

# The Caribbean Islands

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# Countries

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- The Bahamas
- Cuba
- Haiti
- The Dominican Republic
- Jamaica
- Trinidad and Tobago
- The Barbados
- All other islands belong to other countries

# Physical Characteristics

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- Made up of three island groups
  - Greater Antilles
  - Lesser Antilles
  - The Bahamas
- All of the islands are located in the tropics
- Greater Antilles are made up of Cuba, Jamaica, and Hispaniola
- Lesser Antilles are the other smaller islands

Gulf of Mexico

Mexico

Belize

Honduras

Nicaragua

NICARAGUA

Key West

Cozumel

Swan Islands

Islas de la Bahia

Cayos Miskitos

Isla de la Providencia

Isla de San Andres

Islas del Maíz

Eleuthera

The Bahamas

Cat Island

San Salvador

Rum Island

Long Island

Samana Cay

Crooked Is.

Mayaguana

Acklins Is.

Turks & Caicos

Great Inagua

Andros Island

Cay Sal Bank

Great Exuma

Cay Lobos

Guanches Cay

Matanzas

Santa Clara

Cienfuegos

Isla de la Juventud

Cayman Islands

Camagüey

Holguín

Santiago de Cuba

Cuba

Jamaica

Kingston

Nassau

Marquesa Islands

Haiti / Dominican Republic

Puerto Rico

Greater Antilles

Caribbean Sea

Aruba

Curacao

Bonaire

North Atlantic Ocean

US / British Virgin Islands

Anguilla

St Martin

St Kitts

Nevis

Montserrat

Dominica

St Lucia

St Vincent

The Grenadines

Grenada

Venezuela

Turks & Caicos

North Atlantic Ocean

Haiti / Dominican Republic



Puerto Rico

Caribbean Sea

US / British Virgin Islands



**Lesser Antilles**



Venezuela

Guyana

# Physical Characteristics contd.

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## ■ Island formations

- The Greater Antilles are the tops of volcanic peaks that pushed up from the ocean
- These islands are rockier
- The flatter islands were made from dead animal remains called coral
- The soil in these islands cannot support agriculture









# Physical Characteristics contd.

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## ■ Marine Climate

- Because of the ocean winds, the islands stay cooler than other places in the tropics
- Rainfall can also be affected by the wind
  - Sides of islands facing the wind receive abundant rainfall
  - Sides of islands facing away from the wind receive little rainfall

# Ethnic Roots

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## ■ African Descent

- Millions of Africans were brought to islands as slaves
- Culture has been affected by this group
  - Calypso

## ■ Asian Immigrants

- Many immigrants came from Asia when slavery was abolished to find work



# Caribbean Nations Today

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- 90% of the population live in independent countries
- Other islands are politically controlled by other nations
- Jamaica and the Bahamas belong to the British Commonwealth
- Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands are controlled by the United States





# Economic Activities

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- Many of the islands depend on agriculture
  - The Volcanic islands contain very rich soil
  - Many others work as laborers on plantations
- Tourism is also very important because of the beauty of the region
  - The native people receive little benefit from tourism because most of the hotels belong to foreign corporations
  - Layoffs are common in the off-season







# Migration

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- Most people in the Caribbean move to find jobs
- Plantation workers must move during the off-season – they move to Central America or other islands for work
- A large percentage of Puerto Ricans moved to the United States

# Migration contd.

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## ■ Political Unrest

- Fidel Castro's regime in Cuba was oppressive and led many to leave for the US
- Cuba lost its financial support after the fall of the Soviet Union causing more poverty
- Haiti was ruled by harsh dictators causing many to leave
- A US backed leader was put into place in 1994, but his reelection was disputed, and unrest in the area continues

## ■ Economic Benefits

- Many emigrants send money back to the islands
- This extra income has helped modernize the Caribbean





