

What to Pack

Our easy-going, outdoor lifestyle translates to casual, informal attire, both day and night. Shorts and sandals are the norm. Retail establishments generally request shirts and shoes.

-- Plan for sunshine. Our winters are mild (average daytime temperatures in the 70s and 80s) and dry (it rains just enough to keep our islands lush). Summer temperatures, ranging from the high 80s to low 90s, are tempered by cooling sea breezes and brief afternoon showers, followed by more sunshine and glorious sunsets.

-- Pack hats to shade your face and head, shorts, swimsuits, sunglasses, cover-ups, a sundress or two, polo shirts and t-shirts. In winter, slacks and a light wrap will complete your vacation wardrobe.

Serious Stuff

Sun Smart: Begin your days in the sun with a very high sunscreen protection factor (SPF) lotion. For children and fair skin, use no less than waterproof 30 SPF. Be sure to re-apply sunscreen after swimming and at regular intervals throughout the day. Hats and sunglasses provide additional protection for the face. Use zinc ointment for nose and other sensitive and highly exposed areas. The sun is strongest between 10:00am and 3:00pm. Don't be fooled by clouds and haze. They intensify rather than soften the sun's effect. Being in and around the water also increases the burning potential of the sun's rays. Cool minor burns with an aloe vera product. If immediate blistering occurs, see a doctor.

Drink to your Health: Staying hydrated is crucial in sub-tropical climates. If you plan on biking, playing tennis, or participating in other outdoor activities, drink at least 12 ounces of water before you step out the door. Carry a water bottle with you at all times, even if you're only walking or lying on the beach. After coming in from the sun, drink water beyond satiation, and continue to do so throughout the day. Juice and sports drinks are okay, but water is best. Remember that alcohol is very dehydrating, so limit wine, beer and liquor intake as much as possible.