NOTES	
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# PORT EXPLORER SHOPPING GUIDE

## Roseau DOMINICA

GENERAL INFORMATION When the first Europeans arrived in 1493 the Carib Indians who inhabited the island called it "Wai'tukubuli", meaning "Tall is her body". It is only conjecture but this probably refers to the island's towering mountains which rise to a height of over 4,000 feet above sea level. It was Christopher Columbus who named the island Dominica (Dom-in-ee-ka).

This is a volcanic island which geologists believe rose from the sea over 20 million years ago. If this dating is accurate it means Dominica is actually one of the youngest islands in the Antilles. Covered with rainforests and crisscrossed by rivers and streams while having little of the tourist industry infrastructure found throughout much of the Caribbean, it is easy to see why Dominica is often referred to as "The Nature Island of the Caribbean".

Once a fiercely defended island of the Carib Indians, Dominica has been under British or French control since the mid-1600s. Though ultimately British, colonial history combined with its location between the nearby islands of Martinique and Guadeloupe does much to explain the French cultural and linguistic influence.

The economic and political center of Dominica is the capital of Roseau (pronounced "rose-oh"). Located on the southwest coast of the island, the town is bordered by the Roseau River to the north and Morne Bruce (mountain) to the west. Roseau is the largest town on the island with a population hovering around 15,000. Though numerous devastating hurricanes, fires and floods have ravaged Roseau and much of Dominica over the centuries, the town still has a few buildings dating from the late colonial period. The people of Dominica are famously warm and welcoming, pleased and proud to show and share with visitors their "Nature Island of the Caribbean".

HISTORY As was the case with most of the islands throughout the Caribbean, by 300 AD Dominica had been settled by a peaceful Indian tribe commonly known as the Arawak. Over the centuries these gentle people had slowly made their way north, island hopping from the coast of Venezuela. Around 900 AD the warlike Carib Indians followed the same path up the archipelago from South America. They pushed out the Arawak and occupied many of the islands of the Antilles. They called this particular island Wai'tukubuli.

On November 3rd, 1493, sailing on his second voyage to the New World, Christopher Columbus and his men were the first Europeans to see Wai'tukubuli. The Admiral named the island Dominica (Latin for Sunday), the day of the week on which it was discovered. There was nothing on Dominica to generate any long term interest on the part of the Spanish; they were on the hunt for silver and gold.

A few halfhearted attempts at settlements were made by the French and English and a few unfortunate shipwrecked sailors washed up on its rocky shores. However the Carib Indians fought them off and drove them from the island. Over a century passed before the French, in 1635, claimed Dominica and made a serious effort to establish a colony. The Caribs retreated to the protection of the mountains for a time but they did not surrender. Carib attacks upon settlements were numerous, well planned, swift and deadly. By 1660 the French and British signed a treaty abandoning Dominica to the Caribs. But the lure of Dominica was too great for the Europeans and they soon returned.

Small farming estates differentiated Dominica from many of the other Caribbean islands where large sugar plantations and the accompanying slave culture dominated. African slaves were brought from neighboring islands but on Dominica the social climate was more lenient. That is not to say the institution







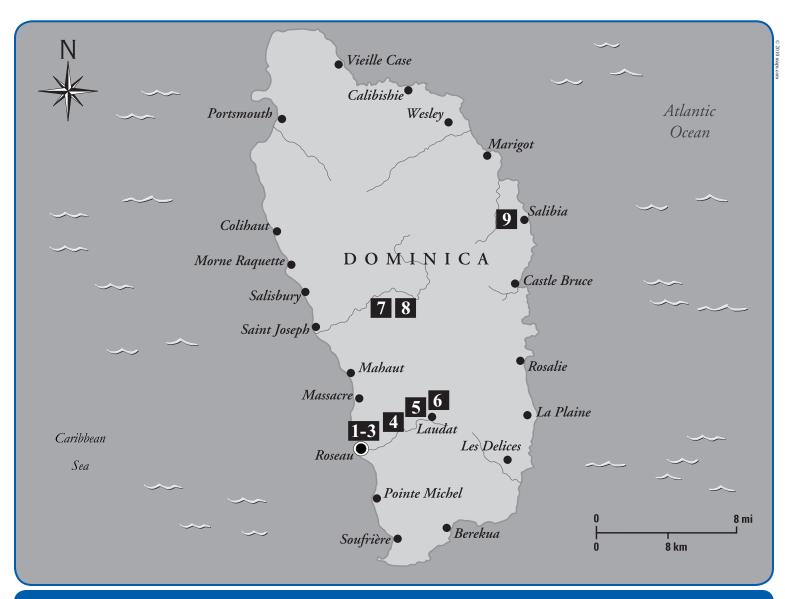


of slavery was enjoyed by those in bondage. However, on Dominica slaves were allowed to grow their own gardens and raise farm animals. This led to the creation of markets where some slaves were eventually able to earn enough to buy their freedom. Yet the life of slavery remained a terrible burden.

Hurricanes brought privation as crops were destroyed. The otherwise intolerable conditions combined to foster numerous slave revolts and uprisings. Those slaves who managed to escape their masters headed for the mountains, the jungle fortress of the Caribs. Over time so many slaves escaped that entire villages and communities sprang up across the island, hidden away. The runaways were known as the Maroons. In 1763 Dominica officially became a British possession and the Maroons were defeated. Slavery was not abolished on the island until 1834.

But what became of Dominica's Carib Indians? Preferring death to slavery throughout the Caribbean, as a people, the Caribs were virtually wiped out. Many Caribs also perished from European disease, against which they had no natural immunity. Today, greatly intermingled with the bloodlines of the former African slaves, in an area of eastern Dominica known as the Carib Territory there are believed to be the only remaining direct descendents of Caribs to be found anywhere in the Antilles. Numbering approximately 3,000, they are free to live according to their cultural traditions.

On November 3rd 1978, 485 years (to the day) after Christopher Columbus set eyes upon the island, the people gained their freedom from English colonial rule. Dominica became an independent republic within the British Commonwealth.



## PLACES OF INTEREST

#### ROSEAU PLACES OF INTEREST

1 The **Dominica Museum** offers visitors insight into the island's history from its geologic creation through the early Carib Indians, European discovery and colonization and on to 20th century independence.

The **Botanical Garden** was established in 1890. This is a beautiful setting consisting of over 150 different species of tropical flowers, plants and trees, many of them quite rare. The garden underwent slow and extensive renovation following Hurricane David (category 5) which mercilessly ravaged Roseau and Dominica in 1979.

3 Morne Bruce is a hill overlooking the Botanical Garden and town. It is a popular site for visitors to pull out their cameras. The lookout can be reached by car or a path leading up from the Botanical Garden.

### Beyond Roseau

4 Morne Trois Pitons National Park is a mountainous setting in the rainforest filled with waterfalls, amazing plants and birds, hot springs and volcanoes. Hiking paths allow visitors to reach the famous Boiling Lake. This natural treasure is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

5 Wotten Waven Sulphur Springs are another example of the island's volcanic activity. Some of the hot springs have man-made stone pools which allow visitors the opportunity to soak in the thermal baths.

**Ti Tou Gorge** is an amazing site in the gap of a mountain. There are hot and cold streams and pools which are great for swimming or soaking.

Trafalgar Falls and the Emerald Pool are beautiful twin waterfalls. There is a nice observation deck to take in the views while fellow visitors take advantage of the refreshing natural pools to enjoy a swim.

The **Layou River** is the island's largest. Tubes and knowledgeable guides are available to take visitors on an easy ride through some of the most beautiful scenery on Dominica.

Malinago Barana Aute (Carib Model Village) shares with visitors the arts and crafts, dance, customs and heritage of the ancient Carib Indians. Located in what is known as the Carib Territory, the Kalinago are believed to be the last surviving descendents of the Carib Indians who formerly populated many of the islands of the Antilles.

SHORE EXCURSIONS To make the most of your visit to Roseau and the surrounding area we suggest you take one of our organized Shore Excursions. For information concerning tour content and pricing, consult your Shore Excursion Brochure or contact the Shore Excursion Desk.

LOCAL CUSTOMS Bargaining: Prices are generally fixed. Local vendors may bargain.

Tipping: Some restaurants may add a 10-15% service charge. The same percentage is appropriate for taxis.

LOCAL CUISINE AND DRINK SPECIALTIES As is common throughout the many islands of the Caribbean the cuisine of Dominica is a combination of traditional West Indian, French and West African. Chicken Stew is a dish where the chicken is marinated with chilies, lemon juice, garlic and vinegar then added to sautéed garlic, thyme, coriander and onions. Vegetables, Créole sauce and water are added then covered and simmered. It is often served on a bed of white rice. Boiled Crabs are often prepared by sautéing onions and adding a mixture of coconut milk, thyme, garlic and curry powder with water and bring it all to a boil. Curried Goat is stewed with a mixture of onions, tomatoes, garlic, carrots and curry powder. Creole Banana Cake is a favorite desert which combines flour, eggs, bananas, cinnamon, vanilla, cream and lemon juice.

Red Cap, Soca and Macoucherie are popular rums produced on Dominica. Macoucherie is said to be the only island rum distilled from locally grown sugarcane.

SHOPPING The Old Market Plaza is close to the pier. This was the site of the slave market during the colonial era. Items of local interest include leather goods, woven baskets, island rum, lace and wood carvings. Some shops in the area offer the works of local artists.

LOCAL CURRENCY The official currency on Dominica is the East Caribbean dollar. U.S. dollars and major credit cards are widely accepted.

POST OFFICE AND TELEPHONE FACILITIES The main Post Office is located across from the ferry terminal on Bayfront.

Dial the following access numbers to use a personal calling card from a public phone:

AT&T: 1.800.225.5288 MCI: 1.800.888.8000

TOURIST INFORMATION The Tourist Information Center is located directly opposite the Roseau Cruise Ship Berth downstairs from the Museum on the Bayfront.

TRANSPORTATION Rental cars and taxis are available. Determine a fare prior to departure.

LANGUAGE English is the official language of Dominica. French based Créole, also known as Patois, is spoken by many of the islanders