Bermuda Port Guide

A colorful island
Bermuda is 640 miles east of North Carolina. The island is shaped like the letter “J” measuring 15 miles on the long side and 5 miles on the short side (map below).

Like other islands, Bermuda offers sun, sea, and beaches for outdoor activities, but it is much more than a “typical” island. It's an Overseas Territory of the United Kingdom with a prosperous economy based on insurance, re-insurance, and tourism. People want to live there. Celebrities call Bermuda “home”. For many, Bermuda is the perfect spot for some “R&R”.

There are many compelling reasons to visit and vacation in Bermuda:

- It's a scenic island with colorful homes, beautiful flora, well-manicured gardens, championship golf courses, up-scale resorts, many beaches, excellent dining, shopping, etc.
- Romantics are drawn to the island for a wedding, honeymoon, or getaway weekend at resorts and to enjoy candlelight dining and dancing.
- The climate is moderate with high temperatures of 64-73 Nov-May and 78-85 Jun-Oct. Average monthly rainfall is 5 inches. Year-round mean relative humidity is 71-79%.
- Bermuda is a short plane ride from the US. My friends tell me one of the best, cost-effective ways to vacation in Bermuda is on a cruise ship that docks for two or three days allowing passengers time to
explore the island while avoiding pricey hotels and restaurants.

**There are three ports for cruise ships:**

- **Royal Naval Dockyard** (also called “West End”, “Bermuda Freeport”, and “Dockyard”) is the main port used by all large ships, and most cruise ships. Ships dock at Heritage Wharf and Kings Wharf.
- **Hamilton**, the capital of Bermuda, has two berths for small to mid-size ships on Front Street in center city. Cruise ships cause traffic congestion, so the city restricts docking. Few cruises dock in Hamilton.
- **St George's Harbor** has two docks that are limited to small to medium size (less than 700 feet length) cruise ships due to “Town Cut”, the narrow channel entrance to the harbour.

**Each of the ports is unique**

- **Royal Naval Dockyard** is a former naval site with the impressive old fortress and military-government style buildings. The well manicured lawns are cut by sheep, not by mechanical equipment. Walk a short distance or take the free shuttle bus to visit the National Museum and fortress, shopping mall, crafts market, restaurants, etc. You'll find all the transportation options to explore Bermuda next to the dock. Stop at the tourist information office to get a map and advice. You can get ferry boats, buses, taxis, tours, and rent scooters near your cruise ship.
- **Hamilton** is the capital city with many shops, restaurants, churches, parks, the main bus terminal on the island, etc. Spend time exploring the city during the day and dance the night away.
- **St George** is the most historic part of the island. It's a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Architecture is impressive and you'll want to visit the Unfinished Church, beaches, and Forts along the coast.

**Between these three ports, you'll find a lovely island** with colorful buildings, flora, gardens, championship golf courses, resorts, and beaches everywhere. The unique diversity of Bermuda Island allows you to tailor your visit to your interests. Plan ahead.

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**CAVEAT**

Information contained herein is believed to be accurate. PLEASE verify the information you use for your travel plans. Opinions expressed are my own. This port guide is protected by copyright law - see the last page of this guide for legal notices.

*Tom Sheridan*
The Royal Naval Dockyard is referred to as “Bermuda Freeport”, “West End”, and “Dockyard”. There are three tourist information centers, three bus stops, a ferry boat dock, a crafts market, restaurants, etc.

The site is dominated by a massive 6-acre, British fortress built to protect the naval base against attack by land or sea. There are seven irregular bastions and ramparts with gun emplacements. The site has sweeping views of Bermuda and the Atlantic. The lower grounds of the Keep contain an area carved out of the hillside with stone Georgian magazines and workshops. In 1857, the Keep’s sea service stores comprised two bombproof magazines for 6,540 barrels of powder, a shell store, a filling room, and a shifting house.

In the 1950's the Royal Navy left the dockyard and transferred the land to the Bermuda Government. Subsequently, the National Maritime Museum [http://www.bmm.bm/] and Dolphin Quest were built within the walls. Adult admission to the museum ($12.50 USD) allows access to the museum, grounds of the fortress, and Dolphin Quest to watch kids and adults swim with the dolphins. You can watch the swimmers with dolphins,
but if you wish to participate, you'll have to pay $150-300 USD. Plan on an hour minimum to visit the area.

The Fortress

View of Clocktower Shopping Mall from our ship at Heritage Wharf
Direct ferry boats are faster than a bus ride from Royal Naval Dockyard (map below)

- The Blue Ferry operates year-round between Royal Naval Dockyard and Hamilton. The ferry takes ~ 20 minutes compared with ~ 60 minutes for a bus ride between these two points.
- The Orange Ferry travels between the Royal Naval Dockyard and St George during the cruise season from mid-April to October and takes ~ 45 minutes.

2014 price for the blue or orange ferry is $ 4.50 USD/adult one way.
For information on the ferry service, see http://www.bermuda4u.com/transport/ferry-service/
Download the 2014 Ferry Boat routes and Schedules from http://www.seaexpress.bm/Documents/Ferry/Summer%20Ferry%20Schedule%202014.pdf

Buses from Royal Naval Dockyard to Hamilton

Take bus 7 or 8. Bus 7 has a more scenic route along the coast. Bus 8 travels more inland with limited views of the coast. Buses run about every 15 minutes. It's a ~ 60 minute ride to Hamilton.

Tips On Using Public Buses

- Dollar bills are not accepted. You must have the exact fare in coins to pay by cash. Place your fare into the fare-box as you enter the bus. Do not give your fare to the bus operator.
- Adult fare to travel 14 zones/any distance one way is $ 4.50 USD. You may save money using tokens, tickets, and day passes purchased at visitor information centers, hotels, post offices, or bus terminals.
- Bus stops are marked by pink or blue poles to indicate the direction of travel. Pink poles signify the bus is traveling toward the City of Hamilton. Blue poles indicate the bus will be traveling away from the City of Hamilton.
- Websites for tourist attractions and businesses often post details on bus travel to their location via bus. Locals and shopkeepers can also provide advice on bus travel.
- For information on bus routes, schedules and fares, see: http://www.bermuda4u.com/transport/buses/routes/
There are 11 bus routes and many bus zones. Bus tickets are sold to travel either 3 or 14 zones. Each zone is ~ 2 miles. Buy a 14-zone ticket ($ 4.50 USD) to travel from Royal Naval Dockyard to Hamilton. The maps below are from the government website at http://www.gov.bm/portal/server.pt?space=CommunityPage&control=SetCommunity&CommunityID=252. Click on a bus route colour bar on the website to see the bus schedule for that route.
The city of Hamilton has restricted cruise ships docking, but I've read a few of the smaller ships still dock there. Tourist information should be your first stop. It's next to the ferry boat terminal at the intersection of Front St and Queen St. The “birdcage” is a popular photo opportunity of policemen directing traffic, protected in a metal cage. Point Pleasant Park and Albuoy’s Point are popular spots for local fisherman, viewing the harbor, and the departure point for charter “booze” cruises.
On April 24, 2012, Par-la-Ville Park was renamed **Queen Elizabeth Park**. It's a premier city park with beautiful trees, rock gardens, flower beds, etc. The city of Hamilton has many offices and government buildings. Workers and visitors often enjoy their lunch in one of the parks.

The **Perot Post Office** is named after William Bennett Perot, Bermuda's first postmaster. He conceived of the idea to use stamps to stop cheaters. The first stamp was printed here. The stamps were signed by Perot.

Step back in time and visit a post office that has been working for a hundred years. It has not changed much. The workers are friendly and it's a great place to mail postcards and buy some stamps.

The **City Hall Arts Center** has free admission see [http://bermudanationalgallery.com/](http://bermudanationalgallery.com/) for details.
The Anglican Cathedral of the Most Holy Trinity rises high above the city of Hamilton.

The Cathedral is open 8-5 every day of the week. Admission is free, but there is a $3 charge to climb the 155 steps to the top of the tower for a heavenly view of the harbor.

**Elevation above sea level**

Hamilton is a great city to explore on foot because there are many things to see and do and walking distances are short. However, there is always the question of steep grades or hills.

In my Quebec City Canada Port Guide, I describe a method to estimate changes in grade. I won't repeat the details here, but the key is to use a map program that opens with a globe called “Google Earth”. I used Earth.exe to estimate elevation above sea level. I show the numbers on the map on page 7 of this port guide.

The elevation is 46 feet at Front St near the cruise ship dock. It increases to 63 feet as you walk north to Victoria Park. That increase in elevation is barely noticeable and it is not objectionable.

If you start at King St & Front St, the elevation is 37 feet. Walking north to Victoria Street, the elevation changes to 89 feet. You would probably notice the grade. If you are walking to Fort Hamilton, the elevation is 133 feet. Walking from King & Front Street to Fort Hamilton is like climbing a 10-story building! The fort is on a hill by design; military engineers wanted a high vantage point over the harbor.

Admission to Fort Hamilton is free and the site offers great views of the harbor. For tips on how to walk or ride a scooter (considering one-way streets) to Fort Hamilton, see

Note it is called St George's, Town of St George, or St George's Town

The Town of St George - UNESCO Description as a World Heritage Site

The historic town of St George with its related fortifications is an outstanding example of a continuously occupied, fortified, colonial town dating from the early 17th century and the oldest English town in the New World. It's a picturesque example of the earliest colonial English urban settlement in the New World. The associated fortifications graphically illustrate the development of English military engineering from the 17th to 20th centuries, being adapted to take account of the development of artillery over this period.

Discovered in 1505 by the Spanish captain Juan Bermudéz, Bermuda was later stocked by the Spanish as a place of refuge in cases of shipwreck. The permanent settlement of St George began in August 1612 with the arrival of a governor, a clergyman, and 60 settlers, to be joined a few months later by 600 more people. A watchtower was built on Fort George Hill and the foundations of several forts were laid to guard the entrances to St George's Harbour and Castle Harbour. The Crown assumed responsibility in 1684 for the colony, of which St George remained the capital until the mid-19th century. During this period Africans and Indians were brought to Bermuda; their descendants make up the majority of the multiracial society of today. For the next century the economy of the island centred on the cedar tree, used for ship construction.

The mid-18th century was a time of economic stagnation for the town, but military activities during the American Revolution (1776-83) saw the beginning of a boom. The Corporation of St George was formed in 1797. St George was to remain a strategic military location for the next two centuries until the US naval base closed in 1995. The economy picked up again with the development of the tourist industry in the later 19th century. The Town and its Corporation's efforts to save historic buildings began as early as 1920.

For the complete citation, see [http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/983](http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/983)

St Peters Church was founded in early 1600's. Wood construction did not survive storms, so it was rebuilt in stone. The church is reportedly the oldest surviving Anglican church in continuous use in the New World.
Map of the Town of St George

Note the location of the Ferry Boat Terminal, the Cruise Ship Dock, and the four bus stops (on York St).

St George’s Harbour

Image © 2014 CNES / Astrium

Google Earth

250 feet

Note the location of the Ferry Boat Terminal, the Cruise Ship Dock, and the four bus stops (on York St).
Smaller cruise ships, up to 700 feet length, can dock near King's Square or the Ferry Terminal (Penno's Wharf). Docking is only possible when wind conditions are favorable to enter the harbor through the “Town Cut” channel. Large cruise ships cannot dock; they would have to anchor and take passengers ashore by tender.

King's square has a Whipping Post, Stocks, & Pillory. It's great for photos, but be sure you're not locked in.

A full-scale replica of the ship Deliverance is near the cruise ship dock. Visitors can go on board and imagine what it was like to be a 17th century passenger crammed in the narrow decks with cargo below and the main deck above. Open Hours Monday to Saturday: 10am - 4pm Adult admission is reported as $1 to $3.

Town Hall is used for city government offices. Admission is free. Walk through this historic building to see the architecture, information on the history of the town, and photos of government leaders.

Bridge House is a circa 1700 mansion, one of the earliest in the area. Today, the house is used for an apartment and artist's studio.

Buckingham a renovated building used for municipal offices.

Old State House was built in 1621. This landmark is one of the oldest stone structures built by the English in the New World. It was built as a meeting place for parliamentarians. It is a favorite building to visit and photograph. Check at the Tourist Information Office re combined tickets for the State House and Tucker Museum for $10.

Somers Garden is a picturesque place to relax. It is named after Admiral Sir George Somers whose last wish was that he would be buried in Bermuda. His nephew buried his heart in the southwest corner of the garden, but took the admiral's body back to England.

St. George's Historical Society & Museum

One of the island’s oldest and most unique institutions. Built in the 1730s by a prosperous St. George’s merchant, Major Walter Mitchell, the house has retained all of its 18th century character and charm. There's a beautiful cottage garden behind the museum. The museum includes a Gutenberg-style printing machine and samples of old newspapers.

Open 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Monday-Thursday and Saturday April-November and 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Wednesday and Saturday only January through March.

Adult Admission: $5.00

Old Rectory (behind St Peter's Church)

It's a restored 18th century parsonage, an immaculate cottage with black shutters and with its exterior similar to an English country garden except that lime, loquat and spice trees abound. It was the residence of the Rev. Alexander Richardson, rector of St. Peter's. There is no admission fee, but donations are accepted.

Pilot Jemmy Darrell Square represents the black slave who successfully navigated the British Naval Fleet through the reefs to a safe anchorage. The Commander was so impressed Pilot Darrell was given his freedom in 1796. He became the first black person to own property in St. George’s. His descendants live in the same house!

Tucker House is named after the same Tucker family resident in 18th century Williamsburg, Virginia. It was the Tucker family, sympathetic to the patriots (not the Crown), who stole gunpowder and secreted it off the Island to the Revolutionary army in Philadelphia and George Washington lifted the embargo on Bermuda. George Tucker became a good friend of George Washington and fought for the revolution at Yorktown, VA.

Open in the summer Tuesday to Saturday, 10 am to 2 pm.

Adult admission $5; combination ticket $10 for access to Tucker House, Bermuda National Trust and Verdmont

St. George's Club

A charming hotel, condominium, and cottage complex overlooking St George. It was a popular place for artists to visit as a setting to paint Old Town.
Boat access to the harbor is via the channel called “Town Cut” which measures 257 feet wide and 960 feet long. This narrow channel is a problem for ships entering the harbor when the winds are strong.
When construction began in 1874, the plan was to build a magnificent structure, rather than repair St Peter's Church. The new structure was severely damaged in a storm and there were financial problems. The project was abandoned and a decision was made to restore/rebuild St Peter's Church.

NOTE: The Unfinished Church is an unstable building; enjoy the view from a safe distance.

Tobacco Bay is a public beach. You can rent snorkeling equipment and purchase food and alcoholic drinks.
**Fort St. Catherine** is one of the most impressive forts on the island. It's open June-Oct 10-4 Admission $ 7

**St Catherine's Beach** is next to the fort.
**Alexander Battery Park** is in a scenic area along the coast. Admission is free; hours are 10-5. The adjacent beaches are popular for collectors of sea glass.

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**RESOURCES to Help Plan Your Visit to Bermuda**

1) **Hard to find, awesome websites packed with tourist information**

   This website is one of the most impressive I've ever seen  
   http://www.bermuda-online.org/

   For a comprehensive review of Bermuda beaches, see  
   http://www.bermuda-online.org/beaches.htm

   Bermuda's Gardens are described in detail at  
   http://www.bermuda-online.org/gardens.htm

   For information on Hamilton, see  
   http://www.bermuda-online.org/seecity.htm

   For information on the Town of St George, see  
   http://www.bermuda-online.org/seetown.htm

   and  
   http://bermuda-online.org/seetown2.htm

By studying the Bermuda-Online website, you'll obtain comprehensive information on things to see and do. It is an excellent resource for planning your vacation.

2) **Free tourist information documents you can download from the web**

   There is an excellent two-page brochure (printed in 2012) to celebrate the 400-year anniversary of St George's. This brochure is “impossible” to find on the web so I have placed it on my my website.

   Download it from  
   www.TomsPortGuides.com/StGeorge's-400Years.pdf

   Good maps are hard to find. There is an excellent Bermuda Map to download at  

3) **Print the Bermuda Map BEFORE you go on vacation**

   One of my pet peeves is that it's hard to find good tourist maps before my vacation, but the instant I get off the ship, I receive a highly detailed map. I don't have time to study the map because I've already started my tour. I prefer to print the tourist map and study it BEFORE my vacation.

   Large maps require some special settings on a printer to print multiple pages that can be taped together to create a large map. It's also handy to print magnified sections of the map on a single sheet of paper. Here's how I print maps on my Canon MX870 printer. Most printers have these types of settings.
Printing the full Bermuda map on multiple pages

The Bermuda Map pdf file is designed to print 22 x 17 inch size which requires 4 sheets of 8.5 x 11 inch paper printed on both sides or 8 sheets of paper printed on one side only.

**Printing is really simple.**

Open the Bermuda Map file and click on “File”, then click on “Print.”

The printer settings window appears as shown above.

Choose these settings:
- Set “Page Sizing & handling to “Poster”
- Put a check mark in the “Cut marks” box
- Set “Overlap” to 0.1 inch
- Click on “Landscape”
- Then click “Print”

Cut the map, as required, on the cut lines, overlap the sections, and tape the map together. It's an excellent map. Other people on your ship will be jealous.

**There are times when I want to print a small section of the map on a full sheet of paper. Here's how:**
Open the Bermuda Map file on your computer. Adjust the magnification of the file at the top of the Adobe Reader menu bar by typing 160 or a similar number and move the map so that the section of the map on Royal Naval Dockyard pretty much fills your monitor screen.

Click on “File”; then click on “Print”. The printer set up screen appears. Make the adjustments listed below.

Under “Pages to Print”, select “More Options” and click on “Current view”.
Under “Page Sizing & Handling”, click on “Custom Scale” and enter “160%”.
Under “Orientation”, click on “Landscape”.

Now carefully look at the image of what will be printed. It's below the heading “11 x 8.5 Inches.”
If you have the Royal Naval Dockyard filling the page and if this is what you want, click on “Print”.
Otherwise, click on “Cancel”. Re-adjust the position of the map on your computer screen and adjust the
magnification in the Adobe Reader menu bar if required.
Set the printer using the adjustments listed above. When you get the view of the map you want, click on “Print”. You can use this technique to magnify and print any section of the Bermuda Map pdf file.

4) Estimate travel distance and travel time to the sites you wish to visit.

I have already provided information in this port guide for websites on travel by public bus and ferry boat. Since it can be helpful to estimate travel distance and time by walking or car/scooter, I have included a list of locations and the relevant GPS coordinates. Copy and paste the coordinates into Google Map “Get Directions”.

**GPS Coordinates**
This guide includes GPS Coordinates for tourist sites and key locations. Open this guide in one window on your computer and open Google Maps in a second window. Copy and paste the GPS coordinates into Google maps to find sites, get directions, and route/time for travel by car, bus, walking, or bicycle. The coordinates can be used with any Bing or Google map format such as “map”, “satellite”, “earth”, or “terrain” to see detailed views of the location at any map scale. These coordinates can also be used in hand-held or vehicle GPS devices. Note that these devices can accept different formats. It's important to set your device to accept data in this format:

**Degrees, Minutes, and Seconds shown as N ddd° mm' ss.ss", W ddd° mm' ss.ss"**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>GPS Coordinates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Royal Naval Dockyard Heritage Wharf</td>
<td>N 32°19'37.5&quot;, W 64°49'50.0&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal Naval Dockyard Ferry Terminal</td>
<td>N 32°19'34.7&quot;, W 64°50'00.6&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton Cruise Ship dock</td>
<td>N 32°17'31.5&quot;, W 64°46'59.5&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton Ferry Terminal</td>
<td>N 32°17'29.1&quot;, W 64°47'11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton Bus Station</td>
<td>N 32°17'38.00&quot;, W 64°47'5.00&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Hamilton</td>
<td>N 32°17'42.0&quot;, W 64°46'37.2&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L. F. Wade International Airport Main Terminal</td>
<td>N 32°21'34.4&quot;, W 64°42'08.5&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St George's Cruise Ship dock</td>
<td>N 32°22'47.9&quot;, W 64°40'35.4&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St George's Ferry Terminal</td>
<td>N 32°22'43.9&quot;, W 64°40'49.9&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfinished Church</td>
<td>N 32° 23' 1.00&quot;, W 64° 40' 35.00&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco Bay</td>
<td>N 32°23'19.4&quot;, W 64°40'43.6&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Catherine</td>
<td>N 32° 23' 18.00&quot;, W 64° 40' 32.00&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Battery</td>
<td>N 32° 22' 48.00&quot;, W 64° 39' 53.00&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Our Private Tour of Bermuda**
There are many companies offering tours of the island. We shared a van for a tour by Curtis Degraff of Blueline Transport Bermuda [www.bermudablueline.com](http://www.bermudablueline.com). Curtis is a charming, pleasant man. He made sure we had the flexibility to go where we wanted. Our interest was a full tour of the island and that's what he delivered in a 5-hour tour. Cost was ~ $50/person plus tip. All of us enjoyed the tour.

The route was from the Royal Naval Dockyard to Gibbs Lighthouse for great views of our ship, then to Hamilton, past the airport to St David's Lighthouse, Turtle Beach on Cooper’s Island, the Town of St George,
Unfinished Church, Tobacco Bay, Fort St Catherine, Alexander Battery Park, Gates Fort Park, the Botanical Gardens, plus several beaches and a few golf courses. We saw a great deal of the island, but because of the distance and travel time we did not stop at locations other than to take photos. I loved our photo tour of the island!!! Below are photos of a few of the sites we visited with the relevant GPS coordinates.

**Government Hill Rd from Unfinished Church to Tobacco Bay**  
GPS = N 32° 23’ 4.00”, W 64° 40’ 36.00”

A statue in Hamilton  
GPS = N 32° 17’ 30.00”, W 64° 47’ 11.00”
Warwick Long Bay Beach, One of the Most Beautiful Beaches in the World
GPS = N 32° 15' 24.00", W 64° 48' 42.00"

St Anne Church & Cemetery, Southampton  GPS = N 32° 14' 56.00", W 64° 50' 41.00
Turtle Beach on Cooper Island  GPS = N 32° 21' 14.00", W 64° 39' 27.00"

Botanical Gardens in Camden  GPS = N 32°17'29.8", W 64°45'53.4"
User Feedback Is Welcome

Goal
My guides are designed to help you plan a great cruise vacation by providing information such as where the ship docks, location of tourist sites, public transit, walking tour maps, things to see and do, travel issues unique to the port, etc. Knowledge of ports is important when planning shore excursions because you have to make many decisions and commitments long before your ship docks. I believe the information in this guide is accurate, however you are responsible to verify accuracy of the information that you use to plan your vacation.

Information on cruise ports frequently changes such as bus routes, admission fees to sites, rental car locations, etc. Cruise Critic is the best source for up-to-date, detailed information on travel details for shore excursions, reviews of cruise ships, etc. There are many knowledgeable people on Cruise Critic who are willing to share their expertise and travel experience. I highly recommend www.CruiseCritic.com; it's free to join.

Why feedback is important
User feedback helps me make corrections and improve the format and content in my quest to produce the “ultimate” port guides. I welcome offers to collaborate with me or provide materials for use in my guides.

PLEASE Help “spread the word” about my website
The only negative feedback I get is, “I wish I knew about your port guides before my vacation”. Please tell your friends and post a reference to my guides and website on the blogs. To receive email notification when new guides are available, send your email address to me at TomsPortGuides@gmail.com

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Fortunately, a friend of mine on that ship complained to the purser and the ship stopped violating my copyright.

If there is any question about use of my guides, contact me at TomsPortGuides@Gmail.com

Tom Sheridan