

30 FUN facts About The Caribbean Island, Saint Lucia

Saint Lucia is an island located in the Caribbean Sea, and thousands of people make it a destination for their vacations every year.

The **official language** is **English**.

As of 1 January 2016, the **population** of Saint Lucia was estimated to be **185,868 people**.

Castries is the capital and largest city of Saint Lucia. The city's design is in a grid pattern. Its sheltered harbour receives cargo vessels, ferry boats, and cruise ships.

Saint Lucia has **158 kilometers** (98 miles) of **coastline**.

Saint Lucia is adorned with **pristine sugar sand beaches** and **exotic black sand beaches**.

MOTTO“ The Land, The People, The Light”

The capital city of Saint Lucia is Castries And the currency is the East Caribbean dollar. .37 US Cents

Around 100,000 people live around the coasts of Saint Lucia, while a further 60,000 live in Castries or further within the mainland.

Initially named the Island of the Iguanas by early Carib settlers, its name was changed later.

The French took over the island in 1660 after signing a treaty with the original Carib people, and it was first named Saint Lucy of Syracuse.

Around 85% of the Saint Lucian population are thought to be of Africans descendant, while the remaining 15% are English, French, or a mixed African and Indian.

Saint Lucia is the second largest island of the Windward Islands. And its name makes it the first country to be named after a woman.

Between 1663 and 1667, England took control of Saint Lucia, sparking a long-term period of instability where the island changed hands a total of 14 times.

In 1814, England had full control over Saint Lucia. By this time, it was known also as “Helen of the West Indies” due to the number of times control had been passed over.

In 1979, Saint Lucia establish a sovereignty of its own, gaining independence from Britain. Saint Lucia is a member state of the Commonwealth of Nations, but is a sovereignty on its own.

The French were the island's first European settlers. They signed a treaty with the native Island Caribs in 1660. England took control of the island from 1663 to 1667. In ensuing years, it was at war with France fourteen times, and the rule of the island changed frequently (it was ruled seven times each by the French and British). In 1814, the British took definitive control of the island. Because it switched so often between British and French control, Saint Lucia was also known as the "Helen of the West Indies" after the Greek mythological character, Helen of Troy. who had dual citizenship between Sparta and Troy JUST KIDDING

Representative government came about in 1840 (universal suffrage was established in 1953). From 1958 to 1962, the island was a member of the West Indies Federation.

The Saint Lucia Parrot, or Jacquot, cannot be found anywhere else in the world, and quite fittingly is the island's national bird.

Saint Lucia is agricultural, with sugar cane, a main crop being produced for decades (although mainly a result of the slave trade). In 1964, Saint Lucia became popular for banana production, and less so for sugar cane.

English is the official language of Saint Lucia, although 95% of the population speak Saint Lucian French or Patois. Roughly 20% of the population doesn't speak English at all.

There is a celebration of this dialect French language every year in Saint Lucia – it is called “celebration of the language”.

Mount Gimie is Saint Lucia's highest mountain, standing over 3,000 feet tall. Saint Lucia has more mountains than most other Caribbean islands, and was formed as a result of volcanic activity.

A famous artist in Saint Lucia is Sir Dunstan St. Omer. Many people visiting Saint Lucia will have seen his visual artwork found in churches and among communities.

Saint Lucia attracts around 350,000 tourists per year, and has a booming fishing industry which benefits the locals.

Derek Walcott, born in Castries, is a famous Saint Lucian who won the 1992 Nobel Prize for Literature.

Despite a population of only 176,000, **Saint Lucians have won two Nobel Prizes:** Arthur Lewis also won a Nobel Prize, this time for Economics. He was the first black man to win a Nobel Prize not for Peace.

Tourists often like to visit Roseau Valley, a location which boasts 21 different types of rum.

Many Saint Lucians do not get married until they are middle aged

Hewanorra, the name given by the native Caribs. Part of the Lesser Antilles, it is located north/northeast of the island of Saint Vincent, northwest of Barbados and south of Martinique. It covers a land area of 617 km² (238 square miles) and reported a population of 165,595 in the 2010 census.^[8]

Hewanorra Airport is the only airport in Saint Lucia which accepts commercial airlines, so many tourists arrive from other destinations by cruise ship.^[7]

Marigot Bay, arguably the most beautiful bay on St Lucia, is best viewed from a vista point on the road between the main Caribbean coastal route and the bay itself. Lush hillsides plunge to the pretty

palm-fringed beach, and yachts bob on the bay's blue waters. The harbor is so deep and sheltered that the British fleet supposedly hid here from the French by covering their masts with palm fronds.

Pigeon Island National Landmark is heralded as one of the most important monuments of Saint Lucia's history. It is a vivid representation of the cultural and historical monuments of international, civil, military and marine cross currents, characteristic of West Indian historical change. A living museum within a natural setting, Pigeon Island is being nurtured through careful protection and intelligent development to serve the intellectual, cultural and recreational needs of all who visit this historic site.

Sulphur Springs is the “world's only drive in volcano”. Though the last major volcanic eruption in St Lucia occurred about 40,000 years ago, this volcanic pit continues to vent sulfur into the air and heat pools of water above boiling. The Sulfur

Springs are a popular tourist destination in St Lucia due to their ability for tourists to literally drive up to the edge of the springs.

The **Diamond Falls** are consistently described as one of the natural wonders of St Lucia. The Diamond Falls offers three popular attractions: well-conceived gardens, a beautiful waterfall colored by mineral deposits, and healing mineral hot spring baths originally built for the troops of King Louis the XVI of France.

The first inhabitants of St. Lucia were the Arawak Indians, who were forced off the island by the Caribs. St. Lucia was granted home rule in 1967 as one of the West Indies Associated States. On Feb. 22, 1979, St. Lucia achieved full independence.

Tourism is vital to Saint Lucia's economy. One of St Lucia's **main export is bananas**, but they also export cacao, vegetables and clothing.

Saint Lucian cuisine is a combination of French, East Indian and British dishes. **St Lucia's national dish is green figs and saltfish** (actually it's made with bananas not figs).

SAINT LUCIA: GREEN FIG AND SALTFISH

by Mike Benayoun

This is the first time that we head back to Saint Lucia since our first virtual world tour. After Vera's chicken roti, it's my turn to present the national dish of this charming little country: the *green fig and saltfish*.

No, we're not going to cook figs, but rather bananas. Yes, this is how banana is referred to in Saint Lucia and other Caribbean islands. Banana is also the first export of this paradisiac island. Banana is pretty much as ubiquitous as potato in Western cuisine. Indeed, banana is often used in a main course (like

I cooked green fig and saltfish for dinner and we ate it throughout the weekend. The whole family loved it. The dish is not only very colorful, but the spices and condiments beautifully enhance the green bananas, that add mostly texture but little taste.

I will definitely cook it again, Green fig and saltfish is the national dish of the island of St. Lucia and is often served during the festival of Jounen Kweyol.

The biggest St Lucian festival is the **Saint Lucia Jazz Festival** in May. Musicians come from all over the world to take part in this celebration.

Cricket is massively popular in Saint Lucia.+



ST. LUCIA Creole Fish

INGREDIENTS

2 whole red bream or large snapper prepared and cut into

1 inch pieces

2 tbsp spice seasoning

2 tbsp malt vinegar flour, for dusting

oil, for frying

For Sauce:

2 tbsp vegetable oil

1 tbsp butter

1 onion, finely chopped

10oz fresh tomatoes, peeled and finely chopped

2 garlic cloves, crushed

2 thyme springs

2 1/2 cups fish stock or water

1/2 tsp cinnamon

1 hot chilli pepper, chopped

8oz green and red pepper, finely chopped

salt

parsley springs, to
garnish

THE METHOD

1. Sprinkle the fish with the spice seasoning and vinegar, turning to coat.
2. Set aside to marinate for at least 2 hours.
When ready to cook, place a little flour on a large plate and coat with fish pieces, shaking off any excess pieces.
3. Heat a little oil in a large frying pan and fry the fish pieces for about 5 minutes until golden brown, then set aside to finish cooking in the sauce.
4. To make the sauce, heat the oil & butter in a large pan and stir-fry the onion for 5 minutes.

5. Add tomatoes, garlic, and thyme, stir well and simmer for 5 minutes.
6. Stir in stock or water, cinnamon and hot pepper.
7. Add the fish pieces and the chopped peppers
8. Simmer until the fish is cooked through, and the stock has reduced to a thick sauce.
9. Adjust the seasoning with salt. Serve hot, garnish with parsley.

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Green fig and saltfish is a recipe that is nowadays often prepared on weekends and special occasions. This is a dish that you will find on the tables during the Jounen Kweyol festival (October 28), along with seafood, sweets, and beverages such as cocoa tea or fresh juices. The International Day of the Creole language and culture is indeed an important celebration on this island that still has a rich French Creole culture.

I cooked green fig and saltfish for dinner and we ate it throughout the weekend. The whole family loved it. The dish is not only very colorful, but the spices and condiments beautifully enhance the green bananas, that add mostly texture but little taste.

I will definitely cook it again, probably with a little more heat if the children are not at home!

Green fig and saltfish is the national dish of the island of St. Lucia and is often served during the festival of Jounen Kweyol.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 lb green bananas
- 1 lb salted cod
- 1 onion , thinly sliced
- 2 cloves garlic , chopped
- 3 pickled peppers , thinly sliced
- ¼ cabbage , shredded (optional)
- 2 tomatoes , diced
- 2 sprigs thyme , chopped
- 3 tablespoons chopped parsley
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- Salt
- Pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Place salted cod in a bowl of cold water and refrigerate for at least 12 hours, changing the water 2 or 3 times.
2. Cut the ends of each banana and discard.
3. Make a shallow cut down the length of the bananas.
4. Place the bananas in a deep pan, cover with water and bring to a boil.
5. Turn heat to low and simmer for about 20 minutes.
6. Drain and cool.
7. Meanwhile, take cod out of the refrigerator and drain.
8. Place in a pot, cover with water and boil for about 25 minutes.
9. Rinse with cold water and drain. Crumble the fish, taking care to remove the bones if any.
10. Heat vegetable oil over medium heat in a deep pan.
11. Add cod, and lower heat.
12. Sauté for about 5 minutes.
13. Add onion, garlic, peppers, black pepper and thyme and cook for 3 to 4 minutes.
14. Add the shredded cabbage and stir.
15. Peel the bananas. Cut 1-inch (2,5cm) pieces diagonally and sprinkle with salt.
16. Add bananas to cod mixture.
17. Mix well so that the green bananas take the flavors of the cod and seasonings.
18. Cook for 5 minutes then add the tomato and parsley. Stir, cover the pan and turn off the heat.
19. Wait 5 minutes before uncovering, then serve.