

Grenada

Isn't that the place that the US invaded in the '80s? Didn't it get munched by a hurricane a few years ago? Grenada is used to bad press. But like a fighter on the ropes, it's come out swinging and has reinvented itself as the next big thing.

The one big island and two small ones plonked in the sea in the southeast corner of the Caribbean are undiscovered and rarely visited. For the smallest independent country in the western hemisphere, this place has a lot to offer.

Grenada Island is elliptically shaped and alive with a rainforested interior. Underrated beaches line the coast and sublime scuba diving is on offer just below the surface. St George's, the largest town, has one of the most picturesque waterfronts in all of the Caribbean. Stone buildings, forts from a forgotten time and houses of all colors meld into a hilly buffet of urban aesthetics. Friendly, welcoming locals go about their lives and are happy to include you in the process.

Carriacou is a step back in time. With a cadence a notch or two slower than Grenada Island, this petite isle is a relaxed affair where endearing locals and an eclectic village life is added to sublime scenery. And if that sounds too busy, head over to Petit Martinique where even less happens – and the locals like it that way.

Yes, Grenada did get invaded by Uncle Sam, but that's old news. And yes, a hurricane obliterated much of the island in 2004, but they've rebuilt. Life moves on, and so has Grenada.

FAST FACTS

- **Area** 132 sq miles
- **Capital** St George's
- **Country Code** ☎ 473
- **Departure tax** EC\$50, EC\$25 for children aged five to 12
- **Famous for** Nutmeg and the 1983 US invasion
- **Language** English
- **Money** Eastern Caribbean dollar (EC\$); EC\$1 = US\$0.38 = €0.24 = UK£0.19
- **Official name** Grenada
- **People** Grenadians
- **Phrase** Dat tune is off da hook! (For a song that you like)
- **Population** 90,000
- **Visa** Not required; see p723



HIGHLIGHTS

- **Carriacou** (p716) Grenada's little sister has all the aesthetics of the big island – beautiful beaches, quiet streets and friendly locals
- **St George's** (p707) With a waterfront that's second to none, this buzzing city is one of the liveliest in the region
- **Windward** (p718) Watch the local boat-builders knock together a seaworthy vessel before your eyes
- **Petit Martinique** (p719) See how many laps you can do walking around this microparadise
- **Morne Rouge Bay** (p712) Make the effort to get out to this beach, where the sand is soft and the water is super blue – it's one of Grenada's best

ITINERARIES

- **Three Days** Spend your time on the island of Grenada. Sample the beach at Grand Anse then compare it to Morne Rouge Bay the next day. Head into St George's for the day, check out the churches and forts, and wander through the eclectic streets.
- **One Week** After completing the three-day itinerary, cruise over to Carriacou and settle into a few days of exploration. Be sure to head over to Windward, up to the hospital hill and down to Paradise Beach.
- **The Trifecta** Go where few are bold enough to attempt and split your time between all three islands in the country. Start in Grenada, checking out the highlights from the three-day itinerary, then cruise over to Carriacou to see how the beaches measure up. Jump on the *Osprey* and head over to Petit Martinique to complete the triple play. Ten days will give you enough time to do it all.

CLIMATE & WHEN TO GO

Although the climate is tropical and hot, it's tempered by the northeast trade winds. In St George's, the average daily high temperature in January is 84°F (29°C) and the average low is 75°F (24°C). In July the average daily high temperature is 86°F (30°C) and the low is 77°F (25°C).

During the rainy season – from June to November – rain falls an average of 22 days per month in St George's. In the driest

months, January to April, there's measurable rainfall for 12 days a month; this is the best time to visit. Hurricane season runs from June to November.

HISTORY Colonial Competition

In 1498 Christopher Columbus became the first European to sight the island of Grenada, during his third voyage to the New World. It wasn't until 1609, however, that English tobacco planters attempted to settle on the island and, within a year, most were killed by Caribs. Some 40 years later, the French 'purchased' the island from the Caribs for a few hatchets, some glass beads and two bottles of brandy. Not all Caribs were pleased with the land deal and skirmishes continued until French troops chased the last of them to Sauteurs Bay at the northern end of the island. Rather than submitting to the colonists, the remaining Caribs – men, women and children – jumped to their deaths off the rugged coastal cliffs.

French planters established crops that provided indigo, tobacco, coffee, cocoa and sugar, and imported thousands of African slaves to tend to the fields. Grenada remained under French control until 1762, when Britain first recaptured the island. Over the next two decades, colonial control of the land shifted back and forth between Britain and France – until 1783, when the French ceded Grenada to the British under the Treaty of Paris.

Animosity between the new British colonists and the remaining French settlers persisted after the Treaty of Paris. In 1795, a group of French Catholics, encouraged by the French Revolution and supported by comrades in Martinique, armed themselves for rebellion. Led by Julien Fedon, an African-French planter from Grenada's central moun-

HOW MUCH?

- **Ferry from Grenada to Carriacou** EC\$80
- **Carib beer at a local pub** EC\$5
- **Single tank dive** US\$55
- **Taxi from the airport to St George's**
Daytime EC\$30, nighttime EC\$40
- **Bus from one side of Grenada to the other** EC\$6

tains, they attacked the British at Grenville. They captured the British governor and executed him along with other hostages. Fedon's guerrillas, who controlled much of the island for more than a year, were finally overcome by the British navy. Fedon was never captured. It's likely he escaped to Martinique, or drowned attempting to get there, though some islanders believe he lived out his days hiding in Grenada's mountainous jungles.

In 1877 Grenada became a crown colony, and in 1967 it converted to an associated state within the British Commonwealth. Grenada, Carriacou and Petit Martinique adopted a constitution in 1973 and gained collective independence on February 7, 1974.

Independence

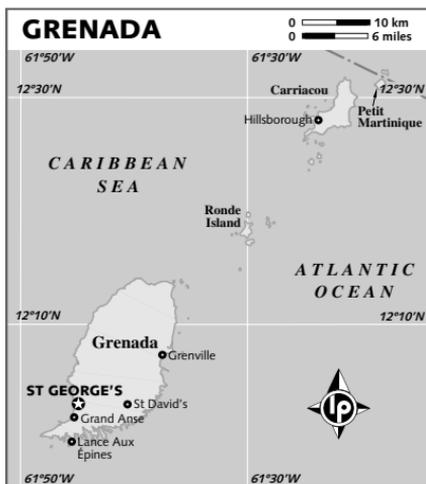
One-time trade unionist Eric Gairy rose to prominence after organizing a successful labor strike in 1950, and was a leading voice in both the independence and labor movements. Gairy established ties with the British government and monarchy and was groomed to become the island's first prime minister when Britain relinquished some of its Caribbean colonies. After independence Gairy's Grenada United Labour Party (GULP) swept to power.

Gairy made early political missteps, such as using his first opportunity to speak in front of the UN to plead for more research into UFOs and the Bermuda Triangle. There were rumors of corruption, of ties with the notorious General Augusto Pinochet of Chile and of the use of a group of thugs (called the Mongoose Gang) to intimidate and eliminate adversaries. Power went to Gairy's head and this former labor leader was soon referring to his political opposition as 'sweaty men in the streets.'

Revolutions, Coups & Invasions

Before dawn on March 13, 1979, while Gairy was overseas, a band of armed rebels supported by the opposition New Jewel Movement (NJM) party led a bloodless coup. Maurice Bishop, a young, charismatic, London-trained lawyer and head of the NJM, became prime minister of the new People's Revolutionary Government (PRG) regime.

As the head of a Communist movement in the backyard of the US, Bishop tried to walk a very fine line. He had ties with Cuba and the USSR, but attempted to preserve private enterprise in Grenada. A schism developed between Bishop and hardliners in the govern-



ment who felt that he was incompetent and was stonewalling the advance of true communism. The ministers voted that Bishop should share power with the hardline mastermind (and Bishop's childhood friend) Bernard Coard. Bishop refused and was placed under house arrest. While Coard had the support of the majority of the government and the military, Bishop had support of the vast majority of the public.

On October 19, 1983, thousands of supporters spontaneously freed Bishop from house arrest and marched with him and other sympathetic government ministers to Fort George. The army was unmovable by the display and Bishop, his pregnant girlfriend (Minister of Education Jacqueline Creft) and several of his followers were taken prisoner and executed by a firing squad in the courtyard. To this day, it is unclear if the order came directly from Coard – although most believe that it did.

Six days later, 12,000 US marines, along with a few soldiers from half a dozen Caribbean countries, were on Grenadian shores. Seventy Cubans, 42 Americans and 170 Grenadians were killed in the fighting. Most of the US forces withdrew in December 1983, although a joint Caribbean force and 300 US support troops remained on the island for two more years. The US sunk millions of dollars into establishing a new court system to try Coard and 16 of his closest collaborators.

Fourteen people, including Coard and his wife, were sentenced to death for the

murder of Bishop. Although the death sentences were commuted to life in prison in 1991, the most recent appeal for full clemency and release from prison was rejected in February 2005.

The New Era

After the US invasion (or intervention), elections were reinstated in December 1985, and Herbert Blaize, with his New National Party, won handily. Many PRG members reinvented themselves politically and found jobs in the new administration. From 1989 to 1995, different political parties jockeyed for control and a few short-term leaders came and went, but all within the democratic process.

In 1995 Dr Keith Mitchell became prime minister and has steadily held the position until the time of this book's printing. Although Mitchell had success building the tourism economy, his term has been plagued by accusations of corruption and financial misdealing. He has also been criticized for a weak initial response to the devastation of 2004's Hurricane Ivan.

THE CULTURE

Grenadian culture is an eclectic mix of British, French, African and East and West Indian influences. A growing number of expatriates from Canada, the UK and, to a lesser extent, the United States are making Grenada home.

Almost 60% of all Grenadians are Roman Catholic. There are also Anglicans, Seventh Day Adventists, Methodists, Christian Scientists, Presbyterians, Scots Kirk, Baptists, Baha'i and an increasing number of Jehovah's Witnesses. Because of the pervasive influence of Christian ideals, Sunday is a pretty quiet day around the islands – you can expect most things to be closed.

The largely religious population makes for a fairly conservative culture – at least at a surface level. Once you scratch beneath the squeaky-clean veneer, you can see a population that enjoys having a few drinks and kicking up its heels.

As one local put it, 'It isn't little old Grenada anymore.' Education is on the rise and the population is quite learned. The political awareness of the general populace is high – probably because of their brush with political infamy in the '80s. Likewise, the impact of Hurricane Ivan in 2004 was a sobering

experience for islanders – forcing the nation culturally to grow up.

The people themselves are friendly and welcoming. They are proud of their tiny nation and take care of it – there is less rubbish in the ditches and a sense of civic responsibility is palpable.

The sport of cricket is followed with near fanaticism in Grenada. In 2007, the cricket world cup was staged in part here and the mighty West Indies side is a national treasure.

ARTS

Like much of the Caribbean, reggae dominates the airwaves. Steel bands can be heard playing live gigs most nights – though they mostly play for rum-punch-sloshed tourists. Dancehall is the flavor for the younger generation and is heard mostly at maximum volume filtering from speeding buses, nightclub dance floors and the best kitchens on the island.

ENVIRONMENT

The Land

Grenada Island, Carriacou and Petit Martinique comprise a total land area of 133 sq miles. Grenada Island, at 121 sq miles, measures 12 miles wide by 21 miles long. The island is volcanic, though part of the northern end is coral limestone. Grenada's rainy interior is rugged, thickly forested and dissected by valleys and streams. The island rises to 2757ft at Mt St Catherine, an extinct volcano in the northern interior. Grenada's indented southern coastline has jutting peninsulas, deep bays and small nearshore islands, making it a favorite haunt for yachters.

Carriacou, at just under 5 sq miles, is the largest of the Grenadine islands that lie between Grenada and St Vincent. Most of the others are uninhabited pinnacles or sandbars in the ocean.

Wildlife

The wildlife in Grenada can be divided into two very distinct categories – those that live on land and creatures that call the ocean home. The variance in altitude on Grenada Island makes for a wide range of distinct ecosystems. The lush rainforests that cover the hilly interior are home to an interesting menagerie of wild creatures. Mona Monkeys introduced from Africa a century ago are curious and social and often drop in for a visit.

A PHOENIX RISES

On September 7, 2004, Hurricane Ivan made landfall on the island of Grenada. Unaccustomed to hurricanes, it had been nearly 50 years since the last major storm lashed the island. The perception of Grenada being below the hurricane belt was shattered all in one tragic night. Ivan struck with force, leaving behind a wave of destruction that saw 90% of buildings damaged or destroyed. The economy was ruined, towns were decimated and staple crops like nutmeg and cocoa were obliterated.

The following months and years were a dark chapter for this small Caribbean nation. Massive support came from its island neighbors helping rebuild what was destroyed. Crops were re-sewn and hotels rebuilt. But within that period of rebirth, instead of simply rebuilding what was once there, opportunity was found.

Hotels, schools, churches and restaurants have all been built bigger and better. New buildings have incorporated sustainable practices and larger floor plans. Structures that were long overdue to be upgraded were leveled and the new buildings are a massive improvement to what was once there.

As this book goes to print, the final touches of the big rebuild will be finishing up. There is a whole host of new and upgraded facilities for the traveler to experience. The reconstruction is almost complete and, for the first time in a long time, Grenada, new and improved, is open for business!

Armadillo, opossum and mongoose also call the island home.

Birds, both migratory and resident, nest in the tall trees and soar on the thermal updrafts. Tiny hummingbirds search for nectar while pelican, brown booby, osprey hawk, endangered hook-billed kite and hooded tanager fly further afield.

In the ocean, sea turtles cruise the grassy shoals and hunt for food and come ashore to nest and lay their eggs. These endangered grandfathers of the sea are sometimes slaughtered for their shells – be sure to avoid buying anything made from turtle shell and preserve these beautiful animals.

A whole range of reef fish populate the surrounding waters. Snorkelers and divers have the pleasure of swimming amongst barracuda, butterfly fish and the odd nurse shark.

FOOD & DRINK

Eating in Grenada is an eclectic pleasure – the native West Indian fare is tasty, and a good number of restaurants cater to foreign tastes, with Italian, Mexican and French food readily available.

The oddly named oil down is the national dish and consists of vegetables and meat boiled down and reduced into a thick stew – coconut milk is added to give it a distinctive flavor. Other West Indian favorites are regularly on offer. Callaloo (a dish that resembles boiled spinach), beans and rice and

fresh fish are mealtime regulars. *Lambi*, as it is known in Grenada, or conch, as it is called elsewhere in the Caribbean, can also be found on menus; however, travelers should keep in mind that the overfishing of *lambi* is a big issue, and the sustainability of this seafood is in doubt. Think before you eat and consider alternatives. Budget eateries and lunch counters will always have rotis on offer. They consist of curried vegetables, potatoes and meat rolled up into a tortilla – delicious and cheap.

Tap water is generally safe to drink on Grenada, and bottled water is readily available if you'd prefer.

Carib, the local beer, is a refreshing, lightly colored brew and is the perfect addition to a hot day. Following the Caribbean tradition, rum is the national spirit. Rum punch flows like water from many a drinking hall, where you can sip the potent cocktails and wonder just how much punch there actually is in the mix.

Grenada is known as the spice island and supplies a staggering percentage of the world's nutmeg. The lively spice is a national treasure and even features on the country's flag. The spice plantations are big money earners and the prospect of buying cheap spices isn't lost on most visitors. Spice vendors are at nearly every corner hawking gift baskets filled with the local flavors.

Getting Around

BUS

Buses are a great way to get around the island; they are inexpensive and fun. These privately run minivans run a series of routes crisscrossing the island.

Although larger destinations are posted on the front of the bus, you may need to ask the conductor or driver which bus is best to get to smaller places outside town. There are stops along all the major routes, and you can flag down a bus pretty much anywhere.

The central terminal in St George's is the place to find more information and to catch a bus to anywhere. Fares in the greater St George's area and to Grande Anse are EC\$1.50. From St George's, fares are EC\$3 to La Sagesse, EC\$3.50 to Gouyave or Grand Etang, and EC\$5 to Grenville or Sauteurs. Depending on passengers, it takes about 45 minutes from St George's to Grenville and 1½ hours to Sauteurs.

Buses run frequently all day from around 7am. They start getting hard to catch after 6pm, so head home early enough so as not to get stuck. A few buses run on Sunday, though they are much more infrequent.

CAR

Grenada Island has numerous rental agencies. Local ones can offer you a better deal on prices, but the international chains have better insurance deals. Cars cost from around US\$45 a day; 4WDs US\$80. Optional Collision Damage Waiver (CDW) insurance, which limits your liability in the event of an accident, starts at an additional US\$12 per day.

Grenadian agencies:

Dollar (☎ 444-4786; Point Salines International Airport)

Gap Rentals (☎ 438-4098) They'll pick you up from the airport or hotel.

Indigo Car Rentals (☎ 439-3300; www.indigocarsgrenada.com) Offers free coolers for the car.

Sanvics 4x4 (☎ 444-4753; www.sanvics.com) Specializes in jeeps.

TAXI

Taxi fares are supposedly regulated by the government, although sometimes you have to negotiate a bit. From the airport to Grand Anse or Lance aux Épinés costs EC\$25; to St George's EC\$30. From central St George's it costs EC\$8 to other parts of the city, EC\$25 to Grand Anse or Morne Rouge and EC\$35 to Lance aux Épinés.

Elsewhere, taxis charge EC\$4 per mile up to 10 miles and EC\$3 per mile after that. The waiting charge is EC\$15 per hour. Taxis can be hired for a flat EC\$40-per-hour rate for sightseeing. An EC\$10 surcharge is added to fares between 6pm and 6am.

ST GEORGE'S

pop 30,500

The harbor of St George's is like something out of an old watercolor painting of a forgotten seaside village. Colonial buildings are mixed with bright Caribbean stalwarts. Churches are made of stone, and a towering fort overlooks the town. European in feel and distinctly Caribbean in its look, the inner harbor is one of the most aesthetic in the region.

Stroll along the narrow, steep streets looking in the pleasant shops and smelling the fresh seafood wafting from the dockside restaurants. Traffic negotiates the hilly laneways as the mish-mash of jumbled streets form a labyrinth of stone throughways.

Orientation

The focal point of town is the harborside road called the Carenage. Along the waterfront you'll find a few shops and restaurants. To get to the city center one must walk up and over the hill on Young or Lucas Sts, or cut through the narrow Sendel Tunnel on Monckton St (be sure to walk along the west side of the tunnel, where cars make room for walkers).

Further south from the Carenage, the road sweeps around an inlet called the Lagoon, on its way to the resorts at Grand Anse.

Information

BOOKSTORES

Sea Change Bookshop (☎ 440-3402; the Carenage) A good selection of popular titles, local authors and pulp.

INTERNET ACCESS

There is a free wireless hot spot in the Port Louis Marina.

Compu-Data (☎ 443-0505; St John's St; per hr EC\$6; ☎ 8am-7pm) Best price in town.

MEDICAL SERVICES

St George's General Hospital (☎ 440-2051; Fort George Point) The island's main medical facility.

MONEY

RBTT (☎ 440-3521; cnr Cross & Halifax Sts; ☎ 8am-3pm Mon-Thu, 8am-5pm Fri) Has a 24-hour ATM.

Scotiabank (☎ 440-3274; Halifax St; 🕒 8am-3pm Mon-Thu, to 5pm Fri) Has a 24-hour ATM.

POST

Main post office (☎ 440-2526; Lagoon Rd; 🕒 8am-3:30pm Mon-Fri)

TELEPHONE & FAX

Cable & Wireless (☎ 440-1000; www.candw.gd; the Carenage; 🕒 7:30am-6pm Mon-Fri, 7:30am-1pm Sat, 10am-noon Sun)

TOURIST INFORMATION

Grenada Tourist Board (☎ 440-6637; www.grenada.grenadines.com; 🕒 8am-4pm Mon-Fri) At the southern end of the Carenage.

TRAVEL AGENCIES

Astral Travel (☎ 440-5127; the Carenage; 🕒 8am-5pm Mon-Fri, to noon Sat) Astral's a switched-on travel agency with info and affiliation to all the relevant airlines and travel services.

Sights

GRENADA NATIONAL MUSEUM

This **museum** (cnr Young & Monckton Sts; adult/child EC\$5/2.50; 🕒 9am-4:30pm Mon-Fri) is in need of some love, but there is some decent information on the history of Grenada, colonial times and the US invasion.

FORTRESSES

Fort George (Church St; admission free; 🕒 6am-5pm), Grenada's oldest fort, was established by the French in 1705 and is the centerpiece of the St George's skyline. The police now use the interior for their headquarters but the public is allowed to wander amongst the stone structure and climb to the top of the walls to see the cannons and get easily the best view in town. Well worth the steep uphill walk.

Fort Frederick (admission US\$1; 🕒 8am-4pm), constructed by the French in 1779, was soon used – paradoxically – by the British to defend against the French. It now provides a striking panoramic view that includes Quarantine Point, Point Salines and Grover Island. You'll find it atop Richmond Hill, 1.25 miles east of St George's.

CHURCHES

The picturesque, 19th-century churches of downtown St George's were once high-lights of the skyline. In 2004 Hurricane Ivan changed all that. While these three magnifi-

cent structures still remain, all suffered heavy damage and lost their roofs. At the time of writing these churches were lagging behind in the rebuilding efforts; they're all in the early stages of being repaired and rebuilt.

Erected in 1825, **St George's Anglican Church** (Church St) features a four-sided clock tower that serves as the town timepiece. The roof is gone now and the brilliant white interior is open to the sky, but the clock remains.

The **Catholic Cathedral** (Church St) sits at the top of the hill and has a great vantage onto the town. Ivan all but gutted this landmark and at present efforts are underway to restore this cathedral to its former glory.

St Andrew's Presbyterian Church (Church St), immediately north of Fort George, fared worst of all in the hurricane. There isn't much left of the interior, and the shell of the place of worship is all that still sits intact – but once again, efforts to rebuild are happening.

Activities

Try **Green's Bike Shop** (☎ 435-1089; Tyrell St; rental per day EC\$40; 🕒 8am-4:30pm Mon-Fri, to 2pm Sat) for bike rental.

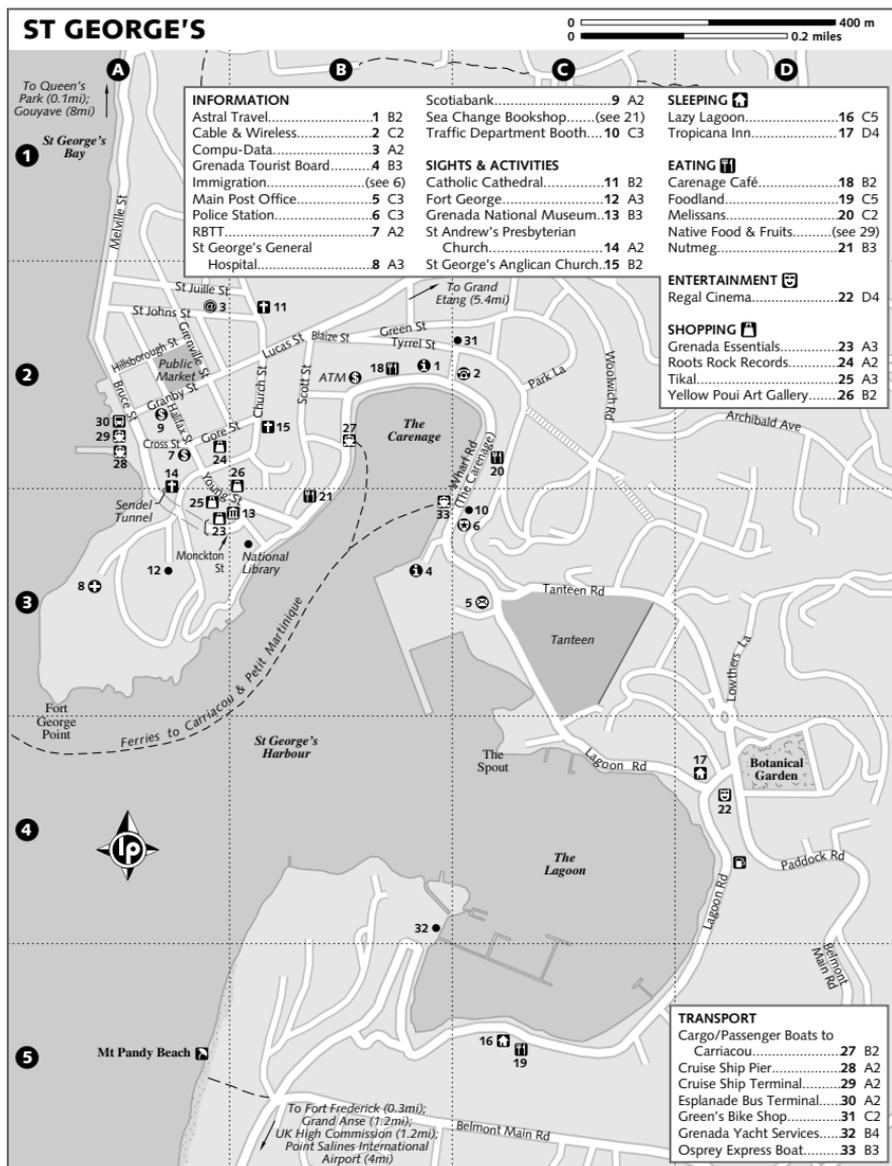
Sleeping

Lazy Lagoon (☎ 443-5209; lazylagoon@caribsurf.com; Lagoon Rd; s/d US\$42/59) Funky, cool and comfortable describes this budget hideaway. Tucked in amongst the outskirts of St George's, several colorful cottages dot the hill across from the marina. The rooms are bright and basic with a bed, bathroom and not much more. The bar is a fun place to be with a host of local regulars, travelers and a festive atmosphere. Recent renovations have upped the rooming capacity and ballooned the bar, all while retaining the intimate feel.

Tropicana Inn (☎ 440-1586; tropicana@caribsurf.com; Lagoon Rd; s/d/t US\$75/100/120; 🍷) Right on the main road, between town and the marina sits the Tropicana. The rooms are not overly large but are clean and have good amenities for the price. The road can be a bit noisy, but the balconies on the upper floors offer good views and the restaurant serves good local cuisine.

Eating

Melissans (☎ 449-1314; the Carenage; mains from EC\$8; 🕒 lunch & dinner) Vegetarians delight at this meat-free eatery. Pizzas, sandwiches and mixed plates all come recommended at this



low-maintenance shop. Tofu comes intertwined with the local classics making for a delightful and healthy fusion of West Indian flavors.

Native Food & Fruits (Esplanade Mall; soup EC\$10) This spot is located in the very nonlocal Esplanade Mall, but come lunchtime the counter is lined wide and deep with hun-

gry Grenadians. They come from all over town for the pumpkin and pig's tail soup and the fresh juices. The soup is great for the adventurous and the juices are tops in everyone's book.

our pick Victory Bar & Grill (☎ 435-7263; Port Louis Marina; mains from EC\$16; 🍷 lunch & dinner) Located at the yacht club, its unsurprisingly nautical

SCULPTURES OF THE SEA

Art galleries are all the same – white walls, wood floors, pretentious patrons. Well not this one. Sitting beneath the surface of the sea, in Molinière Bay (2 miles north of St George's) on the west coast is where you'll find this gallery. Life-size sculptures depicting a circle of women clasping hands, a man at a desk and a solitary mountain biker are amongst the collection. The artist, Jason Taylor, has created a garden of art that is a platform for sea life. As the pieces age, coral will grow on them, creatures will make there homes around them and they will become a part of the sea. To see the art you'll have to get in the water with one of the local scuba-diving companies – trust me, it's worth the effort.

theme permeates the establishment. Tables under sailcloth and fishing nets are filled with happy yachties eating fresh burgers, kebabs and lobster off the grill while taking in the view of the harbor. The atmosphere is fun, the parrots are annoyingly friendly and the food is great.

Ocean Grill Restaurant & Bar (☎ 440-9747; the Carenage; mains from EC\$25; ☺ breakfast, lunch & dinner) It serves mostly burgers and pasta at jetty level, looking into the harbor. The shady dining area is a refuge from the midday sun for a casual lunch of tasty food.

Carenage Café (☎ 440-8701; the Carenage; roti EC\$15, pizza EC\$35; ☺ breakfast, lunch & dinner) Right in the hub of the harbor action and often packed with tourists, don't let its popularity put you off. It's a good spot for a roti and a fine helping of shade. The decently sized patio is a great spot for people-watching and Carib consumption.

Nutmeg (☎ 440-2539; the Carenage; rotis EC\$7; mains from EC\$38; ☺ lunch & dinner) Those wanting to get above the hustle and bustle of the waterfront need look no further than Nutmeg. Popular with tourists and locals, the balcony-laden restaurant is a pleasant place to take in the town over a roti or a nice plate of seafood.

A well-stocked and well-maintained grocery store, **Foodland** (☎ 440-1991; Lagoon Rd; ☺ 7.30am-8pm Mon-Thu, to 10pm Fri & Sat) has an ample selection of local favorites and imported goodies.

Entertainment

Regal Cinema (☎ 440-2403; Paddock Rd; tickets EC\$10) For a quiet evening, check out the (mainly Hollywood) films at this small theatre.

Shopping

Yellow Poui Art Gallery (☎ 440-3001; Young St) This stunning commercial gallery features work from over 80 local artists. Beautiful water-

colors, oils and mixed media line the walls and beg to be taken home.

Tikal (☎ 440-2310; Young St) With a large and varied selection of crafts, prints, fabrics and ceramics, Tikal is a good one-stop shop when it comes to quality Grenadian-made gifts.

Grenada Essentials (☎ 435-5958; Monckton St) Shop with a guilt-free conscience – 100% of the profits go towards environmental projects like sea turtle protection and other worthy causes. This small shop has a good selection of locally produced jewelry, batik and other collectables.

Roots Rock Record Shop (☎ 440-8423; Gore St; CDs EC\$25-30; ☺ 7:30am-6pm Mon-Fri) Roll up the steps and check out this great, small, local record shop. Little surprise that reggae and dancehall are the tunes of choice. The owner is a real character who can help you navigate through the local music you've been hearing and help you take some of it home with you.

Getting Around

St George's is best (and most efficiently) explored on foot, although you can flag down any bus along Lagoon Rd to get you to the far end of town (EC\$2.50).

A taxi to/from the airport costs EC\$40 (EC\$50 at night) and takes around 20 or 30 minutes.

GRAND ANSE

pop 22,000

The tourist epicenter on the island is undoubtedly Grand Anse Beach. The flowing strip of beach is one of the best on the island and is justifiably popular. You can see why the decision was made back in the day that this was the place to plant some hotels. It's an odd sort of town, with no real center to speak of; it's best described as a strip of hotels along the beach. Most budgets are ac-

commodated for somewhere along the strip, with an emphasis on midrange and higher-end accommodations and eateries.

Information

Several banks and ATMs are spread out along the road through town. At the Spiceland Mall there is a grocery store, food court and a few shops.

Activities

Aquanauts Grenada (☎ 444-1126; www.aquanauts.grenada.com) offers all the usual dive shop services, from boats to gear to training. Open-water courses cost US\$460. There's also a branch at True Blue Bay.

Sleeping

Grenada Grand Beach Resort (☎ 444-4371; www.grenadagrands.com; r from US\$140; 🏠 📺 📺) Don't let the big exterior put you off; this enormous complex actually has a fairly intimate feel. The rooms are nothing to write home about, but the facilities are impressive. The 300ft-long, river-like pool is a big hit with kids, and the swim-up bar is a hit with the older kids. The staff are friendly and there seems to be every amenity you'd need onsite. There are often good deals to be had, as the number of rooms is huge.

Flamboyant Hotel (☎ 444-4247; www.flamboyant.com; r US\$145-550; 🏠 📺 📺) Up on the hill adjacent to Grand Anse Beach, the Flamboyant Hotel is a sprawling property that spans both sides of the road. There are great views of the sea and the rooms are pleasant if a bit uninspiring. After indulging in a complimentary kayak rental or snorkel there's a lively restaurant and bar onsite to keep you fueled up.

Coyaba Beach Resort (☎ 444-4129; www.coyaba.com; s/d US\$270/330; 🏠 📺 📺) Coyaba saw the silver lining in getting a good kicking from Hurricane Ivan in 2004. They've rebuilt and improved upon their good foundation, adding rooms and improving facilities. Set upon a great stretch of beach and priding itself on exceptional service the nice rooms nearly justify the price.

Mount Cinnamon (☎ 439-0000; www.mountcinnamongrenada.com; ste from US\$500; 🏠 📺 📺) Newly reinvented and hot off the press, Mount Cinnamon is a feast to the eyes. With a color palate best described as carib-technicolor the wildly energetic decor is confronting and fun. Safety orange refrigerators, hot-pink shag

carpet and purple walls all accent the beautifully appointed suites. It's choc-a-bloc with modern amenities, including wi-fi access, and some of the best views around. A steep uphill trek from the beach is the only downside to this exceptional property.

Eating

The town of Grand Anse is a bit of misnomer as it is more of a strip of hotels along the beach than a town. A whole host of eating options can be found along the strip, if you know where to look. Most hotels have restaurants and happily accept non-guests dropping in for a meal. If you're craving a quick bite, there is decent budget eating at the Spiceland Mall.

Southside Restaurant and Bar (☎ 444-1975; roti EC\$9; 🕒 8am-8pm) Also known as D Green Grocer, this small West Indian takeout place, on the main road by the roundabout, is recognizable by the large Carlsberg beer logos on the roof and front. It has one of the better boneless chicken rotis of any fast-food shop on the island.

La Boulangerie (mains from EC\$20; 🕒 lunch & dinner) Italian food sold under a French name mixed in with Caribbean flavors. Gorgeous pizzas and pastas that will bring you back for seconds – all popular with ex-pats, travelers and the odd local.

Carib Sushi (☎ 439-5640; mains from EC\$20; 🕒 lunch & dinner Mon-Sat) Local seafood is rolled into the mix at this casual sushi bar. Mix and mingle on the outdoor picnic tables before diving into tempura, sushi, sashimi and noodles.

Sapphire (☎ 439-3900; mains from EC\$45; 🕒 breakfast, lunch & dinner) A mix of French and Caribbean flavors is at work here. The twinkling lights of the outdoor dining area foster a romantic setting for an evening meal. Diners relaxing to the sounds of the sea and the fading light of day are treated to well-presented dishes that are gluttonously satisfying.

The biggest grocery store on the island, **Real Value Supermarket** (Spiceland Mall; 🕒 8am-9pm Mon-Thu, 8am-10pm Fri & Sat, 10am-7pm Sun) has everything you'd ever need to self-cater. Grab a snack, a cold drink or an ice cream on a hot day.

Entertainment

Owl (☎ 444-4247; Flamboyant Hotel) There's cricket on the TV, a sea breeze filtering in and a pool table to keep you busy. The Owl staff keep the party going into the wee hours with drink specials and other debaucherous means. It's

a popular hangout for a whole range of local folks. The cocktail list has more pages than the phone book, and the bar stools are hard to leave behind.

MORNE ROUGE BAY

pop 12,000

Though just down the way from Grande Anse beach the succulent sands of Morne Rouge Bay are in a wholly different league. This far superior stretch of beach is a shining example of the snow-white sand and crystal-clear blue water that the Caribbean is known for. Mercifully quiet and pristine, there are only a handful of buildings housing a couple of hotels and restaurants.

Sleeping & Eating

Gem Holiday Beach Resort (☎ 444-4224; www.gembeachreort.com; s/d US\$103/126; 🏠 📺 📶) Just up from the beach, this place is a real gem. Nothing too fancy, but all the basics you'd need. Tidy, friendly and a great budget option on one of the best beaches on the island.

our pick Laluna (☎ 439-0001; www.laluna.com; cottages from US\$730; 🏠 📺 📶) There's a simple elegance to these 16 Bahama-inspired cottages. Beautiful appointments and a penchant for the luxurious await the traveler lucky enough to have the means to enjoy such a well-heeled establishment. A secluded beach and a delightfully delicious restaurant are provided to keep you occupied. The property is secluded and slightly hard to find – just like paradise should be.

Sur La Mer Restaurant (☎ 444-2288; mains from EC\$30; 🍳 breakfast, lunch & dinner) No need to stray too far from the sand, this beachside restaurant will sort you out with a simple lunch or dinner. West Indian fare with a flare for seafood and an enticing bar with views of the lapping waves.

Entertainment

Fantasia 2001 (☎ 444-2288; 🕒 10pm-late Wed-Sat) Has a dance floor that resembles a roller rink or maybe a bull-fighting ring – depending on your perspective. Fun, safe and lively this is definitely the spot to groove with the locals and mix with other travelers into the wee hours.

POINT SALINES & TRUE BLUE BAY

pop 16,000

The area around Point Salines is dominated by Grenadian anomalies – the airport and St George's Medical School. The school, which

is populated by young Americans, is a sprawling and pleasant campus. Ronald Reagan cited the risk to the safety of students at this American-run facility as a justification of the 1983 invasion of Grenada. It feels like you could be on a campus anywhere in the States – perhaps that's the point.

True Blue Bay is a relaxed corner of the island with some nice high-end hotels, some good eateries and the yacht moorings.

Aquanauts Grenada (☎ 444-1126; www.aquanautsgrenada.com; True Blue Bay Resort) is the dive-shop juggernaut on the island. It has it all, from the boats to the gear to an army of staff. Open-water courses cost US\$460. There's also a branch at Grande Anse.

Hurricane Ivan gave **True Blue Bay Resort & Marina** (☎ 433-8783; www.truebluebay.com; True Blue Bay; r US\$210-515; 🏠 📺 📶) a good kicking, but it's come back with a vengeance, rebuilding to a new standard. Like a carpet of children's jelly-beans lining the hill, its multicolored huts pop off the green grass. Apartment units feature full kitchens and an adobe decorative scheme that is quite striking. The family-owned resort is an island favorite. Offers wi-fi access.

The best feature of **Point Salines Hotel** (☎ 444-4123; www.pointsalineshotel.com Point Salines; s/d US\$110/120; 🏠 📺 📶) is its proximity to the airport. The five-minute drive makes it appealing for those early-morning flights, but there are much better options around for an extended stay. The rooms are clean, small and overpriced, and there's wi-fi access.

Popular with expat students from the nearby medical school, **Bananas Restaurant & Bar** (☎ 439-4369; www.bananasgrenada.com; True Blue Rd; mains from EC\$30; 🕒 9am-late) is a good place to come and check out the doctors of tomorrow getting smashed and playing doctor with each other. The dance club out back is fun and the massive open-air patio is a good place to mingle. The food is a bit overpriced, but the drinks are cold and the atmosphere is hot.

Right around the corner from the med school, **Mocha Jumbly** (☎ 439-2227; True Blue Rd; mains from EC\$18; 🍳 breakfast, lunch & dinner) is a popular café for lunch. The tasty burgers and pizza bring the students in and the free wi-fi and subarctic air-con keeps 'em there.

LANCE AUX ÉPINES

pop 9100

Lance aux Épines (lance-a-peen) is the peninsula that forms the southernmost point

of Grenada. It's home to some of the nicer beaches on the island and some of the more-upmarket establishments. The marina is a pleasant place to explore, with members of the sailing set frequenting it and spicing up the atmosphere.

Information

There's a customs and immigration office at the full marina of **Spice Island Marine Services** (☎ 444-4257; www.spiceislandmarine.com; Prickly Bay).

Activities

If you're here for scuba, **ScubaTech** (☎ 439-4346; www.scubatech-grenada.com; Calabash Hotel) is well organized and delivers good wreck dives.

Sleeping

Lance aux Épinés Cottages (☎ 444-4565; www.laecottages.com; r US\$154-335; 🏠 🚿 🚰) You can't argue with the location. It's right on the beach, so your biggest worry is tracking sand into your cottage. Beautiful views are augmented by attractive rooms that come complete with kitchens and large living areas. Well set-up for families, the games room is a big hit with the kiddies.

Calabash Hotel (☎ 444-4334; www.calabashhotel.com; r from US\$570; 🏠 🚿 🚰) This is easily the nicest place to bed down for the night in the Lance aux Épinés area. The beautifully manicured grounds sit hand in hand with a standard of service that is second to none. With little touches, like having breakfast delivered to your room, and the ambience of swaying palms on the beach, the setting is ripe for relaxation. Offers wi-fi access.

Eating

Red Crab (☎ 444-4424; mains from EC\$22; 🍷 🕒 11am-2pm & 6-11pm Mon-Sat) The roadside patio isn't the most aesthetic place to dine on the island, but the outstanding food more than makes up for it. There's a great selection of seafood that's a good catch for those on a budget, and the service is impeccable too.

Prickly Bay Marina Pizzeria (☎ 439-5265; pizza from EC\$28 🍷 lunch & dinner) Pizzas that are world famous in Grenada are baked, sliced and munched dockside. Picnic tables, a pool table and a cozy seaside bar all add up to a very chilled mix of food and fun.

LA SAGESSE NATURE CENTRE

Sitting along a coconut-tree-lined bay with protected swimming and a network of hik-

ing trails, **La Sagesse Nature Centre** (☎ 444-6458; lsnature@caribsurf.com; tours US\$32) occupies the former estate of the late Lord Brownlow, a cousin of Queen Elizabeth II. His beachside estate house, built in 1968, has been turned into a small inn.

La Sagesse is about a 25-minute drive from St George's on the Eastern Main Rd. The entrance is opposite an old abandoned rum distillery. Buses bound for the province of St David can also drop you here (EC\$3.50).

The **manor house** (☎ 444-6458; www.lasagesse.com; manor r US\$195), at La Sagesse Nature Centre, features lots of character and history and has 12 airy rooms with double beds. There is also a modern building with five additional rooms and three suites. The beachside **restaurant** (🍷 breakfast, lunch & dinner) has fish sandwiches and burgers for EC\$20.

GRAND ETANG ROAD

The forested area that you encounter along Grand Etang Rd is the antithesis of the sand and surf on the coast. The mountainous center of the island is often awash with misty clouds, and looks like a lost primordial world. The hills are a tangle of rainforest brimming with life – including monkeys that often get a bit too friendly. A series of hiking trails snake through the wilderness sanctuary providing access for the ambitious into the fertile forest.

To get to the area, take River Rd or Sans Souci Rd out of St George's, and when you reach the Mt Gay traffic circle, take the road north. Alternatively, take bus 9 (EC\$5) from the main bus station in town and enjoy the views as the van winds its way along the twisting road.

Annandale Falls

An idyllic waterfall with a 30ft drop, Annandale Falls is surrounded by a grotto of lush vegetation. There's a pool beneath the falls where you can take a refreshing swim. Unfortunately, it can get packed with tourists when cruise ships are in port.

In the village of Constantine, located 3.5 miles northeast of St George's, turn left on the road that leads downhill immediately past the yellow Methodist church. After three-quarters of a mile you'll reach the **Annandale Falls visitors center** (admission free; 🍷 8am-4pm Mon-Fri). The falls are just a two-minute walk from the center.

THE SILVER LINING

'I think Hurricane Ivan was the best thing that ever happened to this island.' Not the statement you'd expect to hear from someone whose own hotel was nearly destroyed by the storm and whose grandmother's house was obliterated. But Grenada isn't a straightforward place, and Nigel Fleming isn't a straightforward sort of guy.

Nigel was born in Grenada, educated in Canada and returned to the island nine years ago to open a hotel. He runs the Lazy Lagoon Hotel (p708) in St George's. You can usually find him behind the bar, entertaining the regulars and locals alike.

Why do you describe it as the 'best thing' to happen to Grenada? Ivan did so much damage, and destroyed so many people's livelihoods.

It was cleansing for the island. It was devastating, but it took away a lot of shit and allowed people to use insurance and outside investment to improve the infrastructure of the island. People are more aware now of how vulnerable we are – people make it count now.

It must have been like going through a war?

Very much so. It was like a scene out of a war, devastation everywhere; it shook people up. Luckily there weren't a lot of deaths attributed to the hurricane. One thing that really changed was how people look at life. In Grenada people don't usually show emotion in public, but after the hurricane I saw couples walking down the street holding hands – it was such a big change.

So is it better or worse than before?

Much better. Things have been rebuilt bigger and better; there is more business opportunity. People got off their asses and fixed things and got on with life.

What about environmental issues like sustainability? Are people thinking about climate change in Grenada?

People here don't have a clue; it's not even on the radar. We have no recycling; all the plastic juice bottles just go straight into the landfill. Sometimes the government talks about making changes, but there is no action. They need to start to restrict the import of plastic bottles. All of our beer and soda comes in glass bottles – which get washed and re-used, but the plastic just goes straight to the landfill. There just isn't an awareness of these issues – not like overseas.

What is the impact of having the American Medical School on the island?

It's good for the economy; they put a lot of money into the pockets of locals. They rent houses and buy groceries, but they don't really mix with the local people. They just stick to themselves; they can't be bothered to explore the island. But the ones that do get a lot more out of their education – I can't imagine not wanting to explore this place.

Grand Etang National Park

Two and a half miles northeast of Constantine, after the road winds steeply up to an elevation of 1900ft, a roadside sign welcomes visitors to **Grand Etang National Park** (admission US\$2).

Half a mile past the road sign, the visitor center sits to the side of the road overlooking Grand Etang Lake – a crater lake that forms the centerpiece of the park. The **Grand Etang visitors center** (☎ 440-6160; 🕒 8:30am-4pm Mon-Fri, Sat & Sun if cruise ships are in) has a few displays explaining the local foliage, fauna and history. Outside the center there are a series of independent booths hawking souvenirs, spices and cold drinks.

The following are some of the hiking trails in the park:

Concord Falls Serious hikers branch off shortly before the end of the Mt Qua Qua Trail to pick up this five-hour trek (one

way from the visitors center) to Concord Falls. From the falls, you can walk another 1.5 miles to the village of Concord on the west coast and take a bus back to St George's.

Fedon's Camp A long, arduous hike that leads deep into the forested interior, to the site where Julien Fedon, a rebel French plantation owner, hid out after his 1795 rebellion (see p702).

Grand Etang Shoreline This 1½-hour loop walk around Grand Etang Lake is gentle, but it can get muddy and doesn't offer the same sort of views as the higher trails.

Morne La Baye This easy walk starts behind the visitors center and takes in a few viewpoints, passing native vegetation along the way.

Mt Qua Qua This is a moderately difficult three-hour round-trip hike that leads to the top of a ridge, offering some of the best views of the interior forest.

Seven Sisters Falls The hike to this series of seven waterfalls in the rainforest east of the Grand Etang Rd is considered the best hike in Grenada. The main track

starts from the tin shed used by the banana association, 1.25 miles north of the visitors center on the right side of the Grand Etang Rd. The hike takes only about two hours round-trip; a small fee is sometimes charged.

GRENVILLE

pop 15,600

For travelers who want to get beyond the gloss and prefabricated tourism of areas such as Grand Anse, all they need to do is take a trip to the other side of the island. Grenville is a bustling little town that sees little tourist traffic. The agricultural hub of the East Coast, this seaside community is a good insight into the daily lives of the average Grenadian. Two miles north of town is the old airport that used to serve as the main landing strip for the island. It's disused and derelict now, but you can take a look at a couple of rusting planes that are relics of the American invasion.

Grenville is fairly easy to get to by bus 9 (EC\$6, about 40 minutes) from St George's, along scenic Grand Etang Rd.

Eating

our pick Melting Pot (☎ lunch & dinner) Upstairs overlooking the waterfront and a traditional favorite, you're sure to meet up with the local crew here. Windies stalwarts like callaloo, beans and rice, and stewed fish are all made by the local ladies and served up deli style. Great food for an even better price.

Good Food (Convent Hill; meals EC\$7-12) The name, although not the most imaginative, really does sum it up. Good Food is a wonderful choice for trying local cuisine – chicken, beef or fish – and is a top spot to sample the Grenadian national dish, oil down. Which, for the uninitiated, is vegetables boiled down to a stew, with coconut milk added to give it a distinctive flavor. Chase your food down with one of the delicious fresh fruit juices.

Bains (☎ lunch & dinner; plates EC\$10) Follow the winding steps up to the roof and into the tiny dining room where the elevated platform dishes out commanding views of town. Pull up a chair and dig into a mixed plate of chicken, veggies and all the fixings for EC\$10. Drink up the views and kick back island style.

Shopping

Be sure to stop in at the **Culture Joint** (☎ 415-8838; St. Andrews) in the small village of St Andrews, just outside Grandville. PJ, the resident artist, works in his small shop, mak-

ing arts and crafts out of local materials. Cups and mugs, baskets and lampshades are all carved or woven from bamboo. There are some nice pieces all at good prices. PJ is also a great guy to talk to and get the scoop on the local scene.

NORTH OF GRENVILLE

The **River Antoine Rum Distillery** (☎ 442-7109; tours EC\$5; ☎ 8am-4pm Mon-Fri) has produced rum since 1785 and claims to have the oldest working water mill in the Caribbean. It is south of Lake Antoine and most easily accessed from Tivoli (bus EC\$5, 1½ to two hours).

Lake Antoine, a crater lake in an extinct volcano, is a mile south of River Sallee. This shallow crater lake is host to a large variety of wildlife. The lake's perimeter trail makes for a beautiful walk, and it's excellent for bird-watchers.

BATHWAYS BEACH & AROUND

From River Sallee, a road leads to Bathways Beach, a stretch of coral sands. At the north end, a rock shelf parallels the shoreline, creating a very long, 30ft-wide sheltered pool that's great for swimming.

Sandy Island is one of three small islands that sit off the coast of Bathways Beach. It is uninhabited and home to crystal-clear waters. There's also a beautiful beach on the leeward side that offers fine swimming and snorkeling. It's possible to arrange for a boat to take you from Sauteurs to Sandy Island; make inquiries with the fishermen on Sauteurs beach. Expect to pay about EC\$150 per boat, round-trip.

LEVERA BEACH

Backed by eroding sea cliffs, Levera Beach is a wild, beautiful sweep of sand. Just offshore is the high, pointed Sugar Loaf Island (also called Levera Island), while the Grenadine islands dot the horizon to the north. The beach, the mangrove swamp and the nearby pond have been incorporated into Grenada's national-park system and are an important waterfowl habitat and sea-turtle nesting site.

The road north from Bathways Beach to Levera Beach is usually passable in a vehicle, but it can be rough, so most visitors end up hiking. The walk from Bathways Beach takes about 30 minutes. Stick to the road, as sea cliffs and rough surf make it

impossible to walk along the coast between the two beaches.

SAUTEURS

pop 15,000

On the northern tip of the island, the town of Sauteurs is home to some fascinating local history. The literal English translation of Sauteurs is 'Jumpers'. This strange name stems from 1651 when the town was the scene of a rather grim incident. The local Carib families, in an effort to escape the advancing French army, elected to throw themselves off the 130ft-high cliffs that line the coast. Today, the cliffs are referred to as Caribs' Leap and the town itself is a fine example of local life – well off the tourist trail.

VICTORIA

pop 2640

The cliffside west coast road is an interesting journey – views of the sea are interspersed with the occasional falling rock. The cliffs above the road can play havoc with the road surface. Victoria is one of the larger towns on the coast. It has a few locally oriented amenities, including a nutmeg-processing plant. Buses to St George's cost EC\$3.50.

GOUYAVE

pop 14,700

Gouyave, between Victoria and Concord, is a supremely attractive fishing village with a warm small-town feel. It is well worth spending an afternoon or longer here, just walking around, relaxing, having a drink and taking in the ambience.

On the town's main road is a large **nutmeg-processing station** (admission US\$1; ☎ 8am-4pm Mon-Fri). A worker will take visitors on a tour through fragrant vats of curing nuts and various sorting operations for the admission fee, plus a small tip. Just south of the bridge, on the south side of Gouyave, a road leads inland 0.5 miles along the river to the **Dougaldston Estate**, where cocoa and spices are processed.

CONCORD FALLS

There are a couple of scenic waterfalls along the Concord River. The lowest, a picturesque 100ft cascade, can be viewed by driving to the end of Concord Mountain Rd, a side road leading 1.5 miles inland from the village of Concord. These falls are on private property and the owner charges US\$1 to visit them.

The half-mile trail to the upper falls begins at the end of the road. There have been some muggings in this area in the past, so it is recommended that you don't hike alone, and leave your valuables at your hotel.

CARRIACOU

pop 9000

The fact that most people don't realize that there are in fact *three* islands in the nation of Grenada is a fitting introduction to Carriacou (carry-a-cou). Like its minor island sibling, this humble isle is oft forgotten.

Where the island of Grenada can feel touristy and busy, you'll struggle to ever feel that way here. You won't find cruise ships, big resorts or tacky souvenir shops. This is West Indian life the way it was 50 years ago – quiet, laid back and relaxed. This beautiful little island is thankfully off the radar of most travelers, leaving its green hills and white beaches ripe for discovery.

The island itself is joy to experience with some tremendous hiking to be found and some hidden beaches that are destined to make your all time best of list.

Getting There & Away

AIR

To check on flights between Grenada Island and Carriacou, contact **SVG Air** (☎ 444-3549; www.svgair.com).

BOAT

See p724 for details of transport to/from Carriacou by boat.

Getting Around

TO/FROM THE AIRPORT

It is best to get to and from the airport by taxi. A ride from the airport to Hillsborough is EC\$15, while a trip to Tyrrel Bay or Bogles is EC\$20.

BUS

Buses (privately owned minivans) charge EC\$2.50 to go anywhere on the island, or EC\$1 if the distance is less than a mile. The two main routes run from Hillsborough – one south to Tyrrel Bay, the other north to Windward. Minibuses start at around 7am and stop at around sunset.

CAR

There are a few places to rent vehicles on Carriacou, with rates typically around US\$50 per day. **Quality Jeep Rental** (☎ 443-8307; joseph_grenada@yahoo.com; rental per day US\$40), in L'Esterre, southwest of the airport, has good prices. There is a gas station on Patterson St in Hillsborough.

TAXI

Some minibuses double as taxis, and usually you can count on a couple of them swinging by the airport when a flight comes in or by the pier when the boat arrives.

You can hire a taxi for a 2½-hour island tour, costing EC\$150 for up to five people, or you can tour just the northern half, which takes half as long and costs EC\$75.

HILLSBOROUGH

pop 5000

The gentle pace of Carriacou is reflected in the sedate nature of its largest town, Hillsborough. With only a couple of streets loosely packed with uninspired architecture, there is little to actually see or do here. Having said that, the quiet streets and welcoming nature of the local population leave an endearing impression, despite the fact there is little to be done other than hang out.

The town is centered around the lively pier area where most of the action takes place. The beach adjacent is nothing spectacular, but is a pleasant place to kick back.

Information

Ade's Dream Guest House (☎ 443-7317; adesdea@caribsurf.com; Main St; per hr EC\$10) Reasonably fast internet connection, friendly folks and a nice spot.

Cable & Wireless (☎ 443-7000; Patterson St; ☎ 7:30am-6pm Mon-Fri, to 1pm Sat) Free wi-fi if you have your own computer and are happy to pull up a chair in the waiting area.

National Commercial Bank (☎ 443-7289; Main St) Has a 24-hour ATM.

Post office (☎ 443-6014; Main St; ☎ 8am-3pm Mon-Fri) Located at the pier.

Princess Royal Hospital (☎ 443-7400) In Belair, outside of Hillsborough.

Tourist office (☎ 443-7948; Main St; ☎ 8am-noon & 1-4pm Mon-Fri) Located across from the pier.

Sights

The small, community-run **Carriacou Museum** (☎ 443-8288; Patterson St; admission EC\$5; ☎ 9:30am-

3:45pm Mon-Fri) has an interesting collection of Native American artifacts, a display about African heritage and paintings by local artists. There is also an collection of colonial-era objects, including an old urinal.

Activities

The first and still the best shop on Carriacou, **Carriacou Silver Diving** (☎ 443-7882; www.scubamax.com) has two-tank dives for US\$85.

Sleeping

John's Unique Resort (☎ 443-8345; johnresort@grenadines.net; Main St; r from US\$25; ☎) Situated just on the outskirts of town heading towards Bogles, you'd be hard-pressed to name what is truly unique about John's – but it is, nonetheless, a winner. Turtles in the front yard greet you as you arrive. The rooms are large and clean and have sunny balconies. A restaurant onsite can put together a great plate of local food for a good price and the staff are friendly and helpful.

Grand View Hotel (☎ 443-8659; www.carriacougrandview.com; s/d US\$60/70; ☎) Just down the road and up the hill from town, Grand View more than lives up to its name. Towering over the harbor and the surrounding hills, this property is a hidden gem. Some rooms are a bit petite, with double beds so close you could mistake them for a super-duperking size. Every room has a balcony to take in the vista, there is a pool to cool off and the rooms catch the sea breeze, making it a cool and pleasant place to bivouac during your Carriacou stay.

Hotel Laurena (☎ 443-8759; s/d US\$75/85; ☎) One of the larger accommodation options on the island, Laurena has spacious rooms with a good selection of amenities. Catering to families, rooms have fridges and balconies. The staff are friendly and some rooms have Jacuzzi tubs to soak your troubles away. Offers wi-fi access.

Ade's Dream Guest House (☎ 443-7317; www.adesdream.com; Main St; r from EC\$85; ☎) Popular with inter-island travelers, those on a budget and people wanting to be right amongst the action, Ade's is in the dead center of town, above a bustling grocery/hardware/liquor/everything-else store. There are basic rooms with shared facilities and self-contained units with kitchens – all are clean and well maintained. It's a popular spot often booked

to the hilt when the rest of the island is a ghost town.

Eating

Eat of the Town (plates EC\$18 🍷 lunch & dinner) Decorated with torn linoleum, drab decor and plastic tables, Eat of the Town is the classic Caribbean dive. Don't judge this book by the cover – the food is awesome. Mountainous plates of fish, rice and all the trimmings for an unbeatable price. Pull up a folding chair and dig in!

our pick Green Roof Inn (☎ 443-6399; www.greenroofinn.com; mains from EC\$55; 🍷 dinner) Half a mile up the road from Hillsborough, this is the place to be for dinner. Be sure to reserve a spot as the tiny dining area fills fast. The ever-changing menu will be sure to feature fresh fish, steak and lobster if you're lucky. Great views are served with every meal and the small bar will keep you well hydrated. It also has six rooms if you want to stay the night. And you should – the tasteful decor and comfortable style are as inviting as the meals.

NORTH OF HILLSBOROUGH

The northern part of Carriacou is a delightful place to visit, with some wonderfully unique towns and stunning scenery. The central road cuts across the spine of the island making the journey as pleasant as the destination.

You can easily catch a bus or taxi to complete the journey, but as a hike this is a fantastic, if a little grueling afternoon out. From Hillsborough head north, taking Belair Rd, about a third of a mile north of Silver Beach Resort, and follow it uphill for half a mile, then bear right on the side road that leads to the hospital. The **hospital** sits atop the hill and has a magnificent view of the bay and offshore islands.

Continuing north from the hospital, the road traverses the crest of **Belvedere Hill**, providing sweeping views of the east coast and the islands of Petit St Vincent and Petit Martinique. There are also the remains of an **old stone sugar mill** just before the Belvedere Crossroads.

From here, the route northeast (called the High Rd) leads down to **Windward**, a charming small village with a shop, school and little else. It is, however, the home of boat building on the island. If you're lucky the lads will be out building a seafaring craft in the traditional way – the same way they've done it for a century.

The road from Windward leads another mile to **Petit Carenage Bay**, at Carriacou's north-eastern tip. There's a good beach, and views of the northern Grenadines from here.

The cottages at **Bayaleau Point Cottages** (☎ 443-7984; www.carriacoucottages.com; Windward; US\$85-US\$115; 🏠) are a breath of fresh, tropical air. There are blue, green, red and yellow varieties to choose from – all set up to perfection, with all the basic amenities you need for a relaxed holiday. The balconies, hammocks and home touches make it hard to want to leave. Wheelchair access is also available.

Reservation for Mr Frodo Baggins? **Round House** (☎ 443-7841; Bogle's; dinner from EC\$55) is, you guessed it, a round house, that perhaps was designed with Middle-earth in mind. It's run by Grenada's Chef of the Year, so the food – European dishes infused with Caribbean classics all served up fresh – more than meets your expectations. Everything a growing Hobbit needs.

SOUTH OF HILLSBOROUGH

The small village of **L'Esterre**, just southwest of the airport, is a quiet little place with precious little going on. The biggest reason to venture to this portion of the island is to visit the aptly named **Paradise Beach**. This nice stretch of sand is the closest beach to Hillsborough and has some eclectic eating, sleeping and shopping options just off the sand.

Sleeping & Eating

Paradise Inn (☎ 443-8406; Paradise Beach; s/d from US\$30/45) Charming sandside living, right on Paradise Beach. Eight simple rooms look onto a grassy courtyard and are only steps from the sea. There's a great little restaurant and bar, tucked under a tree even closer to the waves, that serves up a good meal.

our pick Cow Foot (Belview South; mains from EC\$10; 🍷 lunch & dinner) Sometimes the best restaurants have the worst names. A uniquely local establishment near the microtown of Belview South, just off the South Coast. Nothing flash here, just tables, chairs and hands down the best roti on the island. The owner is a real character who makes it a memorable dining experience, not just for the delicious food.

Hard Wood Bar & Snacket (Paradise Beach; dinner from EC\$25; 🍷 breakfast, lunch & dinner) Near the center of Paradise Beach this green, yellow and red shack dishes out cold beers and fresh

TWIST MY ARM: THE PLACES THE AUTHORS WANTED TO KEEP SECRET

A beach is a beach isn't it? No, afraid not. There is more to a good beach than just sand and water. Every beach aficionado knows that there's something intangible about a great stretch of sand that makes it more valuable than the sum of its parts.

Anse La Roche, on Carriacou, is most definitely something special. This idyllic stretch of the softest sand you may ever get the pleasure of sinking your toes into is a hidden prize for those willing to make the effort to seek it out. Protected by dense bush and cliffs on its flanks, this secluded beauty – rarely visited, except by the adventurous, those in the know and the sea turtles that nest amongst the sand – will be a private paradise.

The treasure trail goes a little like this. From the town of Bogles take a left at the (white) sign for the High North Park. Follow that road, which quickly turns to dirt, for 20 minutes on foot. Look for a red-painted rock on the left-hand side of the road and follow the rough path through the forest for 15 minutes. All going right, you should be spat out onto a beach that you'll be bragging about for years.

fish meals oozing with local flavor. A serene, quintessentially Caribbean setting: sand, sea and suds. Locals, lifers, ex-pats and the odd traveler pony up to the bar and settle in for a cold one on a hot day.

Shopping

Fidel Productions (☎ 404-8866; Paradise Beach; 🕒 9am-5pm Mon-Sat) This charming little shop built into an old disused shipping container, is a creative cave of artistic niceties featuring locally made T-shirts original artworks, jewelry, ceramics and some great photographs. All are for sale. Everything appears to be well made and is reasonably priced.

TYRREL BAY & THE NEARSHORE ISLANDS

Tyrrel Bay (population 750) is a deep, protected bay with a sandy (although somewhat dirty) beach. It is a popular anchorage for visiting yachters and hosts a number of regattas throughout the year. Since the opening of a commercial dock in Tyrrel Bay in 2005, it is receiving more boat traffic. There are a few sleeping and eating options in town. Buses run with some frequency to Hillsborough (EC\$2, 15 minutes).

Sandy Island, off the west side of Hillsborough Bay, is a favorite daytime destination for snorkelers and sailors. It's a tiny postcard-perfect reef island of glistening sands surrounded by turquoise waters. Snorkelers take to the shallow waters fronting Sandy Island, while the deeper waters on the far side are popular for diving. Water taxis (EC\$50 to EC\$75 return) run from Tyrrel Bay (20 minutes) or Hillsborough (15 minutes). Be clear about

when you want to be picked up. As the island takes only a couple of minutes to walk around, a whole afternoon can tick by very slowly.

White Island makes for a nice day trip. It has a good, sandy beach and a pristine reef for snorkeling. White Island is about one mile off the southern tip of Carriacou. Water taxis run from Tyrrel Bay (about EC\$75 return, 30 minutes).

PETIT MARTINIQUE**pop 1000**

They don't call it Petit for nothing – this little island is a scant one mile in diameter. Small, charismatic and infrequently visited, Petit Martinique is an ideal spot to get away from everything.

With a steep volcanic core rising a stout 740ft at its center, there is little room on the island for much else. The solitary road runs up the west coast, but it is rarely used – locals prefer to walk, nothing is very far and what's the hurry? The population subsists on the fruits of the sea. Fishermen and mariners earn their crust from the ocean.

With barely a thousand inhabitants, most of whom are related to each other, this is a place to find peace, quiet – and precious little else.

SLEEPING & EATING

Melodies Guest House (☎ 443-9052; www.spiceisle.com/melodies; r US\$30-50) Melodies has simple rooms, some with balconies facing the impossibly blue ocean. It is worth the couple of extra dollars for an ocean-view room. The

downstairs restaurant and bar serves good local food and stiff cocktails – sometimes followed by a round of drunken karaoke.

Palm Beach Guest House (☎ 443-9103; www.petitemartinique.com/palmbeachguesthouse; s/d EC\$100/160) Connected to the Palm Beach Restaurant this basic guesthouse has two simple rooms. The frills are few, but the location is great and the atmosphere is endearing. It's a short 10-minute walk to the beach, and the apartments overlook the bay, providing wonderful views.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

The *Osprey* catamaran ferries passengers between Grenada, Carriacou and Petit Martinique daily (see the schedule on p725).

A water taxi can take you from Carriacou to Petit Martinique. They are cheaper from Windward (EC\$120, about one hour) than from Hillsborough.

DIRECTORY

ACCOMMODATIONS

The beaches are the main tourist draw to Grenada, so it's no wonder they are where you will find most of the accommodations. St George's is a lively town with much going on – perhaps too much going on, as it's a bit hectic for most overnight tastes.

Down the road in Grand Anse and further on in Lance aux Épines is where you'll find the majority of the beds. These beachside communities have all the amenities a traveler might need, although the towns themselves are a bit soulless, so be sure to dip your toes into the cultural ocean of St George's.

Carriacou and Petit Martinique are small enough that the places to stay are mixed right

in with the local population. There's no doubt you'll get to mix with the locals here – they'll be your neighbors.

Camping is allowed in Grand Etang National Park, but there are no established facilities and the park is in one of the rainiest parts of the island. Arrangements can be made through the park **visitors center** (☎ 440-6160; ☎ 8:30am-4pm Mon-Fri, Sat & Sun if cruise ships are in). There is a modest camping fee.

ACTIVITIES

See p723 for tours of Grenada, and p724 for information on chartering a yacht.

Beaches & Swimming

Grenada is a beach lover's dream, with a plethora of sparkling sand to sink your toes into. On Grenada itself Grand Anse is an obvious highlight and the star of many a postcard. Morne Rouge Bay, just over the peninsula from Grand Anse, is another standout with the same style of sand and water but with much fewer people.

The islands of Carriacou and Petit Martinique are chockabloc with world-class stretches of ocean just begging to be leapt into. The swimming on all of these beaches is top notch, with light surf, few currents and soft sandy bottoms.

Cycling

The hilly terrain is a turn-off for some cyclists and great fun for others. If you're keen, you can rent bikes in St George (p708).

Diving & Snorkeling

The waters around Grenada have extensive reefs and a wide variety of corals, fish, turtles and other marine life. One popular dive is the wreck of the *Bianca C* ocean liner, off Grenada's southwest coast. Strong currents

PRACTICALITIES

- **Newspapers & Magazines** The weekly *Grenada Today* and *Grenadian Voice* are the island's two main weekly papers. International newspapers, including *USA Today*, can be found in large grocery stores. The tourist office issues *Discover Grenada*, a glossy magazine with general information on Grenada, Carriacou and Petit Martinique.
- **Radio & TV** Grenada has three local TV stations and four radio stations. Most larger hotels also have satellite or cable TV, which pick up major US network broadcasts.
- **Electricity** The electrical current is 220V, 50 cycles. British-style three-pin plugs are used.
- **Weights & Measures** Grenada uses the imperial system.

and a depth of more than 100ft make it strictly for experienced divers only.

Molinière Point (see *Sculptures of the Sea*, p710), north of St George's, has some of the best snorkeling around Grenada, though land access is difficult. Most dive shops will take snorkelers along with divers to check out spots like Molinière Point.

Grenada has a number of other good snorkeling spots. They include Sandy Island (p715), off the northeast coast of Grenada Island, and, off the coast of Carriacou, White Island (p719) and (another) Sandy Island (p719).

As always it's best to dive with a company that knows what they are doing; there are good dive shops in Grande Anse (p711), True Blue Bay (p712), Lance Aux Épines (p713) and Hillsborough (p717). Dives cost around US\$55 per dive.

Hiking

Grenada's most popular hiking area is the Grand Etang rainforest, where trails wind through a forest of mahogany and ferns, leading to a crater lake, waterfalls and mountain ridges. For details on specific trails, see p714.

BOOKS

There are few bookstores around the islands. Books can be found for loan or trade in some guesthouses, and many Grenadians are willing to share books from their homes.

A good book about geology, flora and fauna is *A Natural History of the Island of Grenada*, by John R Groome, a past president of the Grenada National Trust. *The Mermaid Wakes: Paintings of a Caribbean Isle* is a hardcover book featuring paintings by Carriacou artist Canute Calliste; the text, by Lora Berg, is about island life.

Grenada 1983, by Lee Russell, and *Urgent Fury: The Battle for Grenada*, by Mark Adkin, are detailed accounts of the events that surrounded US President Ronald Reagan's invasion of Grenada in 1983. While both books are rather pro-US, they shouldn't be dismissed as propaganda – they do show some of the complexities from both sides. *Revolution in Reverse*, by James Ferguson, presents a critical account of Grenada's development since the US invasion.

Lorna McDaniel's *The Big Drum Ritual of Carriacou: Praisesongs for Rememory of*

Flight explores the Big Drum rituals, as practised in Carriacou, that call ancestors as part of an Afro-Caribbean religious experience. Performed since the early 1700s, it is the only ceremony of its type that has survived in the Caribbean.

Grenada: A History of its People, written by University of the West Indies senior lecturer Beverley Steele, follows the history of the island people from the early days of Arawak settlement to the present.

BUSINESS HOURS

In general, businesses are open from Monday to Saturday from 9am to 5pm. Restaurants that are open for breakfast open at 8am, lunch is served from noon and dinner from 6pm. Closing time is often more a matter of when the last diners finish, but generally 10pm is a safe bet. Pubs and bars will stay open until 2am on the weekend. Few businesses or restaurants open on a Sunday. The exception is when they are located in a hotel, in which case they are usually open seven days a week.

CHILDREN

While Grenada is not specifically a family destination, it has many areas where children can have some free range, such as Carriacou, Lance aux Épines and Morne Rouge. Keep your eye on the little ones around the roads in St George's as the traffic can be on the wild side, and also in some of the forts as the walls are tall and are without railings or barriers.

DANGERS & ANNOYANCES

St George's is a busy little city, but for the most part is very safe. Regular precautions are recommended such as being careful at night and not being a target for opportunistic thieves. You will be asked time and time again on the beach if you want to buy jewelry, T-shirts and spices. Most of these peddlers are harmless and a simple 'No, thank you' sends them on their way.

EMBASSIES & CONSULATES

UK (☎ 440-3536; 14 Church St, St George's)

USA (☎ 444-1173; Lance aux Épines)

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

The **Grenada Board of Tourism** (www.grenadagrenadines.com) can provide all details on yearly festivals and events.

Port Louis Sailing Festival (January) This major sailing event features races, parties and races to parties.

Carriacou Carnival (usually early February)

Grenada Triathlon (May) Swim, bike and run your way to a good time. Teams and individuals compete for fun and prizes.

Grenada Carnival (second weekend in August) The big annual event. The celebration is spirited and includes calypso and steel-pan competitions, costumed revelers, pageants and a big, grand-finale jump-up on Tuesday.

GAY & LESBIAN TRAVELERS

Attitudes to same-sex couples in Grenada (and the Caribbean generally) are not modern or tolerant. Gay and lesbian couples should be discreet in public to avoid hassles.

HOLIDAYS

New Year's Day January 1

Independence Day February 7

Good Friday Late March/early April

Easter Monday Late March/early April

Labour Day May 1

Whit Monday Eighth Monday after Easter

Corpus Christi Ninth Thursday after Easter

Emancipation Days First Monday & Tuesday in August

Thanksgiving Day October 25

Christmas Day December 25

Boxing Day December 26

INTERNET ACCESS

St George's has a growing number of internet cafés. Some hotels provide internet access and there are a few cafés on Carriacou. Rates runs from EC\$6 to EC\$12 per hour. Increasingly, wireless internet-access points are popping up around Grenada; many marinas' hotels and restaurants offer free wi-fi.

INTERNET RESOURCES

Grenada Explorer (www.grenadaexplorer.com) This is an online tourist guide with a gluttony of helpful info.

Grenada Hotel & Tourism Association (www.grenadahotelsinfo.com) The Grenada Hotel & Tourism Association maintains this site from which you can book accommodations online.

Grenada Tourism Information (www.grenadagrenadines.com) This is the official site of the Grenada Board of Tourism, and features links to masses of excellent information.

Grenada Visitor Forum (www.grenadavisitorforum.com) This user-generated site is a good venue to converse with other travelers.

Jason de Caires Taylor (www.underwatersculpture.com)

Have a look at the incredible underwater gallery off the west coast – without even getting wet.

MAPS

Tourist maps are available from the tourism information centers and most hotels. More-detailed road maps are available at car-rental agencies and bookstores. Navel charts are available at the ports, bookstores and bulk-supply stores.

MEDICAL SERVICES

There is a hospital in St George's and on the hill above Hillsborough on Carriacou. The emergency number for an ambulance is ☎ 911.

MONEY

The official currency is the Eastern Caribbean dollar (EC\$ or XCD). A growing number of 24-hour ATMs all over Grenada dispense Eastern Caribbean dollars. Most hotels, shops and restaurants will accept US dollars, but you'll get a better exchange rate by changing to Eastern Caribbean dollars at a bank and using local currency. Major credit cards are accepted by most hotels, top-end restaurants, dive shops and car-rental agencies. Be clear about whether prices are being quoted in Eastern Caribbean or US dollars, particularly with taxi drivers.

An 8% tax and 10% service charge is added to many hotel and restaurant bills. If no service charge is added at restaurants, a 10% tip is generally expected. Prices quoted in this chapter do not include the 18% tax and charge.

POST

Grenada's main post office is in St George's, and there are smaller post offices in many villages and on Carriacou. Mail service is pretty slow and packages are expensive. Postcards to anywhere are reasonable, though.

TELEPHONE

Grenada's area code is ☎ 473. When calling from within Grenada, you only need to dial the seven-digit local phone number. When calling from North America, dial ☎ 1-473 + the local number. From elsewhere, dial your country's international access code + ☎ 473 + the local number. We have included only the seven-digit local number for Grenada listings in this chapter.

Grenada has coin-operated and card phones. Coin phones take 25-cent coins (either EC or US) or EC\$1 coins. Card phones accept the same Caribbean phone card used on other Eastern Caribbean islands; cards are sold at the airport and numerous shops. Americans can also use their US-based calling card or credit card to make long-distance calls – but it's best to check the rate before talking for too long.

TOURIST INFORMATION

The **Grenada Board of Tourism** (www.grenadagrenadines.com; Grenada Island ☎ 440-2279; the Carenage, St George's; Carriacou ☎ 443-7948; Main St, Hillsborough) has offices on Grenada Island and Carriacou. There's also a tourist office booth at Point Salines International Airport, just before immigration, where you can pick up tourist brochures; the staff can also help you book a room.

TOURS

The following tours are for Grenada Island; for information on taxi tours of Carriacou, see p717.

Adventure Jeep Tours (☎ 444-5337; www.adventuregrenada.com) This reputable operator has full-day tours that take in all of the major sights.

Henry's Safari Tours (☎ 444-5313) Various treks into the interior are offered by this company, which specializes in hiking tours. Lunch and drinks are included. Try the five-hour tour that includes a hike to the Seven Sisters Falls.

Kennedy Tours (☎ 444-1074; www.kennedytours.com) Prides itself on having the best guides on the island. They run tours of every description and are flexible and friendly.

Mandoo Tours (☎ 440-1428; www.grenadatours.com) Offers full- and half-day tours of the island and can be tailored for historical or photographic interests. It has quality vehicles with air-conditioning.

Spice Kayaking & Eco Tours (☎ 439-4942; www.spicekayaking.com) Go for a paddle amongst the beaches, mangroves and bays. The tours will have you on the water for half the day, or from dawn till dusk if you prefer.

VISAS

Visas are not required for Americans, Canadians, visitors from Commonwealth countries and most other countries. A passport is required, however, along with an onward ticket. Upon entry you will be issued a 30-day tourist visa that prohibits work. Visitors are allowed to stay for up to three months.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

- **Ambulance** ☎ 911
- **Fire** ☎ 911
- **Police** ☎ 911

WOMEN TRAVELERS

It's unusual for local women to travel alone at night, and as such, female travelers are likely to attract attention. However, taking care if you're out after dark is prudent for both sexes. Otherwise, women needn't expect too many hassles.

WORK

Those wishing to work in Grenada need to obtain a work permit from the Ministry of Labour in St George's.

TRANSPORTATION

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Entering Grenada

All visitors should present a valid passport and an onward ticket, or sufficient funds to support your stay.

Air

Point Salines International Airport (GND; ☎ 444-4101, 444-4555; fax 444-4838) has car-rental offices, an ATM, wi-fi, pay phones and a restaurant. A tourist office booth is in the arrivals section before you reach immigration.

The following airlines fly to/from Grenada from within the Caribbean and further afield:

Air Jamaica (☎ 439 2093; www.airjamaica.com) New York

American Eagle (☎ 444-2222; www.aa.com) San Juan

British Airways (☎ 444-1221; www.ba.com) London

LIAT (☎ 440-5428; www.liatairline.com) Trinidad, Tobago, Barbados, St Vincent

Virgin Atlantic (☎ 439 7470; www.virgin-atlantic.com) London

Carriacou's Lauriston airport is a modest affair with a single ticket counter for all flights. **Prime Travel** (☎ 443-7362) has a desk at the airport and can help with ticket sales, car rentals and other travel essentials.

SVG Air (☎ 444-3549; www.svgair.com) has private air charters and scheduled flights to

Grenada, St Vincent, Bequia, Canouan, Mustique, Union Island, Palm Island, Petit St Vincent, Martinique, Dominica, St Lucia and Barbados.

Sometimes, if all flights are fully booked, it is possible to organize a group and split the cost of a charter flight to/from Carriacou – contact Prime Travel for details.

Sea

CRUISE SHIP

Grenada is a port of call for numerous cruise ships. They dock at the purpose-built pier just north of the harbor in St George's, Grenada Island. For more information on cruises, see p830.

FERRY

The **MV Jasper** is a boat service that runs between Carriacou and Union Island (EC\$20, one hour) in St Vincent & the Grenadines. It departs from Union Island every Monday and Thursday at 7:30am for Carriacou. It returns at 12:30pm on the same days. For information on entry requirements, see p673.

You could also try hopping on one of the various commercial ships that haul goods back and forth between Union Island and Carriacou or Petit Martinique, Grenada, or pay a water taxi (EC\$100 to EC\$150) for the bumpy 40-minute ride.

WATER TAXI

If the ferry schedule doesn't work into your plans or the thought of a bumpy, open-ocean crossing in a motorboat appeals, there is the water taxi option. It will cost you about US\$75 for the 40-minute journey from Carriacou to Union island. Ask around at the waterfront for a suitable driver and be sure to trust your instincts when it comes to evaluating someone's seafaring skills.

YACHT

Immigration (open 8am to 3:45pm Monday to Friday) can be cleared on Grenada Island at **Spice Island Marine Services** (☎ 444-4342) on Prickly Bay, or at **Grenada Yacht Services** (☎ 440-2508) in St George's. Most yachts anchor in St George's in the nearby lagoon. If for some reason you decide not to clear immigration at one of the marinas, you can get all of the necessary stamps at the police station in St George's.

On Carriacou, clearance can be made in Hillsborough.

Whether you're a salty sea dog or a life-jacket-toting land-lover **Horizon Yacht Charters** (☎ 439-1000; www.horizonyachtcharters.com; True Blue Bay Marina) will set you up with the boating holiday you're looking for. Seeing Grenada by sea really is the way to go and this crew can help you do it. You can arrange to have a crewed yacht, where all you have to do is sit back and enjoy the ride. Or you can get your hands dirty, swing it yarr and hit the high seas as captain of your own private pirate ship.

Moorings (☎ 444-4439; www.moorings.com) bases its yacht-charter operation at Secret Harbour, and **Sea Breeze Yacht Charters** (☎ 444-4924) is at Spice Island Marine Services in Lance aux Epines.

The most frequented anchorages are along the southwest side of Grenada, including Prickly Bay, Mt Hartman Bay, Hog Island and True Blue Bay.

GETTING AROUND

Air

SVG Air (☎ 444-3549; www.svgair.com) has flights between Grenada Island and Carriacou.

Boat

When it comes to seafaring travel in Grenada there are two schools of thought. You can either hitch a ride on a cargo ship that will be slow, not really fixed to any sort of schedule and cheap. Or you can hop onto *The Osprey* a high-speed catamaran that will leave right on time, be fast enough to blow you cap off and be relatively expensive. Both will get you where you want to go. It's just a decision about whether you are a 'snack bar and air-conditioning' sort of traveler or a 'sit on your luggage' one.

CARGO/PASSENGER BOATS

Island hopping on cargo boats is an interesting and adventurous way to travel around the Caribbean. Predicting any sort of a schedule is near impossible, but that's half the fun. Boats change all the time, and time and date of departure are often more dependent on the cargo than the wishes of passengers. The best way to go about it is to head down to the dock and ask around and see what you can put together. On Grenada Island it's best to go to the large boats on the north side of the Carenage in St George's. On Carriacou they can be found at Hillsborough's town pier or sometimes

in Tyrrel Bay. The fare on the larger boats is about EC\$20 one way; buy your ticket on board.

CATAMARAN

Osprey (☎ 440-8126; www.ospreyines.com) is the fastest and most reliable way to move amongst the islands of Grenada. The 144-seat motorized catamaran connects Grenada's three populated islands in less than two hours (per person one way/round-trip Grenada to Carriacou EC\$80/160, Carriacou to Petit Martinique EC\$30/60). Reservations are rarely required, except on holidays. Tickets are either purchased on board or from the office prior to departure. In St George's the *Osprey* departs from the east side of the Carenage.

The *Osprey* schedule:

Carriacou to Grenada Island Departs 6am and 3:30pm Monday to Saturday, and 3:30pm Sunday.

Carriacou to Petit Martinique Departs 10:30am Monday to Saturday, 7pm Monday to Thursday, 9.30am Sunday.

Grenada Island to Carriacou and Petit Martinique Departs 9am and 5:30pm Monday to Friday, 9am Saturday, and 8am and 5:30pm Sunday.

Petit Martinique to Carriacou and Grenada Island Departs 5:30am Tuesday to Friday, 3pm daily.

YACHT

See opposite for information on charters.

Bus

There are buses on both Grenada Island and Carriacou, and they are a great way to experience the local community. There'll be shoppers, school kids and commuters crammed into the van. The often overflowing

seats rock back and forth to the tunes as the driver maniacally toots their horn at friends and potential passengers.

Car & Motorcycle

DRIVER'S LICENSE

To drive a vehicle you need to purchase a Grenadian driving license (US\$12). You can get it from most car-rental companies, police stations or the **Traffic Department booth** (☎ 440-2267) at the fire station on the east side of the Carenage in St George's. Grenada's larger towns, including Grenville, Sauteurs and Victoria, have gas stations.

RENTAL

There are many rental agencies on Grenada Island, and a few on Carriacou; see p707 and p717 for details.

ROAD RULES

Driving is technically on the left-hand side of the road, but you can expect buses in particular to be going full bore wherever the hell they want to. The roads are very narrow and curvy and local drivers attack them with great speed. For safety, slow down when approaching blind curves and use your horn liberally. There are few road signs on the island, so a road map and a measure of caution are useful when driving.

Taxi

You'll find taxis on Grenada Island; see p707 for sample fares. Some minibuses on Carriacou double as taxis (see p717).