



Anguilla

The Island for Sand, Sun, Water, Great Food and Meeting Friendly Locals and Tourists

Anguilla means "eel" in Spanish. It's a three-mile long, flat, scrubby island with the bluest water and some of the Caribbean's most spectacular beaches.

Anguilla is easily reached by a 20-minute ferry boat from its largest and much more commercial neighbor, St. Martin, on the French side or by private charters like Funtime directly from the airport on the Dutch side, St. Maarten. (Your hotel will arrange your pick-up for Funtime. The cost is \$40 one-way and they take credit cards. It saves you a lot of time not taking a taxi from the airport to the local ferry and cost with taxi and fees is pretty similar.)

Besides the beaches, one of the biggest attractions are the friendly, welcoming people. I did not see any begging or nastiness and the island is known for very little crime. Of course, you should always exercise common sense anywhere you go. I walked miles of beaches and back roads and was greeted as a local with lots of "Everything's all right? Right? in a lyrical patois of Island English.

History

Anguilla chose to leave the English Association with St. Kitts and Nevis in 1967. There was a brief, comical invasion in St. Kitts. They remained a crown colony of Great Britain. In 1982, it was granted its own constitution and today it is a British protectorate.

What to Do and What to See

1. Beachcomb – Walk the miles of over 30 gorgeous beaches, swim, snorkel, visit a beach with huge waves to jump or one that has the calmest water, read a book under an umbrella.
2. Walk the back roads and see island life – small shacks selling barbeque and grilled fish, little shops or the local supermarket with an upstairs boutique selling stiletto heels, costume jewelry, t-shirts, etc.
3. Rent a car or take a taxi – explore the island
 - a. See the capital – The Valley with malls, art galleries, a few shops, an 18th century Great House to visit.
 - b. Sandy Ground – a small village with a working port, restaurants, beach bars, boat charters for sightseeing or deep sea fishing.
 - c. Play tennis at a neighboring hotel for a fee or arrange to play golf at the Island Golf Club.

- d. Visit gorgeous Scilly Cay, a small cay offshore from Island Harbour. Call 497-5123 or just wave from the pier and they will come and get you for a day. Snorkeling and a lobster lunch about \$50. Closed Mondays.
- 4. Get up early and go to Island Harbour to watch the fishing boats return.
- 5. Go to Shoal Bay East if you want more tumult, lots of bars, restaurants, people watching, tourists and of course, miles of gorgeous beach to roam.
- 6. Go to St. Martin for the day. Take the ferry from Blowing Point to French St. Martin. Shop in town or at the market by the port. A few lunch suggestions from friends that are frequent St. Martin visitors.
 - ✓ La Vie en Rose in the Harbour area – upstairs with a panoramic view of the harbor. Reservations 490-87-54-42
 - ✓ Tropicana in marina area – Pricey but with great views and food. Reservations: 590-87-79-07
- 7. Enjoy a well-deserved nap or just do nothing but look at the beautiful sea. Enjoy a sunset over the water or an early morning visit to the beach just to see the sunrise.
- 8. Your hotel staff can make arrangements for all activities including a massage, snorkeling, fishing, horseback riding, tennis, golf, restaurant reservations, taxis, car rentals, etc.

Anguilla – In United States, Anguilla Tourist Board 1-877-426-4845

- 1. A few websites besides the hotels
www.anguillavacation.com
www.mycaribbean.com
- 2. Currency – They accept American dollars. Credit cards are accepted at all hotel and in many restaurants and some shops.
- 3. Reference books that I used *Frommer's Caribbean*, *Fodor's Caribbean 2012*, *Cadogan's Caribbean and Bahamas*
- 4. Island Car Rental– about \$45 plus taxes
 Apex/Avis Telephone 497-2642, avisxa@anguillanet.com
 Connors Car Rental, 497-6433, lucy@saintmartin.net
 Island Car Rental, 497-2723, islandcar@anguillanet.com
 *Must present a valid driver's license to obtain a local license
- 5. Taxis – Expensive, a short 10-minute trip is about \$10. To go across the island could be \$30 or rent the taxi for a day for about \$60.

How to Get to Anguilla

1. Fly to St. Martin

American Airlines flies Detroit to Miami, Miami to St. Maarten

Delta flies Detroit via Atlanta to St. Martin

American Airlines to San Juan; San Juan to Anguilla on Liat (liatairline.com) 1-268-480-5601

U.S. Air has daily flights from Charlotte and Philadelphia to St. Maarten.

Affordable Hotels

BEST VALUE – Hotel Anacaona, offers the most value for the price on the island, hosted by Robin and Susan Richetts. They came to the island 27 years ago to manage and oversee the construction of the elegant Malliouhana Hotel (which is now closed). I was one of the first guests there when they were building and only had four gorgeous rooms open. Anacaona's prices, even in high season, run from \$250 to \$500 for a three-bedroom suite. The hotel has two lovely pools, is a five minute walk to the beach where they have lounge chairs and are in the process of building a small beach bar. There is a nicely landscaped garden and my room had a small terrace overlooking the garden which is complete with a rooster and a few chickens. Some rooms on the second and third floor have a view of the ocean. Their staff is truly extremely friendly and helpful without any pretensions. I complained that the only mirror was above my head in the bathroom. The next morning the maintenance man knocked on my door and brought in and installed a full-length mirror on the bedroom wall. That's what I call service. My rate before December 20 was \$120 a night plus tax.

Telephone 877.647.4736 or 264.497.6827

Email info@anacaonahotel.com

Website www.anacaonahotel.com

GREAT VALUE - Carimar Hotel, another excellent hotel at the other end of Mead's Bay is the Carimar Beach Club, literally right on the beach. It consists of six villas around a courtyard. No pool or restaurant. 24 units total. Villas one and six are oceanfront and have terraces where you relax and watch and listen to the sea. Prices off season were \$225-\$295 a night. All rooms are suites - bedrooms, living room and full kitchen. Winter rates \$390-\$470 for one bedroom suites. They have two tennis courts and water sport equipment. Check their specials, before Christmas they offered seven nights for the price of five nights. Restaurants like Jacala, Straw Hat and Blanchards are minutes away or cook your own breakfast and lunch.

Meads Bay, Anguilla BWI

Telephone 866.270.3764

www.carimar.com

Email carimar@carimar.com

Frangipani Beach Resort, also on Meads (more expensive, but very popular), offers one, two or three bedroom suites with stainless steel kitchens, ocean views and large living rooms. They have a large infinity pool overlooking Meads Bay and the popular Straw hat Restaurant is part of the complex. Open for breakfast, lunch or dinner. Winter rates, 18 units including breakfast \$385 - \$525, double off-season \$325 - \$425.

Telephone 1-877-593-8988 or 264 497-6442
www.frangipaniresort.com

On Rendezvous Bay – Anguilla Great House - The quietest, most laidback on a gorgeous beach with very simple cottages. Thirty-five rooms - 17 with ocean view porches, 18 with garden view. Winter rates are \$310-\$340 + 20% tax and service and summer rates first three weeks of January and April 1 to September 30. Fall rates, October 1 to December 15, are \$210 - \$240. Summer rates, April 1 – September 30, are \$190 - \$240. The restaurant has a very pleasant atmosphere, but limited selection especially of fresh fish. You may want to go out for some meals. Cuisinart is just a 10-minute walk away down the beach.

800.583.9247
www.anguillagreathouse.com

Serenity Cottages

On the quiet end of Shoal Bay, several people recommended Serenity Cottages, 18 units. Off-season rates are \$195-\$225 studio, and \$295-\$325 one bedroom suite. Winter Rates are \$325-\$350 studio, \$425-\$450, one-bedroom suite. Restaurant, bar, garden and great sea views from rooms and balconies. The sea can be rough here but a short walk on the beach takes you to calmer waters.

Shoal Bay East
PO Box 309
The Valley Anguilla BWI
264.497.3328
www.serenity.ai

Restaurants

On Meads Bay, inexpensive to moderate

1. Hotel Anacaona will serve you at the beach from their restaurant, the Firefly. Order ahead or you can walk the five minutes to hotel restaurant facing the lovely pool. Sandwiches, salads, pasta and seafood are available.
2. Hotel Viceroy – restaurant overlooking pool and beach. You can enter from the beach. Menu – moderate to expensive to very expensive
3. Straw Hat – outdoor terrace dining at Frangipani Hotel – I had “my first lobster cake” for lunch. It was superb.
4. Blanchards – a very elegant, expensive restaurant, considered one of the best in the Caribbean for dinner. Just opened a delightful inexpensive beach bar. I had a cold seafood platter for about \$15. Sandwiches and salads started at under \$10. P.S. I met the charming New England owners, Melinda and Robert Blanchard, and read their fascinating book, *A Trip to the Beach*, about leaving New York and Rhode Island for Anguilla 27 years ago and started a restaurant. A must read if you go to Anguilla
5. Jacala – another gourmet formal dinner restaurant on Meads Bay. Expensive. I did not eat there but was told the food was excellent from frequent island visitors.

There are dozens more all over the island, consult with your hotel staff. I never heard of a terrible one.

Oh, I forgot Lucy's at Long Bay. I had a delicious lobster salad for lunch while Lucy regaled me with her fascinating life stories and pictures of the grown children. I do believe someone could tape the islanders' stories and have a terrific "best seller."

Some Daytime Lunches on Other Beaches and Night Time Happenings

1. The week's excitement at Hotel Anacaona is the Thursday night local singers and musicians followed by everyone dancing and preceded by an Anguillan buffet of native dishes. \$50 for the dinner and entertainment.
2. On Rendezvous Bay, Go to chic Cuisinart for lunch or dinner and music at the beach on weekends or right next door to Cuisinart is Dune Preserve owned by the popular Anguillan singer and songwriter, Bankie Banx. It's a convivial spot on the beach to enjoy drinks, food, and entertainment. There is a small beach shack for barbeque between Cuisinart and Anguilla Great House.
3. On Cove Bay, drop in for lunch, swimming relaxing on the chaise at Smokey's. Call Smokey's at the Cove for dinner reservations and their weekend and some weeknight music schedules. Whether going for the evening or visiting for lunch and the day at the fabulous beach, you will probably meet fascinating, super friendly locals like Dave Fleming (he gave me a ride a few times to save me taxi fare) and the Grand Dame, proprietor, Lisa Gumbs. Mrs. Gumbs is owner of several island restaurants and properties. Her family led the revolution in the 60's against the association with St. Kitts and Nevis. Dave and Lisa are both chatty and you will learn a lot of interesting local island history.

Other favorite restaurants

Bar-B-Que on road behind Malliouhana - BJD's Barbeque on weekends in front of a little house, small tables under awning, a local family cooks and serves, very casual and inexpensive, attracts locals and tourists.

Check with your hotel about other interesting bars, music and special Anguillan happenings all over the island.