

Understanding the Port

St. Kitts packs beaches, mountain views, history, and a sister island into one small stop. Ships dock right in downtown Basseterre, which makes this one of the easiest ports to explore. But the experiences that make this island special require a short drive. Pick one plan and commit to it.

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

The Port Area

Ships dock at Port Zante on the Basseterre waterfront. Duty-free shops and restaurants at the pier. The Circus clock tower is a five-minute walk.

Cash & Currency

Eastern Caribbean dollar (EC\$) is official. USD accepted virtually everywhere; expect change in EC\$. Most taxis and small vendors are cash only.

Getting Around

Licensed taxis wait at the pier. Rates are set, but taxis are unmetered. Agree on the fare and the currency before you ride. No beach at the port itself.

GOOD

Basseterre & The Big View

Best for: Short stops, easy days, minimal logistics

- ✓ Port Zante and downtown Basseterre on foot
- ✓ Timothy Hill: Atlantic left, Caribbean right
- ✓ Back at the ship whenever you want

Low effort, high reward.

BETTER

Beach Day on the Peninsula

Best for: Couples, families, beach lovers

- ✓ Cockleshell Beach: beach bars, views of Nevis
- ✓ South Friars Bay: calm water, chairs, food
- ✓ You may spot the island's famous vervet monkeys

Arrange your return taxi before you settle in.

BEST

Rail, Fortress, or Nevis

Best for: First timers, history lovers, explorers

- ✓ Scenic Railway: last passenger railway in the West Indies
- ✓ Brimstone Hill Fortress: UNESCO hilltop views
- ✓ Water taxi to Nevis for a second island in one day

Timing management required, especially for Nevis.

Top Experiences to Consider

GOOD

Basseterre & Timothy Hill

Browse Port Zante and the streets around The Circus, then take a 15-minute taxi to Timothy Hill for the most famous view on the island. The Atlantic meets the Caribbean at your feet.

BETTER

Beach Day

Cockleshell Beach faces Nevis Peak with beach bars and water sports, about 30 minutes out. South Friars Bay has calm water and beach clubs closer to the ship. Both are worth the ride.

BEST

Scenic Railway or Brimstone Hill

Ride the historic sugar train around the island. About three hours door to door, part by rail and part by bus, with drinks and narration included. Or stand on the ramparts of Brimstone Hill Fortress, the Gibraltar of the West Indies. These are experiences you only get here.

Where Staff & Travelers Recommend

Cockleshell Beach

The consensus pick. Food and drinks steps away, chair rentals on the sand, and a postcard view of Nevis across the channel. Worth the ride to the peninsula.

St. Kitts Scenic Railway

Frequently called the signature St. Kitts experience. A relaxed, narrated ride you cannot do anywhere else in the Caribbean. Book early. It sells out on busy port days.



Timothy Hill Overlook, St. Kitts



Basseterre, St. Kitts

Key Considerations

The port area is pleasant and walkable, but it is not the reason to visit St. Kitts. The views, beaches, and history all sit a short taxi ride away. Taxis are unmetered with set rates, so confirm the total fare, the currency (EC\$ or US\$), and your pickup time before you leave the pier.

The Scenic Railway runs about three hours door to door, part by rail and part by bus. For Nevis, the water taxi from Cockleshell or a ship excursion beats chancing the public ferry schedule. Choose one experience, protect your all aboard time, and St. Kitts becomes one of the easiest great ports in the Caribbean.



Brimstone Hill Fortress, St. Kitts



St. Kitts Scenic Railway



Pinney's Beach, Nevis

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Port Orientation

FROM THE PORT (PORT ZANTE)

● Port Zante & Basseterre	Walkable
● The Circus & National Museum	Short walk from pier
~ 10 min by taxi	
● Scenic Railway Station	Needsmust Station, near the airport
~ 15 min by taxi	
● Timothy Hill Overlook	Two seas, one view
~ 20 min by taxi	
● South Friars Bay	Beach clubs
~ 30 min by taxi	
● Cockleshell Beach	Facing Nevis
~ 35–45 min by taxi	
● Brimstone Hill Fortress	Northwest coast
~ 15 min by water taxi	
● Nevis (Oualie Bay)	From Cockleshell Beach
~ 30–45 min by ferry	
● Nevis (Charlestown)	From Basseterre ferry terminal

DON'T FORGET

Confirm your all aboard time before you leave the ship.
Set a phone alarm. The ship will not wait for you.

Key Takeaway

St. Kitts rewards a decision. One beach, one landmark, or one railway ride, done well, beats trying to see it all.

With taxis waiting at the pier and most of the island within about 35 minutes, this is one of the easiest ports to get right.

ETA will help you choose the right experience based on your travel style.

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Did You Know?

Smallest in the Hemisphere. St. Kitts & Nevis is the smallest country in the Western Hemisphere. About 101 square miles and roughly 48,000 people.

As Many Monkeys as People. Green vervet monkeys, descendants of animals brought from West Africa in the 1600s, roughly match the human population. By some estimates, they outnumber it.

The Mother Colony. St. Kitts hosted the first English (1623) and first French (1625) colonies in the Caribbean, earning the nickname "Mother Colony of the West Indies."

Hamilton's Birthplace. Alexander Hamilton was born on Nevis. The site of his birthplace in Charlestown is now the Museum of Nevis History.

The Last Railway. The Scenic Railway rides a narrow-gauge line built between 1912 and 1926 to haul sugar cane. Sugar ran this island until 2005. The train is now the last passenger railway in the West Indies.