

Aruba

DAY 1

After you have settled into your accommodations, run down to the beach to savor the sunset while taking advantage of happy hour. Look for 2-for-1 cocktails at most hotel bars and cafés nearby. If you're staying in the Palm Beach area, try **Bugaloe** at the end of the De Palm Pier. If you're staying in the Manchebo Beach area, enjoy a gourmet fresh fish entrée beachside at **Ricardo's** in the Aruba Beach Club.

After hours, take in some free live music at Palm Beach's **Arawak Gardens, Fusion Wine and Piano Bar** in the Alhambra Shopping Bazaar, or at the bandstand by the water at the **Renaissance Marketplace** in Oranjestad. If it's a weekend, find a great band and fun crowd at Café Chaos across the street from Renaissance Marketplace or at **South Beach Lounge** in Palm Beach.

DAY 2

If it is a Sunday, check out the luxurious Sunday brunch at **Windows on Aruba** at the Divi Links. Enjoy an exhilarating morning jog along the paths parallel to Eagle Beach, or following the shore from Marriott to Malmok. Or, if you prefer, refresh your chi with some yoga on the beach at the **Manchebo Beach Resort**. For a true introduction to pampering and relaxation, **Okeanos Spa** will take you out to Renaissance Island for a treatment in their private cove.

If it's not a Sunday, or you're hungry for lunch, head over to the **Butterfly Farm** in Palm Beach for your first real outing; it won't be your last visit. Butterflies are most active in the mornings. Enjoy some refreshing, light crepes at the cute Crepe Bar, attached to the farm.

Those eager to learn to snorkel or dive should join a sailing and snorkeling tour. Dive operators like **Unique Sports of Aruba** will have you exploring under the water in a few short hours. Quick morning courses allow novices to dive at one of the easier, shallower dive sites around the west coast, or snorkelers can enjoy a trip to the **Antilla** shipwreck and **Arashi Beach**.

Share a romantic dinner on the beach at **Elements** at the Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort, or book a private sail and dinner for two on the *Tranquilo*. Afterwards, stroll along the Palm Beach promenade for some souvenir shopping. Stay until late to party at **Señor Frog's**.

DAY 3

Catch a bus to Oranjestad for the day. Explore the landmark buildings that house the **National Archeological Museum Aruba** (NAMA) and the **Aruba Historical Museum** located within Fort Zoutman.

Check out a charming lunch spot with a view of the harbor at **The Paddock**, or meet island movers and shakers at their favorite power lunch restaurant **Aquarius**. Break up the day by indulging in an underwater adventure on the *Atlantis* submarine.

For dinner, savor the gourmet cuisine at celebrated **L.G. Smith's Steak & Chop House** or a romantic meal on the water at **Pinchos Grill and Bar**.

DAY 4

Today, get away from both beach and town and do some touring with **Madi's Magical Tours**, a highly personalized, unique safari tour with a dawn trip to **Conchi (Natural Pool)** on the north coast. From there, Madi can take you on an outback adventure lasting all or part of a day.



You can also choose to rent a 4x4 to tour on your own: Start the day by watching the sunrise from the **California Lighthouse**. From there you can head down the north coast road or make your way back to Noord and take in such sights as **Alto Vista Chapel**, **Philip's Animal Garden**, and **Santa Ana Church**. If venturing farther along the coast in a four-wheel drive, follow the gravel road to the **Bushiribana Gold Ruin** and the **Aruba Ostrich Farm**. After scrambling around the **Ayo Rock Formation**, explore the countryside even further on horseback with **Gold Mine Ranch**.

Unwind from an exhausting day of touring with a sunset "toes in the sand" dinner at **Footprints** at the Hyatt.

DAY 5

Enjoy a day of hiking or horseback riding at **Arikok National Park** and the caves and coves beyond. A hearty but inexpensive breakfast of *arepas* can be had at **Cheo's Corner** in Paseo Herencia Shopping Mall in Palm Beach before you venture out into the wilds. Paved roads within the park allow exploration by car, or park rangers will guide you through various hiking paths, such as **Cunucu Arikok Trail**, or to the summit of **Seroe Jamanota**. A trek to Conchi (Natural Pool) will take up a morning or nearly the entire day. Enjoy a lunch of authentic Aruban cuisine at **Urataka Center** on the road leading to the park. Call **Rancho Daimari** if you'd prefer to take the tour on horseback.

If you booked a reservation online months in advance, you can savor a gourmet dinner at **Carte Blanche**, in the Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort. This is a long, full, and entertaining evening of socializing with the chef while watching him prepare a delicious dinner.

DAY 6

Try one of Oranjestad's many early morning eateries, such as **Smit & Dorlas Coffee House**. Drive to San Nicolas to soak in the scenery of "**Sunrise City**." Take a dip at **Baby Beach** or **Roger's Beach**, two of the most beautiful inlets on Aruba. You can also set up diving or snorkeling in this area with **Jad's Dive Shop**.

On the way back from San Nicolas, stop at **Zeerover** in Savaneta for fresh fish island-style, or **B-55**, next to the old drive-in theater on the main highway, for good pizza and a beautiful view. From either of these eateries you can easily stop at **Mangel Halto** for a relaxing swim.

For a full day of water fun, families can skip the excursion in favor of the **Aruba Waterpark** off the Oranjestad-Santa Cruz road. They have a nice kitchen featuring local cuisine and barbecue.

Returning from the south side of the island takes you past the Orange Mall on the Sasaki Highway, which houses **Red Fish** restaurant, an affordably priced haven for fresh-caught fish and island cuisine.

DAY 7

Dig into a buffet breakfast at **La Vista** within Marriott Aruba Resort & Stellaris Casino to fuel up for windsurfing or kitesurfing lessons with **Aruba Active Vacations**. For a real thrill, try **Skydive Aruba** in the field across the road from the windsurfing center. Scuba is a no-no less than 24 hours before departure, but sailing and snorkeling are always an option. Try something really different by exploring the south shore with **Aruba Kayak Adventures**, which includes lunch, or opt for a customized surfing tour with **Aruba Surf School**.

In the evening hours you can pick up some last-minute souvenirs and explore the hot spots at **Arawak Gardens**. It is also a good time to give in and buy that pair of earrings that caught your fancy at **Gemstones International** on the Palm Beach strip or go back for one of the exquisite handcrafted accessories at **Caribbean**



Queen in Palm Beach Plaza. Combine shopping with some island history and culture while enjoying the **Waltzing Waters** at Paseo Herencia Shopping Mall. Finish the day at Señor Frog's in Palm Beach for tasty Mexican food, giant drinks, and the most entertaining staff on the island.

