series of competitive events. Activities take place all over the island with most events composed of invited professionals, but amateurs and touring professionals also have the opportunity to participate. Hot social events are the surfer buffet and the sunset "deAction Beach Party" at Talma's Irie Man Action Shop in Silver Rock.

*Horse Racing*, the racetrack at the Garrison Savannah has been the home of horse racing since the colonial days of 1845, and the Barbados Turf Club—which regulates and promotes horse racing in Barbados—was established in 1905. The latter organizes three seasons of racing per year that run from January to April, May to August and October to December. Racing at the Garrison is not only for the avid race fan, it can also be a fun day of family entertainment. The serious punter has several options for watching the races: from the Grandstand, Field Stand, Sir John Chandler Stand—or if you are lucky enough to get an invitation, from one of the luxurious Corporate Boxes overlooking the famous paddock bend. And those who'd rather forgo the stands can enjoy an informal picnic atmosphere and lounge in the shade of the tall trees surrounding the track. There's also a park for children to enjoy between races.

*Polo*, the game of polo in Barbados has transformed itself from being a local pastime enjoyed by a few enthusiasts to being an important and well-respected event on international sporting and social calendars. Founded in 1884, the Barbados Polo Club plays host each season to a variety of visiting international teams and visitors are always made to feel very welcome. First-time spectators at a match are often amazed by the speed and power of the horses and the courage and skill of the players; not to be played by the faint-hearted; polo is an enthralling spectator sport. The island has several world-class venues with excellent corporate facilities, ideal for hosting the season's tournaments that generally run from December to April. Recently, the facilities on the island have been extended to include three new spectacular playing fields, at Waterhall, Clifton and Lion Castle. These three new fields not only relieve some of the pressure on the ground at Holders, which has been used to its fullest capacity over the last 39 years, but also provides superb alternative facilities for visiting and local players.

*Harrison's Cave*, the only cave of its kind in the Caribbean and unexplored until 1970, this leading attraction is claimed by experts to be among the wonders of the world. Offering public tours with a special tram, the cave houses limestone caverns carved by the steady forces of nature, yielding a network of underground streams. A vast cavern boasts underground streams and a 40-foot waterfall plunging into a lagoon. Coloured lighting accents arches and prehistoric formations.

*Orchid World*, is set amongst the sugar cane fields of the parish of St. George and it is a fantastic stop. Admire thousands of orchids in bloom as you wind your way along the paths. The vivid colors are truly unbelievable and photos never do this garden justice.

*Stargazing*, take to the heavens at the Harry Bayley Observatory, home of the Barbados Astronomical Society. Open Fridays 8:30pm to 11:30pm.

*Welchman Hall Gully* once a mile-long limestone cave, the gully is now flanked by cliffs and awesome formations, boasting some 200 species of tropical plants. This oasis recalls a wilderness as it appeared to the island's first settlers. The Gully is now home to the Aerial Trek adventure.