

St. Lucia

St. Lucia is the sort of island that travellers to the Caribbean dream about--a small, lush tropical gem that is still relatively unknown.

One of the Windward Islands of the Lesser Antilles, it is located midway down the Eastern Caribbean chain, between Martinique and St. Vincent, and north of Barbados.

St. Lucia is only 27 miles long and 14 miles wide, with a shape that is said to resemble either a mango or an avocado (depending on your taste). The Atlantic Ocean kisses its eastern shore, while the beaches of the west coast owe their beauty to the calm Caribbean Sea.

The Pitons

Located near Soufriere, these primeval twin peaks, topping 2,000 feet, are St.

Lucia's most famous landmark. Only the most daring climbers have ventured an ascent to their summits, but they can be seen in all their glory from Mt. Gimie or from the decks of a boat offshore.

National Rain Forest

Of particular appeal to bird watchers, hikers and nature lovers, it covers 19,000 acres of lush mountains and valleys. It is home to giant ferns, birds of paradise and many other indigenous tree species, exotic flowers and fruits, and its paths are strewn with tiny bromeliads, wild orchids and mushrooms.

Among the rare and beautiful birds adding color to the scene are the brightly-hued St. Lucia Parrot, known locally as the "jacquot," the White Breasted Thrasher, the St. Lucia Peewee, and the St. Lucia Oriole.

The Sulphur Springs

Now dormant, it is the world's only drive-in volcano. A tour of its bubbly, steamy sulphur springs offers a direct and fascinating lesson in the violent geology of the Caribbean Rim.

Diamond Falls

France's King Louis XVI had bathhouses built for his troops at these natural, mineral-rich falls. An invigorating shower under the cascading waters is still a refreshing break.

Latille Gardens

This beautiful hidden treasure of St. Lucia is filled with luscious fruits, blooming flowers, thriving plants, shading trees, and vibrant waterfalls.

A walk on the waterfall trails or a relaxing night under the moon and stars, amidst the scent of healthy vegetation, are adventures not to be missed.