

Any Saturday morning travelers can pick up fresh fruits and vegetables at the local market.



Island Breezes

Each week the Philadelphia Tribune will profile a different country in the Caribbean. The stories will trace the attractions and history of each island nation.



ANTIGUA, BARBUDA

A TOURISM DELIGHT

Antigua & Barbuda



Government: constitutional monarchy
Leader: Gov. Gen. James B. Carlisle
Independence: Nov. 1, 1981
Capital: St. John's
Population: 68,320
Life expectancy: 71.6 years
Ethnic groups: Black, British, Portuguese, Lebanese, Syrian
Religions: Christian (predominantly Anglican with other Protestant, and some Roman Catholic)
Languages: English (official), local dialects
GDP: \$750 million

indulge in the secluded exclusivity of the pristine white beaches of Jumby Bay Island."

Antigua and Barbuda are located southeast of Puerto Rico. The islands' capital is St. John's, located on Antigua.

Another frequent Antigua traveler, Ann Dickerson, said she loves visiting the island. Her favorite area of is Portsmouth. She said that area

definitely not the only two people who like traveling to these islands. The World Factbook said tourism dominates the economy.

"Weak tourist arrival numbers since early 2000 have slowed the economy, however, and pressed the government into a tight fiscal corner," the World Factbook reports. "Prospects for economic

and British heritage epitomized by Nelson's Dockyard.

"In addition to sand and sun, Caribbean fun includes enjoying the British, French, Dutch and other cultures," Eggers said. "A typical seven-day vacation on any single Caribbean island may not have enough diversity of activities to keep everyone in a family happily entertained."



Barbuda is known for its pristine white beaches. The island has even started to export its white sand to other locales.



Recreation Ground in St. John's, Antigua.
 —AP PHOTO/ALBERTO CHAVEZ



Antigua has one of the largest regattas in the world during Antigua Sallign Week with more than 200 boats.

Islands feature more than 365 pristine white beaches, diverse cultures and foods

By MIGNON BROOKS
Tribune Correspondent

The best time for tourists to really enjoy themselves in Antigua is during the island's Carnival celebration, which ended Monday, said frequent visitor Sonia Weymuller.

"Carnival is the best time for visitors to get real insight into the history and the culture of Antigua," she said. "It all began over 40 years ago as a celebration of the emancipation of the slaves, commemorated in 10 days of non-stop revelry featuring colorful costumes, beauty pageants, talent shows and especially good music."

Antigua and Barbuda are two islands but run by the same government. The islands were first inhabited by the Siboney people in 2400 B.C., the World Factbook stated. But, when Christopher Columbus landed there in 1493, Antigua and Barbuda were being occupied by Carib Indians. Later down the line, the English formed a colony there in 1663.

The people of Antigua and Barbuda gained their independence Nov. 1, 1981. Queen Elizabeth II is the ruler of both islands and represented by Gov. Gen. James B. Carlisle.

"Slavery, established to run the sugar plantations on Antigua, was abolished in 1834," the World Factbook stated. "The islands became an independent state within the British commonwealth of



Carnival in Antigua is a celebration of the end of slavery. The party ends on Emancipation Day, a national holiday that was celebrated Monday.

nations in 1981."

Nowadays, the Carnival celebration is known as a massive island party, in which dancing begins in the evening and continues until the middle of the next morning, Weymuller said.

One of the best parts of the celebrations, she said, are the calypso dance competitions that go on all night long. They serve a variety of foods during the all-night party such as ducana (a sweet potato dish), pepper pot stews and curries.

"The celebratory mood transpires through Jumby Bay, a Rosewood Resort, with its playful atmosphere and luxurious accommodations. Named for local mischievous spirits - Jumby casts a spell of serene enchantment," Weymuller said. "So once Carnival is over, indulge in the secluded exclusivity of the pristine white beaches of Jumby Bay Island."

Antigua and Barbuda are located southeast of Puerto Rico. The islands' capital is St. John's, located on Antigua.

Another frequent Antigua traveler, Ann Dickerson, said she loves visiting the island.



The Beach House Resort is the newest hotel on the island of Barbuda. The upscale resort has only 21 rooms and opens to a secluded beach.

is where million-dollar yachts reside during the winter months. Also, she said, she buys some food products to bring back to the United States.

"When in Antigua, look for bread that is baked in wood ovens. It has a wonderful smoky flavor," Dickerson said. "I love to buy raw sugar for my coffee and cereal. The drinking water in Antigua was plentiful and good."

Dickerson and Weymuller are definitely not the only two people who like traveling to these islands. The World Factbook said tourism dominates the economy.

"Weak tourist arrival numbers since early 2000 have slowed the economy, however, and pressed the government into a tight fiscal corner," the World Factbook stated.

growth in the medium term will continue to depend on income growth in the industrialized world, especially in the U.S., which accounts for slightly more than one-third of tourist arrivals."

Evan Eggers, president of cruise store 02Cruise.com, said that cruising is a wonderful way to travel to the island because it allows vacationers to see all that the island has to offer. He said Antigua has 365 beaches and British heritage epitomized by Nelson's Dockyard.

"In addition to sand and sun, Caribbean fun includes enjoying the British, French, Dutch and other cultures," Eggers said. "A typical seven-day vacation on any single Caribbean island may not have enough diversity of activities to keep everyone in a family happy."



West Indies captain Brian Lara hits the ball for 6 on his way to beating the world's highest score in test cricket during the third day of the fourth and final test at the Antigua Recreation Ground in St. John's, Antigua.

Antigua & Barbuda