

Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands



A sparkling sea, soft white sand, and soothing sunshine are the gems of Grand Cayman. Add to that a history of pirates, pretty little pastel-painted houses, and you, too, will agree that Grand Cayman is charmingly beautiful.

The real beauty of Grand Cayman, however, is underwater. Sheer coral walls, subterranean drop-offs, and an incredible variety of marine life all submerged in clear and calm waters make it one of the world's favorite scuba diving and snorkeling spots. For those who don't like to get wet, you can still see the sights of the sea aboard a submarine.

Package Includes:

- Choice of accommodations
- Hotel taxes and service charges (except Indies Suites)
- Roundtrip transfers between airport and hotel
- Luggage handling
- Atlantis Adventures discount coupon
- Assistance of a local destination representative

Frequently Asked Questions

Who should go?

Divers

A sunken paradise garnished with coral reefs, colorful marine life, and subterranean drop-offs. The birthplace of recreational diving. Water visibility is 200 feet.

Honeymooners

Pure Caribbean beauty — the perfect setting for romance.

What's the climate like?

	Winter	Spring	Summer	Autumn
Average High	80° F	82° F	86° F	85° F
Average Low	74° F	75° F	81° F	79° F
Average Rainfall	2.0"	2.7"	6.9"	7.4"

Water temperature ranges between 78°-82°F in the winter and 82°-86°F in the summer.

How do I get around town?

Transfers

Transfers are included with your air and hotel vacation package. Grand Cayman's Owen Roberts International Airport is about five miles from the hotels along Seven Mile Beach.

Car

If you plan to explore beyond your hotel, a rental car is a great way to get around. Traffic is sparse around the island, except for West Bay Road, the main thoroughfare along Seven Mile Beach. Don't forget — drive on the left.

Taxi

For short trips into George Town, a taxi can be a good option. However, taxi fares on Grand Cayman are much more expensive than other Caribbean islands. The government sets fares, so no bartering is allowed. If in question, ask your taxi driver to look up the fare in their government-provided fare manual.

Motor Scooter/Bicycle

Scooters and bicycles can be rented at many hotels and at stands along the street. Remember to wear a helmet and drive on the left.

Walking

From the hotels along Seven Mile Beach, you can easily walk to shopping centers, restaurants, and entertainment along the main drag, West Bay Road. George Town is also small enough to walk around.

To Little Cayman or Cayman Brac

There is no ferry service to Grand Cayman's two little neighboring islands, Cayman Brac or Little Cayman. To reach them, you must fly.

Public Minibus

An inexpensive option to go any place on the island for \$2.50 USD.

What kinds of dining and nightlife are available?

Dining can be more expensive in Grand Cayman than in other Caribbean destinations, but the innovation and quality is also higher.

- **Almond Tree House**
Caribbean dining surrounded by the indigenous wildlife create an exotic atmosphere. Feast on specialties such as Cuban pork tenderloin, Asian jumbo shrimp, and almond snapper.
- **Casa Havana**
Located within the Westin Casuarina Resort on Seven Mile Beach, Casa Havana offers resort guests and non-guests an award-winning wine list as well as succulent gourmet cuisine, and a wonderful Sunday brunch.
- **Casanova Restaurant**
Enjoy homemade Italian cuisine in an intimate atmosphere complete with singing waiters.
- **Hemingway's**
Located within the Hyatt Regency Grand Cayman Resort, Hemingway's is considered one of the finest restaurants in Grand Cayman. Fresh seafood is the specialty and a Key West theme creates a casual atmosphere.
- **Hook's Seafood & Samurai Sushi**
A favorite of tourists and locals, Hook's features some of the best seafood on the island amongst a fun, pirate atmosphere with plank floors, cargo nets, buccaneer murals, and a galley-shaped bar.
- **Ye Olde English Bakery**
Perfect for early morning breakfasts, Ye Olde English Bakery boasts a good cup of coffee and fresh-baked goodies as well as full breakfasts of eggs, bacon, and sausage. Also open for lunch and dinner.

To find out about what's going on around Grand Cayman, visitors should check out What's Hot, an entertainment magazine freely distributed throughout the island or the Friday edition of the *Caymanian Compass*. A local favorite hangout is Legendz. Other fun can be found along West Bay Road and in downtown George Town.

Where should I go shopping?

The main streets for shopping are Fort Street and Cardinal Avenue in downtown George Town. Elizabethan Square is another great place to go for food, clothing, and souvenirs. Kirk Freeport Plaza has shops offering fine jewelry, plus duty-free china, crystal, perfumes, and fine cosmetics.

There is no sales tax in Grand Cayman and there are numerous duty-free shops, but be aware that not all imported merchandise is less expensive. One of the unique locally made items to look for is jewelry made of a stone called caymanite. Authentic sunken treasure is also

something to look for. Take note — it is illegal to take Cuban cigars back to the U.S. and buying any coral products is highly discouraged due to environmental concerns.

When are the local events?

Cayfest

April. A two-week festival celebrating the arts and culture of the Cayman Islands with local bands, drama and dance productions, arts and crafts, native food, and other fun.

Cayman Carnival Batabano

May. An annual festival begun in 1984 where visitors and locals alike can witness carnival as it ushers in the spring with a colorful parade of costumes, music, dancing, and culture.

One-Mile Swim

June. Locals and visitors try to come in with the fastest time in swimming the crystal clear waters of Seven Mile Beach. This is one of the world's most prestigious and richest swimming events with more than \$60,000 in cash and random prizes.

Pirates Week

November. A national festival of the Cayman Islands with music, dances, games, food and drink, parades, and fireworks! The party lasts 10 fun-filled days.

What are my golf and recreation options?

Golf

Experience spectacular ocean views in a luxurious tropical oasis. Stunning courses offer a magnificent blend of lush greens and fairways that will test golfers of every skill level.

Sportfishing

Grand Cayman has very good fishing. Along the reefs you'll find grouper and snapper and in deeper waters there are barracuda and bonito, as well as the big catches of tuna, wahoo, and marlin.

Snorkeling

One of the world's most unique snorkeling spots is Stingray City, where in 12 feet of water you can feed stingrays tame enough to eat out of your hand. Other popular sites are Parrot's Reef and Smith's Cove, south of George Town.

Scuba Diving

Diving is one of the primary attractions of Grand Cayman with more than 160 dive sites to choose from. Three of the best dive sites for beginners are Devil's Grotto, Eden Rocks, and the wreck of the Cali. For divers who like to explore sunken ships, there are the wrecks of the Balboa and Oro Verde to check out. The most spectacular site is the Great Wall, off the north side of the island with visibility often exceeding 100 feet, breathtaking coral formations, and an abundance of exotic marine life. Cayman Brac and Little Cayman also offer more spectacular diving with the most famous being Bloody Bay Wall, considered by Jacques Cousteau to be one of the world's top dives. The wall starts at a mere 18 feet and then plunges down to more than 1,000 feet with visibility reaching 150 feet in some spots.

Sailing

There is a strong commitment to developing the sport in the Cayman Islands. The Cayman Islands Sailing Club maintains a strong school and youth training program with Saturday sailing classes for children. Families are especially welcome.

Travel tidbits

Casual Divers

If you are only a casual diver and don't want to take the time to become PADI certified, Grand Cayman is still an ideal vacation destination as resort courses take only a couple of hours to learn the basics. And, dive operators can supply everything from air tanks and lead weights to masks, fins, and a buoyancy control device. It's also recommended that divers wait 24 hours after their last dive before flying.

Feeling SASY

SASY (Supplied Air Snorkeling for Youth) is a great way to introduce youngsters to the wonderful world under the sea. Kids ages 6 and up can use a scuba unit which combines a regulator and a buoyancy compensator so they can breathe from a continuous air supply while floating safely at the surface.

Boatswain's Beach

Formerly the Cayman Turtle Farm, Boatswain's Beach features an amazing array of turtles and other indigenous animals. You can explore the park and snorkel amid thousands of tropical fish. And, if you'd like to be one of the lucky few to release a green sea turtle to the ocean, an auction is held annually.

Buyer Beware

Grand Cayman is world-famous as being a duty-free port, but you may want to beware of the "Cruise Line Recommended" slogan when considering where to shop. "Cruise Line Recommended" has nothing to do with the quality of the products, and everything to do with paying an advertising fee on the cruise ships.

Good to Know:

Airport Name: 3-letter Code:	Owens Roberts International Airport GCM
Best Weather:	January – April
Best Values:	May – November
Currency:	Cayman Islands Dollar, but U.S. currency is accepted. When looking at the price, be sure to know which currency the price is being quoted.
Language:	English with a distinctive Welsh/Scottish/ English brogue
Time Zone:	Grand Cayman is on Eastern Standard Time year-round and does not observe Daylight Saving Time.
Proof of Citizenship:	Government legislation requires all people traveling via air to and from the United States and Canada to have a valid passport. For details on passports, visas, and health requirements, see Entry Requirements .
Tipping:	15%, but check to see if it has been added to your restaurant bill.
Dress:	More formal than other beach destinations, especially in the evening at the many fine restaurants.