



## **THE EXUMA ISLANDS**

### ***Fact Sheet***

<b>City/Settlement:</b>	George Town
<b>Location:</b>	35 miles southeast of Nassau
<b>Size:</b>	Stretches over 120 miles
<b>Population:</b>	Approximately 3,600

#### **History:**

The Exumas have evolved over time from a salt mining colony to a haven for pirates to a cotton producing colony; all of these phases have influenced its historical development. In fact, many of the islands' residents are direct descendants of plantation slaves from the late 1700s. The Lucayan Indians began colonies on The Exumas and survived by fishing and farming. The Spanish arrived in the 1500s and turned the island into a salt mining colony. In the 1700s, a group of Loyalists sought refuge here and wealthy European landowners started large cotton plantations. The most notable was John Rolle, who eventually freed his slaves and deeded his land to them. The former slaves adopted his last name and today 60 percent of the locals still have the last name Rolle.

#### **Shopping:**

Retail shopping on The Exumas is generally limited to hotel boutiques and general establishments in George Town that mainly target the locals. One exception is The Straw Market—a series of five to 10 stands along the main road into George Town offering several varieties of baskets, purses and other straw goods that come in unique Exumian designs and colors.

#### **Activities:**

The Exumas are primarily known for their pristine beaches, exciting snorkeling, sailing and fishing. Home to many boating competitions like The Family Island Regatta, The New Year's Day Cruising Regatta, and the widely revered National Out

Island Regatta, the islands' cays and hidden coves make for some of the most spectacular sailing in The Bahamas. Additionally, diving enthusiasts from around the world believe The Exumas are one of the most spectacular places in all of The Islands Of The Bahamas to take in the beauty of the world beneath the ocean's surface. Vast beds of undisturbed coral teeming with brightly colored schools of fish of every variety surround The Exumas, in addition to the Austin Smith Wreck. The primary watersport in Exuma is snorkeling, which can be done off the beach, from a glassbottom boat or off one of the many cays. Stocking Island is a popular place for shelling, beachcombing and picnicking.

**Airline Service:**

The airlines below serve Exuma from U.S. gateways:

**American Eagle** (800-433-7300), **Bahamasair** (800-222-4262), **Continental/Gulfstream International Airlines** (800-231-0856) , **Delta Air Lines** (800-221-1212), **US Airways** (800-428-4322)

The following airline flies to Exuma from Nassau:

**Bahamasair** (800-222-4262), **Sky Bahamas** (242-377-8993), **Air Charter Bahamas** (866-359-4752)

**Listed below are a range of options for accommodation on The Exumas:**

**Club Peace and Plenty** (800-525-2210), **Hotel Higgins Landing** (242-357-0008), **Palm Bay Beach Club** (888-396-0606), **Regatta Point** (888-720-0011), **Staniel Cay Yacht Club** (954-467-8920), **Sandals Emerald Bay** (888-Sandals) **February Point Resort** (877-839-4253) and **Two Turtles Inn** (242-336-2545) **Grand Isle Resort & Spa** (242-358-5000), **Coconut Cove** (

**Attractions:**

The Hermitage: These ruins are a reminder of the islands' cotton plantation days. One of the last cotton plantations, it was originally built by the Kendall family in the late 1700s. The foundations of the main house and some old tombs are all that remain.

Salt Beacon: Located in Williams Town, Little Exuma, this landmark was designed as a Tuscan Column during the first half of the 19th century. It was built to guide ships engaged in the salt trade. The beacon stands 30 feet high and is a favorite attraction of visitors to Little Exuma.

The Exuma Cays Land and Sea Park: Created in 1958, this 176 square mile park was the first of its kind in the world and is famous for its pristine beauty, outstanding anchorages and breathtaking marine environment. It is the first marine fishery reserve in the Caribbean.

Allan's Cay Iguanas: One of the few places you can still find these fearsome looking yet gentle lizards.

Thunderball Grotto: A breathtaking hollowed out island near Staniel Cay, this grotto is ideal for snorkeling. It abounds with tropical fish, rare sponges and corals. This setting was used for scenes from James Bond's "Thunderball" and "Never Say Never Again," as well as Disney's "Splash."

**Other Information:**

U.S. currency is accepted and is interchangeable with the Bahamian dollar. In September through May, the temperature on the Island averages 70 to 75 degrees Fahrenheit; the rest of the year is warmer, with temperatures between 80 and 85 degrees. Nighttime temperatures are generally cooler by 5-7 degrees. All U.S. citizens and foreign nationals traveling to/from the United States to/from The Bahamas are required to present a valid passport, passport card or WHTI-compliant document to re-enter the United States. All Canadian citizens traveling to/from Canada to/from The Bahamas are required to present either a valid passport, an

official birth certificate or an original naturalization/citizenship certificate. For more information please visit [Bahamas.com](http://Bahamas.com).

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