The Cayman Islands

Three Relaxing Choices

GRAND CAYMAN

Grand Cayman is our largest island, rich in history, charm and sophisticated pleasures. Here you'll find George Town, our capital, well known as the 5th largest financial centre in the world.

CAYMAN BRAC

Cayman Brac offers adventures for divers and a gentle, warm hospitality. The Brackers are some of the most genuinely friendly people you'll ever meet.

LITTLE CAYMAN

Our smallest and most tranquil island is Little Cayman, a nature lover's paradise. Look for iguanas and an abundance of marine life.

Whichever island you choose, you'll find spectacular diving and pristine white sands, along with endless ways to let your body and soul relax.

CAYMAN ISLANDS

Grand Cayman • Cayman Brac • Little Cayman

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CAYMAN ISLANDS

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THE PATH TO RELAXATION

Paradise Reef,
Grand Cayman

relax

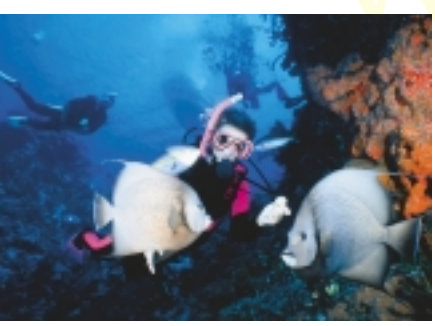
Welcome

Owen Island, Little Cayman

Let Your Body and Soul Relax

Welcome to a world where time slows down to match the soothing rhythm of turquoise waters lapping on sun-drenched shores.

Pause to breathe in deep the clean, fresh air. Then dive into crystal depths, beside a firework display of fish. Discover an underwater world like no other.



Coral Cities, Cayman Brac

Stroll our white coral sands, caressed by gentle, warm breezes. Linger, shaded and cool, among tropical blooms. Revel in our history. Make small talk with turtles.

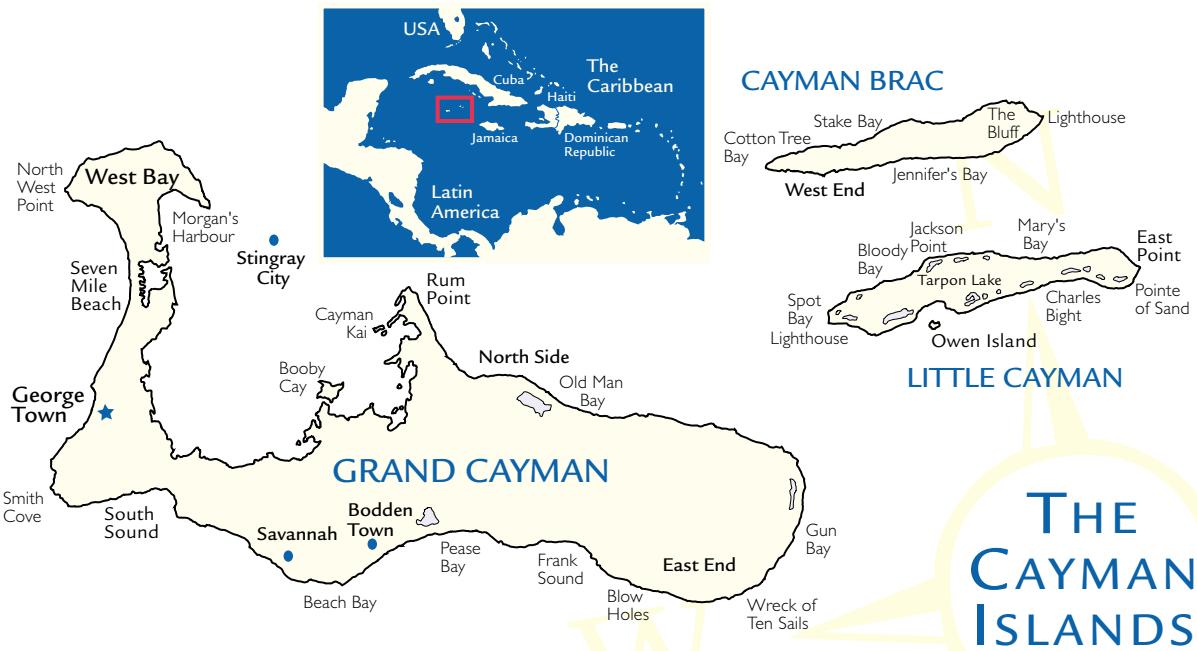
Allow yourself to be tempted by beguiling restaurants. Peruse our glittering shops.

One thing is certain. At the end of the day, when the sun glides towards the horizon, you will know that you have been spoiled.

And you'll know why we're so proud to call our Cayman Islands home. A home where your body and soul will relax.

George Town, Grand Cayman

Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park,
Grand Cayman



The Cayman Islands

Discover Our Trio of Islands

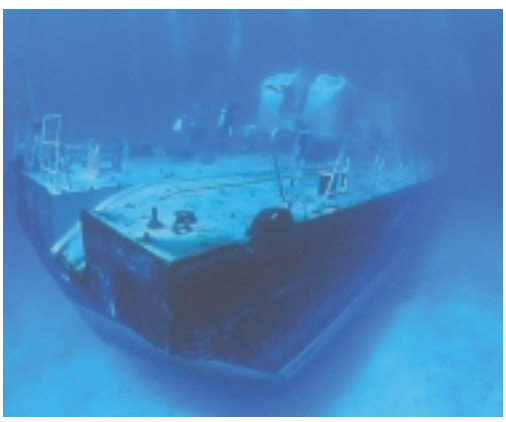
Three jewels, glistening in the Caribbean sea, this peaceful paradise is just 480 miles south of Miami and 189 miles northwest of Jamaica.

Relax on Grand Cayman, our largest island. Soak in the colourful charm and history of George Town, our capital and trade and government centre. It's the 5th largest financial centre in the world, with all the sophisticated pleasures you'd expect.

Delight in the endless white sands of Seven Mile Beach. Dive deep into our warm turquoise waters to our world-renowned underwater world.

For a different piece of heaven, discover our smaller Sister Islands.

Hyatt Regency
Grand Cayman



M/V Keith Tibbetts,
Cayman Brac

Located 89 miles from Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac is a tranquil island rising to a 140' bluff, encrusted with ancient pirate caves, and plunging to a dramatic subterranean water world.

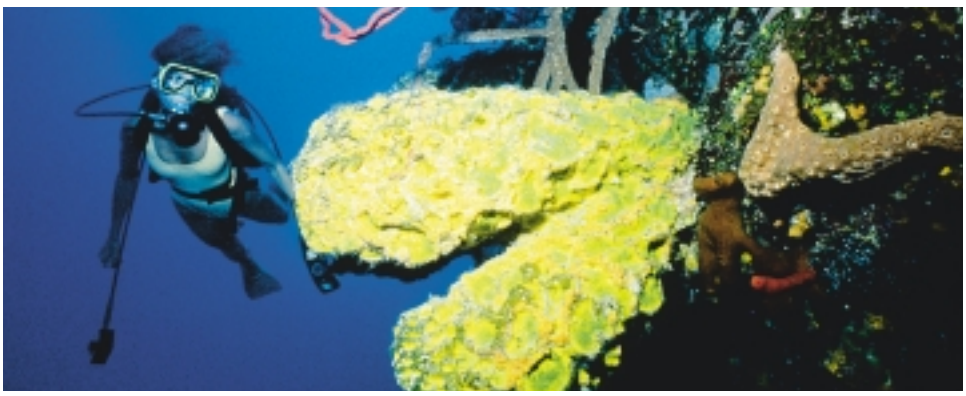
Take time to enjoy the smiles and leisurely conversation of the Brackers, known for the warmth of their welcome. Stop by the National Trust Parrot Reserve and indulge in exotic bird-watching. The fish here are equally abundant. Enjoy bone-fishing or deep-sea fishing. Then marvel at the diversity of marine life underwater in our world famous diver's heaven.

Nature Reserve, Little Cayman

Even smaller than Cayman Brac, Little Cayman offers the ultimate escape from life's stresses and deadlines.

Watch for "Iguana Crossing" signs on roads winding through a nature lover's paradise. Wander white sands without seeing a soul. Explore our Booby Pond Nature Reserve - a natural rookery for wetland and shore birds, including the rare Red-Footed Boobies. Revel in our underwater kingdom with one of the world's top dive sites, Bloody Bay Wall.

Underwater Cayman



Pirate's Reef, Little Cayman

Submerge Yourself in an Indescribable World of Colours and Life

Explore one of the world's most spectacular underwater kingdoms.

Dive or snorkel through pristine 80° waters, with up to 200' visibility. With no rivers or run-offs to blur the beauty, the view seems to unfold forever.

Plunge from a shallow coral reef over a sheer wall cloaked with abundant sponge life, into depths of vivid blue. These walls are the hallmark of Cayman diving, alive with a dazzling diversity of marine life and blooms of every colour.

Lighthouse Reef, Cayman Brac

Explore wrecks, reefs and thrills at over 200 protected sites, including Stingray City, with the world's best 12' dive.

Wherever you choose, on whichever of our three islands, Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac or Little Cayman, you'll appreciate the wide range of snorkelling and diving services offered. We have over 35 professional dive centres, catering to everyone from beginners to seasoned divers.

Our Cayman Islands' underwater world ensures utter relaxation at every turn.

We invite you to dive in and enjoy.

Stingray City, Grand Cayman

Bloody Bay Wall,
Little Cayman

Relax

Experience our Style of Relaxation

Fill your days with blissful inactivity. Or get into the swing of things on the lush greens of our golf courses, including an 18 hole championship course.

Ocean Kayaking, Grand Cayman

Discover a piece of heaven called Hell - our village named after one million year old geological formations. Walk the Mastic Trail to a primeval woodland. Roam our 65 acre Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park or our renowned Turtle Farm.

The submarine Atlantis, Grand Cayman

Bone Fishing, Little Cayman

Dining on Grand Cayman

Retreat to our sparkling waters for windsurfing, parasailing, and ocean kayaking. Relax with our "unofficial national sport", fishing. Dive into our exotic underworld. Or view it from the comfort of a submarine.

Relaxing, Cayman Brac

Whatever your desires, we have attractions to suit, including a diverse range of dining experiences and accommodation. Choose the lap of luxury or the charm of a guest house, cottage or dive lodge. All promise a style of relaxation you can't help but embrace.

Our History of Unforgettable Events

Boggy Sand Road, Grand Cayman

Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park, Grand Cayman

Immerse yourself in the colourful culture and traditions that reflect our rich history and seafaring ancestry.

Celebrate local art, music and cuisine at Cayfest in April. Join our Spring Batabano Carnival, where festively costumed stingrays and dancing flowers parade through George Town.

The National Museum, Grand Cayman

Watch the largest aerial invasion of private planes outside the U.S.A. during Aviation Week. Dance in the streets under a starburst of fireworks to commemorate bucaneering feats at our National Pirates Week Festival.

Batabano ***Pirates Week, Grand Cayman***

Touch living history at the restored site of "The Birthplace of Democracy", Pedro St. James, built in 1780 of native coral rock. Take a self-guided historical walking tour. Visit our museum or our historical sites.

So much to experience. So many memorable ways to relax.

Seven Mile Beach, Grand Cayman

Let us show you a world where you can let your body and soul relax

Come enjoy the warmth of welcoming smiles. Bask in perfect, natural beauty.
Come unwind. Come rest and play.
Our Cayman Islands home is waiting.

Getting to the Cayman Islands by air

Escape to a fantasy that's easy to reach.

Airline Services

Owen Roberts International Airport on Grand Cayman and Gerrard Smith International Airport on Cayman Brac are ports of entry, while Little Cayman is served by inter-island flights arriving at the Edward Bodden Airstrip. The Cayman Islands is only about a 70-minute flight by jet from Miami.

The Owen Roberts International Airport has undergone a CI $1.8 million expansion and upgrade of the main passenger terminal facilities. Funded by the Civil Aviation Authority, improvements added more than 18,000 square feet to the terminal, including expansion of the Immigration, baggage collection and Customs arrival areas; an expanded lobby exit area and departure lounge and improved access for disabled travellers.

The Department of Tourism Visitor Information booth in the Customs Hall is stocked with the latest tourist publications and brochures.

There are more than 108 weekly flights into Owen Roberts International Airport including 70 flights each week between Miami and Grand Cayman. This includes three direct, non-stop daily flights from Miami to Grand Cayman by Cayman Airways and three by American Airlines.

Delta offers daily 767 service between Atlanta and Grand Cayman.

US Airways provides daily service from Charlotte, NC, and Philadelphia to Grand Cayman.

Cayman Airways also offers regular service from Houston, Tampa, Miami and Orlando and Kingston, Jamaica to Grand Cayman. Contact Cayman Airways at: US and Canada toll free: 1(800) 422-9626 or in the UK: 171-491-7771.

Northwest operates direct service from Detroit from December through April.

British Airways offers two weekly 777 flights from London (Gatwick) to Grand Cayman on Monday and Wednesday with a intermediate stop in Nassau, Bahamas.

Air Jamaica and **Cayman Airways** offer regular service to Kingston, Jamaica and Montego Bay. **Islena** connects Grand Cayman with La Ceiba, Honduras, and **Cubana Airlines** offers weekly flights from Grand Cayman to Havana.

A number of charter flights also operate from various US cities and Canada.

Interisland Service

Our Interisland service between Grand Cayman and the Sister Islands is excellent.

Cayman Airways offers daily jet service from Grand Cayman to Cayman Brac every day except Monday and Tuesday.

Island Air based at Owen Roberts International Airport, also offers scheduled daily interisland service between Grand Cayman and Little Cayman and Cayman Brac.

Island Air flies from Grand Cayman to the Sister Islands four times each day via 19-passenger turboprop Twin Otter, 7-passenger Navajo Chieftain and 6-passenger Islander aircraft.

The flight between Grand Cayman and the Sister Islands is approximately 45 minutes.

Please note: all airlines and schedules are subject to change.

CAYMAN ISLANDS
Grand Cayman • Cayman Brac • Little Cayman

The Athletic Life: Sports in the Cayman Islands

In addition to an abundance of watersports, Grand Cayman offers a variety of spectator and competitive sports.

In addition to an abundance of watersports, Grand Cayman offers visitors a variety of both spectator and competitive sports.

There are two golf courses, one Jack Nicklaus - designed course at the Hyatt Regency Britannia Golf Club (which can be played as either executive 18 holes or 9 hole course) and our Championship 18-hole course, The Links at SafeHaven, a USGA Par-71 course. For family fun there is also a Mini-Golf miniature golf course near the Hyatt Regency on West Bay Rd.

Tennis, squash, volleyball, jogging, walking, hiking, cycling and a good selection of local health clubs (including a franchise of World Gym) and fitness centres are other activities enjoyed by visitors. Martial arts training centres feature instruction in Taekwondo and Karate, popular with young residents.

Regular local sports competitions are held throughout the year, including triathlons, 5K and 10K runs, swimming events and cycling races.

The Cayman Islands has one of the world's largest baseball Little Leagues, with over 600 young local ballplayers participating. The association built a US $1.5 million "Field of Dreams" complex with four playing fields on Grand Cayman.

Rugby, football (soccer) and cricket are extremely popular during their respective seasons.

The upgraded Truman Bodden Sports Complex, located behind the John Gray High School in George Town, was officially opened in April 1995. The $2.9 million complex has a professional quality track and field facility and a stadium with seating for 3000. Cayman has hosted major international sporting events including the 24th Carifta Games here in 1995 and the Shell Caribbean Cup soccer finals.

The Cayman Autocross Association has over 100 members, and is finalising plans for a family motorcross park. Currently, stock car races take place at Lakeview Race Track on weekends throughout the year.

The Cayman Horse Association has more than 50 horse-owner members, who stage special events including races and horse shows throughout the year.

Sports Office
(Ministry of Community Affairs, Sports, Women, Youth and Culture)

Third Floor, Tower Building,
Grand Cayman
Cayman Islands,
B.W.I.

Telephone:
(345) 914-3480

Fax:
(345) 949-8487

CAYMAN ISLANDS
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H.M. Customs Information for Visitors

Simple guidelines that will make your visit an enjoyable one.

Arriving visitors may bring in duty-free any personal items for use while on vacation. In addition, visitors 18 and older can bring in duty-free either one litre of alcohol, four litres of wine or one case of beer (not exceeding eight litres) and 200 cigarettes, or 25 cigars or 250 grams of tobacco. Don't be confused by the Customs forms which states that returning residents are allowed CI $350 worth of goods duty free. This privilege does not apply to visitors.

Remember that any gifts you are bringing into Cayman may also be subject to duty.

Books and camera equipment are always allowed as duty free items.

Don't Attempt To Bring In: Importing or possession of any kind of illegal drugs including marijuana (ganja) is strictly prohibited by law and violators face arrest and prosecution by local authorities.

Also Prohibited: Firearms of any kind. Spearguns (or pole spears or Hawaiian slings). Live plants and plant cuttings; raw fruits and vegetables are also restricted because they may carry diseases or shelter harmful insect pests. If you have questions about any item, contact the Collector of Customs.

When You Leave Cayman: Visitors from the US, Canada and UK should be aware that products made from farmed green sea turtles available in limited selections at the Cayman Turtle Farm Ltd. are offered for local consumption. The importation of genuine sea turtle products is strictly prohibited by any countries which have signed the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (1978) including the USA, Canada and UK. In addition, US Customs prohibits the transhipment of turtle products through the US. Any products discovered will be confiscated.

The importation of Black Coral is prohibited in many countries under the CITES law. Black Coral must be accompanied by a certificate from the Department of the Environment.

The Cayman Islands' stringent conservation programmes have been established to ensure preservation of marine, plant and wild life for future generations.

Plants and Animals: You will not be allowed to bring back any plants or plant seeds, vegetables or fruits unless you have official permits from US Customs. Otherwise, these will be confiscated by Customs at US gateways.

Cayman Islands Customs Department

Collector of Customs

P.O. Box 898GT
Grand Cayman
Cayman Islands,
B.W.I.

Telephone:
(345) 949-2473

Fax:
(345) 945-1573

CAYMAN ISLANDS
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Dive Cayman

An underwater fantasy just off our shores

Diving here in the Cayman Islands is like discovering an uncharted world for divers of every level and interest.

From tiny still-unnamed invertebrates hidden in coral heads to mysteries of a marine world seen only by trained technical divers, the Cayman Islands spells out ADVENTURE. And for divers of every level and interest, Cayman has it all.

Cayman is world famous for breathtaking walls covered with dazzling sponge life, beginning as shallow as 18 ft. in Little Cayman and plummeting thousands of feet straight out of sight into indigo Caribbean.

But there's much more! Every kind of Caribbean marine creature, from green sea turtles to tarpon, patrol our coasts. Acres of healthy coral reefs and lush gargonians thrive in our Marine Parks. Wrecks, old and new, offer underwater photographers great opportunities.

Our three islands surprise even "been there, done that" divers with exciting discoveries and bragging-rights log book entries year round. And things you never thought you'd see here: cartoonish blennies and orange sea horses; yellow frogfish and sandy plains of garden eels; flying gurnards — and Stingray City's squadron of Southern Atlantic Stingrays that flock around divers like curious birds after tidbits of squid.

Underwater photographers become snap-happy discovering Cayman's variety of approachable marine creatures - and ideal conditions. Visibility averages 80-150 feet in our warm, clear, generally current-free waters whose temperature ranges between 78°F in winter and 86°F in summer and fall.

Each island's personality is unique but they share one great attraction: these unlimited diving adventures are easy to reach and suitable for all diving skills.

These include 257 moored boat dive sites and great shore diving just minutes away from anywhere you're staying.

Grand Cayman

Grand Cayman's sophisticated polish and plentiful comforts and services offer every dive vacation lifestyle possible. Walls plummet along all four distinct sides of this island, which means there is always a leeward side offering a calm day of diving. Regardless of weather, diving is practically guaranteed 365 days a year. And if you think you've seen it all on Grand Cayman, head out to East End's wild and exciting wilderness. With only 159 dive sites marked off these coasts - there's still miles of adventures awaiting discovery.

Little Cayman

Peaceful Little Cayman boasts 57 dive sites and one of the world's most dramatic sheer walls, beginning at only 18 ft. at Bloody Bay and Jackson Point. Legendary visibility, lush coral and sponge life and a constantly surprising "What's That!" of marine life have made repeat visitors of some of the most famous underwater photographers in the world.

Cayman Brac

Rugged, seafaring and friendly Cayman Brac has been a cherished diver's mecca for over 25 years, and some of its original scuba trail blazers are still diving out here.

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CAYMAN ISLANDS

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Fishing
Our "Unofficial National Sport"

Whether you come to simply cast a line or fish competitively,
the Cayman Islands offer the perfect world for the greatest catch of the day.

The official motto of the Cayman Islands is "He Hath Founded It Upon the Seas." The emphasis here is on the word "upon." From trolling for tuna and marlin to light tackle action for bonefish, tarpon and permit: the Cayman Islands is a fisherman's paradise.

While cricket may be the most famous of the West Indian sporting events, in the Cayman Islands, "goin' fishin' in" claims national attention. Many islanders consider fishing the unofficial "national sport" of the Cayman Islands.

When it comes to sportfishing, this island trio offers skilled and novice anglers a variety of angling opportunities. Popular game fish such as blue marlin, yellowfin tuna, wahoo, dolphin (dorado) and barracuda are caught year-round. Occasional catches of white marlin and, very rarely, Atlantic sailfish and Atlantic long-billed spearfish are also reported.

Our water temperature varies annually only 8 - 10 degrees and the bait fish are here year-round - which means the bigger fish are too. One of the Cayman Islands' biggest attractions for anglers is that big fish run close to the coastlines of Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman. Year round, good catches take place as close as a quarter mile offshore all three Cayman Islands, where the ocean floor drops off sharply, plummeting thousands of feet and creating a natural thoroughfare for the big migratory pelagic species prized by anglers.

While many popular Caribbean game fish species are caught year-round, Caymanian captains can identify distinct seasons. Wahoo season runs November through March; yellowfin tuna season follows in spring months. Predictably, small blue marlin (100-150 lbs) can be caught and released year round.

For years, these islands have been known as a destination for anglers seeking billfish action close to shore. Although blue marlin caught in Cayman waters average 200 lbs. or less, they challenge anglers year-round - and marlin strikes occur as close as a quarter mile offshore. Local captains promote conservation and sportsmanship by encouraging anglers to release any fish, reef or pelagic, which are not to be eaten and all billfish unless they are local records or potential prize winners during tournaments.

Grand Cayman has a small fleet of modern, well-equipped sportfishing boats available for full and half day charters, average US $375 to $550 for a half day, and US $650 to $1,200 for a full day aboard a sleek new Bertram 54' equipped with state-of-the-art equipment and tackle. Smaller charter boats and excellent local captains are also available in the Sister Islands of Cayman Brac and Little Cayman.

Experienced and knowledgeable Caymanian captains and fishing guides welcome both serious sportsmen and absolute novice anglers, whether for deep sea or flats fishing. They are happy to share their unique island techniques for blue water and shallow action, including outwitting wily bonefish, found on the flats of all three islands.

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CAYMAN ISLANDS
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The history of the Cayman Islands

Revel in a past rich with colour and seafaring exploits.

During the last decade, we've made serious attempts to document a comprehensive and authoritative history of these islands throughout the past 300 years. Much important research has been done during the last five years, specifically through the dedicated efforts of the staff of the Cayman Islands National Archive.

Christopher Columbus discovered Little Cayman and Cayman Brac during his fourth and last voyage to the New World, on May 10, 1503. While sailing from Panama to Hispaniola, severe winds pushed his ships off course west.

In fact it was the diary of Ferdinand Columbus, the son of Christopher Columbus, that records this event "...on Wednesday May 10 we raised two small and low islands full of turtles (as was all the sea about, so they looked like rocks); whence these islands were called Las Tortugas."

The islands were later named Lagartos, meaning alligator or large lizard and finally, the name Caymanas was applied around 1540, derived from the Carib word for marine crocodile. This name in a modified form remained since the late 16th century.

Sir Francis Drake visited the islands during a voyage between 1585-86 and reported sighting "great serpents called Caymanas, like large lizards, which are edible." An anonymous author in Drake's fleet also described 10 ft. crocodiles. According to the Cayman Islands National Archive, there are written accounts of Cayman dating back to the 1830's which describe the shooting of crocodiles as a Sunday sport.

During the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, the islands were replenishment centres supplying abundant fresh water and food, including sea turtles and wild fowl, for English, Dutch, French and Spanish explorers and buccaneers and ships plying the Spanish Main route.

The Islands came under British control in 1655 when Jamaica was captured from the Spanish by Oliver Cromwell's army.

They officially became part of the British Empire under the Treaty of Madrid in 1670, after which Spain recognized British possession of "all lands, islands, colonies and places situated in the West Indies." For almost 300 years after that, the islands were administered as a dependency of Jamaica.

The first recorded settlement was of Little Cayman and Cayman Brac between 1666-1671, while Sir Thomas Modyford was Governor of Jamaica, comprising of homes built by fishermen from Jamaica, some of whom may have come from the British Isles.

An interesting historic reference provided by the C.I. National Archive confirms details of the earliest settlers of Grand Cayman and their lifestyle. The following is an excerpt from the transcript of George Gauld's remarks on The Island of Grand Cayman contained in a H.M. Royal Navy survey dated 1773: "The Island was originally settled by one of Oliver Cromwell's soldiers named Bodden, who had been at the taking of Jamaica. Old Isaac Bodden, his grandson, a native of the Island, now upwards of 70 years of age, remembers when there were only five families; but at this time, there are 21 at the SouthSide, which we have called Bodden Town, 13 at the West End, commonly called the Hogsties, 3 at the East End and 2 at Spot's Bay; in all 39 families, consisting of at least 200 white people and above same number of Negroes and Mulattoes."

"The Island produces a great quantity of cotton, which is their principle article of export besides Turtle; but for their own consumption, and to supply the vessels that pass by, they raise Indian corn, yams, sweet potatoes, pompions, plantains, melons, limes, oranges and most kinds of the fruits and vegetables that are to be found in Jamaica. The Sugar Cane likewise grows very well.

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CAYMAN ISLANDS
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Location and Geography of the Cayman Islands

The Cayman Islands is a British Overseas Territory located in the western Caribbean, 480 miles south of Miami, 150 miles south of Cuba and 180 miles northwest of Jamaica.

The islands lie between 19° 15' and 19° 45' North and between 79° 44 ' and 81° 27' West and over 1000 miles west of the US Virgin Islands and the Leeward Island chain.

By jet, the Cayman Islands is about a 70 minute direct flight from Miami.

The island country consists of Grand Cayman, largest and most populous of the trio; and the Sister Islands of Cayman Brac and Little Cayman, which lie approximately 89 miles east-northeast of Grand Cayman and are separated from each other by a channel about five miles wide.

The total land mass of the three islands is 100 square miles. Grand Cayman occupies 76 square miles; Cayman Brac, 14 square miles and Little Cayman, 10 square miles. Grand Cayman is approximately 22 miles long and 8 miles at its widest point, reaching a maximum elevation at East End of 60 ft.

The three islands are limestone outcroppings, the tops of a submarine mountain range called the Cayman Ridge, which extends west southwest from the Sierra Maestra range off the southeast part of Cuba to the Misteriosa Bank near Belize.

The islands lack rivers or streams because of the porous nature of the limestone rock. It is this lack of runoff which gives the surrounding Caribbean Sea exceptional visibility, often well over 120 ft.

Between the Cayman Islands and Jamaica lies the deepest part of the Caribbean, the Cayman Trench, which is over four miles deep. South of Cayman is the Bartlett Deep where depths of over 18,000 ft. have been recorded. All three islands are surrounded by healthy coral reefs which lie at the top of dramatic walls and drop-offs close to shore, creating ideal conditions for diving and sportfishing.

Cayman Brac

Cayman Brac is 12 miles long and just over a mile wide and has the most dramatic topography of the trio. Its majestic Bluff rises west to east along the length of the island to 140 feet at the eastern tip, ending in a sheer cliff.

Many mysterious caves are carved throughout this awe-inspiring natural attraction.

Little Cayman

Little Cayman, only 10 miles long and a mile wide, is flat, reaching a maximum elevation of 40 feet. Its famous Bloody Bay Wall Marine Park has been called one of the world's best dive sites. Inland, the 203 - acre Booby Pond Nature Reserve is a RAMSAR site and nesting ground for the Caribbean's largest population of Red Footed Boobies.

CAYMAN ISLANDS
Grand Cayman • Cayman Brac • Little Cayman

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands

Preserving Cayman's historic, natural and maritime heritage for future generations and visitors alike.

Banana Orchid, Cayman Islands' National Flower

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands Law of 1987 created this non-profit, statutory body which is responsible for the preservation of Cayman's historic, natural and maritime heritage; the conservation of lands, natural features and submarine areas of beauty, historic or environmental importance, and the protection of our native flora and fauna.

The Trust is also empowered to declare Trust-owned property as inalienable, which means that heritage property can be held in trust, forever protected for the people of the Cayman Islands to cherish and enjoy.

With a two-fold mission to preserve natural environments and places of historic significance for present and future generations of the Cayman Islands, the Trust's work at this time focuses on Environmental Conservation through establishing a system of nature reserves and Historic Preservation, by the identification and restoration of Cayman's built heritage.

Public education is a strong element of the work of the Trust, with the understanding that developing widespread appreciation and awareness of Cayman's natural and historic heritage is critical to preservation.

Come visit the National Trust's projects and sites and get to know our very special islands. We invite you to share in the preservation of Cayman's unique heritage. National Trust Properties and Sites include:

Grand Cayman

Bodden Town Guard House Park
East End Lighthouse Park
Fort George
Governor Michael Gore Bird Sanctuary
Heritage Beach (East End)
Mastic Reserve and Mastic Trail
Miss Izzy's Schoolhouse
Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park
Salina Reserve
Trust House
Mission House
Watlers Cemetery

Cayman Brac

Cayman Brac Parrot Reserve and Nature Trail

Little Cayman

Booby Pond Nature Reserve

The Cayman Islands National Trust

For more information or to become a member

Web site:
www.cayman.com.ky/pub/ntrust/index.htm

Address:
P.O. Box 31116 SMB,
Grand Cayman,
Cayman Islands, BWI

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ntrust@candw.ky

CAYMAN ISLANDS
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Getting Around on land

Information that will make getting around during your trip more relaxing, enjoyable and stress free.

Taxis: Taxis are available at Owen Roberts International Airport on Grand Cayman and offer a fixed rate per vehicle or per person to all points on Grand Cayman. This information is available from the taxi dispatcher at the curb. Hotel vans cannot provide courtesy arrival pick-up at the airport. Taxis are readily available from all resorts and from the taxi stand at the cruise ship dock in George Town. A sign with current rates is posted at the dock.

Driving in the Cayman Islands: Driving is on the left throughout the Cayman Islands and a law requiring mandatory wearing of seat belts went into effect in February 1998. Visitors must obtain temporary drivers licenses from the police station or car rental agency, easily granted upon presenting a valid drivers licence from their home state, county or parish. The fee is US $7.50.

Rental cars: Cayman has one of the Caribbean's most extensive modern fleets of rental cars, and many feature right hand drive. In addition, most rental jeeps and vans are right hand drive, left hand stick shift. A variety of models of rental cars at competitive rates are available in Grand Cayman and a limited number on Cayman Brac and Little Cayman (jeeps and 4-wheel drive only). You must be 21 to rent a car in the Cayman Islands, and some rental agencies' insurance will not cover renters under 25. Check with your rental company in advance to determine.

Car Rental Firms:

Grand Cayman

ANDY'S RENT A CAR, across from Marriott (345) 949-8111
AVIS/CICO Airport, Hyatt, locations (345) 949-2468
BUDGET, Airport (345) 949-5605
CAYMAN AUTO RENTALS, N. Church St. (345) 949-6408
COCONUT CAR RENTAL, Airport (345) 949-4377
CONMAC / E. Scott's, Airport (345) 949-6955
DOLLAR, Airport, (345) 949-0700
ECONOMY, Airport (345) 949-9550
HERTZ, Airport and Beach Club Resort (345) 949-2280
JUST JEEPS, West Bay Rd. & Airport Industrial Park (345) 949-7263
MARSHALL'S RENT A CAR, Airport office and near the Marriott (345) 949-2127
NATIONAL, Airport (345) 949-4790
SOTO'S 4x4 JEEPS, (345) 945-2424
SUNSHINE CAR RENTALS, Seven Mile Shops (345) 949-3858
THRIFTY, Owen Roberts Int'l Airport (345) 949-6640

Cayman Brac

B & S MOTOR VENTURES, (345) 948-1646
BUSSIES RENTAL, (345) 948-0531
CD'S (BRAC) RENT-A-CAR (345) 948-1446
BRAC HERTZ (345) 948-0277
CICO AVIS (345) 948-2847
FOUR D'S CAR RENTAL, (345) 948-1599

Little Cayman

MCLAUGHLIN'S ENTERPRISES/ JEEP RENTALS, (345) 948-1000

Mopeds and Scooters: Mopeds and scooters are available for rent on Grand Cayman and Cayman Brac. Riders are required by law to wear a helmet at all times and urged to be extremely careful and remember to stay on the left. Average daily rate is US $25 which includes helmet and permit.

Bicycles: Rental bicycles (including 10-speeds and mountain bikes on Grand Cayman) are available on all three islands. On Cayman Brac and Little Cayman, most hotels have bicycles available for complimentary guest use.

Public Transportation: Grand Cayman has its first ever official public bus transportation system. The bus terminal is located adjacent the Public Library on Edward St. in downtown George Town and serves as the dispatch point for buses to all districts. There are 38 mini-buses operated by 24 licensed operators, serving eight routes.
Daily service starts at 6 a.m.

CAYMAN ISLANDS
Grand Cayman • Cayman Brac • Little Cayman

Shopping, Dining and Entertainment

No where in the Caribbean will you find so much to do . . .

Shopping

Cayman is a duty-free destination and our capital of George Town is one of the most attractive, polished shopping centres in the Caribbean. Here you'll find not only the main duty-free shops, but a fine selection of more than 60 fine jewelry, specialty and souvenir shops as well as a variety of casual restaurants. Stores in George Town are closed on Sunday.

Duty Free Shopping: You'll find a good selection of traditional duty free items such as watches, china and crystal, perfumes and fine jewelry-including authentic treasure coin jewelry - on Grand Cayman and at a few stores on Cayman Brac.
Prices on perfume, watches and select luxury items may be as much as 30% less expensive here.

In addition to traditional duty free selections, varied and interesting shopping - from chic European fashions to outstanding local art - delights visitors in speciality stores in George Town, at hotel boutiques and in shopping plazas on West Bay Road. These include Queen's Court mall next to the Sleep Inn; Seven Mile Shops, Westshore Plaza, Buckingham Square by the Hyatt; Galleria Plaza, The Strand and Cayman Falls Plaza across from the Westin.

Local Art and Crafts: Local Caymanian products include shell jewelry; thatch work, wood carvings and Caymanian-style birdhouses, crocheted items, pepper sauces, tropical fruit jams, honey, Caymanite (Cayman's semi-precious stone) jewelry and sculpture, the Caribbean's largest selection of antique and treasure coin jewelry.

Underwater Photography: Cathy Church's Underwater Photo Centre and Gallery (Sunset House) offers both underwater photography services and an excellent selection of underwater photos and prints framed as art pieces. Visitors can also arrange for custom underwater videos and photographs of their diving and snorkelling experiences, which make a unique souvenir of a Cayman vacation.

Farmer's Market: On Grand Cayman, The Farmer's Market Cooperative on Thomas Russell Way and Frankie's Fresh Fruits & Juices on Red Bay Road both sell delicious unusual local jams, hot sauces, fruits, fresh juices and baked goods.

Dining and Cuisine

More than 130 restaurants, fast-food outlets and small snack bars offer visitors a selection ranging from elegant fine dining to budget fast food and take out.

Grand Cayman: Traditional Caymanian cuisine has been enlivened by a strong Jamaican influence of jerk, curry and other vibrant seasonings and features conch, lobster and local seafood in a variety of dishes, complimented by coconut, plantain, breadfruit, yams, cassava, rice and peas and other West Indian side dishes.

In addition to Caribbean and Central American cuisine, Grand Cayman offers European, Italian, Mexican, German, Thai, Chinese, Indian, Japanese and "American Tex-Mex" variety as well as fast food chains featuring hamburgers, tacos, chicken, pizza, subs and salads.

Cayman Brac: The Brac has a handful of small local restaurants in addition to the hotel restaurants serving buffet style meals, and the new Captain's Table full service restaurant at the Brac Caribbean Beach Village.

Little Cayman: On Little Cayman the Hungry Iguana restaurant at the small airstrip opened in December 1994. With advance reservations, dining is available for non-guests at Southern Cross Club, Little Cayman Beach Resort, Pirates Point and Sam McCoy's Lodge.

continued over

CAYMAN ISLANDS
Grand Cayman • Cayman Brac • Little Cayman

The Sister Islands Cayman Brac & Little Cayman

Before you content yourself with the beauty and relaxation of Grand Cayman, we have two smaller Sister Islands that offer a different kind of retreat.

The Sister Islands of Cayman Brac and Little Cayman are located approximately 89 miles northeast of Grand Cayman, a short plane trip away.
Island Air offers daily service between Grand Cayman and the Sister Islands. Cayman Airways also offer service between Grand Cayman and Cayman Brac.

Cayman Brac

In Cayman Brac, diving is what attracts most people to this small island. The newest attraction for divers is the wreck of the 330 ft. M/V Captain Keith Tibbetts, a Russian built naval frigate which was sunk off the island's northwest coast in September 1996. It is already the home for a variety of marine life. There are two other small wrecks off the Brac's coast.

Ashore, attractions include the Cayman Brac Museum at Stake Bay, a variety of dramatic caves; such as Rebecca's Cave, Peter's Cave and Skull Cave; nature trails; exploring the bluff and ironshore beneath it at the eastern tip; small, charming homes restored in traditional seafaring architectural styles, and the delightful people of this unusual community.

The National Trust chapter has activities scheduled throughout the year. A two-mile long nature trail on the bluff adjacent the 180 acre Parrot Reserve was opened in July 1996. Birdwatching has long been considered an excellent, if under promoted attraction of this tiny island.

Deep sea and bonefishing are also available with excellent local guides.

At West End, the Community Park features indigenous local plant and tree life identified with wooden signs; a nature trail; playground and picnic/barbecue facilities. Members of the National Trust visit the DIVI Tiara Beach Resort on Monday evenings to display local crafts and meet with visitors, offering additional information on local Trust projects, activities and points of interest.

Little Cayman

On Little Cayman, diving, especially on famous Bloody Bay Wall and Jackson Point, is the main attraction. Bird watching, and light tackle fishing action for bonefish, small tarpon and permit particularly in South Hole Sound lagoon are exciting activities here.

Little Cayman also has the largest known breeding colony of the Red Footed Booby and only breeding colony of Magnificent Frigate Birds in this hemisphere, the country's first RAMSAR site, the 202-acre Booby Pond Nature Reserve, now under National Trust protection. Groundbreaking took place on 22 July, 1995 for the Little Cayman Trust House, a Caymanian-style building overlooking the rookery, which opened in late 1996 and serves as the headquarters for Little Cayman National Trust activities. It also provides an observation deck with high-powered telescopes for year-round viewing of the sanctuary's bird life.

Little Cayman now has its own museum, located across from the Booby Pond Nature Reserve.

Little Cayman also has a resident indigenous Little Cayman Rock Iguana population estimated at 2,000. Signs painted by local artists were erected in 1995 cautioning motorists to watch out for iguanas along the main coastal road.

The local chapter of the National Trust organises outings and activities on a regular basis. The mile-long Salt Rock Nature Trail provides glimpses of Little Cayman's natural habitat.

CAYMAN ISLANDS
Grand Cayman • Cayman Brac • Little Cayman

Snorkelling

An underwater fantasy just off our shores

Our waters are clear and warm throughout the year and because we have no rivers or run-offs, the Cayman Islands offer unparalleled snorkelling.

Snorkelling is Cayman's greatest, easiest adventure and an activity everyone can enjoy. If you've only fantasized about peeking beneath the sea, there is no safer, gentler and more exciting place to learn this sport than in Cayman's calm, clear, current-free waters. Thanks to Cayman's strict Marine Parks laws, our protected healthy coral reefs and abundant marine life remain our greatest natural attraction.

You've never tried snorkelling? No problem. Cayman's watersports operators understand this and are happy to assist first-time snorkellers in mastering basic skills safely to insure they enjoy the sport on their first try. Many dive operations offer special "learn to snorkel" boat trips offering instruction, equipment and several snorkelling stops for about US $35 per person. The entire family can go along and learn together.

Begin with the basics: properly fitting equipment. Don't be afraid to ask for help. Nothing is more important than finding a mask which is comfortable and fits well - this is your window on the underwater world - and fins which don't cramp your feet. You can rent a complete set of equipment for about US $10 per day - or invest in a set of your own and you're free to explore whenever the urge strikes. For safety sake: consider wearing a snorkelling vest and please tow a dive float if you plan to snorkel any distance from shore or beyond protected snorkelling areas.

Before you splash into the unknown - buy a guide to Caribbean marine life. It can be as simple as a laminated plastic card to carry with you. Understanding what you're seeing and being able to identify the strange and unusual creatures you see will greatly increase your snorkelling enjoyment.

Remember, almost everything you see beneath the sea's surface is a living creature, regardless of what it looks like. Because most snorkelling is in shallow waters, snorkellers must take special care to protect fragile coral and other marine life. Be careful not to stand on coral or sea fans and watch your fins! Careless action by dive fins is the greatest cause of damage to marine life.

We ask that everyone enjoying our waters follow a "look but don't touch" policy and not disturb, damage or take any marine life from the sea.
For further information pick up a copy of the Department of Environment guidelines (345) 949-8469. *continued over*

Cayman Islands Department of Tourism

Telephone:
(345) 949-0623

Fax:
(345) 949-4053

Cayman Islands Watersports Operators' Association (C.I.W.O.A.)

Telephone:
(345) 949-8522

Fax:
(345) 949-0220

Cayman National Watersports Association (C.N.W.A.)

Telephone:
(345) 949-3200 or
(345) 949-0400

Fax:
(345) 949-0391

CAYMAN ISLANDS
Grand Cayman • Cayman Brac • Little Cayman

Things to do and see

As if our sparkling waters and pristine beaches weren't enough, we offer an endless array of additional attractions.

Whatever your interests, our trio of islands has a wealth of activities to suit.

Golf:
Grand Cayman is the island for avid golfers, with two challenging courses.

Built to rigorous USGA standards, **The Links at Safehaven** is a championship 18 hole course - a Caribbean version of the famous Scottish links courses.The course is spread over 103 lush green acres, sweeping to a breathtaking vista of the Caribbean Sea.

We also offer our Jack Nicklaus designed golf course at the **Hyatt Regency Britannia Golf Club**. This course can be played as either executive 18 holes or 9 holes.

For family fun, swing over to our mini-golf course, where children love to test their skills.

Hell:
Send a few postcards from a piece of Heaven postmarked Hell. Named after 1 million year old spiky geological formations, our village called Hell makes a novel side-trip and comes complete with gift shops and a post-office.

The Jolly Roger:
For a fun-filled afternoon or evening, reminiscent of the buccaneering days of old, come aboard this replica of a 17th century Spanish galleon. Our pirate style cruises sail daily from Bayside Docks in George Town Harbour, with a choice of three boardings. Take our two hour afternoon pirate cruise or embark on a memorable sunset cocktail hour or dinner cruise. Our fun-loving crew will ensure your every need is met, making this an adventure to remember.

Atlantis and Our Semi-Submersibles:
Experience our world famous coral reefs and underwater life, without getting wet! Our Atlantis submarine and Deep Explorer research submersibles offer a unique window on our subterranean world from air-conditioned comfort.
The Atlantis Submarine offers 3 different dives to suit your schedule and budget. Plunging 100' below the surface, they provide wonderful opportunities to view and photograph our exotically coloured fish feeding.
The Deep Explorer Research Submersibles, carrying just two passengers and one highly skilled pilot, take you down even deeper to a rarely viewed fantasy world.

Reservations for all trips are strongly recommended.

Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park:
Garden buffs and nature lovers will delight in these 65 breathtaking acres of protected land. Stroll the Nature Trail and Iguana Habitat to view exotic wildlife up close, including Cayman parrots, woodpeckers, lizards and, naturally, iguanas. Then be sure to experience our Heritage Garden, dedicated to traditional local flowers, shrubs and fruits, and including an authentic sand yard.
The Floral Garden is our most spectacularly colourful garden, with Cayman flowers featuring virtually every colour of the rainbow, filling the air with sensational scents.
The Park is open daily, except Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

continued over

CAYMAN ISLANDS
Grand Cayman • Cayman Brac • Little Cayman

Weddings & Honeymoons in the Cayman Islands

Whether your marriage is one of simple elegance or one of exotic splendour, there's no more romantic place to be wed.

Getting Married in the Cayman Islands

Visitors wishing to be married in the Cayman Islands no longer have to fulfill any waiting (residency) period. An amendment to the Cayman Islands Marriage Law has eliminated the previous 72 hour waiting period. This means that visitors can now get married on the day they arrive, including passengers arriving on cruise ships, who may be legally married during their day in port in Grand Cayman.

Visitors are advised to make arrangements in advance to expedite paperwork and all required details.

A special licence will be granted by the Governor for non-resident couples. The application for this license can be obtained from the Chief Secretary's Office. The fee for this license is CI $150 plus a CI $10 stamp duty (US $200 total). It is now possible to obtain the special licence the same day.

Couples must arrange for a Cayman Islands Marriage Officer before applying for the licence. A list of officers is available from the Chief Secretary's office and can be sent in advance of arrival.

Other requirements include proper documentation proving citizenship and age (passport or birth certificate) and marital status (proof of legal divorce decree or death certificate if spouse has died, if applicable); Immigration pink slip showing legal entry into the Cayman Islands or documentation proving visitors are passengers on a cruise ship. The minimum legal age for getting married without parental consent is 18.

Further information and the complete guidelines are available from the Government Information Services.

Marriage License Application

Chief Secretary's Office, 4th Floor, (Room 406)
Government Administration Building,
George Town

Telephone:
(345) 949-7900

Fax:
(345) 949-7544

Additional Information

Government Information Services,
Broadcasting House,
Grand Cayman

Telephone:
(345) 949-8092

Fax:
(345) 949-5936

CAYMAN ISLANDS
Grand Cayman • Cayman Brac • Little Cayman

Welcome to our home, the Cayman Islands

Information that will make your trip more relaxing, enjoyable and stress free.

Immigration & Entry Requirements: US, British and Canadian citizens, and citizens of British Dependent Territories do not require passports, but must present proof of citizenship (passport or birth certificate and current photo ID. A driver's license or voter's registration card alone is not sufficient) and a return or ongoing airline ticket. (Please note that according to a US law passed in 1996, a Voter's Registration Card is no longer considered valid proof of US citizenship and is therefore not valid ID for re-entry into the US.)

Visitors from all other countries require a passport and return or ongoing ticket. Entry is granted for up to six months at the discretion of the Department of Immigration. Resident aliens of the US who show a valid US Alien Registration Card (green card) may be permitted to enter and remain in the Cayman Islands for up to 30 days.

Please keep the pink Immigration slip given to you upon arrival. This is our equivalent of a tourist identification card. Visitors should keep it with their travel documents and present it when departing. Anyone who wishes to extend their stay after arrival must visit the Department of Immigration and obtain an extension and may be asked to show proof of financial resources to permit an extension.

Departure Tax: There is a CI $10.00 or US $12.50 departure tax that is now included in the price of your travel ticket.

Working in the Cayman Islands: If you're planning a business trip, please know in advance that salespeople planning to solicit business and take orders in our islands require a temporary work permit. Applications for this may be obtained in advance from the Department of Immigration. Contact their office weekdays between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. at (345) 949-8344. You also must declare all samples of goods you're bringing into the country and these must leave with you.

Please know that under our Immigration Laws visitors are not allowed to accept jobs in the Cayman Islands without a government-issued work permit.

Language: English is our official language, with a distinctive "brogue" reflecting heritage of Welsh, Scottish and English ancestors still distinguishing the speech of the Caymanian people. The Jamaican patois and accompanying heavier accent is also common. Spanish, particularly regional dialects of Central America and Cuba, is also widely spoken.

Dress: Neat, casual and comfortable tropical attire are appropriate throughout the Cayman Islands. Visitors will want to bring smart casual tropical resort wear for evenings out at our restaurants. When attending church services, "Sunday dress" is appropriate - shorts and T-shirts are not considered acceptable. However, ties are not expected!

Visitors should remember that the Cayman Islands remains a "proper" British Overseas Territory and our people are conservative by nature. Please do not wear bathing suits or scanty beach wear beyond the beach or cruise ship - and cover up when in public areas elsewhere. As we say in Cayman, Please keep your shell on! There are no nude beaches in the Cayman Islands. Public nudity and topless bathing are strictly prohibited by law.

Time: The Cayman Islands remains on Eastern Standard Time year-round and does not change to Daylight Savings Time in April. The Cayman Islands are 5 hours behind Greenwich Meantime.

Population: The population of the Cayman Islands was estimated at 36,600 at the end of 1997. *continued over*

CAYMAN ISLANDS
Grand Cayman • Cayman Brac • Little Cayman

Climate: The Cayman Islands enjoy "perpetual summer," lying between the latitudes 19° and 20° North, in the heart of the Caribbean tempered by cooling trade winds. Temperatures are coolest during February, ranging from 64 to 72°F at night and 72 to 86°F during the day. Temperatures reach highs of 85 to 90°F during the summer months of July and August. Relative humidity varies from 68% to 92%.
The water temperature ranges between 78 and 82°F in the winter months and from 82 to 86°F in the summer. Predictably, the rainy season starts in May and lasts through October, with May and October usually the rainiest months. March and April are usually the driest months of the year.
Average annual rainfall is estimated at 46".

Currency and Banks: The Cayman Islands has its own currency, first issued in 1972, whose basic unit is the dollar, issued in notes with denominations of CI $100, 50, 25, 10, 5 and 1 and coins valued at 25 cents, 10, 5 and 1 cent. The CI dollar has a fixed exchange rate with the US dollar of CI $1.00 equals US $1.25. Or, the US dollar equals CI $.80.
There is no need for visitors to exchange their US dollars into local currency. The US dollar is accepted throughout the islands at a rate of CI 80 cents. Banks do NOT give a better rate of exchange. Major credit cards (with the exception of the Discover Card) and travellers checks are widely accepted. Canadian dollars and pounds sterling can be exchanged for CI dollars at local banks.
In addition, Automatic Teller Machines accepting VISA and Mastercard with Cirrus affiliation are located at Cayman National Bank and other banks and at Owen Roberts International Airport.

Banks: Although Grand Cayman now has more than 600 licensed banks, only a handful are full-service "A-class" banks providing full customer banking services as visitors know it. These include Barclays Bank; Scotiabank; Bank of Butterfield; Royal Bank of Canada; Cayman National Bank; Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce and British American Bank.
Regular banking hours are 9:00 a.m. until 4 p.m. Monday through Thursday and until 4:30 p.m. on Friday.

Taxes and Service Charges: Additional taxes on all accommodations include Government room tax of 10% and usually an automatic gratuity of 10% of the room rate. Restaurants often automatically add a 15% gratuity to their bill on food and beverage: visitors should check before adding gratuities

Medical Services: The Cayman Islands has a variety of modern medical facilities on Grand Cayman and Cayman Brac, including government-operated hospitals on both islands. In addition Cayman now has an efficient, island-wide 911 Emergency service.
The George Town Hospital on Grand Cayman has undergone a $26 million expansion and renovation. The hospital now has 128-beds and includes Maternity, Surgical, Medical and Pediatric units.
Also available are physiotherapy, radiology and laboratory services; a dental clinic and eye clinic, a pharmacy, and a new forensic laboratory. The Emergency Room is open 24 hours with a physician on-site at all times. The facilities including 24 hour ambulance paramedic service, only a phone call away to 911 or 555. The hospital is affiliated with Baptist Hospital of Miami for patient referrals involving advanced care or treatment.

Medical Services for Divers: Divers should know that the George Town Hospital also has a two-man, double-lock recompression chamber staffed by trained operators supervised by a physician experienced in hyperbaric medicine on call 24 hours for treatment of diving-related accidents.
Medivac services can be arranged quickly through Executive Air (345-949-7775) at Owen Roberts International Airport, whenever necessary to US facilities.

Private Medical Centres: There are two private medical centers on Grand Cayman, Professional Medical Centre (345-949-6066) and Cayman Medical and Surgical Centre (345-949-8150), which also has a physician referral hotline for medical advice.
Each centre is staffed by resident medical practitioners offering regular visits by a variety of medical specialists. In addition, there are a number of doctors representing a variety of specialties practicing in the Cayman Islands, most of them on Grand Cayman. They are listed in the local telephone directory.
In addition to pharmacies at the Hospital and independent medical centres, there are 15-full service pharmacies on Grand Cayman.

Dental Services: There is a new private dental clinic, Cayman Dental Services, in George Town, with resident dental surgeon/specialists on call 24 hours. (345-947-4447.) There are other private dental practices available. See listings in the local telephone directory. The Faith Hospital in Stake Bay on Cayman Brac offers emergency room facilities.

The Mastic Trail:
Take a guided hike along the natural path used by Grand Cayman North Siders before there were roads. You'll discover rare tropical trees, exotic birds and indigenous plant life through terrain that ranges from flat open land to mangrove swamps, primeval forest, craggy rockland and finally, farmland.
You can choose to walk the Mastic Trail both ways, or be met by a van for the return trip.

Pedro St. James:
Painstakingly restored to its original 1780 Great House splendour, this is the famed 1831 site of "The Birthplace of Democracy" in the Cayman Islands. It was originally built by slave labour and includes the Palladian staircase where the Proclamation of Emancipation abolishing slavery was read in 1835.

The House is the centre-piece of a heritage park, where you'll also discover a restored traditional wattle-and-daub cottage. A multi-featured visitor centre is available to compliment your tour.
It is open daily, except Christmas.

Bird Watching:
Cayman Brac: Cayman Brac has a mix of habitats that encourages many species of birds, both wetland and terrestrial birds. Unique to the Brac is the Red-Legged Thrush, but all birds are well covered in local references, especially "Birds of The Cayman Islands" by Patricia Bradley. Explorers are safe here and can count on cooperation from local people to answer their questions.
Little Cayman: Little Cayman Red-Footed Booby Pond Nature Reserve and RAMSAR site.

Cayman Islands National Museum:
Make the Cayman Islands National Museum the first stop on your tour of Grand Cayman and begin to see the real Cayman. The restored Old Courts building in George Town overlooks Hog Sty Bay, and is one of Cayman's few remaining 19th century structures, a survivor of hurricanes and countless Nor'westers. During its 150 years, it has served as a jail and courthouse - and meeting place of worship.
The meticulous restoration project won the 1990 American Express Preservation Award for the Caribbean.

The Museum collection contains over 2,000 items, from a 14-ft. traditional handmade catboat to old coins, rare documents and natural history specimens.

At the museum, you'll learn about this tiny country's fascinating cultural and natural history and the resourceful, independent nature of our seafaring society in a variety of exhibits and a 10-minute audiovisual presentation,"Cayman: Founded Upon the Seas".

The National Museum Shop offers a fine selection of books about Cayman; locally made crafts and high quality gifts, from Christmas tree ornaments to Caymanite jewelry.

The Museum is open Mon. through Fri., 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. and Saturday, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
For information contact: (345) 949-8368.

Turtle Farm:
No visit to Grand Cayman would be complete without a trip to this renowned centre where literally thousands of green sea turtles flourish through every stage from hatchling to healthy mature adult.

An important scientific facility for the replenishment of the world's sea turtle population, it also offers a unique opportunity for residents and tourists alike to interact with the gentle creatures.

In a separate area of the Farm, you can also observe Cayman green parrots, blue iguanas and the Cayman 'rabbits' called the Agouti.

The Turtle Farm is open seven days a week.

Good Snorkelling sites: Stingray City and the nearby Sand Bar in North Sound are Grand Cayman's most popular snorkelling sites, visited by hundreds of snorkellers each week.

The North Sound Lunch/Snorkelling trips provide visitors with a delightful, truly Caymanian experience. They are offered by a variety of Caymanian captains and boat operators. This activity remain one of our tourism industry's best values and most memorable soft ecotourism adventures. For about US $50 per person, Caymanian captains and crew take visitors on a full day adventure (9:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.) where they enjoy two or three snorkelling stops at Stingray City and the shallower Sandbar area, where rays swim freely with humans in only three feet of water, and then on to Coral Gardens for fish watching on shallow coral heads.

Great snorkelling can be found close to shore on all three islands. Boat trips will allow you to enjoy more dramatic views of deeper wrecks, reefs and the Cayman wall while floating on the surface.

Divers don't have the exclusive on seeing exotic marine life in Cayman waters! You can see huge neon blue Midnight Parrot fish; stingrays, tarpon, schools of yellowtail and blue tangs - and our treasured green turtles, probably raised at the Cayman Turtle Farm!

More than a dozen watersports operations offer snorkelling trips, including deluxe excursions with lunch on board. On Grand Cayman's west coast, you can cruise on the Nautilus semi-submersible and many other vessels, including luxury 60' Catamarans, and see a variety of sites.

Popular west coast sites which are easy to reach from shore on Grand Cayman include these locations just south of George Town: Coconut Harbour, Sunset House, Seaview Hotel, Parrot's Landing Watersports Park; Eden Rock Dive Centre and the shallows reefs directly off Paradise Reef bar.

Grand Cayman: On Grand Cayman's west coast just north of George Town: Don Foster's dive shop on North Church St. and Calico Jack's - both are the best entry points to see the wreck of the Cali.

Other good locations include just off Bob Soto's Scuba Centre at the Lobster Pot restaurant. Treasure Island Resort has good snorkelling off its beach.

Other popular locations further north include Cemetery Reef in West Bay and Turtle Reef, just north of the Turtle Farm at Northwest Point. The shallows off Morritt's Tortuga Club and Resort's lovely beach offer a surprising variety of fish and other marine life.

Cayman Brac: Off Cayman Brac, the easy entry at the Buccaneer's Beach on the north coast is a popular snorkelling site with healthy small coral formations and plentiful fish but the entire north coast offers shallow underwater scenery which is primarily pristine and seldom explored.

For a real thrill, join a dive boat headed for the wreck of the M/V Capt. Keith Tibbetts, a 330-ft. Russian built frigate sunk in 50-100 ft. off Cayman Brac's northwest coast. The view from above will stun you!

Little Cayman: Little Cayman's South Hole Sound Lagoon and Point of Sand (watch currents!) are other delightful snorkelling sites - their white sand beaches are as breathtaking as any in the Caribbean. You might glimpse a feisty bonefish or permit in these waters, as well as Queen conch, parrot fish and dozens of kinds of reef fish.

Jackson Point offers snorkellers easy shore entry. Explore fabulous coral reefs and marine life within several feet of water. Snorkel out to a mini-wall or venture a few feet further to a truly dramatic drop-off.

For an unforgettable experience take a boat trip to Bloody Bay, where the wall begins at only 18 ft. - an unforgettable sight as lush coral gardens meet sheer vertical coral wall!

Nightlife & Entertainment

The Cayman Islands lack casinos and cabarets, but does offer an enjoyable variety of nightlife and entertainment, most of which takes place on Grand Cayman.

Grand Cayman: On Grand Cayman, nightlife includes two comedy clubs, the 9-year old Coconuts Comedy Club at Legendz bar in the Cayman Falls shopping plaza and Chuckles at West Bay Polo Club and Sharkey's nightclub.

Top local bands appear regularly at The Planet Nightclub and occasionally other venues. The Gary Ebanks performs Jazz weekly during "Happy Hours" at various locations.

Other popular bands include CMX-5, Lammie, Heat, Acts, Gone Country, Hi-Tide, Mainstream and Blue Steel.

The legendary Barefoot Man and Band preform at Rum Point on Grand Cayman.

The Planet Nightclub and Sharkey's are nightclubs which attract a younger crowd along Seven Mile Beach for disco music by DJ's and occasionally live music.

The Links at SafeHaven Club House; Benjamin's Roof, The Westin, the Marriott, the Hyatt Regency, and Decker's 269, all regularly feature live music.

The Lions Centre in Red Bay on Grand Cayman is the location for a variety of events throughout the year, from concerts by top names in Caribbean music and stage productions to country, pop and rock performers from the US.

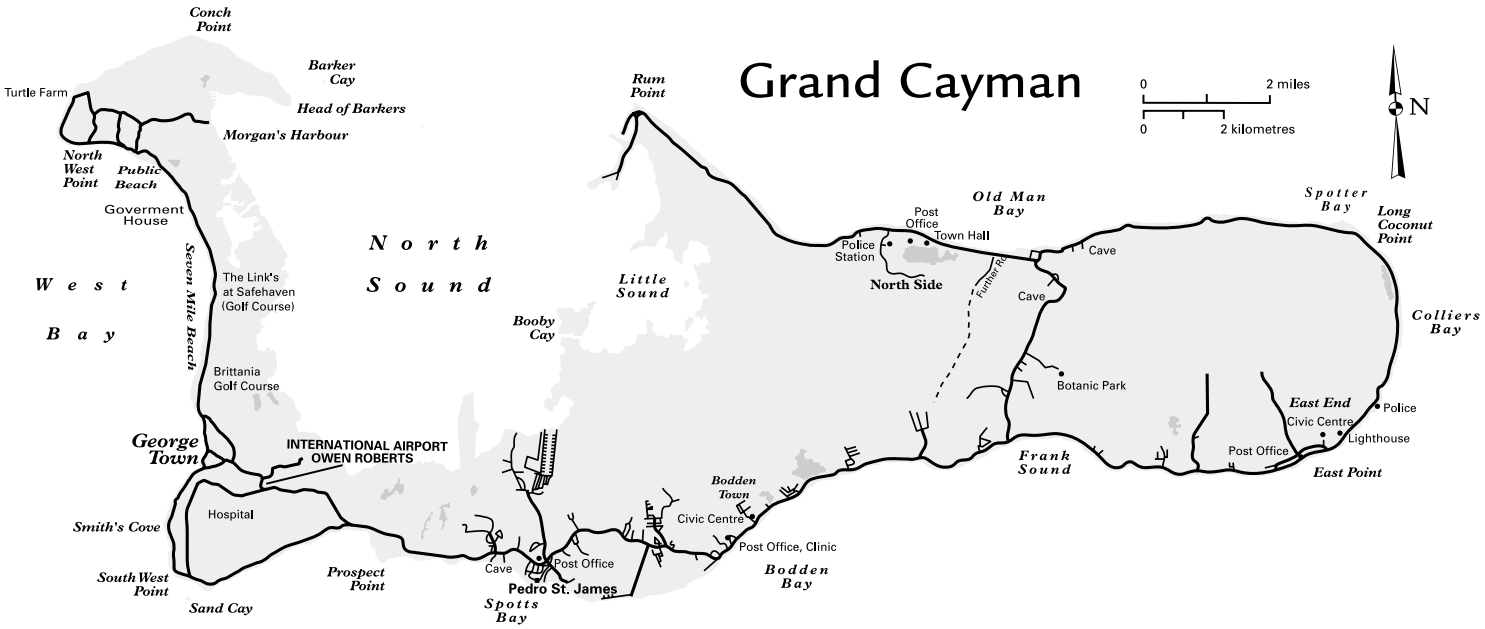
Live Theatre: The Harquail Theatre on West Bay Road is a state of the art, 330-seat facility, and the venue for cultural events including stage productions sponsored by the Cayman National Cultural Foundation, including plays by Caymanian and other West Indian playwrights; drama and comedy by Caribbean performers and special events such as art exhibitions and concerts.

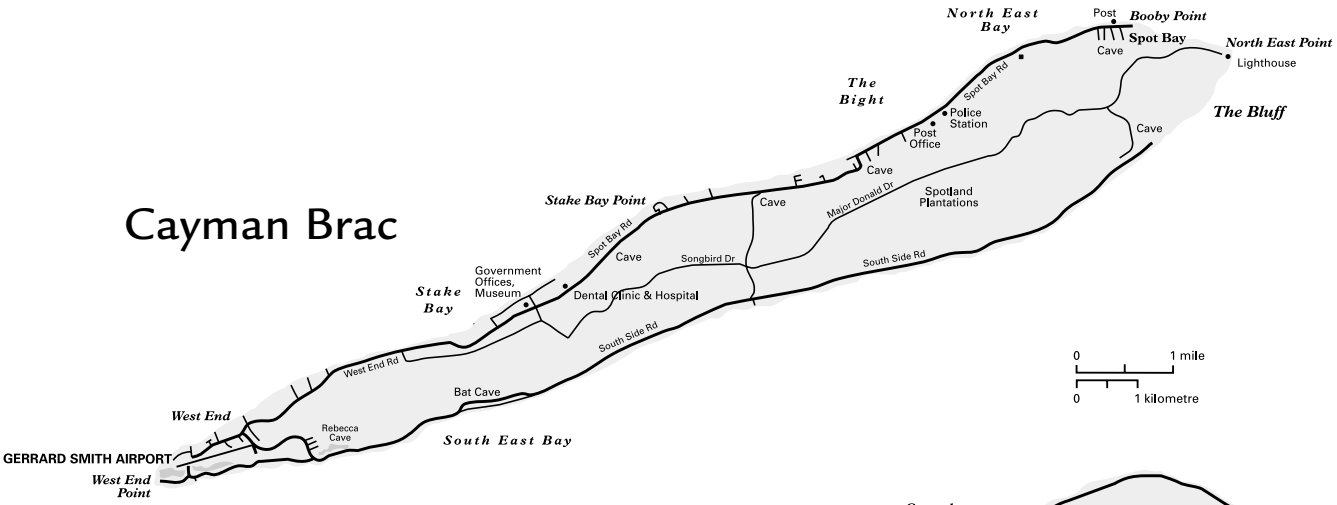
The Prospect Playhouse in Red Bay features year-round regular performances of comedy, drama and musicals by the Cayman Drama Society.

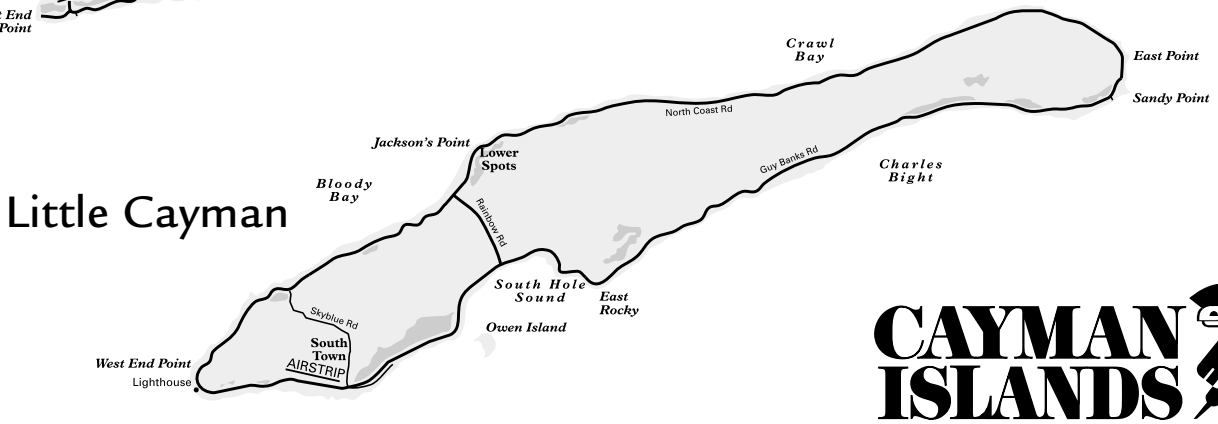
Dinner Cruises: There are also a wide variety of sunset and dinner cruises offered by local watersports operators on Grand Cayman, including ones aboard a replica pirate ship and 19th century tall ship.

Cayman Brac: On Cayman Brac, occasional weekend dances by local bands and community events, including talent shows and other stage and musical presentations at the Aston Rutty centre provide the island's main nightlife other than romantic walks under the stars and conversation.

Visitors will find the monthly magazine What's Hot, distributed free throughout the islands, and the "What's Happenin" column in the Friday issue of the local newspaper, the Caymanian Compass, provide the best sources of information about nightlife and special events.







CAYMAN ISLANDS

Grand Cayman • Cayman Brac • Little Cayman

There are plenty of goats on the Islands, but neither sheep nor black cattle, and only two horses, which were lately brought there from Jamaica by accident."

The first royal land grant in Grand Cayman, signalling the beginning of permanent settlement, was recorded around 1700, covering 3000 acres between Prospect and North Sound, and others followed until 1734.

These settlements included the use of slaves, although slavery was limited and never reached harsh and oppressive conditions which existed in plantocracy societies elsewhere in the Caribbean.

By 1773 the population of Grand Cayman was 400.

Legends of Cayman's occupation by pirates during the 18th century, including treasure caches left behind by Edward "Blackbeard" Teach, Neal Walker (in Little Cayman) and Henry Morgan, continue to be a romantic but historically questionable part of the folklore of this Western Caribbean country.

One of the most colourful historic legends, The Wreck of The Ten Sail, was recently "rewritten" in an accurate account uncovered through detailed research by Dr. Margaret Leshikar Denton.

On February 8, 1794, not November 1788 as long thought, 10 merchant vessels went aground in rough seas off Grand Cayman's East End, led by the HMS Convert. Contrary to an enduring popular legend, the convoy did not carry Prince William, the future King William IV, or any member of the Royal family, whose courageous rescue by Caymanians was attributed with the granting of the Cayman's freedom from taxation by King George III.

Another important historic event is considered the "Birth of Democracy" in the Cayman Islands. Pedro St. James great house in Savannah was the site of a historic meeting of the Islands' prominent residents. This took place on December 5, 1831 during which it was resolved that representatives should be appointed for the five different districts for the purpose of forming local laws for better Government.

The elections took place on 10 December in the five districts on Grand Cayman and on 31 December they met as the first Legislative Assembly for the first time in George Town.

In addition, another historic event took place there in May 1835, when the proclamation declaring the emancipation of all slaves throughout the colonies was read at Pedro St. James and at a number of other prominent places in the Cayman Islands.

During the next century with limited natural resources to sustain them, Caymanians became famous for their resourcefulness and independent spirit. They turned to the sea for their livelihood, and Caymanians' reputation as outstanding sailors and turtle fishermen grew during the 20th century. Many Caymanian men joined the merchant marine and earned reputations as some of the finest ship's captains and seamen in the world.

When Jamaica attained independence in 1962, the Cayman Islands chose to remain tied to Britain as a British Crown Colony. In 1971, the Islands received their first Governor and the present constitution was adopted in 1972 and its most recent amendments were adopted in February 1994.

Today, tourism and the international financial industry form the basis of Cayman's strong economy and prosperity. The Cayman Islands is recognized as the "birthplace" of the modern sport of recreational scuba diving in 1957, when the legendary Bob Soto opened the Caribbean's first dive shop on Grand Cayman.

The country's Tourist Board, was formed in 1966, launching the country's early serious efforts at tourism promotion overseas.

It was the precedent for the Cayman Islands Department of Tourism, which was created by the Tourism Law of 1974.

The country's successful offshore financial industry dates back to 1966 when the first banking and trust laws were passed, laying the foundation for the modern banking and financial services industry which exists today.

Shore Fishing: Our calm, crystal-clear waters, abundant marine life, flats and rocky shorelines make all three of our islands the answer to a shore fisherman's dream. Be careful to familiarise yourself with our Marine Parks laws, which prohibit fishing or taking of any kind of marine life in specific protected areas. Among the species anglers can catch (and release!) are small barracuda and bonefish — even tarpon, permit and pompano.

Bottom and Reef Fishing: Our islands are surrounded by hundreds of square miles of healthy reefs which offer good fishing, both with natural baits and artificial lures. Bottom fishing is a activity for the whole family in the Cayman Islands. You can bring your own equipment or simply book a charter that includes all tackle and bait. Our local guides usually recommend natural baits, including small fry, squid and pieces of conch for better action.

Marine Parks: Once again, we urge visitors to respect our Marine Parks laws when fishing on their own, and not to waste our marine life resources simply for the sake of pictures.

In all three islands, anglers can try for catches of yellowtail snapper, mutton snapper, grouper, blue runner (also known as fry jack) porgy, almaco jack, bar jack and jack crevalle — the jack family are all fierce fighters and provide first-class light tackle action.

Night fishing: Night fishing trips can also be arranged with local guides upon request.

Light Tackle and Flyfishing Action: Bonefish, tarpon and permit.

Bonefishing: Good bonefishing (the fish average 3-8 lbs. in Cayman waters) awaits anglers in unexpected areas of Grand Cayman, including the shallow flats of North Sound, South Sound and Frank Sound — even off Seven Mile Beach, Anglers can also cast for tarpon in select areas.

Little Cayman is most famous for bonefish action, mostly in the coastal flats, including South Hole Sound Lagoon, off Little Cayman. Cayman Brac also offers some good action from small bonefish along the shallows off the southwest coast.

Visitors should be aware that guides revive and release bonefish (as well as tarpon and permit) in the interest of marine conservation, and to provide action for future anglers.

A little known fact to most visitors is the abundance of tarpon in Grand Cayman's mosquito control canals, also called "dykes".

These fish are even found in land-locked brackish ponds island-wide and average 4 - 5 lbs. although we've seen them much larger — so have divers, on the North Wall and west coast grottos of Grand Cayman!

Sportfishermen will also discover the thrill of catching and releasing small tarpon, powerful light tackle fighters found in many of these same areas, but especially in Grand Cayman's North Sound, canals and Little Cayman's landlocked, mangrove-surrounded Tarpon Lake.

Excellent guides are available on all three islands, but Little Cayman is recognized as the best island to sample all three types of light-tackle game fish action, from bonefish, small tarpon and permit, weighing up to 35 lbs.

While good deep sea fishing exists right offshore for game fish including blue marlin, dolphin, dorado, wahoo, tuna and barracuda, Little Cayman's main attraction for anglers is light tackle and flyfishing.

Flyfishing: This type of fishing requiring special skills and tackle is still not widely available in the Cayman Islands and anglers are urged to bring their own equipment.

Fishing Tournaments: Local fishing tournaments are sponsored throughout the year by the Cayman Islands Angling Club and attract an enthusiastic following of resident and visiting anglers. These include the annual spring Cayman Islands International Fishing Tournament.

But their secret is out and divers are heading east from Grand Cayman to this still pristine frontier in growing numbers. The newest among the 41 moored dive sites is the dramatic M/V Capt. Keith Tibbetts, a 330 ft. Russian-built frigate sunk off the northwest coast in September 1996.

Columbus may have discovered the Cayman Islands in 1503, but it was Bob Soto's equally important discovery in these waters 450 years later that opened a truly New World. With homemade diving equipment that would appall divers today, Mr. Soto began exploring the magic and mystery of Cayman's underwater kingdom. In 1957, he was called a madman when he decided to expose visitors to this dramatic marine scene and launched Bob Soto's Diving Ltd., the Caribbean's first dive operation, on Grand Cayman.

Dive Operations

During the past four decades, this tranquil Western Caribbean island trio has developed into one of the world's top dive destinations. Its location and unusual geology accounts for part of that appeal. There are now more than 30 dive operations on Grand Cayman, six on Little Cayman and three on Cayman Brac. In addition, two liveaboards, the Cayman Aggressor IV and Little Cayman Diver II offer week-long inclusive dive packages.

The three tiny islands are not volcanic, but actually peaks of an undersea mountain known as the Cayman Ridge, which rises more than six miles from the ocean floor. To the south is the deepest part of the Caribbean Sea: the Cayman Trench, which plunges to a depth of 24,759 ft.

What lures both novice and experienced divers to these islands is a combination of attractions: at the top of the list is the famous Cayman Wall, which divers know actually refers to the dramatic drop-offs surrounding all three islands. Within a quarter mile from shore, beginning as shallow as 20 - 35 ft., the ocean floor falls away as either a sloping or sheer vertical cliff, plummeting 6,000 ft. into unfathomable blue abyss.

Today, the Cayman Islands offers more extraordinary diving adventures than ever for divers of all skill levels, from absolute beginner through Master Scuba Instructor.

Dive shops and training facilities throughout the three islands offer every possible diving-related service from IANTD Nitrox certification; Tri-mix instruction and other opportunities for technical diving.

Marine Conservation

The Cayman Islands has carefully protected its marine environment through strict legislation dating back to the original marine conservation Act of 1976. The Marine Parks laws introduced in April 1986 greatly expanded Cayman's protection of the marine environment.

By safeguarding its varied critical marine habitats, Cayman has insured the existence of varied and abundant population of marine life on its reefs and drop-offs. There are now 257 single and double-pin permanent moorings off the coasts of our three islands, including 159 on Grand Cayman, 41 on Cayman Brac and 57 on Little Cayman.

The Department of Environment has four staff members (two Marine Parks Officers and two Marine Technicians) specifically responsible for maintenance and repairs to this extensive system of structures, as well as for research and identification of new mooring sites which could relieve stress on heavily dived areas.

Now almost 50 years after Bob Soto first said "let's go diving", off Grand Cayman's west coast, the mystery and pristine quality of more than 75% of these sites remains unknown to most divers. There are still miles of virgin diving off Cayman's coasts awaiting discovery by divers today.

Here, beneath the calm tourmaline and lapis surface of the Caribbean divers find virtually unlimited diving adventures and startling encounters with marine life.

The Cayman Islands remains surrounded by a New World awaiting discovery.