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ST LUCIA



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Considered to be one of the most romantic of all destinations in the world, St Lucia is a strikingly beautiful tropical island situated at the heart of the Windward chain in the Eastern Caribbean between St Vincent and Martinique. The island is mountainous and fertile, its spectacular peaks and deep valleys draped in the lush greenery of the rainforest and blooming with tropical splendour. The stunning coastline offers variety from classic stretches of white-sand beaches to the dramatic cliffs and hidden coves, and has some of the finest natural harbours in the Caribbean. The iconic towering Pitons are just two of the island's natural wonders; the spectacular twin volcanic peaks rise majestically from the sea, midway down the Caribbean coast.

As well as being the perfect place to relax and do nothing, St Lucia offers visitors a colourful kaleidoscope of attractions to entertain them. Experience the adventure of exploring its sultry rainforest and swimming in its tropical waterfalls or take advantage of the excellent opportunities for snorkelling and diving in the clear turquoise waters surrounding the island which are home to a magnificent array of colourful marine life.

The Marquis Estate is located just 15 minutes from the George Charles Airport near Castries.





KEY FACTS ABOUT ST LUCIA

Population 170,650.

Capital Castries.

Area 616 sq km/238 sq m); 43 km/27 miles long 23 km/14 miles wide.

Geography St Lucia is a volcanic island with 158 km of coastline and is dominated by high peaks and rain forests and is known for the twin peaks of Gros Piton and Petit Piton on the southwestern coast. The highest peak is Mount Gimie – 958m. The island is divided into 11 quarters – Anse la Raye, Canaries, Castries, Choiseul, Dennery, Forest, Gros Islet, Laborie, Micoud, Soufriere, Vieux Fort. The island has 5 administrative parishes – Charlotte, St Andrew, St David, St George, St Patrick.

Time difference GMT -4.

Language Official language is English; the local dialect is French Patois.

Monetary unit Eastern Caribbean dollar EC\$ (fixed to the US Dollar); US dollars are widely accepted.

Airport Hewanorra International Airport on the southern tip of the island handles international flights. The George F.L. Charles Airport in Castries handles inter-Caribbean traffic.

Flight times 8 hours 45 minutes from London – BA and Virgin fly from Gatwick; Virgin fly from Manchester; 4 hours from New York – with American Airlines.

Climate Tropical climate with little seasonal temperature variation averaging 27°C; average daily sunshine is 8 – 9 hours; seasonal rainfall between June and December.

Location St Lucia is the second largest of the Windward Islands and part of the Lesser Antilles, with the Caribbean Sea on the west coast and the Atlantic Ocean on the east coast.

Government St Lucia is an ex-British colony and has been an independent state in the Commonwealth since February 1979; Governor General - Pearlette Louisy; Prime Minister - Stephenson King.

Economy In 2005 GDP grew by 5.1% Tourism and banana production are the main sources of income for St Lucia and the tourist industry is its biggest employer. Improvements in roads, communications and services infrastructure have attracted foreign investment. The World Bank has recently placed St Lucia in the top 30 countries in the world to invest, making St Lucia the only Caricom country to make the top 30.

Tourism St Lucia is considered to be the most romantic destination in the Caribbean and attracts a large number of visitors each year. In 2005 tourist visitors totalled over 700,000 mainly from the US and UK and tourism accounted for more than 48% of St Lucia's GDP. High season – mid Dec to mid April.



THINGS TO SEE & DO

Discover Castries, St. Lucia's bustling capital which is home to some beautiful colonial architecture, the La Toc Battery, the Central Library, the Derek Walcott Square which is the old centre of town where a 400-year-old samaan tree shades the uniquely decorated Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, built in 1897. There is excellent shopping in the town market and Bagshaws, where the art of silkscreening can be observed.

Gaze in awe at the magnificent Pitons, two extinct volcanoes that are St Lucia's most famous landmarks - Petit Piton (2438 ft) and Gros Piton (2618ft) – or if you're feeling energetic local guides will help you tackle the challenging climb.

Take a guided tour through the rainforest – choose from the Descartiers Trail at Soufriere and the Barre Del'isle Trail – and watch the birds at Bois d'Orange Swamp and Boriel's Pond.

Soar above the rainforest on a canopy tour. Adrenaline lovers can fly along a series of ziplines from 30 to 150m (100 to 500ft) in length connecting nine platforms 9 to 15m (30 to 50ft) above the ground.

Windsurf from the sandy beach of Anse de Sable, ideal for both novice and expert, or for more of a challenge for the more experienced surfers ride the waves at Cas en Bas and Vieux Fort.

Explore the underwater world and try snorkelling or scuba-diving to spot turtles, nurse sharks and seahorses. Popular diving sites include Anse Chastanet, Anse Le Raye, the Coral Gardens at the base of the Gros Piton, Fairy Land at the base of Anse Chastanet, and the Lesleen M Shipwreck and Superman's Flight.

Go whale watching and see up to 20 species, including sperm whales, pilot whales and humpbacks.

Visit the national landmark, Pigeon Island, a 40-acre islet connected by a causeway to St. Lucia's west coast which reflects a thousand years of history from the ancient Arawak artefacts left by the first Carib Indian settlers to the military buildings from the island's role in the French/British battles during colonization. See the remains of an 18th-century British fort and Fort Rodney where the Admiral for which it is named spied on the French ships from its strategic viewpoint. The Pigeon Island Museum is housed in a landmark former British officers' mess building, restored to its 1808 elegance.



THINGS TO SEE & DO (*CONTINUED*)

Stop by one of the picturesque villages on the island – Anse la Raye is a colourful fishing village where locals make dug-out canoes from gum trees; Choiseul is rich in history, crafts and spectacular views and home to a petroglyph carved centuries ago by the island's early inhabitants.

Sail into Marigot Bay, a secluded, palm-fringed yachtsman's paradise above which lies Cul de Sac, an area of three large banana plantations where the original Dr Doolittle was filmed.

Wander around Soufrière, which takes its name from the volcano and is the oldest town in St Lucia, known for its unusual marketplace decorated with colourful murals and gingerbread trim.

Admire St Lucia's waterfalls –the Diamond Falls Botanical Gardens which include mineral baths, the Toraille Waterfall and Gardens, the Piton Waterfall and the En Bas Saut Waterfall all near Soufriere, the Saltibus Falls at Choiseul, the Millet Waterfall, and the Latille Waterfall at Micoud.

Go back in time on a plantation tour to the colonial era; choose from Fond d'Or Nature Historic Park, La Sikwe Historical Sugar Mill & Plantation, the Fond Doux Estate, the Balenbouche Estate, the Morne Coubaril Estate or Errard Plantation.

Enjoy the local nightlife – at the Friday Night Fish Fry BBQ at Anse La Raye, Saturday Fish Fry at Dennery or the Friday Street Party at Gros Islet.

Visit in May for the annual Jazz Festival.



MAPS

St Lucia is situated at the heart of the Windward chain in the Eastern Caribbean between St Vincent and Martinique.



The Marquis Estate is situated on the stunning northeast coast of St Lucia just 15 minutes from the George Charles Airport near Castries, and occupies a breathtaking lush, tropical valley that sweeps majestically down to one of the most beautiful beaches in St Lucia, the Marquis Bay.





THE MARQUIS ESTATE

The developer intends that The Marquis Estate will be the finest resort in the Caribbean, bringing together some of the best brands and names from around the world to deliver a truly exceptional resort.

The Signature Golf Course will be designed to be both picturesque and challenging with fabulous views across the stunning landscape and Atlantic Ocean. This, combined with a marina that offers excellent facilities for cruising yachts, will ensure this exclusive resort is destined to become one of the Caribbean's finest luxury destinations.

The Marquis Estate is situated amongst some of the Caribbean's most attractive landscape on the stunning northeast coast of St Lucia and occupies a breathtaking 500 acre site in a wide lush, tropical valley that sweeps majestically down to one of the most beautiful beaches in St Lucia, the Marquis Bay, where with pristine white sands meet clear, turquoise waters that are perfect for scuba diving and snorkelling.

Originally the site of an 18th century sugar mill and more recently a banana plantation, the estate is resplendent with native fruit trees including mango, papaya, coconut, avocado, breadfruit, star fruit, plum and coffee. Tall flame flowers, orchids, jasmine, bougainvillea, oleander and hibiscus explode with colour and the bright red flamboyant tree attracts tiny iridescent humming birds.

An estate of this individuality requires considerable care to leave this piece of land better than it is. The developer plans to do this by ensuring the indigenous population's involvement and the protection of the wildlife and existing ecosystems to create a new legacy.





AMENITIES

Elegant bars and restaurants are planned for a number of key locations within the hotels, golf course, marina and The Island Sanctuary to provide a range of culinary experiences from fine dining to casual lunches.

The championship 18 hole signature golf course will be designed by a golfing legend to be both challenging and picturesque with fabulous views across the stunning landscape and Atlantic Ocean.

The casino will be developed by one of the best known Vegas operators, drawing inspiration from Las Vegas to deliver a world class gaming experience.

The stunning marina will offer excellent facilities for cruising yachts. Surrounded by a cosmopolitan array of waterfront cafes and high class boutiques and jewellery stores, it will also include The Marquis Estate Yacht Club which will enjoy spectacular ocean views from its members lounge and sun deck, and an infinity pool perfect for unwinding after a day's sailing.

One of the world's best known and most highly regarded architects is involved in the development of The Marquis Estate resort. Responsible for some of the most influential projects architecturally of the last 25 years and renowned for combining quality with environmental sustainability they promise to bring a differentiating pedigree to the architectural design of this resort.

The resort will also offer full conferencing and banqueting facilities for a maximum capacity of 500 people providing a stunning venue with exceptional five star services for events ranging from weddings to corporate business meetings. Business suites will also be available with a complete range of modern IT solutions to allow for presentations, conference calls or just an office away from home. The complete facility will leave you in no doubt that every detail has been considered.

The equestrian centre will be managed by highly qualified staff offering exemplary teaching facilities for all levels from beginner to advanced riders and will provide treks through the surrounding national park area. A world class Polo field will provide the perfect practice ground for international Polo players along with extensive stabling facilities.



AMENITIES

The Sports Academy will provide expert cricket, football and tennis coaching for both children and adult, and will be equipped with modern facilities which will attract international teams for out-of-season training.

The Fitness Centre comprises a full range of cardiovascular and physical training equipment including resistance weight machines, treadmills, bikes, cross trainers and rowing machines.

The Island Sanctuary Spa will have indoor and outdoor treatment suites providing a range of massages, beauty treatments and holistic therapies, as well as yoga, Pilates, Reiki and meditation.

Eco-friendly electric buggies equipped with GPS will enable guests to navigate the resort with ease as well as transporting golfers around the stunning 18 hole course.

Managed by a world-class hotel management company The Marquis Estate will offer unparalleled luxury, service and comfort with every attention to detail including a 24 hour concierge facility and a staff that will be attentive to your every need to ensure your stay is an idyllic experience.

All this will ensure that this exclusive resort will be the Caribbean's finest luxury destination.





PROPERTIES

Inspired by a vision of luxurious and elegant Caribbean living and intelligently designed by highly acclaimed architects, The Marquis Estate will comprise a distinctive collection of estate villas, townhouses and apartments that combines the grandeur of colonial-style plantation houses and contemporary luxury whilst embracing the essence of Caribbean architecture. Here you will find exotic sophistication within a setting of natural beauty.

Surrounded by lush tropical greenery, the properties will be meticulously designed and built using the very finest natural materials sourced from around the world. With coral stone accents and private plunge pools or Jacuzzis, the properties will not only look stunning but will be beautifully furnished and equipped with luxuriously appointed bathrooms and a state-of-the-art interactive entertainment system. The gardens will be carefully landscaped to create a resort that embraces its exotic natural environment and is in harmony with nature, complementing the island's natural beauty and creating a gem within a gem.

The Marquis Estate will also include The Island Sanctuary, an exotic, tropical paradise surrounded by fresh water channels and reached only by private bridge. Each of the villas on The Island is secluded from the outside world by a living boundary of lush greenery. Each of the luxurious villas has its own private grounds and is surrounded by channels of fresh water and tropical planting. Designed and built to the highest specification the villa offers elegant and spacious accommodation.



WHY INVEST

St Lucia is an increasingly popular holiday destination that is also one of the most accessible. In 2007 hotel occupancy was 69.7% meaning that there is excellent rental potential for properties. The total number of visitors increased by 19.4% between 2002 and 2007. In the period January to June 2008 stopover arrivals were up by 9.1%, with visitors predominantly from the USA (40%) and Europe (32.3%) and Canada (10.2%). Visitors from Canada were up by 46.9% year on year. In 2007 the total expenditure by visitors was \$808.3 million

The St. Lucian Government sees expansion of tourism as a key objective and has allocated an extra 148% funding to the tourism industry between 2004 and 2008, with an average increase of 27.7% per year. The allocation for the tourism sector in 2008/9 was \$53.6 million. St Lucia has been granted 'Approved Travel Destination Status' (ADS) by the Chinese Government and is currently developing strategic alliances with airlines and travel agents to bring Chinese tourists to the island.

Several new signature golf courses are being constructed which will make St Lucia a major golf destination and boost tourism. From 2009 Virgin Atlantic will increase its non-stop flights from the UK to a daily service.

The real estate sector in St Lucia is booming, in 2007 it grew by 7.6%. Property prices are still more reasonable than on other islands in the Caribbean and are 40-50% lower than on Barbados. They have increased by around 40% per annum for the last 2 years, and are projected to continue to rise for the next 5 years. Land prices on the northern tip have doubled over the last three years and are expected to double again in the next two years.

As a volcanic island there is limited land suitable to build on so it will never be overdeveloped and will not have an oversupply of stock. The long term effect of this is that property prices will hold their value.

The World Bank has recently placed St Lucia in the top 30 countries in the world to invest, making St Lucia the only Caribbean country to make the top 30, ahead of Barbados and Antigua. The property market is expanding with investors coming from Germany, America and Canada.

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