

SAINT LUCIA TRAVEL ESSENTIALS



WEATHER

Tropical, with daytime temperatures typically in the mid to high 20s celsius year round. June to November is the wetter time of year.

CURRENCY

The official currency is the Eastern Caribbean dollar, which is linked to the US dollar at US\$1 to ECS\$2.70. You can also pay for most items with US dollars, and hotel rates are quoted in US dollars. Cashpoints issue EC dollars.

ELECTRICITY

Generally 220 volts, 50 cycles AC, with most sockets taking UK standard 3-pin square plugs. Adaptors are available at many hotels.

DIAL CODE

The international dialling code for Saint Lucia is (00) 1 758.

GETTING AROUND

Taxis

These are widely available. Point-to-point fares are fixed, but it's still advisable to establish the

cost of the journey before setting off. Taxis can also be booked for island tours. In the Rodney Bay and Soufriere areas, water taxis will take you along the coast to nearby beaches.

Car hire

Vehicles can be rented from the airports and hotels, and booked in advance through travel agents and car rental offices. You will need a temporary driving permit, purchasable from the rental company. A four-wheel drive vehicle is a good idea.

Buses

A network of minibuses provides public transport to most corners of the island, and fares are cheap.

Ferries

Those who prefer to do much of their travelling on the water will find that Saint Lucia is well serviced by ferries, making it easy to include Saint Lucia in any island hopping tour. Several ferry lines connect Saint Lucia with Martinique, Dominica and Guadeloupe.

Visit www.express-des-iles.com or Channel Shuttles Inc (tel 758/451-8161) which operates a daily ferry service between Saint Lucia and Martinique.

Helicopters

Spectacular aerial tours of Saint Lucia are possible, and helicopter transfers between Hewanorra and George FL Charles airports reduce the travel time between the south and north of the island. For more information, visit www.stluciahelicopters.com.

TAXES AND SERVICE CHARGES

On hotel and restaurant bills, a government tax and a service charge are applicable. These charges are often not included in hotels' published rates and on restaurant menus. However, the prices on labels in shops are what you pay.