

Sandys Parish

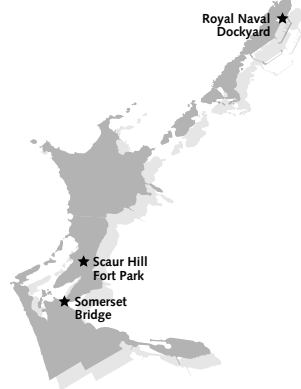


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HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore the **Royal Naval Dockyard** (p134) with its craft shops, galleries and superb maritime museum
- Take a peek at the **world's smallest drawbridge** (opposite), in Somerset Village
- Walk around the extensive grounds of **Scaur Hill Fort Park** (p131)



■ POPULATION: 7275

■ AREA: 1.82 SQ MILES

If Bermuda has a hinterland, then it's certainly Sandys (pronounced 'sands'). This western-most parish, also known as the West End, is made up of five islands connected by bridges.

Sandys has a multi-faceted history born of rich soil and a powerful motherland. It is sometimes referred to as 'up the country' because of its rural roots, and many old-time Bermudians can trace their ancestry back to the family farmsteads that once dotted the parish.

The main village of Somerset derives its name from Sir George Somers, whose shipwrecked crew were the first settlers to Bermuda – this, it is said, was 'Somers seat.' Somers was just the first of many admirals to leave a mark on the parish. Two hundred years after Somers' death, the British Royal Navy arrived in force and began staking its claim.

The parish's main sightseeing attractions include, on one hand, nature preserves with quiet trails that wind through farms and woodlands and, on the other hand, mighty impressive forts. None is more impressive than the 75-acre Royal Naval Dockyard, an immense complex with munitions storehouses, cannon-topped bastions and a moat-encircled fortress.

Sandys' northernmost islands – Watford Island, Boaz Island, Ireland Island South and Ireland Island North – were all once occupied by the Royal Navy. Today, naval cemeteries flank the road leading out of Somerset to the Royal Naval Dockyard.

Ireland Island North, the outermost part of Sandys, was entirely the navy's. Its HMS *Malabar* naval base closed in 1995, ending the Royal Navy's centuries-old presence in Bermuda.

The Royal Naval Dockyard was also decommissioned but it's not sleeping. This collection of 19th-century buildings, along with the former military dockyard and fort, has been turned into one of Bermuda's foremost visitor destinations, with its own cruise ship dock, small marina, snorkel park, maritime museum, shopping center, craft galleries and restaurants.

SOMERSET & AROUND

Somerset, the largest of the islands in Sandys Parish, sits serenely between the beach resorts in Southampton Parish to its south and the tourist-driven Royal Naval Dockyard to the north.

The heart of Somerset Island is the sleepy **Somerset Village**, which is virtually untouched by tourism and can be an interesting place to poke around if you want to get off the beaten track. The village is fronted by Mangrove Bay and has a couple of waterview restaurants that can make for a scenic meal break.

The entry to Somerset Island is across the world's smallest drawbridge. **Somerset Bridge**, built in the 17th century, has a mere 30-inch span. It's amazing to watch in action. It opens just wide enough to allow the mast of a sailboat to pass through as the boat sails,

ever so gently, between the Great Sound and Ely's Harbour. Obviously, the sailor needs to have a good command and steady hand!

Somerset Island has many other sights as well, the most prominent being Scaur Hill Fort Park, an old fort with superb views and lots of nooks and crannies to explore.

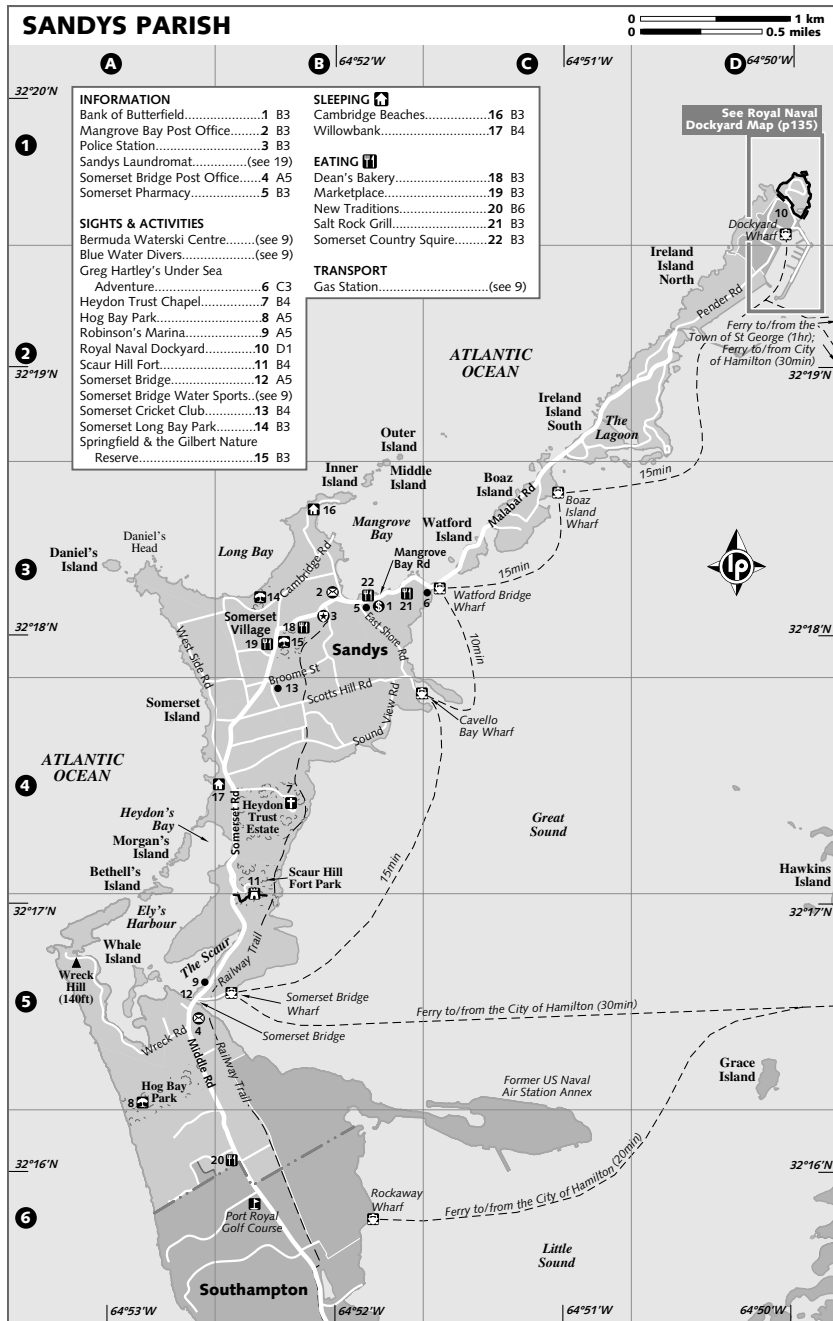
Orientation

The main road through Sandys is Middle Rd, which changes its name to Somerset Rd as it crosses Somerset Bridge, to Mangrove Bay Rd as it passes the village of Somerset, and to Malabar Rd as it continues toward the Royal Naval Dockyard. There's a gas station at Robinson's Marina.

Information

EMERGENCY

Police station (☎ 234-1010; 3 Somerset Rd)



LAUNDRY

Sandys Laundromat (☎ 238-9455; 48 Somerset Rd; ☎ 7:30am-8pm Mon-Sat, to 5pm Sun)

MEDICAL SERVICES

Somerset Pharmacy (☎ 234-2484; 49 Mangrove Bay Rd, Somerset Village; ☎ 8am-8pm Mon-Sat, 10am-6pm Sun)

MONEY

Bank of Butterfield (☎ 234-0048; Mangrove Bay Rd, Somerset Village; ☎ 9am-3:30pm Mon-Thu, to 4:30pm Fri)

POST

Mangrove Bay Post Office (☎ 234-0423; 3 Somerset Rd, Somerset Village)

Somerset Bridge Post Office (☎ 234-0220; 1 Middle Rd) This smaller post office, at the south side of Somerset Bridge, closes for lunch from 11:30am to 1pm.

Sights

SCAUR HILL FORT PARK

The most ambitious out of Bermuda's many forts, **Scaur Hill** (☎ 234-0908; Middle Rd; admission free; ☎ 10am-4:30pm) stands as a monument to the tensions that existed between the British and the Americans in the mid-19th century. During the US Civil War the British had backed the defeated Confederacy, so despite the fact that the victorious North emerged from the war in such a battle-weary condition, the British were worried about a possible retaliatory US invasion of Bermuda.

Britain, with its colonial ties in Canada and possessions in the West Indies, looked upon Bermuda as the forward citadel of its naval power in the New World. Consequently, in 1865 the British allocated a hefty sum for fortifying Bermuda, and in 1868 work began on Scaur Hill Fort, the largest of several such projects.

Scaur Hill Fort was built at the south side of Somerset Island, on the crest of its highest hill, with the express purpose of protecting the Royal Naval Dockyard from a land invasion. For the same reason, a deep ditch was dug from Ely's Harbour in the west to Great Harbour in the east, effectively slicing Somerset Island in two. Ramparts were built along the elevated northern side of the ditch, where platforms were installed for use by infantry men who – theoretically, at least – could mow down invading soldiers as they leaped into the ditch from the south.

So extensive was the design of the fort that it took the better part of two decades to complete the work. By the time it was finished it was obsolete, but, considering Bermuda's history of non-existent military confrontations, that seemed to be beside the point.

In an interesting twist of fate, American troops finally did come to occupy Scaur Hill Fort, albeit by British invitation, when the 52nd Coast Artillery Battalion of the US Army took up station at the fort during WWII.

The fort was originally equipped with a pair of hefty rifled muzzleloader cannons mounted on the Moncrieff 'disappearing' carriages that recoiled out of sight for reloading after firing; 5-ton counterweights then raised the carriages back to position.

Visitors are able to explore the old parade grounds, march along the ditch, view the stone galleries with their cannon and rifle windows, and peer into the concrete emplacements that held the disappearing cannons. However, true to their names, the big guns themselves have disappeared from the site.

One other plus in visiting the fort is the amazing views. On a clear day you can see both ends of Bermuda from the Dockyard in the west to St George's in the east. Bring a lunch and enjoy it on one of the hillside benches while soaking up the scene.

HOG BAY PARK

If you enjoy exploring old house sites and that sort of thing, **Hog Bay Park** (Middle Rd; admission free; ☎ sunrise-sunset) can be an interesting place to wander through. This unique 38-acre park has been patched together from abandoned farms purchased from three adjoining estates.

All three had kept the land in a natural state, free of any 20th-century development; consequently, the park is a repository of sorts for Bermuda's rural past and holds many relics dating to the early colonial period. In those days, Sandys and nearby Southampton Parish abounded with small farms and Hog Bay Park incorporates an unspoiled slice of that original agricultural land. In the early 1990s, before the property was opened as a public park, researchers came from the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia, and uncovered numerous artifacts. They also identified the

uses of former sites, such as a kiln used for the production of lime, the remnants of servants' quarters, and the remains of a buttery – a small structure used for cold storage in pre-refrigeration days.

Spread around the property are fallow tobacco and cassava fields, several abandoned cottages and stands of native trees. The path begins at the roadside parking area at the northeast corner of the park and can be followed all the way down to the bay, where hikers will be rewarded with fine coastal views.

HEYDON TRUST ESTATE

The large **Heydon estate** (Heydon Dr; admission free; ☞ sunrise-sunset), north of Scour Hill Fort, is the biggest tract of undeveloped open space in Sandys Parish. The trust that owns the property generously opens the 43 acres to the public.

The centerpiece of the estate is a lovely little **chapel** perched on the hillside. Thought to have been built by an early colonist as a homestead cottage, this simple limestone building dates to at least 1616. Take a look behind the altar and you can still see the home's original oven.

Inspired by its peaceful setting, an interdenominational Christian organization uses the cottage as a chapel for informal sunrise and afternoon prayer services. Unless a service is taking place, visitors are free to take a look inside. Opposite the chapel you'll find a lookout point with an impressive vista of the Great Sound. Look straight out to get a bird's-eye view of Tucker's Peninsula, which once served as home to the US Naval Air Station Annex.

In addition to the views and tranquility, during the spring and autumn migratory seasons the wooded areas of Heydon Trust Estate are good spots for birdwatching.

The road into the property begins opposite the Willowbank hotel on Middle Rd and leads east about 500yd, where it makes a loop around the chapel.

SOMERSET LONG BAY

Sandys simply isn't endowed with the glorious beaches found in neighboring parishes to the south. The main public bathing spot at **Somerset Long Bay Park** (Cambridge Rd; admission free; ☞ sunrise-sunset) has a sandy beach with shallow waters that are best suited for

children. The park, at the northwest side of Somerset Island, has toilets and picnic facilities.

Nature lovers will find the adjacent **Somerset Long Bay Nature Reserve** (Cambridge Rd; admission free; ☞ sunrise-sunset) well worth a stroll. This reclaimed wetland habitat owned by the Bermuda Audubon Society serves as a prime nesting site for resident waterfowl and attracts migratory birds. A trail through tall grasses at the southwest side of Somerset Long Bay Park leads into the sanctuary. Just a two-minute walk along that trail will bring you to a duck-viewing area, where you can spot redbreasted mergansers in winter and gallinule year-round. At various times of the year, you might also see migratory herons, egrets, warblers and kingfishers, as well as resident catbirds and cardinals.

SPRINGFIELD & THE GILBERT NATURE RESERVE

This combined **historic site and nature reserve** (☞ 236-6483; 29 Somerset Rd; admission free; ☞ sunrise-sunset) at the south side of Somerset Village once comprised a small plantation. The manor house, known as Springfield, dates to the 1740s and has been a holding of the Bermuda National Trust since 1967. Today Springfield houses a community center.

The adjacent 5-acre property, the Gilbert Nature Reserve, was purchased by the Trust in 1973 to protect its rural character from potential development. The reserve is crossed with short footpaths that begin at the southwest side of the parking lot and connect the property to the Railway Trail. The paths start in thick brush and wind past wooded sections of native cedar and palmetto trees that are thick with warblers and other woodland birds.

Activities

DIVING

Blue Water Divers (☞ 234-1034; Robinson's Marina; 1-2-tank dive \$55/75; ☞ 8am-6pm) is a reputable dive operation that also offers snorkel tours (\$40).

For a fun diversion – and you don't even have to be a swimmer – sign up with **Greg Hartley's Under Sea Adventure** (☞ 234-2861; Watford Bridge; adult/child \$58/44; ☞ departures 10am & 1:30pm Apr-Nov) helmet dive operation and take a walk on the ocean floor.

CUP FEVER

For two days in midsummer, in even-numbered years, Somerset becomes the center of the universe for absolutely everyone in Bermuda.

Thousands of people flock to the otherwise-sleepy village for Cup Match, filling the streets leading up to the Somerset Cricket Club, all of which sport apt names: Bat 'n' Ball Lane, Grandstand Lane and Cricket Lane. Bet-starved Bermudians crowd the Crown 'n Anchor gaming tables for the only public gambling allowed on the island all year. Food booths dish up steaming plates of conch stew, mussel pie and fried fish, and Somerset fans adorn themselves in their team's colors of light and dark blue. Their opponents, who come from St George's, can be identified by their garb of dark blue and red colors.

Don't fret if you can't grasp the lingo. What's a square leg, you wonder? A silly mid off? A sticky wicket? Just ask and Bermudians will gladly fill you in. Cricket fever is infectious...

BOATING

Somerset Bridge Water Sports (☞ 234-0914; Robinson's Marina; kayak/canoe/motorboat per 4hr \$40/50/120; ☞ 9am-5pm) handles water-related gear, with everything from snorkel sets (\$6) to fishing gear (\$15) and boat rentals.

HIKING

A 2.3-mile stretch of the **Railway Trail** (p34) runs from Southampton Parish to Somerset Village. The section on Somerset Island is open to both hikers and scooters and is a scenic stretch, with views of the Great Sound along the way. En route, the Railway Trail passes the eastern sides of Scour Hill Fort Park, the Heydon Trust Estate and the Gilbert Nature Reserve, offering hikers some nice diversions.

WATERSKIING

Bermuda Waterski Centre (☞ 234-3354; Robinson's Marina; per hr \$120; ☞ 8am-7:30pm May-Sep) offers slalom, trick skis, tubes and knee boards.

TENNIS

Willowbank Hotel (☞ 234-1616; 126 Somerset Rd; per court per hr \$8; ☞ 8am-6pm) has two Plexipave tennis courts open to the public for a fee and free for hotel guests. Lessons and tennis equipment rental are available.

Sleeping

Cambridge Beaches (☞ 234-0331, in the USA ☞ 800-468-7300; www.cambridgebeaches.com; 30 King's Point Rd; r winter/summer from \$305/370; ☞ ☞) Bask in the sun on your choice of five private beaches at this exclusive hideaway resort spread along a 25-acre peninsula at the northernmost point of Somerset Island. It's got it all – elegant rooms, breakfast included and

pampering facilities that include a health spa, indoor and outdoor pools, tennis courts and a marina with a complimentary ferry to Hamilton. Most anything else you can imagine from kayaking to deep sea fishing is available and guests receive a temporary membership to all Bermuda golf courses.

Willowbank (☞ 234-1616, in the USA ☞ 800-752-8493, in Canada ☞ 800-463-8444; www.willowbank.bm; 126 Somerset Rd; r winter/summer from \$135/170; ☞ ☞ ☞) A wholesome family setting is offered at this nondenominational Christian hotel on the beach southwest of Somerset Village. Accommodations, which are in low-rise buildings spread around the 6-acre grounds, are straightforward but comfortable. The whole place is alcohol free; breakfast and dinner are included in the price. There are some religious services, mainly a morning Bible study and evening hymn sessions, but they are optional. The grounds have two tennis courts, a shuffleboard and a playground.

Eating

Salt Rock Grill (☞ 234-4502; 27 Mangrove Bay Rd; lunch \$8-15, dinner \$14-32; ☞ noon-4pm & 6-10pm; ☞ ☞) Sit on the terrace and enjoy superb grilled fare while watching the sun set over Mangrove Bay. Everything about this place is a class act. The menu is creative – try the barbecued wahoo club sandwich for lunch. Dinner specialties include Dijon rack of lamb and fresh local seafood like spiny lobster thermidor and char-grilled tuna. Every Sunday until 4pm one of Bermuda's very finest codfish breakfasts (\$14) is also on offer. And if you want a dessert to remember, try the cognac pumpkin cheesecake!

New Traditions (☞ 234-3770; 2 Middle Rd; breakfast & lunch \$4-10, dinner \$9-20; ☞ 6am-9pm Mon-Sat; ☞ ☞)

Come here for the tasty codfish-cake sandwiches served up with a smile in a quintessentially local atmosphere. When it's available, the spicy bean soup makes a perfect accompaniment. Everything here is home-style, made from scratch. Breakfast includes the usual pancake and egg dishes, and at dinner there are steaks and hearty seafood meals.

Somerset Country Squire (☎ 234-0105; 10 Mangrove Bay Rd; lunch \$8-14, dinner \$15-28; 🕒 11:30am-4pm & 6:30-10pm; 🍷) A cozy pub atmosphere and well-prepared local seafood are the catch at this old Somerset village favorite. At lunch the menu revolves around traditional pub fare with sandwiches, chowder and steak-and-kidney pie. At dinner, the broiled Bermuda rockfish and sirloin steak take center stage. In summer, you can opt to sit at the outdoor patio that overlooks Mangrove Bay.

Dean's Bakery (☎ 234-2918; 17 Somerset Rd; items \$1-4; 🕒 6:30am-6pm Mon-Sat) If you're looking for quick eats, search out this small bakery west of the police station in the center of the village. Dean's bakes up a mean apple turnover and inexpensive sandwiches and meat pies.

Marketplace (☎ 234-0626; 48 Somerset Rd; 🕒 7am-10pm Mon-Sat, 1-5pm Sun) Somerset's grocery store is opposite Springfield and the Gilbert Nature Reserve.

Entertainment

Salt Rock Grill (☎ 234-4502; 27 Mangrove Bay Rd) On weekends this restaurant turns into the hottest nightclub at this end of the island. On Friday and Saturday evenings the place caters to diners, with a pianist playing golden oldies. When the clock strikes 10pm, the tables are cleared and a DJ and dancers take to the floor until 3am. On Sundays from 8pm to midnight an R&B band performs.

Getting There & Around

BOAT

The Blue Route of the public ferry (p154) provides service between the City of Hamilton and Sandys Parish. Some of the trips are nonstop from Hamilton to the Royal Naval Dockyard, but five to seven of the runs each day make intermediate stops at Somerset Bridge, Cavello Bay, Watford Bridge and Boaz Island. The order of the stops varies with the sailing – so it can take as little as 30

minutes to get to Somerset from Hamilton or as long as 1¼ hours, depending on which boat you catch.

On weekdays, the first ferry departs Hamilton at 6:25am, the last at 6:15pm (9:45pm in summer); the first boat from Somerset Bridge is at 7:40am on weekdays, the last at 7:30pm (10:20pm in summer). The schedule is lighter on weekends. The one-way fare between any two points on the Blue Route is \$4.

BUS

Bus Nos 7 and 8 operate along the main road through Sandys. When you're boarding in the City of Hamilton, take note of the destination marked on the front of the bus, as some of these buses only go as far as Barnes Corner in Southampton Parish; others stop in Somerset Village, and still others go on to the Royal Naval Dockyard. The service between Hamilton and Somerset Village (\$4.50, 55 minutes) runs once every 15 minutes during the day and about once every 30 minutes in the evening, with the last bus in either direction at around 11:45pm (10:45pm Sunday).

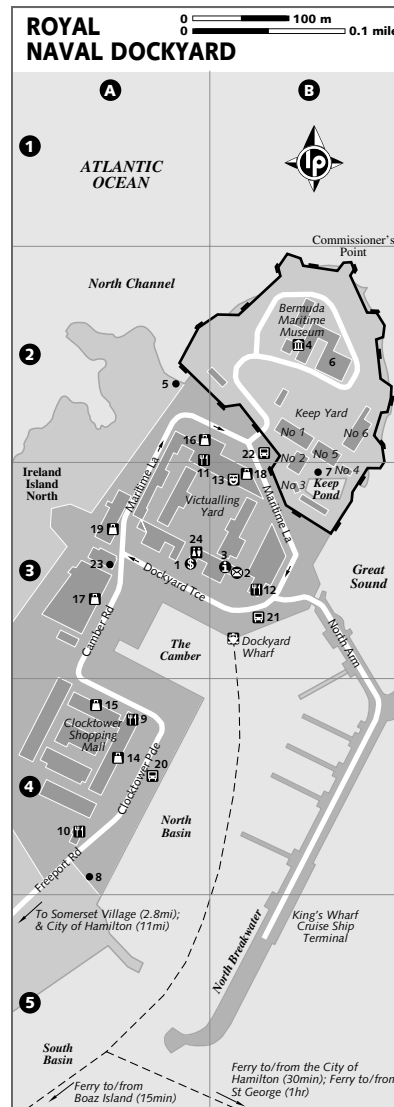
For more information on public buses, including passes, see p155).

ROYAL NAVAL DOCKYARD

This fascinating place is like no other in Bermuda. Once dubbed the 'Gibraltar of the West,' this immense former naval base has something for everyone.

The Dockyard's handsome old stone buildings that once served the mighty Royal Navy now buzz with vacationing tourists. The former Keep has been turned into a maritime museum. The Cooperage, where barrels were made, is now the site of an atmospheric pub, a movie theater and a craft market. The handsome twin-towered naval administration building on the waterfront has been turned into a shopping center, called the Clocktower Mall.

You could easily while away a full day here. Most people visit the Royal Naval Dockyard to have lunch at one of the restaurants and browse for souvenirs. But there's much more to do than that. The Bermuda Maritime Museum is the island's most extensive history museum and well worth a couple of hours of your time. And strolling about the rest of the Dockyard



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History

After the American Revolution in 1776, the British, who were no longer able to use ports in the former American colonies, needed a new naval base that had the capacity to repair warships and serve as a midway station between Nova Scotia and the British West Indies.

Bermuda fit the bill. The Royal Navy selected Ireland Island at Bermuda's western tip, which provided a natural deepwater cove, a huge sheltered anchorage and commanding land and sea views of all approaches. Military engineers drew up surveys and construction began in 1810.

It was a huge undertaking. Most of the back-breaking work was carried out by British convicts quartered in 'prison ships' – old, permanently docked hulks with unspeakably crowded conditions and wretched sanitation. Outbreaks of disease, including yellow fever, claimed hundreds of prisoners. In all, nearly 10,000 convicts were sent to Bermuda between 1814 and 1863 to work on the Dockyard and related projects.

with its curious buildings and fine water views can be an experience in itself.

Not all the sights are on land. Don a mask and explore the underwater world at the Bermuda Snorkel Park or swim with dolphins in the Keep Pond, a stone-lined pool once used to unload ammunition from warships and now home to Dolphin Quest.

The main elements of the Georgian-style, limestone-block Dockyard fort were completed in the 1820s, but construction on other buildings, including many of the magazines, continued until the 1860s.

One of the Dockyard's first military operations took place while the fort was still being built: during the War of 1812, a British fleet set sail from here in August 1814 on the infamous raid that sacked and burned Washington, DC. In the years that followed, the Dockyard not only kept tabs on American activities in the Atlantic, but also on French privateers in the West Indies.

In the 20th century, the Royal Naval Dockyard served as a North Atlantic base during WWI and WWII and was used briefly by NATO during the postwar period. Still, with the collapse of the British Empire, activities at the Dockyard base tapered off. Strapped for cash, the British Admiralty decided it no longer needed the remote outpost and in the 1960s the Royal Naval Dockyard was closed. Subsequently, the property was turned over to the Bermuda government for civilian use. In 1975 Queen Elizabeth II herself came to showcase the Dockyard's new life by inaugurating the opening of the Bermuda Maritime Museum within the walls of the old fortress.

Information

For tourist brochures and information pop in to the **Visitors Service Bureau** (☎ 234-3824; Dockyard Tce; ☎ 9am-5pm Sun-Fri, to 8:30pm some cruise ship days), where you can also buy phone cards, bus tokens and transportation passes. There's a small **post office** (☎ 234-0220; ☎ 10am-3pm Tue-Thu, to noon Fri) adjacent to the tourist office and a Bank of Bermuda ATM just west of the tourist office. You'll find pay phones around the Dockyard, including at the cruise ship terminal and Clocktower Mall. For Internet access, **Freeport Cybercafé** (☎ 234-1692; 1 Freeport Rd; per 30min \$6; ☎ 11:30am-10pm) is a lounge with six computers inside Freeport Seafood Restaurant.

Sights & Activities

BERMUDA MARITIME MUSEUM

Don't miss a visit to the **Bermuda Maritime Museum** (☎ 234-1418; Maritime Lane; adult/child \$10/5; ☎ 9:30am-4:30pm). With massive bastions this 6-acre fortress on the tip of the Dockyard known as the Keep is the real deal. And

keep it has; it's virtually unchanged since its construction in the 19th century. Indeed, to enter the gate of the Keep today you must still walk across the old moat footbridge.

More than anything, this place was an arsenal and the exhibits are in ordnance buildings. Their vaulted brick ceilings were once stacked high with munitions; these days each building contains a themed exhibit.

Building No 1, known as the **Queen's Exhibition Hall**, has exhibits on whaling and navigation with handcrafted model ships of the *Deliverance* and Bermudian-built schooners. A mighty 5000 barrels of gunpowder were once stored here. Notice the floors – they're layered in bitumen. This was done to prevent sparking when the gunpowder barrels were rolled across the floor. As a little insurance in the event that bitumen alone didn't handle the situation, the limestone walls were constructed a full 4ft thick to minimize damage from a potential explosion.

Out the back is the former **Shifting House** (Building No 2), erected in 1837 to temporarily store munitions unloaded from ships. Today it houses a fascinating collection of artifacts recovered from shipwrecks, including pieces of pewter and pottery from the *Sea Venture*, as well as gold coins, bars and jewelry recovered from 16th-century Spanish shipwrecks.

Building No 3 showcases a collection of Bermuda bills and coins, including specimens of the island's unique hog money, while **Building No 4** displays period maps and paraphernalia from early explorers. The **Forster Cooper Building** (Building No 5) is a former cooperage that made the all-essential barrels that stored everything from ale to gunpowder.

The **Boatloft** (Building No 6) pays tribute to the island's maritime heritage. The prize here is the collection of handcrafted Bermuda dinghies, 14ft boats made of Bermuda cedar and driven by oversized sails.

When you're done browsing the buildings in the yard, walk through the gate to the upper grounds. The path leads onto the lofty **fortress walls** that are still dotted with old cannons and offer panoramic views of the surrounding seas. On the highest point on the museum's grounds, you'll find the **Commissioner's House**. This grand old building, sporting a unique cast iron and lime-

stone construction, was built by convicts in 1823 to house the Dockyard commissioner. Its rooms hold heritage displays that explore the backgrounds and contributions of Bermudians.

BERMUDA SNORKEL PARK

Jump into a bathing suit and explore the undersea world at the **Bermuda Snorkel Park** (☎ 234-6989; Maritime Lane; admission free, snorkel rental per day \$20, kayak rental per hr \$25; ☎ 9am-6pm May-Oct). The park's shallow lagoon is fronted with a nearshore reef that's home to several varieties of tropical fish, including bright butterfly fish, turquoise wrasses and large coral-chopping parrotfish. But they're not the whole show. The park sits beneath towering fortress walls and the water contains a handful of colonial-era cannons that were apparently shoved over the ramparts when they proved defective.

The attendant can give you the skinny on where to look for cannons, and if you're heading here from elsewhere on the island, call ahead to inquire about water conditions. The wind sometimes picks up here, making the water choppy even when it's calm elsewhere around Bermuda. When you've finished snorkeling there's a sandy beach where you can soak up some rays, as well as showers and changing rooms.

DOLPHIN QUEST

Ever dreamed of swimming with dolphins? **Dolphin Quest** (☎ 234-4464; www.dolphinquest.org; Bermuda Maritime Museum, Maritime Lane; 30/60 min programs \$150/275; ☎ 9:30am-4:30pm) fulfils the fantasy, operating out of a pool in the Keep Yard at the Bermuda Maritime Museum. The pool the dolphins swim in is connected to the ocean by a sluice gate, which allows the water to circulate while keeping the dolphins from beating their tails back out to sea. These guys are actually quite domesticated and relate well with people, and a couple of them were born right here in the pool. Call ahead for reservations if you'd like to join Flipper for a swim. Participants must be at least eight years old and be good swimmers.

OTHER WATER SPORTS

Windjammer Watersports (☎ 234-0250; Freeport Rd; half-day kayak rental s/d \$50/55; ☎ 9am-5pm) does a little bit of everything related to the water. Half-day rentals include Sunfish sailboats

(\$60), windsurfing gear (\$55), motorboats (\$115) and fishing gear (\$15).

TRAIN TOUR

The **Bermuda Train Company** (☎ 236-5972; adult/child \$27/14) offers a 90-minute guided tour in summer around the Dockyard and Somerset Village on its 'miniature motorized train.' Tours are usually twice daily, at 9:30am and 1pm, but depend on cruise ship passenger demand.

Eating

Frog & Onion (☎ 234-2900; Cooperage Bldg, Maritime Lane; lunch \$10-18, dinner \$14-29; ☎ 11:30am-midnight, closed Mon in winter; ☎) This pub-restaurant takes its spirit and its name from its two owners, one French and one Bermudian. Burgers and pub grub shore up lunch, while dinner adds on heavy-hitters like steak and grilled tuna. You might notice a pattern as you read the menu – the items are named after Old English pubs; choose from 'Tumbledown Dick' (salmon and crab cake), 'Bishop's Head' (curried chicken) and 'Snooty Fox' (vegetarian linguine). Truly a pub lover's pub!

Beethoven's (☎ 234-5009; Clocktower Mall; breakfast \$4-12, lunch \$7-15, dinner \$17-30; ☎ 9am-9:30pm; ☎) With two Swiss chefs running the kitchen, you can bet on reliably good continental cuisine at this chic restaurant. Look for fine pastries and indulgent Belgian waffles for breakfast, sumptuous salads at lunch and robust dinner offerings such as braised duck à l'orange and Angus steak in wine sauce. In the evening, when candlelight sets the tone, it's easily the most romantic choice in the Dockyard.

Pirate's Landing (☎ 234-5151; 6 Dockyard Tce; lunch \$8-15, dinner \$10-20; ☎ 11:30am-10pm; ☎) Set at the end of the cruise ship dock, people really do jump off the ship and land here, though presumably few are pirates. Because of its outdoor tables and water view, on sunny days this place really packs in a crowd. The mainstay of sandwiches and burger fare pairs well with a frosty beer and convivial chatter. At dinner the Landing offers more substantial meat and pasta meals – nothing fancy but all reasonably priced.

Freeport Seafood Restaurant (☎ 234-1692; 1 Freeport Rd; mains \$7-20; ☎ 11:30am-10pm; ☎) It might seem surprising in the tourist-driven Dockyard to find a solidly local eatery. But here it is, in a quieter corner opposite the

south side of the Clocktower Mall. Freeport makes a good fish sandwich and respectable pizza, pasta and curry dishes. But the real find here is the takeout counter, where you'll find freshly baked pastries and an unbelievable curry pie (\$4).

Entertainment

Frog & Onion (☎ 234-2900; Cooperage Bldg, Maritime Lane; 🕒 11:30am-midnight, closed Mon in winter; 🍷) This pub and restaurant is the main place for nighttime activity in the Dockyard, whether you want to shoot pool, have a drink or dance. The place livens up on nights the cruise ships are in dock, with a DJ spinning tunes from 10pm to 3am. In winter it's a quieter scene, but on weekends there's sometimes live music.

Neptune Cinema (☎ 234-2923; Cooperage Bldg, Maritime Lane) This theater opposite the Frog & Onion shows first-run Hollywood movies.

Shopping

The Royal Naval Dockyard has two distinct shopping areas. If you're looking for handi-crafts and other Bermuda-made items, the Cooperage area is the place to head. If you want to do more serious shopping for fashionable clothing, fragrances, jewelry and the like, stop off at the Clocktower Mall, which essentially has a sampling of some of the high-end shops found in Hamilton.

COOPERAGE AREA

Dockyard Glassworks & Bermuda Rum Cake Company (☎ 234-4216; Maritime Lane) A fun place, whether you're shopping or not. Watch glassblowers at work, sample island-made rum cakes and, if tempted, take home the final products. The yummy rum cakes are made with black seal rum and spiced up with your choice of ginger, coconut or chocolate. The glass ranges from inexpensive tree frog figurines to cool wind chimes and large vases.

Bermuda Arts Centre (☎ 234-2809; Maritime Lane) Come to this gallery shop to buy quality works by local artists in a variety of media including woodwork, paintings, jewelry, batiks and prints. Several artists have permanent studios in the center, including internationally known Chesley Trott, who sculpts with fragrant native Bermuda cedar.

Bermuda Clayworks (☎ 234-5116; Camber Rd) You can watch as potters create decorative din-

nerware with island-themed designs, such as dolphins and cottages. Or try your hand yourself. Visitors can paint a dish, mug or other piece of pottery and have it glazed and fired before leaving the island.

Bermuda Craft Market (☎ 234-3208; Maritime Lane) Craft booths of varying quality are set up here, most with locally made handicrafts such as candles, dolls, jewelry, handprinted T-shirts and similar items that could make good souvenirs.

CLOCKTOWER MALL

Among the many shops and galleries in the mall are branches of two of Bermuda's leading department stores.

AS Cooper & Sons (☎ 234-4156) Everything from designer clothing and perfumes to Wedgwood porcelain and Waterford crystal.

A Taste of Trims (☎ 296-1290) Sells the island's best polo shirts and Bermuda shorts, plus a few souvenir items such as gourmet jams and jellies.

Makin Waves (☎ 234-5319) This shop specializes in beach items such as bathing suits, sunglasses, sun hats, T-shirts and sandals.

Michael Swan Gallery (☎ 234-3128) Features the work of Bermuda artist Michael Swan, with some nice pastel prints of Bermuda scenes.

Dockyard Linens (☎ 234-3871) For a little bit of Bermuda with an English accent, take a look at the bun warmers and tea towels here, most decorated with Bermuda flower prints.

ER Aubrey Jewellers (☎ 234-4577) Offers a large selection of earrings, bracelets, pendants and other jewelry.

Crisson (☎ 234-2223) Best known for its selection of fine watches, ranging from

high-end brands like Rolex and Omega to some moderately priced Seiko and Casio watches.

Getting There & Around

The ferry between Hamilton and the Royal Naval Dockyard makes an interesting alternative to the bus, offering different views along the way; you might want to take the boat one way and the bus the other.

BOAT

The Dockyard is served by three lines of the public ferry (p154). Speediest is the Orange Route, which stops at the Dockyard in each direction on its run between the City of Hamilton (\$4) and the Town of St George (\$4). The thrice-daily service operates in summer only, leaving Hamilton at 9:30am, noon and 2pm, arriving at the Dockyard in 20 minutes and departing 10 minutes later for the one-hour trip to St George. The boat then leaves St George at 11:15am, 1:30pm and 3:45pm, makes the one-hour trip to the Dockyard, and departs from the Dockyard at 12:30pm, 2:30pm and 4:55pm for the 20-minute trip back to Hamilton.

The Blue Route runs between Hamilton and the Dockyard at least 16 times a day on weekdays and a dozen times on weekends, with services more frequent in the summer. The first boat from Hamilton leaves at 6:25am on weekdays, 9am on weekends. The last boat leaves the Dockyard at 6:35pm on weekdays and Saturdays (10:50pm in summer) and at 5:30pm on Sundays. It costs \$4 and takes between 30 and 75 minutes,

depending on whether you catch a nonstop Hamilton-Dockyard boat or one that stops elsewhere in Sandys Parish en route (p134).

In addition, the Green Route (p126) between Hamilton and Southampton, the Rockaway Express, goes on to the Dockyard (\$4) from Southampton at 4:30pm every day except Sunday.

BUS

Bus No 7, which travels via the south shore, leaves the Royal Naval Dockyard for the City of Hamilton (\$4.50, 1 hour) at 20 and 50 minutes past the hour, and bus No 8, which travels to Hamilton via Middle Rd, leaves the Dockyard at five and 35 minutes past the hour. On weekdays, buses operate on this schedule from 6:35am to 6:35pm, after which there are a few staggered night buses, the last leaving the Dockyard at 11:50pm. On Sunday the schedule is slightly lighter and there's no bus service from the Dockyard after 6:35pm.

From the City of Hamilton the Dockyard-bound buses begin at 6:45am on weekdays and 9:30am Sundays, with the last bus leaving at 10:45pm daily. If you pick up a No 7 or 8 bus in Hamilton, make sure that it reads 'Dockyard,' as not all buses continue that far.

For more information on public buses, including passes, see p155.

MOTOR SCOOTER

Scooter rentals (p157) are available from **Oleander Cycles** (☎ 234-2764; Maritime Lane) at the west side of the Royal Naval Dockyard.

THE TIDES OF TIME

At first glance it might seem redundant that the Clocktower Mall, which once served as an administration building for the Royal Navy, has two separate 100ft-high clocktowers. If you look closer, you'll notice that the clocks on the two towers read differently – but that's by design, not error. As with everything else in the Dockyard, the clocks had a practical purpose related to the sea: one was installed to show the actual time, the other to indicate the time of high tide.

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