Castries, St. Lucia

Two terminals on one harbour, beaches close by, and the Pitons a long, winding drive away.

Facts checked on 26 October 2026

I haven't sailed into St. Lucia yet, so this guide is built the way I'd want one built for me: from the port authority's own pages, the island's published taxi fare schedule, the US and UK government travel pages and the cruise lines' tour notes, with every price dated. The Pitons are the picture everyone wants, and they're a long way from the ship, so the most useful thing I can do is help you decide whether that drive fits your day.

THE QUICK TAKE

- Ships dock in Castries, at either **Pointe Seraphine** (north side of the harbour) or **La Place Carenage** (right downtown). A water taxi links the two.
- The Pitons and Sulphur Springs are down at Soufrière, about **1.5 to 2 hours** by road each way. Plan a whole-day tour or skip them.
- Taxi fares are set in law, in US$, by group size: **$8** for one to three people around Castries, **$20** to Rodney Bay, **$90** to Soufrière.
- Vigie Beach is about a **4-minute drive** from the port. Reduit Beach is about 15 minutes.
- **Camouflage is banned**, strictly, for everyone, children included. It can be confiscated at the border.
- The US State Department raised St. Lucia to **Level 2**, "exercise increased caution", in July 2026.

St. Lucia at a glance

Getting ashore	Ships dock in Castries Harbour at Pointe Seraphine or La Place Carenage. Ships too big for the harbour anchor outside and tender in.
Ship to town	La Place Carenage is downtown. From Pointe Seraphine it's about a **20 to 30 minute** walk around the harbour, or the water taxi across.
Currency	Eastern Caribbean dollar. US dollars widely accepted in tourist areas and by taxis; change often comes back in EC$. ATMs pay out EC$.
Language	English. You'll also hear Kwéyòl, the local French-based Creole.
Time zone	Atlantic time (UTC−4), same as US Eastern in summer, one hour ahead in winter. Go by **ship time**.
Taxis	Fixed fares in US$, set in law by destination and the number of passengers. Taxis wait in lines outside each terminal.
Drive on	The left. A temporary local licence is required.
Special	Camouflage clothing and accessories are banned and the ban is strictly enforced.

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Check the official source

Rules, prices and hours change. Scan to open the official page and confirm before you go. These are not paid links.

Taxi fares in US$
Laws of Saint Lucia

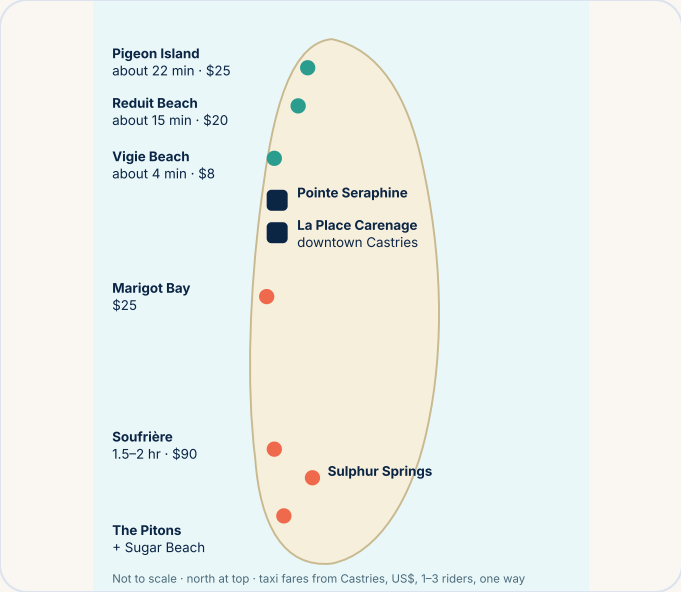
Cruise services
Saint Lucia Air and Sea Ports Authority

Travel advisory
US State Department

Full guide online: photos, live prices and the latest updates at **aicruisegranny.com/port-st-lucia**

Booking codes are affiliate or travel-agent links: AI Cruise Granny may earn a commission at no extra cost to you. Prices, rules and availability are set by each company; check them before you book.

Map of the island



The beaches near the ship are north of Castries; the Pitons are at the far south-west end of the island.

Which pier you'll use

Castries has two cruise terminals on opposite sides of the same harbour. Up to five cruise ships can call on a single day in season. Neither terminal belongs to one cruise line, so check your line's port page for your ship's berth.

Pointe Seraphine

The main cruise facility, on the north side of the harbour, with two dedicated cruise berths taking ships up to about 1,000 feet long. You walk off into a duty-free shopping village with a terminal building. It's the one most big ships use. Downtown Castries is about a **20 to 30 minute walk** around the harbour edge, and vendors may approach you on the way. The easier route into town is the **water taxi** across to La Place Carenage. Global Ports Holding, which now runs the port, is upgrading Berth 1 to take the region's biggest ships, with the whole project due by 2027, so expect some construction.

La Place Carenage

On the south side of the harbour, right in downtown Castries, serving ships at the Queen Elizabeth II Dock. It opened in 1996 and is a three-storey duty-free mall with places to eat. The Castries market is a few minutes' walk away. It takes one ship at a time.

Tender days

Ships too big or too deep for the harbour anchor outside and tender passengers in, usually to the Queen Elizabeth II Dock. A new tender jetty is part of the port upgrade.

> On either terminal, taxis wait in organized lines outside. You don't need to hail one.

At the St. Lucia cruise port: what's there

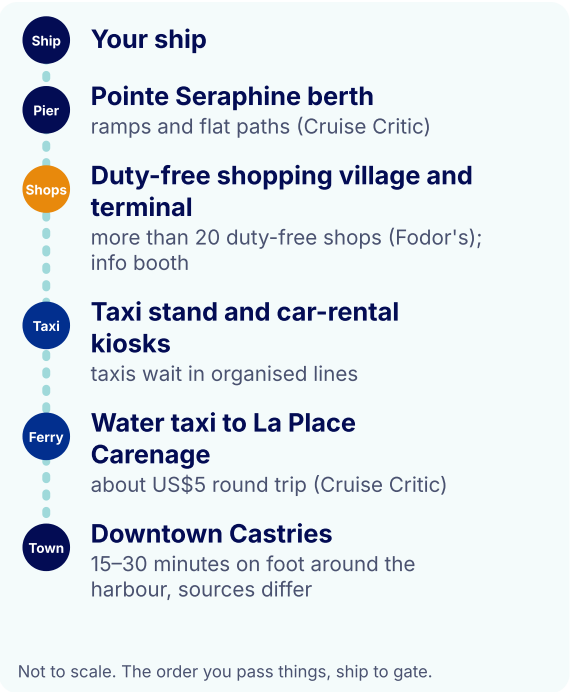
Port facts checked on 30 October 2026. Shops, prices and opening hours change, so check on the day.

I haven't sailed into St. Lucia yet, so this is the planner's version. Castries has two cruise terminals on one harbour, and which one you get decides your day. Pointe Seraphine, where most big ships tie up, is a shopping village with free Wi-Fi, a bar and a taxi stand, a fair walk from town. La Place Carenage puts you in a three-storey duty-free mall on the edge of downtown, with the Castries market a few minutes away. Neither has a beach or a pool, so if you stay at the port it's a shopping-and-coffee day, with a little water taxi ride across the harbour as the treat.

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: Pointe Seraphine

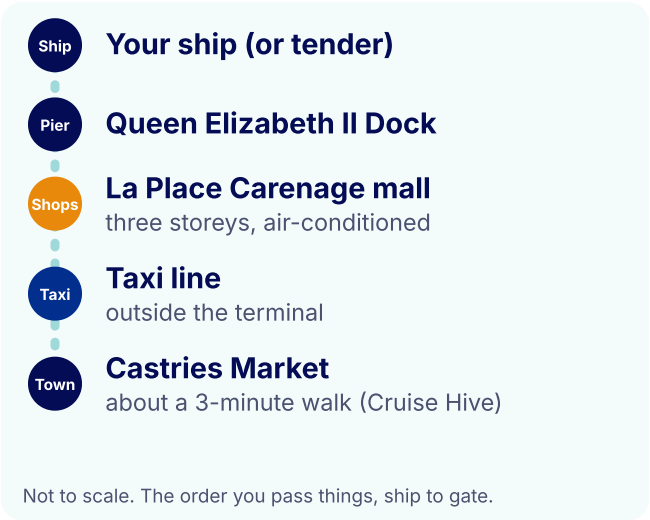
North side of Castries Harbour; the main cruise facility, used by most ships. Two cruise berths: No. 1 for ships of 850–1,000 ft and No. 2 for 750–850 ft (Saint Lucia Air and Sea Ports Authority). Now operated by Global Ports Holding, which is upgrading Berth 1 for the largest ships, so expect some construction.



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

From the ship: La Place Carenage

South side of the harbour, right in downtown Castries, serving ships at the Queen Elizabeth II Dock. Opened by SLASPA in December 1996 as an air-conditioned, three-storey duty-free mall. One ship at a time; tender passengers from ships anchored outside usually land here too.



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

Free things to do inside the port

Free Wi-Fi at Pointe Seraphine Free — Cruise Critic says free Wi-Fi reaches most of the Pointe Seraphine grounds; Cruise Hive warns it struggles when the port is busy.
Pointe Seraphine

Wi-Fi at La Place Carenage
Free with a purchase, likely
— Cruise Critic says Wi-Fi here is only available at one restaurant.
La Place Carenage

Tourist information kiosk Free — Information booth at Pointe Seraphine (Fodor's; My Cruise Stories).
Pointe Seraphine

Window-shopping Free to browse — Browse the duty-free village at Pointe Seraphine or the three-storey mall at La Place Carenage.
Both terminals

Castries Market and Craft Market Free to browse — Fresh produce, spices and hot pepper sauces, with an adjoining craft market for T-shirts, wooden bowls and woven baskets (Cruise Critic).
About 3 minutes' walk from La Place Carenage · about 3 min walk from the ship

Indoor seating Free — Both terminals have indoor waiting areas with seating (Cruise Critic).
Both terminals

Food and drink

Pointe Seraphine eateries and bar — Casual eateries, some with harbour views (Cruise Critic); Fodor's lists a bar. No names published by the port.
Pointe Seraphine

La Place Carenage dining — SLASPA describes the mall as combining shopping, dining and entertainment.
La Place Carenage

Market food stalls — Food stalls at the Castries Market near La Place Carenage (Cruise Hive).
Castries Market · about 3 min walk from the ship

Shopping

Pointe Seraphine duty-free village — More than 20 duty-free shops around the terminal building (Fodor's), many branches of familiar Caribbean cruise-port chains: jewellery, liquor, clothing and souvenirs, plus local shops.
Around the Pointe Seraphine terminal

La Place Carenage mall — Air-conditioned, three-storey duty-free mall opened in 1996.
La Place Carenage

Castries Craft Market — Local crafts beside the main market.
Near La Place Carenage · about 3 min walk from the ship

Worth paying for (and what it costs)

Car rental kiosks

From about US$60 per day (undated, Cruise Critic)

— At Pointe Seraphine (Fodor's; Cruise Critic, rates from around US$60 a day). You'll also need a temporary local licence, and they drive on the left.
Pointe Seraphine

Restrooms, Wi-Fi, money and help

Restrooms Free — Both terminals have restrooms; Cruise Hive (updated May 2026) describes them as clean and accessible.
Both terminals

Money — Eastern Caribbean dollar; US dollars widely taken in tourist areas. ATMs in Castries pay out EC$; none at the terminals is listed by the port.
Castries

Last-minute excursion booth — A booth selling excursions at Pointe Seraphine (My Cruise Stories).
Pointe Seraphine

Getting out of the port

Taxi lines

US$8 for 1–3 riders to Castries or Vigie

— Government-regulated taxis wait in lines outside each terminal. The legal fare schedule (US$, one way, 1–3 riders): Vigie, Pointe Seraphine or Castries city US$8; Rodney Bay (Reduit) US$20; Marigot Bay or Pigeon Island US$25; Soufrière US$90.
Outside each terminal

Water taxi across the harbour

About US$5 round trip (undated)

— Runs between Pointe Seraphine and La Place Carenage (SLASPA). Cruise Critic gives about US$5 round trip.
Pointe Seraphine and La Place Carenage

Walk to downtown from Pointe Seraphine Free — About 15–30 minutes around the harbour edge, depending on the source; vendors may approach you.
From Pointe Seraphine

Walk from La Place Carenage Free — You're already downtown; the Basilica is about 0.3 miles (Cruise Hive).
La Place Carenage

A whole day without leaving the port

If I were spending the day at the port here, I'd hope for La Place Carenage: an air-conditioned mall at the gangway and the Castries market three minutes away for spices, hot sauce and a woven basket. At Pointe Seraphine, I'd browse the duty-free village early, use the free Wi-Fi with a cold drink at the bar, then take the little water taxi across the harbour to the mall and the market, and ride it back. There's no beach at either terminal; if you want a swim, Vigie Beach is about four minutes away by taxi, US$8 for up to three of you.

At the port with a cane, walker or wheelchair

- Both terminals are docked, so there's usually no tender. Cruise Hive and Cruise Critic both report ramps and flat paths at both terminals.
- Pointe Seraphine to downtown is a long harbour walk (15–30 minutes). The water taxi saves the walk but means a boat step; a US$8 taxi is the easier option.

- Ships too big for the harbour anchor outside and tender, usually to the Queen Elizabeth II Dock at La Place Carenage. A new tender jetty is part of the port upgrade.
- The port authority publishes no wheelchair rental, accessible-restroom specifics or pier lengths beyond berth sizes.
- Beyond the port, the US State Department says access is extremely difficult for people with mobility issues and taxis have no special accommodations.

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

Questions about the port

Which cruise terminal will I use in St. Lucia?
Most big ships use Pointe Seraphine, on the north side of Castries Harbour; smaller ships and tender passengers use La Place Carenage downtown. Check your cruise line's daily planner.

Is there free Wi-Fi at the St. Lucia cruise port?
At Pointe Seraphine, Cruise Critic says free Wi-Fi covers most of the grounds, though it slows when the port is busy. At La Place Carenage it's limited to one restaurant.

How do I get from Pointe Seraphine to Castries?
Walk around the harbour (about 15–30 minutes), take the water taxi to La Place Carenage, or take a taxi, which is US$8 for one to three people by law.

Where the port facts come from: Saint Lucia Air and Sea Ports Authority: cruise and ferry services (30 October 2026); Cruise Hive: St. Lucia cruise port (last modified 10 May 2026) (30 October 2026); Cruise Critic: St. Lucia cruise port terminal information (updated 15 February 2024) (30 October 2026); Cruise Critic: St. Lucia port page (30 October 2026); Fodor's: Pointe Seraphine (30 October 2026); Beyond Ships: St. Lucia cruise port (30 October 2026); My Cruise Stories: Saint Lucia cruise port (January 2026) (30 October 2026); Seatrade Cruise News: GPH two-year timeline for St. Lucia upgrades (2 October 2023) (30 October 2026); Attorney General's Chambers, Laws of Saint Lucia: taxi fares in US$ (26 October 2026)

How I'd spend the day

If walking is hard

Ask the cruise line which terminal you'll use. At La Place Carenage, the mall and the market are right there. At Pointe Seraphine, skip the long harbour walk: take the water taxi or an **$8** taxi into town, or go straight to Vigie Beach, about four minutes away by car.

Beach day

Reduit Beach in Rodney Bay, about 15 minutes north, has soft white sand, a beach bar and watersports. The taxi fare is **$20** for one to three people each way. Vigie is closer and calmer if you just want to swim. **see St Lucia Reduit beach day on Viator**

See the island

The Pitons are a full-day trip. I'd book a tour that goes down by boat and back by road (or the reverse), stopping at Marigot Bay, Soufrière and Sulphur Springs, so you're not in a van for four hours. Princess rates its version 7 hours and "moderate". **see St Lucia Pitons Soufriere boat tour on Viator**

Getting around

Taxis (fares set in law)

St. Lucia's Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic Act includes a taxi fare schedule in US dollars, priced by destination and the number of passengers. From Castries, one way:

Destination	1–3 riders · 4 · 5 · 6
Vigie, Pointe Seraphine, Castries city	**$8** · $10 · $12 · $14
Choc Bay	**$10** · $13 · $15 · $18
Rodney Bay (Reduit Beach)	**$20** · $25 · $30 · $35
Marigot Bay, Pigeon Island, Gros Islet	**$25** · $31 · $38 · $44
Soufrière	**$90** · $113 · $135 · $158

The schedule also lists a Soufrière round-trip tour at **$175** for one to three riders and a round-the-island tour at **$200**. These come from the 2023 revised laws; the government site notes that edition hasn't been formally authenticated, so treat them as the benchmark and

confirm with your driver before you go. The schedule doesn't list waiting charges.

Water taxi

Runs across the harbour between Pointe Seraphine and La Place Carenage. The port authority doesn't publish the fare.

Driving

Drive on the **left**. You need a temporary local licence from a rental office or the transport department. The State Department describes roads as narrow, winding and steep, and advises against driving at night. The road to Soufrière is a lot of hairpins.

Ride share

Cruise Hive reports that Uber now operates on the island. Check the app on the day.

What to see

The Pitons and Soufrière

The twin volcanic peaks rising straight from the sea at the south-west end of the island. Soufrière is the old town beneath them. By road from Castries it's about **1.5 to 2 hours** each way. Allow the whole day.

Sulphur Springs

Billed as a drive-in volcano: you can drive or walk into the crater to see the steaming vents, then soak in warm mud pools. About 10 minutes from Soufrière town. In March 2026 the Caribbean Journal put admission at roughly **$10 to $15** including a guided tour; the operator, the Soufrière Regional Development Foundation, doesn't publish a current price that I could find.

Marigot Bay

A deep, sheltered bay ringed with palms, south of Castries and a **$25** taxi for one to three. A popular photo stop on the way to Soufrière.

Pigeon Island National Landmark

At the north tip, about 22 minutes from the port and a **$25** taxi. Run by the Saint Lucia National Trust: old British military ruins from the early 1800s, lawns, a beach, and a climb up to Fort Rodney for the view. There's an entry fee; I couldn't find the current amount on an official page.

Castries

The capital's public market is a few minutes' walk from La Place Carenage, and the duty-free malls at both terminals are right off the ship. It's a working town more than a sightseeing one, so an hour or two is plenty.

Beaches, ranked for a cruise day

1. **Reduit Beach**, Rodney Bay, about **15 minutes** north. Nearly a mile of soft white sand, a beach bar, jet skis, paddleboards and more. Lively. Taxi **$20** for one to three people, one way.
2. **Vigie Beach**, about **4 minutes** from the port, next to the small airport. About two miles of fine sand and calm water for swimming, with chairs and umbrellas to rent. Busy but relaxed. Taxi **$8** for one to three.
3. **Pigeon Island**, about **22 minutes**. White sand, clear water, snorkelling by the rocks, restrooms and a restaurant, plus the park fee. Taxi **$25** for one to three.
4. **Sugar Beach**, between the Pitons. The postcard beach, but about **90 minutes** by road or around 45 minutes by boat. Part of it is run by a resort. Only worth it as a boat-tour day.

Prices and lifeguards: chair and umbrella prices aren't published officially, so agree the total first. The UK government warns that currents can be stronger than they look and not every beach has lifeguards or flags.

Where to eat

- **Try:** green fig and saltfish (the national dish), accra (saltfish fritters), bouyon soup, cocoa tea, and Piton, the local beer.
- **Near the pier:** the shops and cafés in La Place Carenage and Pointe Seraphine, and the stalls around the Castries market.
- **On the beach:** the beach bar on Reduit, or the restaurant at Pigeon Island.

Money, language and local rules

- **Money.** Eastern Caribbean dollar. US dollars are widely accepted for taxis and in tourist areas, but change usually comes back in EC$, and ATMs dispense EC$. Bring small US bills.
- **Camouflage is banned.** The State Department says the ban is strictly enforced, covers any camouflage pattern on clothing or accessories (not just military colors), applies to children, and can lead to confiscation, arrest and a fine. Refusing to hand it over can get you turned away at the border.

- **Drugs.** Severe penalties for all drug offences.
- **Driving.** Left side, with a temporary local licence.
- **Language.** English, plus Kwéyòl.
- **Time.** Your phone may switch to island time. The ship's clock is the one that counts.

What the videos don't show you

- **The Pitons are far.** Those drone shots are 1.5 to 2 hours away by twisting road. A "Pitons tour" is most of your port day.
- **Two terminals, one long walk.** If your ship is at Pointe Seraphine, town is a 20 to 30 minute walk around the harbour.
- **Busy days.** Up to five ships can be in at once, and the beaches near Castries fill up.
- **Construction.** The port is being upgraded through 2027.
- **Vendors and overcharging.** The State Department warns about overcharging, scams and aggressive vendors. Use the fare table and agree prices first.
- **Safety.** The State Department raised St. Lucia to **Level 2**, "exercise increased caution", in July 2026 because of crime, including violent crime that has reached resort guests. Stay in busy areas, use licensed taxis, keep jewellery and cash to a minimum, and don't leave bags alone on the beach.

With a cane, walker or wheelchair

Both terminals are docked, so on most days there's no tender. La Place Carenage puts you right in town; Pointe Seraphine means a long harbour walk unless you take the water taxi (a boat step) or a taxi.

Beyond the pier, the US State Department is blunt: access is **extremely difficult** for people with mobility issues, sidewalks are uneven, ramps are occasional, crossings are poorly marked, and buses and taxis have no special accommodations. It advises bringing your own mobility device and key spare parts. The port authority publishes no accessibility details.

The Pitons day means hours in a van on winding roads, and Sulphur Springs is uneven, hot ground. A short taxi to Vigie Beach or a stroll through the shops by your terminal is the realistic plan. See Mobility & Health Needs for how piers and tenders work, and check with your cruise line which terminal your ship will use.

The biggest mistake

Booking a Pitons trip by road without counting the hours. It's 1.5 to 2 hours each way on hairpin roads, so a taxi there and back plus the sights eats almost the whole port day and leaves little margin for all-aboard. If the Pitons are your dream, take a tour that goes one way by boat, or one sold through your cruise line so the ship waits if it runs late. Otherwise, enjoy Reduit or Vigie and wave at the Pitons from the ship.

St. Lucia FAQs

Is St. Lucia a tender port?

Usually not. Ships dock at Pointe Seraphine or La Place Carenage in Castries. Ships too big for the harbour anchor outside and tender passengers in.

Can you walk to town from the St. Lucia cruise port?

From La Place Carenage, yes, you're downtown. From Pointe Seraphine it's about a 20 to 30 minute walk around the harbour, or a water taxi across.

How far are the Pitons from the cruise port?

They're at Soufrière, about 1.5 to 2 hours by road from Castries. The legal taxi fare is $90 one way for one to three people.

How much is a taxi to Reduit Beach from the cruise port?

The fare schedule in St. Lucia's taxi law is $20 for one to three people from Castries to Rodney Bay, one way, rising with more passengers.

Can you wear camouflage in St. Lucia?

No. The ban is strictly enforced, covers all camouflage clothing and accessories, and applies to children. It can be confiscated and you can be fined.

Is St. Lucia safe for cruise passengers?

The US State Department rates St. Lucia Level 2, exercise increased caution (July 2026), because of crime. Stay in busy areas, use licensed taxis and keep valuables out of sight.

Where these facts come from

- Saint Lucia Air and Sea Ports Authority: cruise and ferry services (https://storage.slaspa.com/contentPages/view/cruise-and-ferry-services) (checked 26 October 2026)
- Attorney General's Chambers, Laws of Saint Lucia: taxi fares in US$ (https://www.attorneygeneralchambers.com/laws-of-saint-lucia/motor-vehicles-and-road-traffic-act/part-2-taxi-fares-in-uss) (Revised Laws 2023; checked 26 October 2026)
- US State Department: Saint Lucia travel advisory (https://travel.state.gov/en/international-travel/travel-advisories/saint-lucia.html) (Level 2, issued 10 July 2026; checked 26 October 2026)
- UK Foreign Office: St Lucia safety and security (https://gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/st-lucia/safety-and-security) (checked 26 October 2026)
- Cruise Industry News: GPH advances cruise infrastructure (St. Lucia upgrades) (https://cruiseindustrynews.com/cruise-news/2025/09/gph-advances-cruise-infrastructure-across-5-destinations/) (26 September 2025; checked 26 October 2026)
- Princess Cruises: Sulphur Springs, the Pitons, Marigot Bay and lunch (https://princess.com/ports-excursions/st-lucia-excursions/sulphur-springs-the-pitons-marigot-bay-and-lunch) (checked 26 October 2026)
- Royal Caribbean: top 5 St. Lucia beaches (https://www.royalcaribbean.com/guides/the-top-5-st-lucia-beaches) (3 June 2025; checked 26 October 2026)
- Caribbean Journal: driving into Saint Lucia's volcano (https://www.caribjournal.com/2026/03/18/saint-lucia-volcano/) (18 March 2026; checked 26 October 2026)
- Cruise Hive: St. Lucia cruise port (https://www.cruisehive.com/st-lucia-cruise-port/138214) (updated 10 May 2026; checked 26 October 2026)
- Beyond Ships: St. Lucia cruise port (https://www.beyondships3.com/st-lucia-cruise-port.html) (checked 26 October 2026)
- Lonely Planet: Pigeon Island National Landmark (https://www.lonelyplanet.com/st-lucia/northern-st-lucia/pigeon-island-national-park/attractions/pigeon-island-national-landmark/a/poi-sig/1489257/1331214) (checked 26 October 2026)

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.