



ANTIGUA & BARBUDA

Rum, spice & all things nice

Follow your taste buds to Antigua and Barbuda to discover an exciting and evolving culinary scene. Words: Sarah Lee

The Caribbean may be renowned for jerk chicken and rice and peas, but have you heard of pepperpot and fungee? Pepperpot, a meat and vegetable stew that's served with fungee, an okra and cornmeal-based dish, is said to have first been introduced to Antigua and Barbuda when enslaved people arrived from Africa. The recipe evolved with locally found ingredients, and went on to become Antigua and Barbuda's national dish.

In fact, pepperpot and *fungee* is taking centre stage in May at the islands' 2025 Restaurant Week, with a competition planned to identify the restaurant serving the best version. The event shines a light on local cuisine, and champions creative chefs who are working to broaden the nation's culinary offering. It's little surprise then, that there is an abundance of exciting dining spots on both islands. So whether you're looking for casual beachside hangouts or upscale restaurants, here's how to make the most of Antigua and Barbuda's vibrant cuisine.

WHERE TO EAT IN ANTIGUA BREAKFAST

Bay House Restaurant, at the Trade Winds Hotel, is one of Antigua's most popular culinary experiences, serving a modern take on Caribbean food. Keep it local with an Antiguan breakfast of salted fish, eggs and johnny cakes — little flatbreads that are fluffy on the inside and crisp on the outside. Meanwhile, Likealatte provides typically American dishes such as chicken and waffles alongside French toast soaked in Baileys.

LUNCH

Choose from a menu of Italian and Caribbean dishes at Salt Plage, set on the shifting sands of Dickenson Bay, noted for the red phone box on the beach. The shrimp summer rolls are a great place to start, after which you might want to go for a seafood linguine, creole snapper or spicy jerk pork chop.

Touted as 'philosophy on a plate', the menu at the upscale Sheer Rocks restaurant within Cocobay Resort has received a number of international accolades. Head chef Jamal Warner tempts the palate with dishes such as grilled, aged beef short rib with charred shallots and smoked oxtail jus. The location — on a clifftop overlooking the west coast — is almost as much of a draw as the food.

DINNER

At Shirley Heights Lookout you can dine inside the 18th-century military lookout and enjoy sweeping ocean views. This restaurant is the place to be on a Thursday for chilled-out reggae vibes, or Sundays for its popular steel band barbeque party.

On Fridays, join the weekly Rum in the Ruins talk at Dow's Hill Fortification & Interpretation Centre to learn about Antigua's rich history with rum. Afterwards, enjoy one of the renowned Seafood Friday evenings at the Copper and Lumber Store Hotel — named one of the top five fish fries in the Caribbean.

Those seeking fine dining should make for Le Bistro in Hodges Bay, where the menu fuses Caribbean flair with French passion. Their high-end status is reinforced through dishes such as the signature 'Long Island' duck, served with orange bark and honey.



Clockwise from top: Rendevous Bay Beach; entertainment at Tamarind Hills; fresh lobster with rice and vegetables; Jolly beach; a cocktail served at Weatherills Hotel



IMAGES: GETTY; ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA TOURISM AUTHORITY

WHERE TO EAT IN BARBUDA BREAKFAST

Barbuda may be Antigua's smaller sister, but it still has plenty for food-lovers to appreciate. On the unspoilt stretch of Coral Group Bay, where white sails float through the aquamarine sea, sits Uncle Roddy's, a family-run business serving food all day. Its seafood brunch is rightly renowned, offering excellent grilled lobster and plump shrimp.

LUNCH

Serving unexpected but authentically Barbudan dishes is Wa'Omoni Restaurant, in Codrington Village. Drawing on the island's culture and local ingredients, this restaurant makes Barbuda deer burgers from the meat of the island's fallow deer, as well as conch burgers using the sea molluscs that are abundant in the region. Its specials include stewed beans (great for vegans) or oxtail stew, and fish with staple Caribbean root vegetables such as sweet potatoes and cassava.

For Asian flavours, the sophisticated Japanese group Nobu has dropped anchor at Princess Diana Beach, with a lunch menu ranging from spicy miso salmon tacos to wagyu steak.

DINNER

Seafood is cooked to succulent perfection at The Mangrove, located in the luxury resort Barbuda Belle. Its menu is brimming with locally caught fish, including a variety of lobster dishes, conch chowder and red snapper. Diners will enjoy Barbudan and French flavours while soaking up coastal views in this secluded location, which is only accessible by boat.

PLAN YOUR TRIP

Antigua and Barbuda Restaurant Week will showcase the best of the islands' cuisine from 4-18 May 2025. Kenwood Travel offers package deals from the UK, starting at £1,225 per person. There are daily direct flights from Gatwick and Heathrow to Antigua. Barbuda is accessible via a daily 90-minute ferry or a 15-minute plane or helicopter flight. For more information, go to visitantiguabarbuda.com

