

Trip Styler | GSA Publishing – Travel Magazine



The ABCs :: An Intro

The ABCs: the first three letters in the alphabet, as well as a collection of the Caribbean's southernmost islands lucky enough to grow up in the right part of town, outside the hurricane belt. Hint, hint: warm up in the ABC islands all winter, or plan ahead for fall 2012 when everyone stays away from the Caribbean and ABC-goers get a great low-season deal. Formerly known as the Netherlands Antilles, Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao are BFFs, sitting less than 46 miles apart at the longest distance and only 15 miles above the Northern tip of Venezuela. This week, we'll visit Curacao.



The ABCs :: Curacao

[trip style = sun + beach + urban]

Curacao would be the worst place in the world to do an Easter egg hunt. Its pastel green, blue, pink and yellow buildings would mask the colour of the eggs and the bright Caribbean hues would distract from the task at hand. The chocolate would melt too {it's the Caribbean after all}.

Curacao is the ABC's boutique island. Sure, its busy capital, Willemstad, welcomes cruise ship passengers and a few mega hotel mavens, but most of the resorts are small and most of the visitors are seeking an edited experience—the kind where you dine under a thatched roof for dinner, where you snorkel with turtles, and where you sun bathe between a coral cliff and clear water that refracts light like a Swarovski crystal. As a tourist you feel like you blend in—whether this is true or not. The 38-mile island has 50+ ethnicities represented and everyone seems to do every job—regardless of their background. This is as refreshing as sipping a Blue Curacao cocktail {like a blue lagoon} under the shade of an umbrella with misters and fans refreshing you from the intense heat.

Eat

Overlooking Willemstad and its lengthy rotating bridge {which allows freighters entry into Curacao's deep-water port—its main and thriving industry}, [Gouverneur De Rouville](#) offers open-air dining in a restored Dutch building. Excellent service and a fusion of local and globally-inspired cuisine make it consistently busy with both tourists and Curacaoans. If you make it outside the city, there's a local garden joint in Westpunt that can't be missed. Jaanchies is an 85-year-old restaurant with an owner who acts as the host and talking menu.



Do

Shop hop in Willemstad's boutiques, visit Blue Beach and dive off the far reaches of the island.

Stay

[Kura Hulanda Hotel and Lodge](#)

Hotel: Hang out in history in a UNESCO World Heritage Site and restored Dutch village in the heart of Willemstad. Walk along cobblestone streets, dine in the main square or massage your shoulders under the cascading waterfall in the eco-pool.

Lodge: For a breezy beach experience, stay at the Lodge on the island's west side. A tranquil cove and coral cliffs front the cool, coastal retreat with amenities from home, thousands miles away from it all.

Getting There

Get there just got a little easier from Canada. On December 24th, 2011, Air Canada started doing a weekly, seasonal service from Toronto on Saturdays. This means that [Air Canada Vacations](#) will be offering flight and hotel packages to nine resorts, two of which are mentioned above!

About [Trish Friesen](#) Trish Friesen is the definition of a jetsetter; she eats, sleeps and breathes travel, packing her bag every two weeks for a wild adventure or sun-drenched hotspot. Aruba, Curacao, Bonaire, New York, Palm Springs, Seattle, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Dallas and Whistler—and that's just this fall! In addition to her writing being published in [The Daily Meal](#) and The Vancouver Sun, Trish is also the editor-in-chief of [TripStyler.com](#), a Vancouver-based travel lifestyle website. Along with stable of globetrotting writers, Trip Styler dishes daily tips, tricks and technology that make traveling easier, faster, more fun and lighter on the wallet. Follow Trish on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

