Welcome to San Nicolas

SAN NICOLAS CITY

HISTORY

San Nicolas, Aruba's second largest city, owes its success to the former oil refinery that it harbors. With the recruitment of refinery workers from the British Caribbean in the early 1900's, San Nicolas developed its distinct Creole flavor–including food, music, dialect, and its designation as the birthplace of Aruba's Carnival. Journeying from the hotels and Oranjestad toward San Nicolas "sunrise side" of the island will take you through island communities that represent the typical lifestyle and culture of our locals.

RUM SHOPS

Take part in an Aruban tradition and enjoy an ice-cold beer at a rum shop. These quick in-and-out bars offer drinks at local prices mixed nicely with years of tradition. Located in the heart of downtown San Nicolas on Main Street is White Star, one of the island's oldest rum shops.

EVENTS

CARNIVAL

Beginning after the new year and ending at midnight on the eve of Ash Wednesday, Aruba's Carnival schedule features a handful of parades characterized by colorful floats, extravagant costumes, and rolling sound trucks that fuel the dancing crowd with roadmarch songs. Jump-ups (street parties), impressive steel-pan drum performances, a tumba contest, a calypso and roadmarch contest, and king and queen elections round out the Aruban Carnival season.

SAN NICOLAS STREET GALLERY

In 2016, the first-ever Aruba Art Fair was held in the streets of San Nicolas, highlighting the island's growing and dynamic art scene. Now held annually, brilliant street art and murals are added to the buildings on and around San Nicolas' main street every year by famed international and local street artists as the main feature of Aruba Art Fair, leaving behind an evolving street gallery for everyone to enjoy all year.

ISLAND FEST

On the last week of most months, locals and visitors come together to celebrate the sights, sounds, and tastes of the island's culture and heritage during Island Fest. Experience colorful and engaging performances, live music, and a wink at our famed Carnival. Admission is free, and local art and crafts and tastes of local and Caribbean cuisine can be purchased. Perfect for families, groups, and couples.

One of Aruba's best assets is its remarkable repertoire of powdery, white-sand beaches, rated as some of the best in the world by respected publications. Perhaps you've been enjoying the beaches along the hotel areas, but a trip to the southern side will introduce you to a diverse offering of both quaint and majestic beach settings to bask in.

SAN NICOLAS CITY

Our beaches

Mangel Halto

Mangel Halto is tucked along the western coast of the island in the area of Pos Chiquito. The beach is named for the dense network of mangrove trees here, providing plenty of shade for afternoon picnics. A clearing in the mangroves leads into an expanse of shallow water. Public beach huts are featured here.

Boca Grandi

Located on the eastern side of Aruba's southern tip, Boca Grandi is well-known to both local and international kite surfers. The beach, characterized by sand dunes kept in place by low-lying sea grapes, wraps around a bay where steady winds and a small, rolling surf attract advanced kites surfers to ply their hobby. The water at Boca Grandi can be rough, requiring strong swimming skills.

Rodger's Beach

Outfitted with a few shady picnic huts, Roger's Beach sweeps around a reef-protected bay that is ideal for swimming. A handful of colorful traditional fishing boats are docked here, adding a touch of charm to the peaceful setting.

Baby Beach

At Aruba's southern end, famous Baby Beach wraps around a shallow and remarkably calm lagoon, making it a prime destination for families with small children. Baby Beach is a favorite of locals and visitors. Swimmers are encouraged to stay within the marked safety zones.

Mangel Halto

Boca Grandi

Baby Beach

Iconic Landmarks & Points of Interest

Seaman's Anchor
Positioned at the point of Seroe Colorado is the bright red anchor dedicated to all seamen, and an oft-photographed icon on the island.

White Chapel of Seroe Colorado
Located in the heart of Seroe Colorado and located just above Rodger's Beach, this chapel was originally constructed in 1939 serving the oil workers and their families residing in Lago Colony Today it serves as a Protestant church.

Vader Piet Windmill Farm
This windmill farm is Aruba's first large-scale enterprise in converting wind energy into electricity. The ten 180-meter-high wind turbines provide up to 18% of Aruba's energy needs, reducing the island's carbon footprint.

Pet Cemetery
Within this cherished cemetery situated near the sea, driftwood crosses mark the final resting place for beloved Aruban pets, with some markers bearing curious epitaphs worthy of reading.

Arikok National Park
Spanning across nearly 20% of Aruba's land area, this park is dedicated to nature conservation and education, as well as the preservation of Aruba's cultural-historic heritage. The park is home to an extensive variety of native flora and fauna. Great geological diversity and remnants of Aruba's Amerindian heritage can be found in caves here. The park's Visitor's Center provides information on the many sites to facilitate navigation.

Lourdes Grotto
In 1958 – to commemorate the reported appearance of the Virgin Mary in Lourdes, France, 150 years earlier – a local Catholic preacher and a group of his parishioners placed a statue of Mary into a natural limestone cave in the side of Seroe Preto (Black Hill).

San Nicolas Street Gallery
In 2016, the first-ever Aruba Art Fair was held in the streets of San Nicolas, highlighting the island's growing and dynamic art scene. Now held annually, brilliant street art and murals are added to the buildings on and around San Nicolas' main street every year by famed international and local street artists as the main feature of Aruba Art Fair, leaving behind an evolving street gallery for everyone to enjoy all year.

Cosecha Store & Creative Learning Center
This arts-and-crafts store features locally made products certified by the national seal of craftsmanship, Seyo Nacional pa Artesania, established by the government of Aruba through the Department of Culture. Workshops, featuring hands-on experiences in a variety of art disciplines presented by local artisans, are featured throughout the year. Open Mondays 2pm-6pm, Tues-Sat 10am-6pm.

Museums
Discover Aruba's history, culture, and heritage at a variety of museums in San Nicolas. The **San Nicolas Community Museum** (open Mon-Fri, 9am-6pm, Sat 10am-2pm) stages collections curated to share a slice of the everyday lives of past generations in our island community. **The Museum of Industry** (open Mon-Fri, 9am-6pm, Sat 10am-2pm), housed in the iconic and historic **San Nicolas Water Tower**, details the significance of past and current industries on Aruba and their economic, social, and cultural impact on the island through artifacts, memorabilia, and personal accounts. The **Carnival Euphoria Exhibition** (open Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm, Sat 10am-2pm) introduces the history, heritage, and cultural and social impact of Aruba's Carnival season through various displays and gorgeous costumes of past Carnivals.

Water Tower of Museum of Industry

Seaman Anchor

Arikok National Park

Dine & Refresh with Us

Zeerovers
Located in the sleepy fishing town of Savaneta, Zeerovers is a fisherman's wharf with a heavy dose of local flavor. Fresh fish is for sale at local prices, along with a kitchen deep-frying fresh catches for those who want to dine on the waterside deck.

El Gallo Rojo
This corner eatery is a go-to for locals craving their made-to-order sandwiches, soups, and milkshakes. Their in-house bakery features local pastries and sweet treats.

Charlie's Bar
Opening in 1941, this rambunctious bar was once overflowing with oil workers and sailors from around the world stationed in or docked up in San Nicolas. Although the boom of oil has quieted, Charlie's Bar is still hopping.

Pueblito Paisa
Open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, typical Colombian dishes are served.

O'niel's Caribbean Kitchen
Located at the start of San Nicolas' downtown Main Street, this family restaurant serves traditional local and regional Caribbean cuisine.

Grill Twenty One
If you are on the southern side of the island in the evening, try a San Nicolas staple—the Johnny cake, and enjoy it with fresh-off-the-grill meats. Take-out only.

Saco de Felipe
No frills, but lots of tasty noshes in every saco (Papiamento for "sack")—from ribs and chicken to fries and Johnny cakes. This iconic, family-operated spot is open for take-out in the evening.

Grote Berg Snack
A traditional Johnny cake is made of dough that is deep-fried and stuffed with various meats or cheese. Enjoy these at Grote Berg Snack, where they are stuffed with cheese, ham, or salt fish.

Kamini's Kitchen
Located in Seroe Colorado, just before the red anchor, Kamini and her family can be found cooking curries, roti, bami, and many other Trinidadian specialties in the open-air restaurant.

Rum Reef at JADS Dive Center
Rum Reef restaurant offers cocktails, sandwiches, and snacks. Upstairs, a new open-air bar and terrace (with an infinity pool open to guests of the bar) overlooking scenic Baby Beach has been added.

Big Mama Grill
Sip tropical libations at this beach bar and restaurant on Baby Beach. Enjoy a taste of local cuisine and fresh seafood, as well as burgers, wings, and snacks.

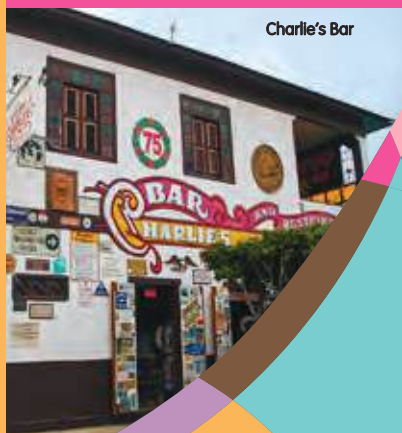
White Star Rum Shop
Take part in an Aruban tradition and enjoy an ice-cold beer at a rum shop. These quick in-and-out bars offer drinks at local prices mixed nicely with years of tradition.

Flying Fishbone
Enjoy a toes-in-the-sand seaside dining experience at this Savaneta restaurant specializing in fresh seafood, steaks, and more.

This list does not comprise all the bars, shops and eateries in the area. Visitors are encouraged to actively explore all available options.

Nicolaas Store

Zeerovers



Charlie's Bar

Saco de Felipe

For more information visit www.aruba.com