Kralendijk, Bonaire

A walk-off-the-ship town on the US dollar, with world-class reef a few steps from the beach and one fee you need to know about.

Facts checked on 26 October 2026

I haven't sailed into Bonaire yet, so I built this guide the way I'd want one built for me: from the national parks foundation's own pages, the island's tourism guide and the government's tax rules, with every fee dated. Bonaire is the quiet one of the ABC islands. Ships dock right in the little capital, the reef starts a few steps off the beach, and the one thing people trip over is a fee most of them have never heard of.

THE QUICK TAKE

- Ships **dock** at one of two piers right in front of Kralendijk. Town is a few steps away.
- The money is the **US dollar**. No exchange, no change in a foreign currency.
- If you go **in the sea**, even just snorkelling off a beach, you need the nature fee. For cruise passengers it's **$10 for the day** instead of the $40 annual fee.
- Sunscreen with **oxybenzone or octinoxate** is banned. Bring a mineral or reef-safe one.
- Bonaire drives on the **right**, and there's no public bus.
- Bonaire doesn't change its clocks. Go by **ship time**.

Bonaire at a glance

Getting ashore	Ships dock at the North Pier (Town Pier) or the South Pier (Customs Pier), both in front of downtown Kralendijk. No tenders.
Ship to town	A short walk. The South Pier is under 300 feet from Wilhelmina Plaza and the waterfront.
Currency	The US dollar is the official currency. Visa and Mastercard are widely accepted; carry some cash for taxis.
Language	Dutch is official and Papiamentu is everyday; English and Spanish are widely spoken
Time zone	Atlantic Standard Time (UTC−4) all year: 1 hour ahead of Eastern in winter, the same in summer. **Be back by ship time.**
Taxis	Fixed government rates, no meters. Plates say TX. Ask the fixed price before you get in.
Drive on	The right. Speed limits are 40 km/h in town and 60 km/h outside.
Nature fee	Needed to enter the sea or Washington Slagbaai National Park. Cruise passengers: $10 for one day.

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Nature fee and park rules
STINAPA Bonaire

Nature fee
Bonaire.com

Visitor entry tax
Bonaire.com

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Map of the island



The town, the nearest beach and the water taxi to Klein Bonaire are all within minutes of the ship; the national park is a rough drive north.

Which pier you'll use

Kralendijk has two cruise piers side by side along the waterfront, right in front of town. There's no big terminal building. Ships tie up parallel to the shore, and you walk a short stretch of pier to land. Both are walkable to everything in town. Ask your cruise line which one you'll get, because it's assigned close to the day.

North Pier (Town Pier)

The closer of the two to the centre. Its exit gates open onto a pedestrian street opposite Wilhelmina Park, near the open-air market and Kaya Grandi, the main shopping street. When only one ship is in port, it usually docks here.

South Pier (Customs Pier)

Often used by the larger ships. It's a little further south, but still less than 300 feet from Wilhelmina Plaza and the seaside promenade. Wheelchair-accessible public restrooms were opened here in 2023 as a tourism pilot; I couldn't confirm they're still open.

Taxis, restrooms and tourist information are at the port. Most snorkel boats and the water taxis leave from points a **5 to 10 minute walk** along the waterfront.

At the Bonaire cruise port: what's there

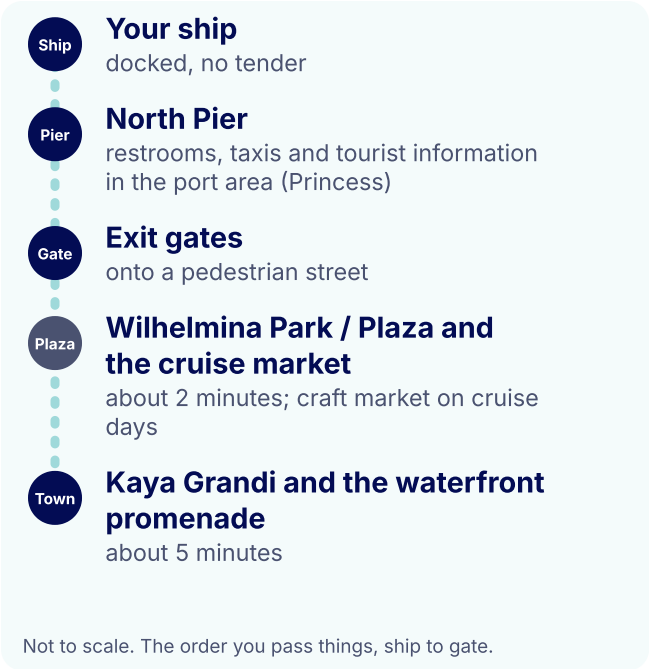
Port facts checked on 30 October 2026. Shops, prices and opening hours change, so check on the day.

I haven't sailed into Bonaire yet, so this is the planner's version. There's no big cruise complex here: ships tie up at one of two piers right on the Kralendijk waterfront, and a couple of minutes later you're in Wilhelmina Park with the cruise-day craft market. That makes it one of the easiest "stay near the ship" days in the Caribbean: the town is the port, it's flat, and it's on US dollars.

Port map: this port doesn't publish a map of its own that we could find, so we drew the simple walk below from the port's and cruise lines' own descriptions.

From the ship: North Pier (Town Pier)

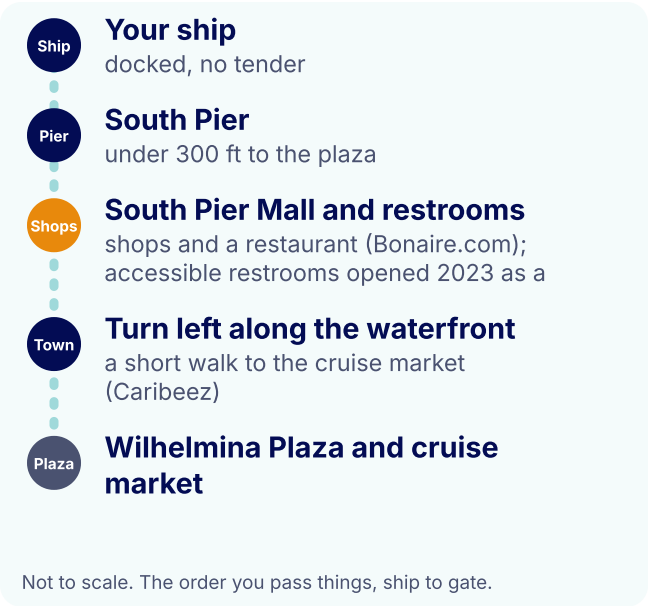
The pier closest to the town centre; Princess says its exit gates open near a pedestrian street across from Wilhelmina Park. Pier areas are open only when ships are in, and only to passengers with a ship card (Bonaire.com).



Our own simple drawing, not the port's map.

From the ship: South Pier (Customs Pier)

Often used by larger ships. Less than 300 feet from Plaza Wilhelmina and the seaside promenade. Bonaire.com lists a South Pier Mall with shops and a restaurant; wheelchair-accessible public restrooms opened here in 2023.



Our own simple drawing, not the port's map.

Free things to do inside the port

Bonaire Arts and Crafts Cruise Market Free to browse — Open-air market of small stalls with local crafts (jewellery, woodwork, keepsakes) and food, held on cruise days.
Wilhelmina Park / Plaza, right off the North Pier; a short walk left from the South Pier · about 2 min walk from the ship
Access: Flat park setting

Wilhelmina Park and the waterfront promenade Free — Shady little park and seaside promenade at the foot of the piers.
Next to both piers · about 2 min walk from the ship
Access: Flat

Fort Oranje — Small historic fort on the waterfront.
About 5 minutes on foot (Bonaire.com) · about 5 min walk from the ship

Kralendijk city walk Free — Downtown Kralendijk is 5 to 10 minutes from the piers; Bonaire.com suggests 2 to 3 hours for a visit.
Town centre · about 5 min walk from the ship
Access: Mostly flat

Pools and beaches

Nature fee (STINAPA)

US$10 per person for one day (STINAPA, checked 26 October 2026)

— Needed before you go in the sea anywhere, even off a town beach. Cruise passengers can pay a one-day fee instead of the $40 annual one. Pack a reef-safe sunscreen: oxybenzone and octinoxate are banned.
Paid before swimming; ask your cruise line where to buy it

Klein Bonaire water taxi (No Name Beach)

From US$25 per person, return (tourism guide, checked 26 October 2026)

— Boats to the uninhabited island opposite town; about 15 minutes each way (Princess). No toilets, shops or water there. Beach chairs extra.
From the Kralendijk waterfront, 5 to 10 minutes' walk from the piers
Access: Stepping into and out of a small boat

Food and drink

South Pier Mall restaurant — Bonaire.com lists a restaurant in the South Pier Mall.
South Pier · about 0 min walk from the ship

Karel's Beach Bar — Bar on a pier over the water in town, a classic place to watch the sea (Princess).
Kralendijk waterfront

Waterfront and Kaya Grandi cafés — Café patios and restaurants a few minutes from the piers; many smaller shops close for lunch.
Waterfront promenade and Kaya Grandi · about 5 min walk from the ship

Shopping

South Pier Mall — Small cruise shopping mall beside the docks with shops and a restaurant (Bonaire.com; InfoBonaire calls it newly available).
At the South Pier · about 0 min walk from the ship

Harborside Mall — Small open-air shopping centre on the waterfront.
Kaya Grandi, a few minutes' walk

Kaya Grandi — Main shopping street: clothing, souvenirs, jewellery, snorkel and dive shops; groceries and a pharmacy nearby (InfoBonaire). Caribeez lists typical shop hours of 9am to noon and 2 to 6pm, Monday to Saturday.
Parallel to the docks, about 5 minutes · about 5 min walk from the ship

Worth paying for (and what it costs)

Snorkel and dive trips — Reef snorkel and dive excursions run from the waterfront; nature fee needed.
Waterfront, 5 to 10 minutes' walk

Golf cart rental — Golf carts can be rented within walking distance of the pier (Bonaire.com).
In town, outside the pier area

Restrooms, Wi-Fi, money and help

Restrooms — Public restrooms at the port area; InfoBonaire warns they get very busy on cruise days.
Port area · about 0 min walk from the ship

Wheelchair-accessible restrooms (South Pier) — Opened in October 2023 by the Tourism Corporation Bonaire as a pilot, open during port operating hours in cruise season. I couldn't confirm they're still open in 2026.
South Pier · about 0 min walk from the ship
Access: Built for wheelchair users

Tourist information Free — Tourist information at the port area (Princess).
Port area · about 0 min walk from the ship

ATMs and banks — In the downtown area, not published at the pier; the currency is the US dollar, so most visitors won't need one.
Downtown Kralendijk

Getting out of the port

Taxis at the pier — No meters; fixed rates by destination. They go quickly on busy cruise days. Licensed taxis have TX plates; carry US cash.
Waiting in the pier area where you disembark · about 0 min walk from the ship

Water taxi to Klein Bonaire
From US$25 per person, return
— See the swim section.
Kralendijk waterfront

Rental cars — Bonaire.com advises booking a car ahead. No public bus on the island.
In town

A whole day without leaving the port

If I were spending the day by the ship here, I'd walk off, browse the craft market in Wilhelmina Park while it's cool, then stroll the promenade to Fort Oranje and up Kaya Grandi for a little shopping. Lunch would be fresh fish at a waterfront table, and I'd watch the divers walk into the sea from town. If I wanted a swim, I'd pay the $10 nature fee and take the water taxi to Klein Bonaire, or simply sit by the water with a cold drink. Shops close for lunch, so I'd do my shopping in the morning.

At the port with a cane, walker or wheelchair

- Docked port at both piers; no tenders. Both piers are a few minutes' flat walk from town (South Pier under 300 feet from the plaza).
- There's no big terminal building with seating, so plan rests in Wilhelmina Park or a café.
- Wheelchair-accessible public restrooms opened at the South Pier in 2023 as a pilot; ask whether they're open.
- No wheelchair or scooter rental at the pier is published.
- The Klein Bonaire water taxi means stepping in and out of a small boat.
- Isidel Beach Park has had a wheelchair ramp into the sea since December 2024 (taxi needed). Check with your own cruise line which pier you'll get.

More on cruising with mobility & health needs. Rules differ by cruise line, so check with yours.

Questions about the port

What is there to do at the Bonaire cruise port?
The port is the town: the cruise-day craft market is in Wilhelmina Park a couple of minutes from the pier, and Fort Oranje, the waterfront promenade and Kaya Grandi's shops are within about 5 minutes.

Is there a beach at the Bonaire cruise port?
No beach at the piers themselves. The water taxi to Klein Bonaire (from $25 return) or a taxi to Te Amo Beach are the usual choices, and you'll need the $10 nature fee to go in the sea.

Are there restrooms at the Bonaire cruise pier?
Yes, restrooms are at the port area, and wheelchair-accessible ones opened at the South Pier in 2023. They can be busy on cruise days.

Where the port facts come from: Bonaire.com: Cruise terminal (30 October 2026); Princess Cruises: Bonaire cruise port (30 October 2026); InfoBonaire: Cruise ship FAQs (30 October 2026); InfoBonaire: Cruises (30 October 2026); InfoBonaire: Wheelchair accessible public restrooms at South Pier (Oct 2023) (30 October 2026); Caribeez: Bonaire cruise port tips (Jan 2026) (30 October 2026); STINAPA Bonaire: nature fee (26 October 2026); Bonaire.com: Water taxi to Klein Bonaire (26 October 2026); Bonaire Insider: Accessibility ramp at Isidel Beach Park (26 October 2026)

How I'd spend the day

If walking is hard

Stay in town. Wilhelmina Park, Fort Oranje and the waterfront promenade are all a few minutes from the pier and flat. Then sit with a cold drink at a waterfront bar and watch the divers go by. If you'd like to see more without walking, book a van tour of the south: the salt flats, the slave huts and the flamingos, mostly seen from the vehicle. **see Bonaire island tour flamingos salt flats on Viator**

Beach and snorkel day

Pay the $10 nature fee, then take a water taxi to Klein Bonaire's No Name Beach (no facilities at all, so bring water and shade) or a catamaran snorkel trip in the marine park. Not a boat person? A taxi to Te Amo Beach puts you on sand with the reef a short swim out. **see Bonaire Klein Bonaire snorkel on Viator**

See the island

A half-day tour north to Rincon, Gotomeer lake and its flamingos, and the viewpoints at the edge of Washington Slagbaai, or south to the salt pans, the slave huts and Lac Bay's mangroves. **see Bonaire Lac Bay mangrove kayak on Viator**

Getting around

Taxis

Bonaire taxis have no meters. The island government sets fixed rates by zone, so there's nothing to haggle over. The farther from Kralendijk, the more you pay, with the north (Rincon, Washington Slagbaai) costing the most. The current rate list isn't published online that I could find, so ask the driver for the fixed price before you get in. Expect a surcharge late at night and on Sundays and holidays. Licensed taxis have **TX** on the plate. Not every taxi takes cards, so carry US cash.

Water taxis to Klein Bonaire

Small boats run from the Kralendijk waterfront to No Name Beach on Klein Bonaire, the uninhabited island you can see from the ship. The tourism guide lists round trips from **$25 per person**, and a beach chair over there costs about $5 more. There are **no toilets, shops or water taps** on Klein Bonaire. Ask what time the last boat back leaves.

No public bus

Bonaire has no public bus service. It's taxi, tour, rental or your own two feet.

Renting a car, scooter or bike

Rentals are available near town. You drive on the **right**, and the speed limit is 40 km/h in town and 60 km/h outside. Watch for donkeys and goats on the road. Washington Slagbaai National Park needs a high-clearance vehicle like a pickup or Jeep, and ATVs, golf carts and e-bikes aren't allowed inside.

What to see

Kralendijk waterfront, Fort Oranje and Wilhelmina Park

Right off the pier. Fort Oranje is a small 17th-century fort with 19th-century cannons, and Wilhelmina Park sits across from the North Pier gates. An easy, flat hour.

Salt flats, salt pier and the slave huts

About 10 minutes south of the port. Pink salt pans, white salt mountains and flamingos, plus the tiny stone huts where enslaved salt workers slept. Willemstoren Lighthouse, from **1837**, is at the southern tip. Free to look at; go by taxi or tour.

Lac Bay and the mangroves

On the southeast coast, about 15 minutes away. Shallow, sheltered water, mangrove forest, and windsurfers at Sorobon. Kayak and mangrove tours run here.

Washington Slagbaai National Park

Wild, cactus-covered parkland at the north end, about 25 minutes from the port to the gate. Open **Tuesday to Sunday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.**, last entry **2:30 p.m.**, closed on holidays and sometimes after heavy rain. Entry is covered by the nature fee (**$10** for a cruise passenger) and payment is **cashless**. You need a high-clearance vehicle, and the inner roads are rough and slow (25 km/h), so on a port day it's best done as a guided tour.

Rincon and Gotomeer

Rincon is Bonaire's oldest village, inland in the north, and Gotomeer is a lake where flamingos often feed. Both are usual stops on north-island tours.

Beaches, ranked for a cruise day

1. **Te Amo Beach**, about 10 minutes south by car, across from the airport. Free and public, with a sandy entry (not rocky), and the reef starts close to shore. Two food trucks in the free parking lot. Shade is scarce, so bring a hat. Don't swim behind the breakwater; that's a boat channel.

2. **Sorobon, Lac Bay**, about 15 minutes away on the east side. Waist-deep water (about a metre) for a long way out, beach bars, and loungers and umbrellas for about **$15 to $25 a day**. Popular with windsurfers, so swim inside the marked areas.
3. **Klein Bonaire's No Name Beach**, by water taxi. Gorgeous water and great snorkelling, but no facilities whatsoever, and getting in and out of the boat takes some balance.
4. **Eden Beach and the beach clubs near town**, about 1 km from the centre. Chairs, a bar and toilets, but you pay a day pass (a full-island tour lists Eden Beach entry at **$10 cash**; the tourism guide says passes run $20 to $35).

Lifeguards aren't mentioned for any of these beaches in the tourism guides I checked. Water shoes help on coral and rock. If you go in the sea anywhere, the nature fee applies.

Where to eat and what to try

- **Fresh fish**, grilled or fried, at the waterfront restaurants in Kralendijk.
- **Goat stew (stoba)** and **pastechi**, the island's fried turnovers, if you see them.
- **Karel's Beach Bar**, on a pier over the water right in town, is a classic spot to watch the sea.
- **Te Amo Beach** has food trucks serving burgers, wraps and fresh fish.
- **Cadushy Distillery** makes a liqueur from the island's cactus; some tours stop there.

Money, fees and local rules

- **Currency:** The US dollar. Cards are widely accepted in restaurants and bigger shops; carry cash for taxis and the market.
- **The nature fee:** Run by STINAPA, the foundation that manages Bonaire's marine park and Washington Slagbaai. Everyone who goes into the sea (swimming, snorkelling, diving, kayaking) or into the national park must have it. Visitors pay **$40** for the calendar year; **cruise passengers pay $10 for one day**. Young children are exempt unless they scuba dive (the island guide says under 13; STINAPA's park page says under 12). The fee is sold through STINAPA's online nature fee site, which emails a QR code to carry with your ID, and at the national park's entrance booth, which takes cards only. Ask your cruise line or tour operator how to buy the $10 day option before you go ashore. If your excursion is a snorkel or dive trip, ask whether it's included; most tour pages don't say.
- **Visitor entry tax:** Bonaire charges other visitors $75, but cruise passengers pay a **$10** tax that the **cruise line collects**. You don't pay anything on the pier.
- **Sunscreen:** Sunscreens containing **oxybenzone or octinoxate** have been banned since **1 January 2021**, to protect the reef. Use a mineral or reef-safe product.
- **Hands off the reef:** Don't touch or stand on coral, don't take shells, and take your rubbish with you.
- **Ship time:** Bonaire stays on Atlantic Standard Time all year. Go by the ship's clock.

What the videos don't show you

- **The nature fee.** The famous snorkelling isn't free. It's only $10 for a cruise passenger, but you need it before you get wet, and older online advice saying cruise passengers are exempt is out of date.
- **It's a reef island, not a long-sandy-beach island.** Te Amo and Sorobon are the easy, sandy entries. Elsewhere, expect coral and rock underfoot.
- **Klein Bonaire is truly empty.** No toilets, no shade structures, no water, no shops. Lovely, but go prepared.
- **No buses, and taxis have no posted price list.** Ask the fixed price every time.
- **Heat and sun.** Bonaire is dry and sunny with little shade on the beaches. Hat, water, reef-safe sunscreen.
- **Washington Slagbaai is not a quick stop.** Rough roads, a 2:30 p.m. last entry, and closed Mondays.

With a cane, walker or wheelchair

Bonaire is one of the easier ports to arrive at. It's a **docked** port, the piers are right in town, and the waterfront, Wilhelmina Park and Fort Oranje are a short, flat walk. In 2023 the tourism board opened **wheelchair-accessible public restrooms at the South Pier** as a pilot; ask if they're still open.

Beyond town, it's harder. Te Amo has a sandy entry but little shade, and Klein Bonaire means stepping in and out of a small boat. One bright spot: **Isidel Beach Park** has had a wheelchair ramp running into the sea since December 2024, so wheelchair users can get into the water. I couldn't find a published list of accessible taxis or vans, or any beach wheelchairs for hire.

Check excursion fine print carefully. Some Shore Excursions Group tours here exclude canes, walkers and wheelchairs entirely, while their flamingo and mangrove tour says it can take collapsible wheelchairs and walkers.

For more on piers, tenders and planning, see Mobility & Health Needs, and always check with your cruise line about your pier.

The biggest mistake

Getting in the water without the nature fee. It's only $10 for a cruise passenger, but Bonaire.com's beach guide warns that getting caught without it can mean a **$150 fine**. Sort it out before you leave the ship, pack a reef-safe sunscreen, and the best shore snorkelling in the Caribbean is yours.

Bonaire FAQs

Do cruise passengers have to pay the Bonaire nature fee?

Yes, if you go into the sea or into Washington Slagbaai National Park. STINAPA charges cruise passengers $10 for one day instead of the $40 annual fee. Young children are exempt unless they scuba dive.

Do cruise ships dock or tender in Bonaire?

They dock at the North Pier or the South Pier, both right in front of downtown Kralendijk. There's no tender.

Can you walk from the Bonaire cruise port to town?

Yes. Both piers open straight into Kralendijk. The South Pier is less than 300 feet from Wilhelmina Plaza and the waterfront.

What currency does Bonaire use?

The US dollar is the official currency, and Visa and Mastercard are widely accepted. Carry some cash for taxis.

Do cruise passengers pay Bonaire's $75 entry tax?

No. Cruise passengers pay a $10 tax instead, and the cruise line collects it, so there's nothing to pay on the pier.

Is Bonaire safe for cruise passengers?

The US State Department rates Bonaire at Level 1, exercise normal precautions. The bigger risks are sun, rocky beach entries and currents, so wear water shoes and stay hydrated.

Where these facts come from

- STINAPA Bonaire: Washington Slagbaai National Park and the nature fee (https://stinapabonaire.org/washington-slagbaai-national-park/) (checked 26 October 2026; cruise passenger 1-day fee $10)
- Bonaire.com: Nature fee (https://bonaire.com/en/travel-info/nature-fee/) (checked 26 October 2026; page updated 8 October 2026)
- Bonaire.com: STINAPA (https://bonaire.com/en/nature/stinapa/) (checked 26 October 2026)
- Bonaire Insider: Simplifying the 2023 nature fee (https://infobonaire.com/simplifying-the-2023-nature-fee) (checked 26 October 2026; published 7 December 2022; cruise marine park fee from 2024)
- Bonaire.com: Visitor entry tax (https://bonaire.com/entrytax) (checked 26 October 2026; updated 26 October 2026)
- Tourism Corporation Bonaire: Plan your vacation (https://bonaireisland.com/plan-trip/) (checked 26 October 2026)
- Tourism Corporation Bonaire: Bonaire Guide 2026 (PDF) (https://bonaireisland.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/08/Bonaire-Guide-2026_English-1.pdf) (checked 26 October 2026)

- Tourism Corporation Bonaire: Cruise town hall 2023–2024 (https://bonaireisland.com/tourism-corporation-bonaire-organized-its-annual-cruise-town-hall-meeting-in-preparation-for-the-2023-2024-cruise-season/) (checked 26 October 2026; cruise head tax $10 from January 2023)
- Princess Cruises: Bonaire cruise port guide (https://www.princess.com/en-int/blog/bonaire-cruise-port) (checked 26 October 2026; updated 21 August 2026)
- InfoBonaire: Cruises (https://www.infobonaire.com/cruises/) (checked 26 October 2026; updated 1 September 2026)
- Bonaire.com: Taxi (https://bonaire.com/en/taxi/) (checked 26 October 2026)
- Bonaire.com: Water taxi to Klein Bonaire (https://bonaire.com/en/water-taxi/) (checked 26 October 2026)
- Bonaire.com: Te Amo Beach (https://bonaire.com/en/beaches/te-amo-beach/) (checked 26 October 2026)
- Bonaire.com: Lac Bay and beaches (https://bonaire.com/lac-bay) (checked 26 October 2026)
- Bonaire.com: Reef-safe sunscreen on Bonaire (https://bonaire.com/en/blog/reef-safe-zonnebrand-bonaire/) (checked 26 October 2026)
- Bonaire Insider: Wheelchair accessible public restrooms at South Pier (https://infobonaire.com/?p=88966) (checked 26 October 2026; published 19 October 2023)
- Bonaire Insider: Accessibility ramp at Isidel Beach Park (https://infobonaire.com/accessibility-ramp-at-isidel-beach-park/) (checked 26 October 2026; published 29 January 2025)
- US State Department: Bonaire travel advisory (https://travel.state.gov/en/international-travel/travel-advisories/bonaire.html) (checked 26 October 2026; Level 1, issued 20 August 2026)
- Shore Excursions Group: Full Island Sightseeing Tour and Beach Break (https://www.shoreexcursionsgroup.com/tour/full-island-sightseeing-tour-beach-break/cabosightseeingbeach) (checked 26 October 2026; Eden Beach entry and accessibility notes)
- Shore Excursions Group: Mangrove Wildlife Experience with Flamingo Viewing (https://www.shoreexcursionsgroup.com/tour/small-group-mangrove-wildlife-experience-flamingo/caboflamingomangrove) (checked 26 October 2026)
- Beyond Ships: Bonaire cruise port (https://www.beyondships3.com/bonaire-cruise-port.html) (checked 26 October 2026; used for pier layout and no public bus)

Facts checked on 26 October 2026. Ports change their rules and prices, so check before you sail.

About the "I" on this page. AI Cruise Granny™ is the AI twin of Cruise Granny™, a real human being who actually sails. Every experience written here in the first person is hers. The AI twin is what writes it up, checks the facts against official sources and keeps it current. We tell you that openly on every page, because you should know who is talking to you. More about how this works.