

TRAVEL SMART

STRATEGIES AND EXPERT ADVICE FOR YOUR NEXT VACATION



AFFORDABLE ANGUILLA

Bodacious Beaches on a Budget

Anguilla may be one of the Caribbean's most expensive destinations, but its ultimate attractions are free: the beaches. They're some of the best in the Caribbean, mile after mile of silky sand ringing a slumbery island.

To economize on accommodations, the sure bet is to plan your visit for low season, when most hotels drop rates by 40 percent or more (note that the island virtually shuts

down for a few weeks in September). But don't count out high season altogether: Check out the relatively low prices we found — you may be pleasantly surprised.

If airline prices and flight times for service to Anguilla are daunting, look into flying to St. Maarten and taking a taxi to Marigot (\$15), where a 20-minute ferry ride brings you to Anguilla for \$12. You may save hundreds of

dollars and hours of layovers.

There are great (and pricey) restaurants, but you can keep your food tab down with take-out meals from **Fat Cat Gourmet To Go** (264-497-2307) in George Hill.

An island institution since 1959, **Lloyd's Bed & Breakfast** (264-497-2351; lloyds.ai) is a nine-room inn located in a residential area above The Valley, Anguilla's capital. Each smallish

Anguilla's visitors enjoy dozens of world-class beaches, including Shoal Bay.

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but immaculate room has a private bath and air conditioning. There's no pool, and it's a mile to the beach at Crocus Bay, but this family-owned lodge is the closest thing you'll find on Anguilla to a homey West Indian guest house. Year-round rates of \$75 for a single and \$105 for a double, including breakfast, make this a particularly good deal in winter.

Close to the island's ferry dock, the **Ferryboat Inn** (264-497-6613; ferryboat.inn.ai) has seven units that sit near an excellent beach. Accommodations include two good-sized one-bedroom apartments, plus four larger, 1,200-square-foot, one-bedroom, two-bath apartments that are suitable for four people. These are priced from \$90 to \$105 in low season (\$160 to \$180 high). Bigger still is a two-bedroom, two-bath cottage fronting the sand, for \$175 a night in low season (\$280 high).

Located at the east end of Anguilla's most luxuriant sweep of sand, **Rendezvous Bay Hotel & Villas** (800-274-4893; rendezvous.bay.com) opened in 1962 and still has plenty of quirky charm. But the hotel is undergoing two summers of major remodeling that will result in the original rooms



WORTH A SPLURGE

Meads Bay is one of Anguilla's loveliest beaches, and although winter rates are high at **Carimar Beach Club** (800-235-8667; carimar.com), summer discounts of more than 55 percent are a deal. Each of the 24 one- and two-bedroom condo units has a full kitchen and a sea view. Rooms in front are right on the beach; tennis courts are across the street. One-bedroom doubles are \$160 to \$200 in low season (\$365 to \$440 high).

AN AFFORDABLE DAY IN ANGUILLA

\$135 PER PERSON IN LOW SEASON

(\$149 high), based on double occupancy.

Not including airfare, car rental, airport transfers, tax or service (US\$1 = EC\$2.68).

Average low-end hotel: \$90 in low season (\$119 high)

Breakfast: \$13 for a local breakfast of fried fish and johnnycakes at Tasty's in South Hill (264-497-2737)

Lunch: \$12 for barbecued chicken and ribs with sides at Gwen's Reggae Grill on Shoal Bay (264-497-2120)

Dinner: \$20 for pan-seared snapper with mashed sweet potatoes at E's Oven in

South Hill (264-498-8258)

Activity: \$45 for boat trip to Prickly Pear Cays

Getting there: American Eagle and LIAT fly to Anguilla from San Juan. You can also take a ferry over from Marigot, St. Maarten for \$12 each way; they depart every 30 minutes. (St. Martin is served by American, Continental, Delta, United and US Airways.)

Taxi from airport to hotels: \$8 to Lloyd's; \$16 to Ferryboat Inn and Carimar; \$22 to Harbor Lights

Rental car: \$45 per day from Island Car Rentals, including drop-off (264-497-2723); \$20 for an Anguilla driver's license

Taxes: Hotels add 10 percent tax and 10 percent service charge; departure tax is \$20 by air, \$3 by sea.

Additional information: 800-553-4939; anguilla-vacation.com