

A Profile of Trinidad and Tobago

Area and Geography

The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago comprise the two most southern islands in the Caribbean region and completes the eastern chain of islands extending from Florida, in the North, to Venezuela, in the south. Geologically, the islands are an extension of South America, located just 10 kilometres from the North East coast of Venezuela. To the East, the islands are bound by the Atlantic Ocean, and to the North and West by the Caribbean Sea. Trinidad has an area of 4,828 sq. km and Tobago an area of 300 sq. km. The two islands are 33 km apart.

Three mountain ranges traverse the island of Trinidad from east to west; the northern range reaches a maximum elevation of 949m. Typically, however, the terrain is gently undulating with low hills and tropical forests. Tobago rises to a height of 554m at the centre of the island.

Approximately one-third of Trinidad is under cultivation while nearly half the island is covered with tropical forest. Tobago is an island of natural beauty, of coral reef formations and sandy coastal beaches. The indigenous resources of the islands include crude oil, natural gas, and asphalt.

Climate

Trinidad and Tobago enjoy a tropical climate with relatively high daily average temperatures that vary between 21-35 C. The climate is moderated by sea breezes and northeast trade winds. Lying south of the hurricane belt, the islands are relatively free of violent storms.

The period from July to December is the wettest of the year, although it is usually interrupted by a temporary dry spell in October. Rainfall comes for the most part in short sharp bursts. Generally, the first six months of the year are dry with a few irregular showers in April and May.

Local Time

Trinidad and Tobago operate on Atlantic Standard Time (add one hour to Eastern Standard Time). They do not use daylight saving time.

Principle Cities

Port of Spain, situated in northwest Trinidad, is the commercial centre and main seaport. Forty-eight kilometres to the south is San Fernando, the centre of the oil and gas industry. Scarborough (population 5,000) is Tobago's chief town and port.