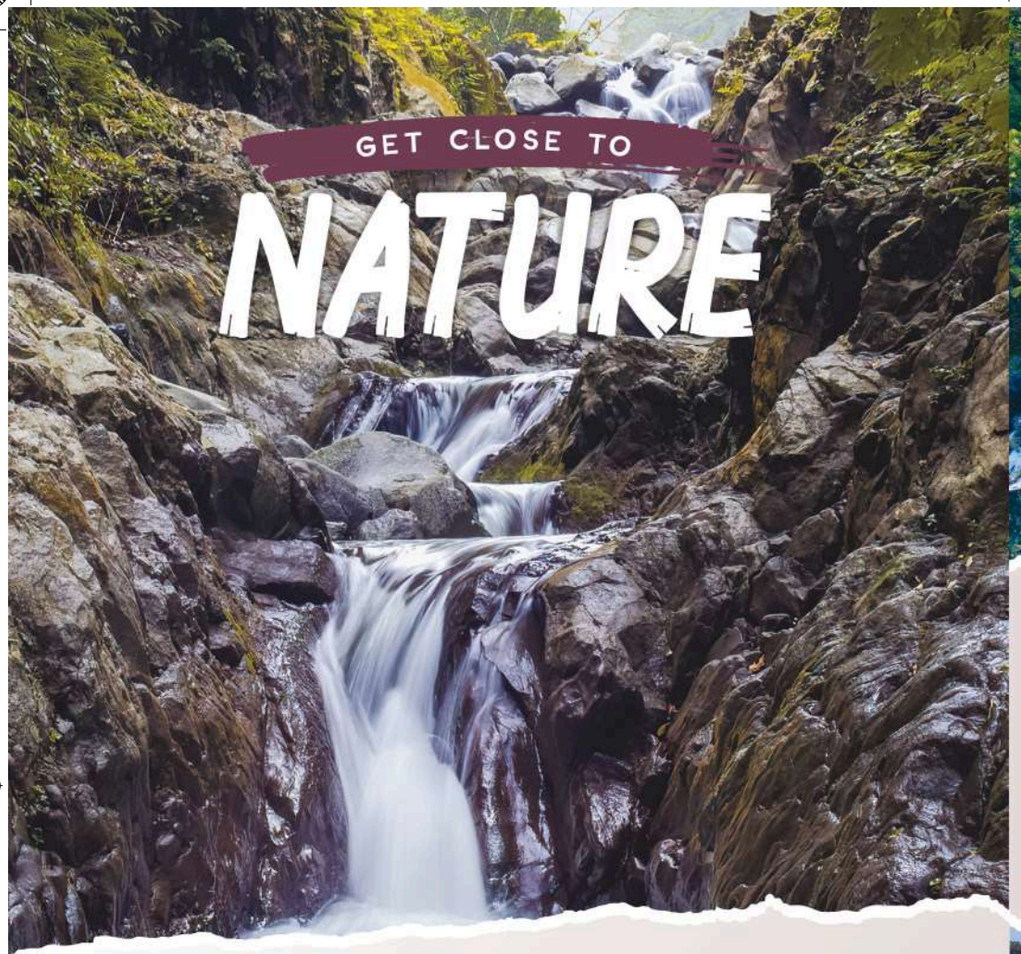

St. Vincent and The Grenadines

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ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

ECO-ADVENTURES

St. Vincent and the Grenadines' (SVG) natural surroundings are still untouched by development and are an excellent backdrop for Eco-Adventure experiences. Hikers can trek to an active volcano, take a quick dip in secluded waterfalls, or uncrowded pristine beaches hidden by lush foliage. Jeep safaris, bike trips, and walking tours thrust explorers into parts of the islands that few people have ever laid eyes upon. The beaches, black, gold, or white sand, are natural experiences in their own right, with long deserted shorelines dotted by palm trees to explore.

As the largest of the islands, St. Vincent has the most to offer in the way of land-based natural attractions. From hiking trails to historic gardens, the activities here practically demand that eco-tourists spend at least a day or two exploring the island's interior.

HIKING LA SOUFRIERE VOLCANO

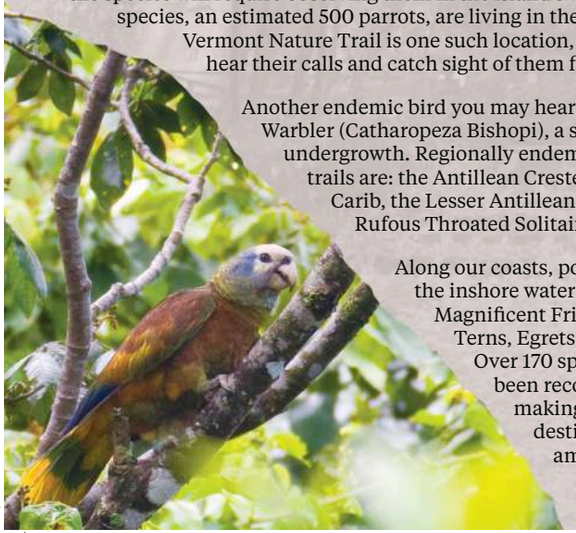
At over 4,000 feet above sea level, the active La Soufriere volcano dominates the landscape of mainland St Vincent. It has long captured the imagination of adventure seekers with the famed Daniel Defoe, author of Robinson Crusoe the adventure novel, writing about its majesty in the Myst Journal, 1718. La Soufriere experienced a series of explosive eruptions from 9th April 2021 and is currently deemed out of its explosive phase. However, explorers are discouraged from hiking until further notice by the local authorities.

RAWACOU RECREATION PARK

A major recreational spot, Rawacou Recreational Park includes two beaches separated by a rocky headland with a man made pool. A dune system provides protection at the shoreline against the waves of Rawacou Bay. Facilities at this site include vending units, events and performance area, parking, gazebos, washrooms and change rooms. Sea bathing is not encouraged. Visitors to this site are asked instead to use the man-made pool.

BIRD WATCHING

St. Vincent and the Grenadines is home to many Endemic and migratory bird species. Among the variety, there is nothing quite like seeing the Amazona Guildingii (St. Vincent Parrot), our national bird, in full flight. While the Botanical Gardens houses the parrot, a full appreciation of the species will require observing them in the island's wild, lush forested interior. An endangered species, an estimated 500 parrots, are living in the wilds of St Vincent's interior. The Vermont Nature Trail is one such location, allowing spotters a prime opportunity to hear their calls and catch sight of them flying across the forest canopy.



Another endemic bird you may hear in the forest setting is the Whistling Warbler (Catharopeza Bishopi), a small, black bird that z around the undergrowth. Regionally endemic birds that you may encounter at the trails are: the Antillean Crested Hummingbird, the Purple Throated Carib, the Lesser Antillean Tanager, the Brown Trembler; and the Rufous Throated Solitaire.

Along our coasts, ponds, mangroves, and hovering high above the inshore waters of the Grenadines, lookout for the Magnificent Frigate bird, the White-Tailed Tropicbird, Terns, Egrets, Herons, and the occasional Glossy Ibis. Over 170 species of resident and migratory birds have been recorded in St Vincent and the Grenadines, making our islands an exciting and beautiful destination for professional ornithologists and amateur birders.

VERMONT NATURE TRAIL

Cutting a path through the Grand Bonhomme Mountain in the south of St Vincent, the Vermont Nature Trail is an excellent spot for both hiking and nature watching. The trail consists of a network of loops on the mountain, which go through both evergreen and tropical rainforests. Some of the island's dense vegetation and meandering streams are on full display and hikers may be able to spot some of the island's bird species like the endangered St Vincent Parrot.

Thanks to St. Vincent's wealth of inland waterfalls, hikers can enjoy rewards of a different kind at the end of their trails. Trinity Falls, sitting at about a 30-minute hike into the forest, features three separate cascades, 40 ft. in total, flowing into a serene circular swimming pool before another 10 ft. drop into a second natural spot for a swim.

DARK VIEW FALLS

Dark View Falls are two spectacular waterfalls, one above the other, cascading down high cliff faces and plunging into natural pools. There is a short and easy hike to the falls through rainforest and across the Richmond River via either a bamboo bridge or conventional bridge. You pass through a clearing in the middle of a pretty bamboo grove before reaching the first tall waterfall. Another short, but more difficult walk will take you up to the second waterfall, directly above the first. The waterfalls flow all year from a tributary of the Richmond River.

BOTANIC GARDENS

Located on 20 acres of land on the outskirts of the capital Kingstown, the Botanic Gardens are the oldest of their kind in the Western Hemisphere. Among the wide variety of tropical trees and shrubs is a breadfruit tree from the original plant brought to the country by Captain Bligh (of The Bounty fame) in 1793. Conservation of rare species of plants has been v since the Gardens were founded in 1765.

OWIA SALT POND

Owia is home to many of St Vincent's Kalinago people and among its many attractions is the Owia Salt Pond. Situated close to the black sand beach and formed from the dark volcanic rock, the Pond is like a natural private sauna that allows you to enjoy the warm waters of the Atlantic without the choppy waves. The drive to the Owia Salt Pond takes you along the island's magnificent east coast.

CUMBERLAND NATURE TRAIL

The Cumberland Nature Trail winds its way through beautiful rainforest including the Cumberland Forest Reserve, home of many unique flora and fauna. There are many species of birds along the trail including the St. Vincent Parrot, Whistling Warbler, Short Tail Swift, Brown Trembler, Lesser Antillean Tanager, and Grenada Fly Catcher. The trail is 1.6 miles (2.5km) long, about 1.5-2 hours walking. Bird watching booths are scattered along the trail, and guides are available for hire. The trail is currently open to visitors, however some sections of the trail are overgrown, steep and dangerous (particularly if it rains). Visitors should take sensible precautions when hiking the trail.

MONTREAL GARDENS

Located in the mountains above the Mesopotamia Valley, the Montreal Gardens estate is blessed with fertile volcanic soil and frequent rainfall. You will find an array of exotic flowers, animals and plants in an environment which is cool, misty and quiet. The Gardens are open to the public for a small entrance fee.

BRIGHTON SALT POND

A black sand beach with mangrove swamp, Brighton Salt Pond is located on the south-eastern tip of St Vincent. Brighton Pond attracts many visitors and is a popular recreational and entertainment spot. Activities include sea bathing, picnicking, fishing, parties or just taking in the picturesque views of the Grenadines.