

## Language

English is the official language; however, there is a creolized variation known as the Bajan dialect.

## Religion

Barbados is predominantly Anglican, but some 80 to 100 other denominations and religious sects are represented on the island.

## Weights, Measures and Electricity

Metric weights and measures are used locally. There is a reliable electrical supply on the island with 110 volts and 50 cycles.

## Public Holidays

The following holidays are observed:

<b>New Year's Day</b>	<i>January 1</i>
<b>Good Friday</b>	<i>March/April</i>
<b>Easter Monday</b>	<i>March/April</i>
<b>Whit Monday</b>	<i>May/June</i>
<b>Kadooment Day</b>	<i>First Monday in August</i>
<b>United Nations Day</b>	<i>First Monday in October</i>
<b>Independence Day</b>	<i>November 30</i>
<b>Christmas Day</b>	<i>December 25</i>
<b>Boxing Day</b>	<i>December 26</i>

## Business Hours

The general hours of work are 8.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. from Monday to Friday and 8.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon on Saturday. Government hours are 8.15 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. Monday to Friday only. Core banking hours are from 9.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. Monday to Thursday and 9.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. and 3.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m. on Fridays. Banks do not open on Saturday.

## Historical Background

Although the island was not actually settled until 1627 by the British, the Portuguese originally charted it in 1536 and gave it the name "Los Barbados" (bearded fig tree) after the abundance of fig and banyan trees present. The island's first inhabitants, however, were the Arawak Indians.

When Captain John Powell first claimed Barbados in 1625 at the site of Holetown, the island was then