

Directory

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ACCOMMODATIONS

Accommodation options in Bermuda range from small guesthouses to big beachside resorts. There are plenty of delightful options to choose from but don't expect any bargains. Bermuda doesn't offer truly cheap accommodations – no youth hostels, no family campgrounds and no economy-chain motels.

Rates that fall below \$125 a night are considered budget. If you're looking in the mid-range, expect to pay between \$125 and \$275. Top-end places start around \$275. You can find attractive places in all price ranges; even the ones that fall into the budget category have nicely equipped rooms and sometimes a pool to boot. What you get as you spend more are fancier digs, private beaches and more pampering.

Throughout this book, we give published rates which the industry refers to as rack

rates. Some of the resort hotels, which are affiliated with international chains, occasionally offer discounts from their rack rates on their websites, but deals at smaller places are few and far between. One way to cut down your accommodations bill is to come in the winter season, from November to March, when many places offer lower winter rates.

PRACTICALITIES

- **Electricity** Plug in to Bermuda's 110V, 60Hz electric current using a flat, two-pronged plug – the same as in the USA. Some hotels have adapters for electric shavers.
- **Newspapers** Keep up with Bermudian current affairs and local entertainment with the *Royal Gazette* newspaper, published daily except Sunday, or the twice-weekly *Bermuda Sun*.
- **Magazines** As soon as you arrive at the airport or dock, pick up *This Week in Bermuda* and *Preview Bermuda*, free magazines packed with useful visitor information.
- **TV** Bermudian cable TV is loaded with US programming plus BBC World. Tune in to ZBM (channel 3) at 7pm for local news, and channel 4 for ongoing Bermuda weather updates.
- **Radio** FM 89 and FM 106.1 have rock and contemporary music and AM 1160 broadcasts the BBC World Service and local public affairs.
- **Video Systems** If you're buying videos to take home, be aware Bermuda uses the NTSC system – the same as in the USA and Canada, but incompatible with the PAL system used in Europe and Australia.
- **Weights & Measures** Bermuda has gone partly metric (such as for speed limits) but retains the imperial system of measurement for many uses (temperatures are reported in Fahrenheit; weights are measured in pounds).

Bermuda's tourist industry likes to divide accommodations into several categories, based on a place's predominant character. Keep in mind that these groupings are somewhat imprecise and categories often overlap a bit. A room in a small hotel or a cottage colony may have the same cooking facilities that you'd find in an apartment, for instance.

In addition to the places listed in this book, which operate as full-time businesses and accept direct reservations, there are private families that occasionally rent out rooms and apartments solely via a booking service. To peruse these and make reservations go online to **Bermuda Rentals** (www.bermudarentals.com).

B&Bs & Guesthouses

Many of these places are in lovely period homes, often overlooking gardens or sporting water views. They might have just a couple of rooms in a family home or be larger places with several wings. What they have in common is an intimate setting in which you get to know the host. In most cases, breakfast is included in the rate and you share the table with fellow guests. Sometimes there's a group kitchen where guests can prepare other meals.

Apartments

Hugely popular, tourist apartments provide not only a place to stay but also full cooking facilities. As a rule they pack the most space for the buck and are also economical because they save you from having to dine out for every meal. Considering that the average hotel charges a good \$10 per person for breakfast, being able to prepare your own coffee and toast can represent a tidy saving!

Cottage Colonies

Now this is where things start to get fancy. The term 'cottage colony' is generally used in Bermuda with more upmarket places that offer units inside individual cottages, or in small clusters of buildings, each of which contain a few units. The 'cottages' sometimes have limited cooking facilities and invariably have a genteel setting with landscaped grounds, water views, afternoon teas and the like. All very private and pampering.

Small Hotels

Small hotels are by and large just that: smaller places, typically around 50 rooms, that usually have a restaurant, lounge and swimming pool but don't necessarily offer the extensive array of services found at the large resort hotels. These range from unpretentious family-oriented places to some of the island's more prestigious and intimate spots.

Resort Hotels

Bermuda has five resort hotels: the Elbow Beach Hotel, the Grotto Bay Beach Hotel, the Fairmont Hamilton Princess, the Fairmont Southampton and the Wyndham Bermuda Resort. Together they provide about half of all the guest rooms in Bermuda. Each has all the amenities you'd expect in an upmarket resort – restaurants, swimming pools, room service, activities and the like.

Camping

Although you may see Bermudians setting up tents, foreign visitors cannot camp in Bermuda. The only exception is for organized groups, who may apply for permits to camp at group sites run by the government on nearshore islands. Information on group camping is available from the **Ministry of Youth, Sport and Recreation** (☎ 297-7619).

ACTIVITIES

Bermuda offers plenty for active visitors. Essentially, the best time of the year for most things to do in the water, including swimming, snorkeling and diving, is during the summer season of April to October. Golf and tennis are good year round, though the most pleasant weather for a vigorous outdoor workout is during the cooler winter season. Golfers will find information at **Bermuda Golf Association** (www.bermudagolf.org). Tennis players can log on to **Bermuda Lawn Tennis Association** (☎ 296-0834; www.blta.bm). For more information on all sorts of outdoor fun, see p34.

BUSINESS HOURS

Business offices are typically open 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. Shops are generally open 9am to 5pm Monday to Saturday, though there are exceptions – for example, grocery stores have longer hours and Sunday openings, and tourist-gear shops catering to cruise ship passengers often stay open into the evening when ships are in port.

Most restaurants and cafés serve lunch from around 11:30am to 2:30pm, and dinner from 6pm to 10pm. Bars tend to keep much later hours, and are typically open to at least 1am, with even longer hours on weekends.

CHILDREN

Although Bermudians are family oriented, Bermuda can pose some challenges to travelers with children. For instance, families who are accustomed to renting a car and piling all the kids inside will be dismayed to learn Bermuda has no car rentals. Large resort hotels don't place restrictions on children, but many other hotels and guesthouses tend to be formal and gear their activities solely to adults.

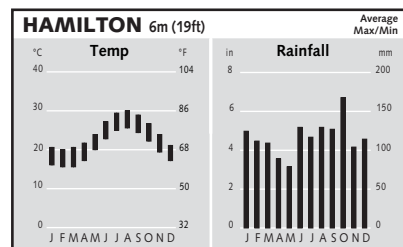
On the plus side, apartment-style accommodations that are well-suited for families are readily available in Bermuda, and most have a swimming pool that kids can splash around in. All places except fine-dining restaurants welcome families with young kids. In addition to beaches and swimming pools, there are snorkeling tours, miniature golf (p123), a wonderful aquarium and zoo (p90), and plenty of cool forts to explore.

Travelers with babies will readily find baby food, formula and disposable diapers at local supermarkets, although prices will be higher than at home. Some hotels can provide cribs and high chairs; if not, they can be rented from the **Bermuda Red Cross** (☎ 236-8777) at the King Edward VII Memorial Hospital in Paget.

For those vacationing with children, Lonely Planet's *Travel with Children* has lots of valuable tips and interesting anecdotal stories.

CLIMATE CHART

Bermuda being a small place, the weather's the same throughout the island. For information on the best time to visit, see p9.



CUSTOMS

Visitors to Bermuda may bring in duty-free 200 cigarettes, 50 cigars, 0.5kg of tobacco, 1L of liquor and 1L of wine as well as clothing, sports equipment, cameras etc intended for personal use. Each visitor is also entitled to a \$30 gift allowance.

Because of the high price of imported food, it's not uncommon for return visitors staying in places with kitchens to bring in frozen steaks and other meat. Visitors are allowed to bring in up to 50lb of meat and other food items for their own consumption, though these are subject to a 22% duty.

Bermuda restricts or prohibits the importation of animals, plants, fresh fruits and vegetables, firearms, spear guns and drugs. For more information about customs laws, contact the **Customs House** (☎ 295-4816; www.customs.gov.bm).

DANGERS & ANNOYANCES

Crime

Although Bermuda is relatively safe, it has its fair share of crime and drug abuse problems just like any other place. Violent crime has been on the increase in recent years, and tourists are occasionally targeted for muggings. Travelers should use the standard precautions they would use anywhere when walking alone at night, especially in areas that are not well lit. Women carrying handbags should keep them close to their bodies to prevent purse snatchings. One local mugging offense is the drive-by in which a thief rides by on a motorbike and snatches the purse of a pedestrian from behind.

Still, the most common problem encountered by visitors is motor scooter theft, which is at epidemic proportions in Bermuda. It's so great a problem that it's virtually impossible to get theft insurance on scooters anymore. Some of the bikes end up in 'chop shops' where they are stripped for parts, although others just end up being taken for a joyride before being dumped over a cliff. If you rent a scooter, you can cut down on the odds of having it stolen by locking it every time you stop and by parking in well-lit public places.

Land Dangers

There are no poisonous snakes or other such dangerous creatures lurking in Bermuda. Hikers, however, should be aware that

poison ivy is abundant on interior trails. Wear socks and long pants as a precaution. Mosquitoes can also get pesky, particularly around marsh areas.

Ocean Dangers

RIP TIDES

If you're not familiar with water conditions, ask a local. It's best not to swim alone in any unfamiliar place.

Chief among the ocean dangers are rip currents, fast-flowing currents of water moving from shallow nearshore areas out to sea. They are most common in conditions of high surf, forming when water from incoming waves builds up near the shore. Essentially the waves are coming in faster than they can flow back out. The water then runs along the shoreline until it finds an escape route out to sea, usually through a channel or out along a point. Swimmers caught up in the current can be ripped out to deeper water. Although rip currents can be powerful, they usually dissipate 50yd to 100yd offshore. Anyone caught in one should either go with the flow until it loses power or swim parallel to shore to slip out of it. Trying to swim against a rip current can exhaust the strongest of swimmers.

JELLYFISH

Always take a peek into the water before you plunge in to make sure it's not jellyfish territory. These gelatinous creatures, with saclike bodies and stinging tentacles, are sometimes found in Bermuda. The sting of a jellyfish varies from mild to severe, depending on the variety. Unless you have an allergic reaction to their venom, the stings are generally not dangerous.

The Portuguese man-of-war is by far the worst type to encounter. Its body consists of a translucent, bluish, bladder-like float, which generally grows to be about 5in long, though its tentacles can extend many feet. In the waters off Bermuda, the Portuguese man-of-war is most prevalent from March through July. A man-of-war sting is very painful, similar to a bad bee sting except that you're likely to get stung more than once from clusters of long tentacles containing hundreds of stinging cells. Even touching a Portuguese man-of-war a few hours after it's washed up on shore can result in burning stings.

DISABLED TRAVELERS

Unlike in the UK, Bermuda has no laws requiring businesses to make adjustments to their property to accommodate the physically disabled. So, not surprisingly, access varies greatly.

For wheelchair users, Bermuda's larger resort hotels generally have the greatest accessibility with elevators, wider doorways and the like. Some smaller places also have wheelchair-accessible guestrooms and common areas, but others don't, so visitors with special needs should make their requirements known at the time of booking.

Wheelchair access on public transport is limited. Public buses do not have hydraulic lifts and are unable to accommodate wheelchairs at all. Public ferries are readily accessible only from the three largest ports – the City of Hamilton, Town of St George and Royal Naval Dockyard – which have ramps. Taxi companies have wheelchair-accessible vans but they are in limited supply and sometimes require booking the day before.

Travelers with special needs should log on to the website of the **Bermuda Physically Handicapped Association** (www.bermuda-online.org/BPHA.htm), which is chock-full of information, including specifics to how to handle the ins and outs of getting around Bermuda.

DISCOUNT CARDS

If you're a member of the National Trust in Australia, Barbados, Britain or another Commonwealth country, you'll get free entry into Bermuda National Trust sites by showing your membership card.

EMBASSIES & CONSULATES

Bermudian Embassies & Consulates

As a dependency of the UK, all of Bermuda's diplomatic representation is handled by British embassies and consulates around the world. British embassies are listed at www.fco.gov.uk and include the following:

Australia (☎ 02-6270-6666; British High Commission, Commonwealth Ave, Yarralumla, Canberra, ACT 2600)

Canada (☎ 613-237-1530; British High Commission, 80 Elgin St, Ottawa K1P 5K7)

France (☎ 01 44 51 31 00; British Embassy, 35 rue du Faubourg St Honoré, 75383 Paris Cedex 08)

Germany (☎ 30 20457 0; British Embassy, Wilhelmstrasse 70, 10117 Berlin)

Ireland (☎ 1 205 3700; 29 Merrion Rd, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4)

Netherlands (☎ 070 4270 427; Lange Voorhout 10, 2514 ED The Hague)

New Zealand (☎ 04-924-2888; British High Commission, 44 Hill St, Wellington 1)

USA (☎ 202-588-6500; British Embassy, 3100 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington, DC 20008)

Embassies & Consulates in Bermuda

Bermuda has no embassies but the USA maintains a **consulate** (Map p100; ☎ 295-1342; Crown Hill, 16 Middle Rd, Devonshire).

In addition, numerous countries have designated individuals as 'honorary consuls' in Bermuda. Keep in mind that these honorary consuls are often businesspeople, not permanent diplomats, and thus the list changes rather frequently. Currently it includes Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. See the blue pages of the Bermuda phone book for honorary consuls' contact details.

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

Bermudians are a festive bunch; visitors can enjoy cultural and sporting events throughout the year. As no event is more than 20 miles away, you're never far from the action. Many events vary with the season. For example, yacht races take place early in the summer before the hurricane season gets underway and golf tournaments are most frequent from fall to spring when the weather is cooler.

Keep in mind that dates can vary a bit each year and the venues are not always the same; check with the **Bermuda Department of Tourism** (www.bermudatourism.com), which maintains updated schedules, for the latest information.

January & February

New Year's Day The first day of the year features performances by costumed troupes of Gombey dancers at various locations around the island.

Bermuda International Race Weekend (www.bermudatracknfield.com) The island's biggest running event includes a marathon, half marathon, 10km race, 10km fitness walk and festivities on the second weekend in January in the City of Hamilton.

Bermuda Regional Bridge Tournament (www.bermudaregional.com) The best time of the year for bridge players is during this nine-day event at the end of January, featuring a variety of bridge tournaments and activities.

Bermuda Festival (www.bermudafestival.com) This seven-week festival of the performing arts brings in international artists for dance, drama, comedy and musical performances at various locations. Eagerly awaited each winter, it runs from early January to late February.

March

Ladies Pro-Am Golf Classic (www.bermudagolf.org) This week-long tournament with teams consisting of one professional and three amateur women golfers is held in early March at the Port Royal Golf Course in Southampton.

Bermuda Amateur Match Play Championship

A six-day singles match for golfers, with separate events for men and women, held in mid-March at the Mid Ocean Club.

Bermuda International Film Festival (www.bermudafilmfest.com) Independent films from around the world are shown at island theaters for a week in mid-March, accompanied by parties, workshops and talks with filmmakers.

Good Friday Kite Festival Show up at Horseshoe Bay in Southampton on Good Friday to experience one of Bermuda's most festive family events – an afternoon of kite flying, competitions, music, children's games and more.

Palm Sunday Walk (www.bnt.bm) The Bermuda National Trust holds a popular guided walk each Palm Sunday; the location changes each year.

April

Good Friday Kite Festival (see March) Sometimes falls in April.

Peppercorn Ceremony With as much pomp as can be mustered while handing over a single seed, the Town of St George reenacts the mid-April ceremony in which the Masonic Lodge pays its annual rent of one peppercorn for use of the Old State House. The ceremony dates to 1816.

Bermuda Annual Exhibition (www.agshowbda.com) One of the most traditional events in Bermuda, this three-day event features exhibits of flowers and livestock, along with equestrian shows and music. It's held in mid-April at the Bermuda Botanical Gardens in Paget.

XL Capital Tennis Classic (www.xlcapitalbermudaopen.bm) Bermuda's top tennis event, held mid-month at the Coral Beach & Tennis Club in Paget, is an ATP challenger tournament for professional tennis players from around the world, including Bermuda resident Patrick Rafter.

May

Royal Bermuda International Race Week (www.rbyc.bm) This event features yachters from Bermuda, the UK and North America competing in various boat categories in the Great Sound.

Open House & Garden Tours The Garden Club of Bermuda hosts several tours of distinctive island homes during the month.

Bermuda Senior Amateur Championships (www.bermudagolf.org) Men have to be age 55 or older, though women can be as young as 50, for this three-day stroke play event held mid-month at Riddell's Bay Golf & Country Club.

TransAt Daytona–Bermuda Race This yacht race is held in May on odd-numbered years from Ponce de Leon, Florida, to Bermuda.

Bermuda Day This public holiday on May 24 kicks off the summer season. It features a half-marathon that begins in Somerset, a colorful afternoon parade in the City of Hamilton and fitted dinghy races in St George's Harbour.

Beating Retreat Ceremonies Historic military reenactments performed by the Bermuda Regiment Band, complete with bagpipes, take place at various times of the month in St George's, Hamilton and the Royal Naval Dockyard.

June

Bermuda Amateur Stroke Play Championships (www.bermudagolf.org) This golf tournament spans four days in mid-June at the Port Royal Golf Course in Southampton with separate events for men and women.

Queen's Birthday This public holiday features a military parade led by the Bermuda Regiment that marches down Hamilton's Front St.

Newport–Bermuda Race (www.rbyc.bm) Held in late June during even-numbered years, this is one of the world's premier ocean races, starting in Newport, Rhode Island. The Royal Bermuda Yacht Club coordinates events at the Bermuda end.

Bermuda 1-2 Single-Handed Race Held in June in odd-numbered years, this yacht race goes single-handed from Newport, Rhode Island, to Bermuda, and returns double-handed to Newport.

Bermuda Ocean Race Held in June in even-numbered years, this yacht race starts in Annapolis, Maryland, and ends at St George's Harbour.

Beating Retreat Ceremonies See the event description under May.

July & August

Bermuda Big Game Classic Fishing Tournament (www.bermudabigggameclassic.com) The search is on for the largest blue marlin, tuna and wahoo during five days in mid-July.

Cup Match Cricket Festival (www.cupmatchbermuda.com) The most popular event of the year for Bermudians, this two-day match between West End and East End cricket teams takes place on Somers Day and Emancipation Day, both public holidays. It's held in Somerset in even-numbered years and in St David's on odd-numbered years. Abounds in local flavor with food booths, music – and, of course, cricket.

Beating Retreat Ceremonies See the event description under May.

September

Labour Day Speeches by union leaders and politicians and a small parade in the City of Hamilton mark this public holiday on the month's first Monday.

Bermuda Triathlon This swimming, bicycling and running competition takes place from Albouy's Point in the City of Hamilton in late September or early October.

Bermuda Mixed Foursomes Championship (www.bermudagolf.org) This two-day stroke play event is held mid-month at the Port Royal Golf Course in Southampton.

Beating Retreat Ceremonies See the event description under May.

October

Bermuda Music Festival (www.bermudamusicalfestival.com) The year's biggest music event spans five days in mid-October and features jazz, R&B, soul and more, with international musicians such as Anita Baker and Isaac Hayes. Includes a series of open-air concerts at the Royal Naval Dockyard and around the island.

Bermuda Open for Men (www.bermudagolf.org) This golf tournament held over four days in mid-October at the Port Royal Golf Course in Southampton is open to pro golfers and amateurs with a handicap limit of 6 or less.

King Edward VII Gold Cup International Match Racing Championship (www.kingedwardviigoldcup.com) In late October, Bermudians compete for prize money with international boaters, including America's Cup Match contenders.

Bermuda Cat Fanciers Association Cat Show Pedigree and mixed-breed cats show their fluff at the end of the month at the No 1 Cruise Ship Terminal on Front St in the City of Hamilton.

Beating Retreat Ceremonies See the event description under May.

November

Convening of Parliament This ceremonial event takes place at Sessions House in the City of Hamilton near the start of the month.

Bermuda Four Ball Stroke Play Amateur Championships (www.bermudagolf.org) A 72-hole golf event for men and a separate 54-hole event for women is held for four days in early November at the Port Royal Golf Course in Southampton.

Remembrance Day This public holiday on November 11 features a military parade along Front St in the City of Hamilton and the laying of wreaths at the Cenotaph.

Bermuda Culinary Arts Festival (www.bermudaculinaryarts.com) Celebrity chefs and other culinary experts from the USA and Europe present cooking demonstrations, seminars and wine tastings during this tasty five-day event held mid-month in the City of Hamilton.

World Rugby Classic (www.worldrugby.bm) Rugby fever sweeps the island at this nine-day tournament event

featuring eight teams made up of former international rugby players. Held in mid-November at the National Sports Centre in Devonshire.

Bermuda International Dog Show (www.thedogtrainingclubofbermuda.com) International exhibitors arrive with their canine best to join Bermuda's showpiece dogs in this weeklong woof-fest. It's held in mid-November at the Bermuda Botanical Gardens in Paget.

December

Bermuda Goodwill Tournament (www.bermudagolf.org) This pro-am golf event for men is held over a week in early December at five different golf courses.

Bermuda Christmas Boat Parade (www.bermudaboatparade.bm) Boaters decorate their vessels with lights and holiday cheer and sail around Hamilton Harbour in this mid-month event, ending with a fireworks display.

Christmas Day Midnight candlelight services are held at many churches on the island.

Boxing Day The day after Christmas sees colorful Gombey dancers taking to the streets all around Bermuda. If you hear the drums, you'll know they're near.

New Year's Eve Celebrations take place at King's Square in the Town of St George with live music, food stalls, midnight fireworks and the 'lowering of the onion.'

FOOD

Bermuda's restaurants run the gamut from casual local eateries to indulgent gourmet cuisine. You can eat your fill at budget spots for \$6 to \$15, while midrange restaurants run from about \$15 to \$30. Top-end spots offer dishes from around \$30, but don't expect to walk away from a full meal for much less than \$60 per person (\$80 with wine). See p43 for more details on eating in Bermuda.

GAY & LESBIAN TRAVELERS

Bermuda is certainly not a mecca for gay travelers. A century-old criminal code that outlawed gay sex wasn't removed from the books until 1994, and that was after a fractious debate in parliament. Homophobic attitudes still exist in many quarters and most gay people keep a pretty low profile outside of their personal circle of friends. That closet must be awfully full! Public displays of affection, which are uncommon among Bermudians regardless of sexual orientation, may well draw unwanted attention.

Bermuda doesn't have exclusively gay bars, but Casey's Lounge (p59) and Blue Juice (p59) within the City of Hamilton are gay-friendly places. A useful website is www.gaybermuda.com.

HOLIDAYS

On public holidays, all government offices, most business offices and some shops and restaurants close, and buses and ferries run on a reduced schedule.

Note that when a public holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, it is often observed on the following Monday. The following are Bermuda's public holidays:

New Year's Day January 1

Good Friday Friday before Easter (March/April)

Bermuda Day May 24

Queen's Birthday Second Monday in June

Emancipation Day Thursday before first Monday in August

Somers Day The day after Emancipation Day

Labour Day First Monday in September

Remembrance Day November 11

Christmas Day December 25

Boxing Day December 26

INTERNET ACCESS

Getting online isn't a challenge in Bermuda. There are now cybercafés in the three major tourist centers – the City of Hamilton (p49), the Town of St George (p72) and the Royal Naval Dockyard (p136). The cost averages \$10 to \$12 an hour. Hamilton has the greatest variety and the best facilities for business travelers. Those looking for free access can use the computers at the public library in Hamilton on a space-available basis.

LEGAL MATTERS

For the most part, the police in Bermuda tend to be lenient with tourists and few visitors are likely to have run-ins with the law. For minor traffic violations, such as forgetting to put on your helmet while driving a scooter, you could be stopped by a police officer, but as long as your response is polite, a brief lecture will likely be the end of it.

On the other hand, any infraction of Bermuda's strict drug laws will almost certainly land violators in court, and perhaps in jail as well. The importation or possession of unlawful drugs, including marijuana and other 'soft' drugs, is subject to a fine of up to \$10,000 or five years in prison or both.

Customs officers are very strict these days, with luggage-sniffing dogs and the occasional body search. Those on cruise ships are not exempt – police have been known to search cruise ship cabins after a whiff of cannabis has wafted through the air.

GETTING HITCHED, BERMUDA STYLE

Everyone knows Bermuda is a favorite with honeymooners, but it's a thoroughly romantic place to tie the knot as well. And to smooth the way there are both public offices and private wedding consultants set up to manage all the arrangements.

For those who want to take the public route, both the required paperwork and the ceremony can be handled by the **Registrar General's office** (www.registrygeneral.gov.bm) in the City of Hamilton. For a fee of \$231, this government agency will put the mandatory 'Notice of Intended Marriage' in local newspapers. Assuming no formal objection is raised to your marriage intention, the marriage certificate is issued after a two-week waiting period. The registry maintains its own cozy little 'Marriage Room' where, for an additional fee of \$193, a civil marriage ceremony can be performed.

Should you prefer something more tailored, private wedding consultants can arrange anything from a traditional church wedding to a seaside ceremony, and take care of all the incidentals from a cake and flowers to bagpipe music and a horse and carriage.

For full information on arranging a wedding in Bermuda, download the *Weddings & Honeymoons* brochure by the **Bermuda Department of Tourism's** (www.bermudatourism.com), which includes all the nitty-gritty details and contact addresses you'll need.

When a visitor is arrested, the police will call their consulate, which can usually provide advice on securing a lawyer. The **Legal Aid Society** (☎ 297-7617) can also help visitors obtain the services of a lawyer.

MAPS

The Bermuda Department of Tourism's free *Bermuda Handy Reference Map*, updated annually, should cover everything you'll need for a short visit. It shows major roads and locations of hotels, sightseeing attractions, beaches and the like. Pick one up at the airport or any one of the Visitors Service Bureaus in Bermuda after your arrival.

MONEY ATMs

The Bank of Bermuda has 24-hour ATMs in nearly two dozen locations – including the airport, Hamilton, St George and Somerset – which will accept Cirrus and Plus system ATM cards and MasterCard and Visa credit cards.

The Bank of Butterfield also has a widely dispersed network of ATMs that accept the same ATM and credit cards as the Bank of Bermuda. Among the places you can find these ATMs are Bank of Butterfield branch offices, Marketplace grocery stores and larger shopping centers.

Cash & Currency

The legal tender is the Bermudian dollar, pegged at a 1:1 ratio with the US dollar. The

Bermuda dollar's relationship to the other nations' currencies fluctuates according to their value against the US dollar.

The Bermuda dollar is divided up into 100 cents (¢). Coins come in denominations of 1¢ (penny), 5¢ (nickel), 10¢ (dime), 25¢ (quarter) and one dollar (\$). The coins display special Bermudian designs: a hog on the back of the copper penny, an angelfish on the nickel, an Easter lily on the dime, a longtail tropic bird on the quarter and a sailboat on the bronze \$1 coin.

Bills come in \$2, \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50 and \$100 denominations.

The best currency to take to Bermuda is the US dollar, as it can be used interchangeably with the Bermudian dollar. If you have US dollars there's no need to even exchange it for Bermudian money – just use it, as it's accepted everywhere at full value.

See p10 for a general idea of costs, and the inside front cover for an exchange rate table.

Credit Cards

Major credit cards, such as Visa and MasterCard, are accepted by most shops and restaurants, and the American Express charge card is accepted by many as well. Hotels and guesthouses are more fickle when it comes to credit cards; the larger resort hotels accept them, but several of the smaller places do not. If you intend to pay off your room bill with a credit card, be sure to inquire at the time of booking your reservation as to

whether it will be honored – surprisingly, even some of the high-end places don't accept them.

Exchanging Money

US dollar traveler's checks are widely accepted. Other foreign currencies, including the British pound sterling, will need to be exchanged at a bank.

The Bank of Bermuda, which has branches at the airport as well as near the cruise ship docks in Hamilton and St George, cashes traveler's checks that add up to a total value of US\$500 in US dollar, Canadian dollar or British pound denominations, free of service charges. Expect to pay a 1% commission if you cash more than \$500 in a single transaction. Although the bank does not accept other foreign traveler's checks, it will exchange cash in most other major currencies.

Tipping

The usual restaurant tip is 15%, which most restaurants automatically add to the bill – if not, you should add the tip yourself. Hotels typically tag a 10% service charge onto your final room bill, which covers gratuities to hotel workers. For taxi drivers, a tip of about 10% is appropriate.

POST

There are post offices in every major village and town in Bermuda. Service is very reliable; airmail posted by 9:30am at the General Post Office in the City of Hamilton leaves the island the same day.

Most hotels will hold mail for their guests. In addition, poste restante mail can be received in your name, c/o General Delivery, General Post Office, 56 Church St,

Hamilton HM PM, Bermuda. Items not collected at the GPO in Hamilton within 30 days will be returned to sender.

Postal Rates

To post airmail letters costs 70¢ for the first 10g and 40¢ for each additional 10g when sent to the USA, Canada, Mexico, Central America, Venezuela, Colombia or the Caribbean. Postcards to these same destinations cost 70¢.

The cost is 85/40¢ for the first/additional 10g for letters (80¢ for postcards) to the UK, Europe, North Africa and most of South America.

The cost is 95/50¢ for the first/additional 10g to other destinations (90¢ for postcards) – including Australia, New Zealand, Asia and most of Africa.

Aerograms cost 70¢ to any international destination.

For mail sent within Bermuda for local delivery, the cost is 30¢ for a postcard and 35¢ for a letter of up to 20g.

SHOPPING

Shoppers are going to have fun here. Standout Bermuda-made items include hand-blown glasswork that ranges from miniature tree frogs to extravagant serving bowls and vases. There's also good-quality pottery made in Bermuda, including mugs and dinnerware with island designs.

Jewelers on the island create some attractive earrings, charms and pendants using island motifs, such as Bermuda onions, longtail tropic birds, hog pennies – even scooters.

Bermuda designs show up on numerous other items, including silk-screened T-shirts,

tea towels, note cards and the like, any of which can make a lightweight memento of your trip. Bermuda inspires many artists who put the island's lovely pastel scenes onto canvas, and these are available in both originals and prints.

If you want a whiff of the island after you leave, Bermuda's Royall Fragrances mixes up four varieties of men's colognes: Royall Bay Rhum, Royall Lyme, Royall Spycy and Royall Muske. Or bring home a taste of the island with Outerbridge's spicy sherry peppersauce, Bermuda honey or island-made liqueurs and rums.

Bermuda's shops carry an excellent variety of top-name English and European imports. You'll find everything from Swiss watches to French fashions but generally the best selections and prices are found on items imported from the British Isles, like English bone china, Waterford crystal and Scottish tweeds.

Bermuda has no sales tax, so the price you see on everything is what you pay.

TELEPHONE

Bermuda telephone numbers have seven digits – there's only one area code for the whole island and it's not used when making domestic calls. All calls made in Bermuda to another place in Bermuda are local calls and cost 35¢ from a pay phone.

Pay phones, which are readily available in public places, accept both Bermuda and US coins as well as major credit cards.

You can also purchase phonecards, which can be convenient if you're going to be making a lot of calls or are making overseas calls, as you won't need a pocketful of coins. Phonecards in \$10, \$20 and \$50 denominations are sold at tourist offices and shops around the island.

If you're a cellular phone user, the Bermuda Telephone Company's mobile network supports North American Analog (AMPS) and Digital (TDMA) standard service.

International Calls

Bermuda's area code is ☎ 441, which must be added to the seven-digit local number when calling Bermuda from overseas. Bermuda's country code is ☎ 1 and its international access code is ☎ 011, the same as it is in the USA and Canada.

You can call Bermuda direct from the USA, Canada and most Caribbean countries by dialing ☎ 1 + 441 + seven-digit local number. To call Bermuda from anywhere else in the world, dial the international access code for the country you're calling from + 1 + 441 + seven-digit local number. For instance, the UK access code is ☎ 00, so from the UK dial ☎ 00 + 1 + 441 + local number.

From Bermuda, you can call direct to the USA, Canada and most Caribbean countries by dialing ☎ 1 + area code + local number. To call direct to other parts of the world, dial ☎ 011 + country code + area code + local number. For example, the country code for the UK is ☎ 44; hence ☎ 011 + 44 + area code + local number.

TIME

Bermuda is in the Atlantic standard time zone, which is four hours behind GMT/UTC (London) and one hour ahead of eastern standard time (North American east coast).

When it's noon in Bermuda, it's 11am in New York and Toronto, 10am in Chicago, 8am in Los Angeles and Vancouver, 2am in Sydney, midnight in Hong Kong and 4pm in London.

Daylight saving time is in effect in Bermuda from the first Sunday in April to the last Sunday in October.

TOURIST INFORMATION

First stop should be the website of the **Bermuda Department of Tourism** (www.bermudatourism.com), where you can browse all sorts of visitor information.

There are Visitors Service Bureaus in the City of Hamilton (p50), in the Town of St George (p73) and at the Royal Naval Dockyard (p136), where you can pick up stacks of tourist brochures and the skinny on what's happening around the island.

The Bermuda Department of Tourism maintains the following overseas offices, which will mail out packets of tourist information upon request:

Canada (☎ 416-923-9600; 1200 Bay St, Suite 1004, Toronto, Ontario M5R 2A5)

UK (☎ 0 207 202 6364; Bermuda Tourism UK, Notcutt House, 36 Southwark Bridge Rd, London SE1 9EU)

USA Head office (☎ 800-223-6106; 675 Third Ave, 20th Fl, New York, NY 10017); Atlanta office (☎ 404-524-1541;

LET'S PRETEND THERE'S A BOAT

The Bermuda postal system offers one of the more unusual 'sea mail' services. What is peculiar about it is that ships are not involved in the service, but the mail is instead airlifted from Bermuda to the country of destination.

To make sure people don't overuse the discounted 'sea mail' rates, all surface mail is held in Bermuda until a closing date, which is equivalent to the scheduled date that the imaginary ship would leave Bermuda, plus the additional time – typically three days for mail to the USA, four days for mail to the UK – that it would normally take for a ship to sail between Bermuda and the destination.

Bermudians take it all quite seriously – the closing date for sea mail is displayed in all post offices. If you manage to get something off shortly before the closing date, it can actually be an efficient way to mail things, and the rates are roughly half those of regular airmail.

SMART MOVE

If you're planning to move to Bermuda, here are a few things that might interest you.

- Bring only what you need, as a hefty duty is charged on the importation of household goods (even old ones!).
- A free three-month bus/ferry pass is available to employed newcomers; pick up an application at the ferry terminal.
- If you need to open an account at a local bank you may need a reference from your home bank, so it's a good idea to bring one along to smooth the way.
- A superb source of information for newcomers is the *New Resident in Bermuda* magazine.
- A good online classified-ad resource for apartments for rent is www.bermuda.e-moo.com.
- If you intend to drive you'll have to get a new driver's license – foreign licenses aren't valid in Bermuda.

245 Peachtree Center Ave NE, Suite 803, Atlanta, GA 30303; Boston office (☎ 617-422-5892; 184 High St, 4th Fl, Boston, MA 02110)

VISAS

Visas are not required of citizens of most countries, including the USA, Canada, the UK, Australia, New Zealand and Western European countries.

Visas are required of citizens from most countries in North Africa, the Middle East and the former Soviet Union as well as from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cambodia, China, Croatia, Cuba, Haiti, Mongolia, Nigeria, North Korea, Pakistan, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sri Lanka and Vietnam. Visitors from these countries can obtain a visa from a British embassy or a consulate abroad.

Immigration authorities at the Bermuda International Airport will determine your permitted length of stay. They commonly grant a stay of up to 21 days. Extensions can be applied for at the **Immigration Headquarters** (Map pp48-9; ☎ 295-5151; 30 Parliament St, City of Hamilton).

WOMEN TRAVELERS

Women travelers are no more likely to encounter problems in Bermuda than they are elsewhere, but the usual common-sense precautions apply when it comes to potentially dangerous situations like walking alone at night, accepting rides from strangers etc. Also, keep in mind that skimpy clothing is the norm only on the beach in Bermuda, and it could elicit unwanted attention anywhere else.

WORK

People wishing to enter Bermuda for the purpose of employment are required to obtain a work permit in advance from Bermuda's immigration authorities. Because employers on the island are supposed to give priority to local residents, it can be difficult for foreigners to get a job, unless they have a specialized skill for which there is not a suitable local candidate. That said, some international companies do readily hire non-Bermudians and if you're knowledgeable about corporate work your odds of finding a job improves dramatically.

Transportation

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GETTING THERE & AWAY

ENTERING THE COUNTRY

Bermuda is straightforward to visit. All tourists landing in Bermuda must be in possession of a return or onward ticket.

Passport

A passport is the preferred document for entry into Bermuda and is required of visitors from all countries that require a passport for re-entry purposes to their home country.

Your passport should remain valid until well after your trip. If it's about to expire, renew it before you go.

Applying for or renewing a passport can take from a few days to several months, so don't leave it till the last minute.

For information on visas, see p150.

FROM THE USA

Visitors from the USA must present one of the following types of identification:

- US passport – it needn't be valid, but if it has expired, the photo should be recent enough that it still resembles the bearer
- An official birth certificate with a raised seal, or a certified copy of it issued by a municipal authority
- US Naturalization Certificate

THINGS CHANGE...

The information in this chapter is particularly vulnerable to change. Check directly with the airline or a travel agent to make sure you understand how a fare (and ticket you may buy) works and be aware of the security requirements for international travel. Shop carefully. The details given in this chapter should be regarded as pointers and are not a substitute for your own careful, up-to-date research.

- US Permanent Resident Card
- US Re-entry Permit

Note that if you're presenting identification that doesn't have a photo, such as a birth certificate, you'll need to also present a driver's license or similar photo ID. (Children 16 and under who are traveling with their parents may present an official birth certificate without a photo ID.)

FROM CANADA

Visitors from Canada need to be able to present one of the following four types of identification:

- Valid Canadian passport
- Official birth certificate or a certified copy, along with a photo ID
- Canadian Certificate of Citizenship
- Canadian Permanent Resident Card

FROM OTHER COUNTRIES

Visitors from other countries, including the UK, Western European nations, Australia and New Zealand, must be able to present a valid passport.

AIR

There are regularly scheduled direct flights to Bermuda from the USA, Canada and the UK. Travelers who arrive from other places need to connect through one of these three nations.

Airports & Airlines

Bermuda International Airport (☎ 293-2470; www.bermudairport.com; airport code BHA), on the eastern

side of the island, is Bermuda's only airport. This small but modern facility has a couple of gift shops, a duty-free shop, a bar and food kiosks. If you have any banking needs, there's a **Bank of Bermuda** (☎ 293-1414; ☎ 10am-3pm Mon-Fri) at the ground level of the terminal.

Bermuda's arrival and departure formalities and customs are generally straightforward. An unusual quirk is that if you're flying to the USA from Bermuda, you will actually pass through US customs at the Bermuda airport before your departure, and arrive in the USA as if on a domestic flight.

Air Canada (www.aircanada.ca; AC; ☎ 295-4587; hub Pearson International Airport, Toronto) Has a daily flight from Toronto and a once-weekly flight from Halifax.

American Airlines (www.aa.com; AA; ☎ 293-1420; hub Dallas Fort Worth International Airport, Dallas, TX) Has daily nonstop flights from New York City.

British Airways (www.britishairways.com; BA; ☎ 293-1944; hub Heathrow Airport, London) Has five flights weekly from London.

Continental Airlines (www.continental.com; CO; ☎ 293-1420; hub Newark International Airport, New York, NY) Has daily nonstop flights from Newark Airport.

Delta Air Lines (www.delta.com; DL; ☎ 293-1024; hub Atlanta International Airport, Atlanta, GA) Has daily nonstop flights from Boston and Atlanta.

United Airlines (www.ua.com; UA; ☎ 800-241-6522; hub O'Hare International Airport, Chicago, IL) Has a weekly flight from Chicago.

USA3000 (www.usa3000airlines.com; US; ☎ 877-872-3000; hub Baltimore Washington International Airport, Baltimore, MD) Has twice-weekly flights from Baltimore and New York City.

US Airways (www.usairways.com; US; ☎ 800-622-1015; hub Charlotte-Douglas International Airport, Charlotte, NC) Has daily nonstop flights from Baltimore, Boston, Charlotte, New York City, Philadelphia and Washington DC.

Tickets

Direct flights to Bermuda are available from several major cities on the US east coast, as well as from Canada and London.

It pays to do a bit of research before buying a ticket. A good starting point is with online travel services such as www.orbitz.com or www.travelocity.com in the USA, www.expedia.com or www.travelocity.ca in Canada and www.trailfinders.com in the UK. These are excellent places to get a sense of the range for current fares, but you should also take the time to find

the airline websites to search discounted web fares. These days cash-strapped airlines sometimes offer the very best deals exclusively to travelers who purchase their tickets directly from the airline websites.

Fares vary with the season you travel, the day of the week you fly and the flexibility the ticket provides for flight changes and re-funds. Still, nothing determines fares more than business, and when things are slow, regardless of the season, airlines typically drop fares to fill the empty seats.

Fares can fluctuate so wildly, particularly in the US, that it's not uncommon to find prices dropping by half (or doubling!) from one day to the next. With fixed fares a thing of the past it's hard to put a price on air travel, so take any prices that follow as only a general barometer of what you can expect to encounter.

Canada

Air Canada flies daily to Bermuda from Toronto and has a Saturday-only flight from Halifax. Roundtrip excursion fares typically begin around C\$500 in winter and C\$600 in summer.

UK

British Airways flies from Gatwick Airport in London to Bermuda several days a week, on a schedule that varies with the season. The roundtrip excursion fares typically fluctuate between £500 to £700 depending upon the day of the week and the season of travel.

USA

About 90% of Bermuda's air traffic arrives from the USA. Although the US airlines serving Bermuda operate year-round, the service on some routes gets beefed up in summer. If you have a little flexibility and begin your planning well in advance of your trip, you'll increase the odds of finding a good deal.

Markets that have multiple carriers, such as New York City, typically have the cheapest fares. With the arrival of Bermuda's first discount airline, USA3000, bargain hunters can sometimes find roundtrip fares for as little as \$250 to Bermuda from New York and Baltimore.

On direct flights from elsewhere in the USA, roundtrip tickets average around \$450, though flights during the busiest summer

periods, such as holiday weekends, can cost upward of \$600.

SEA Cruise Ship

Bermuda has made a big splash on the cruise ship map. More than 200,000 passengers sail to the island each year during the cruise ship season, which runs from April to mid-November.

The typical cruise ship holiday is the ultimate package tour. Other than the effort involved in selecting a cruise, such a trip requires minimal planning – just pay and show up – and for many people that is a large part of the appeal. Keep in mind that much of your time will obviously be spent at sea, so you'll have notably less time on the island than someone with a vacation of comparable length who takes a flight. Cruises, which are typically one week in length, spend only about half of that time in Bermuda.

Because cruises cover your rooms, meals, entertainment and transportation in one all-inclusive price, they are sometimes relatively good value. Although cruises cost more than lower-end independent travel, they do not necessarily cost more than conventional package tours that cover airfare and expenses at a resort hotel.

The conventional cruise ship is indeed a floating resort; those sailing to Bermuda hold between 650 and 2000 passengers and have swimming pools, dinner shows, casinos, multiple restaurants and lounges.

In addition to the cruise lines' websites given below, also take a look at **Cruise Lines International Association** (www.cruising.org), an organization of cruise lines that works in affiliation with thousands of travel agencies.

The following four cruise lines all offer regularly scheduled roundtrip cruises to Bermuda throughout the cruise ship season.

Celebrity Cruises (☎ 800-235-3274; www.celebritycruises.com) Departs from New York City from April to October and from Norfolk, Virginia, from May to October. It docks in Bermuda at both the City of Hamilton and the Town of St George.

Norwegian Cruise Line (☎ 800-327-7030; www.ncl.com) Sails from Boston every Sunday between April and October and from New York City from May to October. It docks at the Town of St George.

Radisson Seven Seas Cruises (☎ 800-393-0031; www.radissonsevenseas.com) Departs from New York City

from April to September. It docks at the City of Hamilton and the Town of St George.

Royal Caribbean Cruise Line (☎ 800-327-6700; www.royalcaribbean.com) Departs from New York City from May to October. It docks at both the Town of St George and the City of Hamilton.

Cruises are actually quite equalitarian. Passengers are not divided into class categories, and all are offered the same dining services and amenities – at least when they're outside their cabins. Cruises are offered at a range of rates, however, depending mainly on the size, type and location of the cabin. Price also depends on the dates of the cruise, the number of people in each cabin and your point of departure.

Standard rates for cruises to Bermuda start between \$900 and \$1600 per person, based on double occupancy. Discounts abound, however, and very few people pay the full rates. These days, the general rule is that the earlier the booking is, the greater the discount – and, of course, the better the cabin selection. Still, cruise lines want to sail full, so if there are seats leftover at the end there will be discounts available close to sailing as well. And always ask about promotions, as there are often deals for travel club members, seniors etc.

Meals, which are typically indulgent affairs, are included in the cruise price, as are most onboard activities. Alcoholic drinks usually are not included and generally are comparable in price to those in bars back home. Also, expect to pay extra for any activities in Bermuda.

Before paying for your cruise, be sure to check the fine print about deposits, cancellation and refund policies, all of which can be very restrictive.

Yacht

Yachting is immensely popular in Bermuda and lots of people sail to the island, some during regattas, others on solo trips. Most yachters who sail to Bermuda depart from the US east coast. Bermuda is approximately 640 nautical miles southeast from the state of Virginia, 670 nautical miles from New York City and 690 nautical miles from Boston. Of course, sailing time will vary with the weather and the boat, but the typical voyage time between Bermuda and the US east coast is five to six days.

Bermuda's two main boating entrances are at the Town Cut channel and the Narrows channel, both at the eastern side of the island. Because of the vast reefs that lie as far as 10 miles offshore, the approach must be made cautiously, using updated charts. Bermuda has two lighthouses and numerous beacons, buoys and shore lights to aid navigation.

The government's **Bermuda Harbour Radio** (☎ 297-1010; www.rcbermuda.bm), with the call letters ZBM, maintains a continuous listening watch at 2182kHz, VHF Channel 16, and all vessels approaching Bermuda are required to make contact for entry and berthing instructions. A call should be attempted at approximately 30 miles from the island, giving the estimated time of arrival. Weather forecasts and navigational warnings are broadcast 24 hours a day at VHF Weather Channel 2 on frequency 162.4MHz.

All visiting yachts are required to obtain customs, immigration and health clearance in the Port of St George before proceeding elsewhere in Bermuda. The clearance facility is at the east side of Ordnance Island. Instructions on departure formalities should be obtained here as well; there's a \$15 passenger tax.

Anchorage for yachts is available in St George Harbour, Hamilton Harbour and the Royal Naval Dockyard, the latter through the full-service **Dockyard Marina** (☎ 234-0300). For information on how to berth in Hamilton Harbour, contact the **Royal Hamilton Amateur Dinghy Club** (☎ 236-2250). Bermuda Harbour Radio can provide information on anchorage options in St George.

Because there are several yacht races between Bermuda and the US east coast in early summer, yachters who are not racing should keep in mind that it can be a difficult time to secure a berth.

RESOURCES & CHARTS

The Bermuda Department of Tourism offers a 24-page pamphlet called *Yachts (Private) Sailing to Bermuda*, an essential resource for anyone planning to sail to Bermuda; download it at www.bermutatourism.com/pdf/yachts_info.pdf. It includes detailed information on everything from beacon locations to where to pick up ice.

In addition, consider picking up a copy of *The Yachting Guide to Bermuda*, edited by the Bermuda Maritime Museum.

Detailed charts are essential for sailing into Bermudian waters. In Bermuda, yachting books and British Admiralty charts are available at **PW's Marine Centre** (☎ 295-3232; www.pwmarine.bm; 111 Woodlands Rd, City of Hamilton).

In the USA, books and charts can be purchased from the following companies: **Armchair Sailor Worldwide Navigation** (☎ 401-847-4252, 800-292-4278; www.bluewaterweb.com; 543 Thames St, Newport, RI) **Landfall Navigation** (☎ 203-487-0775; www.landfallnavigation.com; 151 Harvard Ave, Stamford, CT) **New York Nautical** (☎ 212-962-4522; www.newyorknautical.com; 158 Duane St, New York, NY)

GETTING AROUND

You cannot rent cars in Bermuda. Visitors can ride a public bus or ferry, use a taxi, rent a motor scooter or bicycle – or even hire a horse and carriage.

BICYCLE

Although not nearly as popular as motor scooters, bicycles are another option for getting around. However, Bermuda's roads are narrow, curving and often hilly, so people planning on bicycling need to be cautious of traffic and expect to work up a sweat. When it's going your way, using the Railway Trail, which is open to bicyclists but not motorized vehicles, is a good way to avoid traffic. Bicycles, by the way, are generally referred to in Bermuda as pedal cycles, to differentiate them from scooters.

The following scooter rental shops rent bicycles for around \$35 for the first day and \$10 more for each additional day.

Elbow Beach Cycles (☎ 236-9237; 60 South Rd, Paget) **Eve's Cycles** Paget (☎ 236-6247; 114 Middle Rd); St George (☎ 236-0839; 1 Water St) **Oleander Cycles** (☎ 234-0629; Middle Rd, Southampton)

Rental bicycles come in various types but most are mountain bikes. Locks and helmets are provided.

BOAT

Public ferries, which operate daily in the Great Sound and Hamilton Harbour, offer a scenic alternative to the bus. As the distances across water are often shorter than comparable land routes, the ferries can also

FORGET THE KEYS

Don't expect to get behind the wheel of a car on this island. Bermudians have had such dread of automobiles on their narrow roads that they actually banned them outright for decades. After WWII private automobile ownership was allowed for the first time but not without restrictions that continue to this day.

First off, there's a strict regulation that limits the number of cars to one per household, and no one is allowed to drive another person's car if they don't live in that household. Cars cannot be more than 66 inches wide, so don't expect to see any bloated American cars here – even the Volkswagen Beetle doesn't pass the width restriction.

And there are no car rentals available at all – tourists are simply not allowed to drive cars in Bermuda. Just to make sure you're not tempted, foreign driver's licenses are not even recognized here. If you're itching to hit the road on your own, plan to rent a motor scooter or a bicycle – neither requires a license!

be quicker. The fastest ferry from the City of Hamilton to the Royal Naval Dockyard, for example, takes just 20 minutes, while the bus ride takes a full hour.

There are four different ferry routes, connecting the City of Hamilton with St George and the Dockyard; with Paget and Warwick; with Southampton; and with Sandys Parish. Each route leaves from the Hamilton Ferry Terminal, which is conveniently located on Front St in the City of Hamilton, adjacent to the tourist information office.

Cash is not accepted on the ferries. For details on transportation passes, tickets and tokens, all of which are valid on both public ferries and buses, see Bus below. If you have questions regarding ferries, contact the **Hamilton Ferry Terminal** (☎ 295-4506; www.seaexpress.bm). Information on specific ferry routes can be found in the Getting There & Around sections in the individual parish chapters.

BUS

Bermuda has a good islandwide public bus system that you can use to reach most sights and beaches. The buses are reliable and generally run on time. Pick up a free copy of the bus-and-ferry schedule at one of the tourist offices or at the bus terminal on Washington St in the City of Hamilton.

Buses are quite busy between 3:30pm and 5:30pm on weekdays, when schoolchildren and office workers make the commute home, but at most other times, getting a seat isn't a challenge. Frequency varies with the route and time of travel, but during the day the busier routes generally have a bus operating every 15 to 30 minutes. Sundays

and holidays have substantially reduced schedules.

Although schedules vary by route, most buses begin their service somewhere between 6:30am and 7:30am. Service on some minor routes ends around 6pm. On the two most significant routes – Hamilton to St George and Hamilton to the Royal Naval Dockyard – service continues until around 11pm, with the schedule thinning out as the evening goes on.

Of the 11 bus routes, all, with the exception of the St George–St David's route, leave from the Hamilton bus terminal. Consequently, if you use buses often, you'll find yourself transferring there frequently.

Bus stops are marked with color-coded posts to indicate whether buses serving that stop are inbound or outbound. If the post is pink, buses stopping there are heading into Hamilton; if it's blue, the buses are heading away from Hamilton.

For inquiries regarding bus service, contact the **Public Transportation Board** (☎ 292-3851) between 8:45am and 5pm weekdays.

There is also a private minibus service (p80) that operates solely within St George's Parish.

Bus Passes & Fares

To ride the bus, you must have the exact fare *in coins* or have a token, ticket or transportation pass. Paper money is not accepted and change is not given.

Bermuda is divided into 14 different bus zones. You can pay a fare for three zones (meaning the trip covers one to three zones) or 14 zones (for a journey covering four to 14 zones).

From the City of Hamilton, it's a three-zone fare to the following places:

- the Bermuda Aquarium, Museum & Zoo (bus No 10 or 11)
- the Bermuda Botanical Gardens (bus No 1, 2 or 7)
- Elbow Beach (bus No 7)
- Horseshoe Bay (bus No 7)
- Spittal Pond (bus No 1)

From Hamilton, it's a 14-zone fare to the Royal Naval Dockyard (bus No 7 or 8). It's also a 14-zone fare to the airport, Bailey's Bay or St George's – all of which can be reached by bus No 1, 3, 10 or 11.

The regular adult fare is \$3 in coins or \$2.50 in tokens for up to three zones and \$4.50 in coins or \$4 in tokens for more than three zones. Children ages five to 16 ride for \$2 in coins for any number of zones, and those under age five ride for free.

Tickets offer a handsome discount compared with the cash fare. The cost for adults is \$20 for 15 tickets that are each valid for up to three zones, and \$30 for 15 tickets valid for all zones. The cost for children is \$7.50 for 15 tickets valid for all zones.

Bus transfers are free as long as they are made with the next scheduled connecting bus. If you need a transfer, request it from the driver when you get on the first bus.

Transportation passes can be handy if you're doing a lot of exploring, as they allow unlimited use of both buses and ferries. Passes valid for a single day cost \$12; those valid for three consecutive days cost \$28; four days cost \$35; and seven consecutive days cost \$45. In addition, there's a monthly pass for \$55 that is valid for the calendar month in which it is purchased.

Ticket books, tokens and transportation passes are sold at the bus terminal information booth in Hamilton from 7:15am to 5:30pm weekdays, 8:15am to 5:30pm Saturday and 9:15am to 4:45pm Sunday and holidays.

Ticket books and transportation passes are also sold at most post offices, though not the main City of Hamilton post office. The shorter-duration transportation passes are also sold at tourist offices and some hotels.

HITCHHIKING

Hitchhiking is not illegal in Bermuda, but it's rarely done. As one police officer remarked:

'I don't know if people would know what you're doing. They might stick their thumb back up at you, thinking you're just having a good time.'

And of course, as with everywhere else in the world, hitchhiking is never entirely safe and Lonely Planet does not recommend it. Travelers who make the decision to hitchhike should understand that they are taking a potentially serious risk. People who do choose to hitchhike will be safer if they travel in pairs and let someone know where they are planning to go.

HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGE

Up for a little old-fashioned fun? Then this is the way to go. Although it's more of a romantic ride than a practical means of transportation, horse-and-carriage rides are available in the City of Hamilton. The carriages park on Front St on the east side of the No 1 Cruise Ship Terminal. They typically take a side route west along Pitts Bay Rd or make a circular route north on Bermudiana Rd, west on Richmond Rd and back to Front St via Serpentine and Par-la-Ville Rds.

The cost per carriage (for one to four passengers) is \$30 for the first 30 minutes (the minimum charge) and \$30 for each additional 30-minute increment. If the carriage is drawn by two horses it is allowed to carry more than four passengers, in which case the cost for the fifth and additional passengers is \$5 per person per 30 minutes.

MOTOR SCOOTER

Motor scooters, which are commonly referred to as 'cycles' in Bermuda, are the main mode of transport for touring the island independently. Hopping on one can be a fun way of getting around, but Bermuda's narrow winding roads present challenges for drivers who aren't used to these conditions – or who don't have scooter experience.

In fact, enough visitors spill their scooters that the term 'road rash' is part of the island vernacular. And scrapes aren't the worst that ever happens – serious accidents and fatalities aren't unknown. If you're not used to riding, make sure you're comfortable with the scooter before taking to the road. All rental shops are required to have an instructor show you how to use the scooter and to provide you with an opportunity to practise. If you're not satisfied with your ability to

handle the scooter after your instruction, feel free to cancel the contract.

Driver's License

Here's a surprise: you don't need a driver's license to drive a scooter in Bermuda. Just remember when you get out on the road that there may be plenty of shaky novices out there who don't have one! Scooter drivers, however, are required by law to be at least 16 years old.

Rental

Scooter rates are competitive and you may find that you'll do just as well renting from the shop associated with your hotel or guesthouse. Still, if you want to call around and seek out the best price, most cycle liveries will either pick you up and take you to their office or deliver the scooter to you.

When comparing rates, take note of the add-ons that pad up the bill. A mandatory 'repair waiver insurance' of about \$25 is the most common one; this is a one-time fee that covers the entire rental period, whether it's one day or one week. The repair waiver insurance covers damages to the scooter, but with some companies there's a deductible (excess), in which case you still could be held responsible for hundreds of dollars in damages. Be sure you understand the policy in advance.

Whichever cycle livery you rent from, and regardless of the insurance offered, you'll likely have either a large deductible for theft or find that it will not be covered at all. Scooter thefts are at such epidemic proportions in Bermuda that it's virtually impossible to insure against theft. Incidentally, it's not just a problem for rentals – most islanders have had theft coverage dropped from their own insurance policies. Inquire carefully about the theft policy before renting; some companies might limit your liability if you can prove you locked the scooter (ie you have the key), but others will hold you responsible under any circumstances.

Rates for a one-person scooter average \$45 for a one-day rental, \$70 to \$90 for two days, \$100 to \$120 for three days and \$190 to \$210 for a week – plus the one-time repair waiver charge. For about \$10 more a day you can rent a larger double-seat scooter that's capable of carrying a passenger. Carrying a passenger isn't recommended, however,

unless you are an experienced motorbike driver.

The scooters come with a full tank of gas and most have a small reserve fuel tank. If you need to refill on the road, there are gas stations throughout the island from St George to Somerset.

Oleander Cycles (☎ 236-5235; www.oleandercycles.bm) and **Wheels Cycles** (☎ 292-2245; www.bermudashorts.bm/wheels) are large reputable operations with numerous branches scattered around Bermuda. Smaller operations include **Eve's Cycles** (☎ 236-6247; www.evecycles.com) and **Smatt's Cycle Livery** (☎ 295-1180; www.smattscyclelivery.com) as well as **Elbow Beach Cycles** (☎ 236-9237; www.elbowbeachcycles.com). Branch offices are listed in each parish chapter.

Road Rules

In Bermuda, as in Britain, driving is on the left. The speed limit throughout Bermuda is 35km/h (22 miles), except in a few municipal areas such as central St George, where it drops to 25km/h.

Bermuda has a handful of roundabouts (also known as rotaries or traffic circles) – you must give way to traffic already on the roundabout, but once you enter you have the right-of-way.

Helmets are required of both drivers and passengers, and are provided by the cycle livery you rent from. Police are not eager to ticket tourists and will generally issue warnings for traffic violations as long as the violator is polite and apologetic.

TAXI

Taxis are readily available from the airport at flight times, and most larger hotels have taxis waiting. In addition, there are taxi stands in heavily touristed areas, such as Front St in Hamilton and King's Square in St George.

All taxis are equipped with meters. The standard rate (for up to four passengers) is \$5.75 for the first mile plus \$2 for each additional mile. If there are five or six passengers the rate is \$7.19 for the first mile plus \$2.50 for each additional mile. Prices are 25% higher between midnight and 6am and all day on Sundays and public holidays.

If you need to call for a taxi, **Radio Cabs** (☎ 295-4141), **BIU Taxi Co-op** (☎ 292-4476) and **Sandy's Taxi Co** (☎ 234-2344) are three of the larger dispatchers with a 24-hour service.

TOURS

If you want to piece together your own private sightseeing tour, taxis can double as tour operators, catering a tour to your interests. The drivers are generally knowledgeable and their commentary can add plenty of local color as you explore. Seek out a taxi with a blue card in the front window, which indicates the driver has been certified as a tourism specialist, meaning that their background on sightseeing is par-

ticularly extensive. The cost is \$36 per hour for one to four passengers, \$50 per hour for five or six passengers.

The St George's Mini-Bus Service (p80) offers one-hour tours of the Town of St George for \$20 while the cruise ship season is on. The aforementioned public ferry rides can double as inexpensive harbor cruises. For information on organized sightseeing walks, see Outdoor Activities (p34).

Health

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Because the level of hygiene in Bermuda is generally high, most travelers experience nothing worse than a little diarrhea or a mild respiratory infection. Also, good medical care is available; however, medical care in Bermuda is expensive.

BEFORE YOU GO

Prevention is the key to staying healthy while abroad. A little planning before departure, particularly for pre-existing illnesses, will save trouble later. See your dentist before a long trip, carry a spare pair of contact lenses and glasses, and take your optical prescription with you. Bring medications in their original, clearly labeled, containers. A signed and dated letter from your physician describing your medical conditions and medications, including generic names, is also a good idea. If carrying syringes or needles, be sure to have a physician's letter documenting their medical necessity.

INSURANCE

If your health insurance does not cover you for medical expenses abroad, consider supplemental insurance. The Subwwyway section of the Lonely Planet website at www.lonelyplanet.com/subwwyway has more in-

formation. Find out in advance if your insurance plan will make payments directly to providers or reimburse you later for overseas health expenditures.

MEDICAL CHECKLIST

It is a very good idea to carry a medical and first aid kit with you, to help yourself in the case of minor illness or injury. Following is a list of items you should consider packing.

- Acetaminophen (paracetamol) or aspirin
- Anti-inflammatory drugs (eg ibuprofen)
- Antihistamines (for hayfever and allergic reactions)
- Antibacterial ointment (eg Bactroban) for treating cuts and abrasions (prescription only)
- Steroid cream or hydrocortisone cream (for allergic rashes)
- Bandages, gauze, gauze rolls
- Adhesive or paper tape
- Scissors, safety pins, tweezers
- Thermometer
- Pocket knife
- Sun block

INTERNET RESOURCES

There is a wealth of travel health advice on the Internet. For further information, the **Lonely Planet** (www.lonelyplanet.com) website is a good place to start. A superb book called *International Travel and Health*, revised annually, is available online at no cost; it's published by the **World Health Organization** (www.who.int/ith/). Other websites of general interest are **MD Travel Health** (www.mdtravelhealth.com), which provides complete travel health recommendations for every country, updated daily, also at no cost; the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** (www.cdc.gov); and **Fit for Travel** (www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk), which has up-to-date information about outbreaks and is very user-friendly.

It's also a good idea to consult your government's travel health website before departure, if one is available:

Australia (www.dfat.gov.au/travel/)

Canada (www.hc-sc.gc.ca/english/index.html)

UK (www.doh.gov.uk/traveladvice/index.htm)

USA (www.cdc.gov/travel/)

RECOMMENDED VACCINATIONS

All travelers should be up-to-date on routine immunizations, listed below.

Vaccine	Recommended for	Dosage	Possible side effects
tetanus-diphtheria	all travelers who haven't had a booster within 10 years	1 dose lasts 10 years	soreness at the injection site
measles	travelers born after 1956 who've had only one measles vaccination	1 dose	fever; rash; joint pains; allergic reactions
chickenpox	travelers who've never had chickenpox	2 doses 1 month apart	fever; mild case of chickenpox
influenza	all travelers during flu season (Nov through Mar)	1 dose	soreness at the injection site; fever

FURTHER READING

If you're traveling with kids, *Lonely Planet's Travel with Children* by Cathy Lanigan may be useful. *The ABC of Healthy Travel*, by E Walker et al, is another good resource.

IN TRANSIT**DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS (DVT)**

Blood clots may form in the legs during plane flights, chiefly because of prolonged immobility. The longer the flight, the higher the risk. The chief symptom of DVT is swelling or pain of the foot, ankle, or calf, usually but not always on just one side. When a blood clot travels to the lungs, it may cause chest pain and breathing difficulties. Travelers who have any of these symptoms should immediately seek medical attention.

To prevent the development of DVT on long flights you should walk about the cabin, contract the leg muscles while sitting, drink plenty of fluids and avoid alcohol.

JET LAG & MOTION SICKNESS

To avoid jet lag (common when flying across more than five time zones) try drinking plenty of nonalcoholic fluids and eating light meals. Upon arrival, get exposure to natural sunlight and readjust your schedule (for meals, sleep and so on) as soon as possible.

Eating lightly before and during a trip will reduce the chances of motion sickness. If you are prone to such upsets, try to find a place that minimizes movement – near the wing on aircraft or close to amidships

on boats. Fresh air and a steady reference point like the horizon usually help; reading and cigarette smoke don't.

Antihistamines such as dimenhydrinate (Dramamine) and meclizine (Antivert, Bonine) are usually the first choice for treating motion sickness. There are also natural preventatives in the form of ginger (available in capsule form) and peppermint (including mint-flavored candy).

IN BERMUDA**AVAILABILITY & COST OF HEALTH CARE**

For an ambulance in Bermuda, call 911.

Bermuda has one general hospital, the **King Edward VII Memorial Hospital** (☎ 236-2345; Point Finger Rd, Paget Parish), which has an emergency room, an obstetric unit, an intensive care unit, a dialysis unit, and a variety of other specialty services. There is also a separate psychiatric hospital. There are no private hospitals. The quality of medical care is generally good, but complex medical problems will usually require evacuation to the USA. For nonurgent medical matters, ask the concierge at your hotel to recommend a local physician.

Medical care in Bermuda is expensive. Though British, Bermuda does not participate in reciprocal health care agreements either inside or outside the European Economic Area. Make sure you're covered for medical costs while in Bermuda.

Most pharmacies are well-supplied and the pharmacists well-trained. The Phoenix stores are a reputable chain of pharmacies.

There are also a number of good independent pharmacies listed in the phone book.

**INFECTIOUS DISEASES
HIV/AIDS**

As with most parts of the world, HIV is a health problem in Bermuda. You should never assume, on the basis of someone's background or appearance, that they're free of this or any other sexually transmitted disease. Be sure to use a condom for all sexual encounters.

If you have any questions regarding AIDS while in Bermuda, you can call the **Allan Vincent Smith Foundation** (☎ 295-0002).

TRAVELER'S DIARRHEA

If you develop diarrhea, ensure that you drink plenty of fluids, preferably an oral rehydration solution (eg Dioralyte). A few loose stools don't require treatment, but if you start having more than four or five stools a day, you should start taking an antibiotic (usually a quinolone drug) and an anti-diarrheal agent (such as Loperamide). If diarrhea is bloody, persists for more than 72 hours or is accompanied by fever, shaking, chills or severe abdominal pain you should seek medical attention.

**ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS
Bites & Stings**

Do not attempt to pet, handle or feed animals, with the exception of domestic animals known to be free of any infectious disease. Most animal injuries are directly related to a person's attempt to touch or feed the animal.

Any bite or scratch by a mammal, including bats, should be promptly and thoroughly cleansed with large amounts of soap and water, followed by application of an antiseptic such as iodine or alcohol. (Bermuda's Department of Agriculture claims that there have been no cases of rabies for more than 40 years.) It may also be advisable to start an antibiotic, since wounds caused by animal bites and scratches frequently become infected. One of the newer quinolones, such as levofloxacin (Levaquin), which many travelers carry in case of diarrhea, would be an appropriate choice.

If you are stung by a jellyfish or a Portuguese man-of-war, quickly remove the tentacles and apply vinegar or a meat ten-

derizer containing papain (derived from papaya), both of which act to neutralize the toxins – in a pinch, you could use urine as well. For serious reactions, including chest pains or difficulty breathing, seek immediate medical attention.

Heat Stroke

This serious, sometimes fatal, condition can occur if the body's heat-regulating mechanism breaks down and the body temperature rises to dangerous levels. Long, continuous periods of exposure to high temperatures and insufficient fluids can leave you vulnerable to heat stroke. Avoid strenuous activity in open sun when you first arrive.

The symptoms of heat stroke are feeling unwell, not sweating very much or at all and a high body temperature (39° to 41°C or 102° to 106°F). Where sweating has ceased, the skin becomes flushed and red. Severe, throbbing headaches and lack of coordination can also occur, and the sufferer may be confused or aggressive. Eventually the victim may become delirious or convulse. Hospitalization is essential, but in the interim get victims out of the sun, remove their clothing, cover them with a wet sheet or towel and continually fan them. Give fluids if they are conscious.

Sun Exposure

Ultraviolet radiation may be a health hazard during the summer. To protect yourself from excessive sun exposure, you should stay out of the midday sun, wear sunglasses and a wide-brimmed sun hat, and apply sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher, with both UVA and UVB protection. Sunscreen should be generously applied to all exposed parts of the body approximately 30 minutes before sun exposure and should be reapplied after swimming or vigorous activity. Travelers should also drink plenty of fluids and avoid strenuous exercise when the temperature is high.

Water

Although several of Bermuda's larger resort hotels have their own desalination plants, the rest of Bermuda depends upon rain for its water supply. Because the rain is caught on rooftops and directed into individual storage tanks, the bacteria count in the water can vary. If you're staying at a smaller

hotel or guesthouse, it's best to inquire with the manager about the water's suitability for drinking.

If in doubt, you can always treat the water first. The simplest way is to boil it vigorously. Chlorine tablets kill many but not all pathogens. Iodine is more effective in purifying water and is available in tablet form. Bottled water is available in Bermudian grocery stores.

CHILDREN & PREGNANT WOMEN

When traveling with children, make sure they're up-to-date on all routine immunizations. It's sometimes appropriate to give children some of their vaccines a little early before departure; you should discuss this with your pediatrician. If pregnant, you should bring along a copy of your medical records in case complications develop while abroad.