



CURACAO

Located in the south western Caribbean just north of Venezuela, Curacao forms part of the Netherlands West Antilles. It was previously best known for having one of the world's largest oil refineries but has now developed into a major offshore centre. In addition to being a tourist destination, it is also a well-known business centre. It is situated at the crossroads of major shipping routes, Curacao has an affluent economy, a low rate of inflation and the highest standard of living in the Caribbean.

Cost of Living: As in any of the Caribbean islands, the cost of living is quite high but due to Curacao's unique economic status being linked to the Netherlands and also as part of the US Caribbean initiative, the standard of living is also very high.

Accommodation: For the expatriate, the norm is to share houses. A large house with a pool is usually shared between 3/4 people. Rates can go between 850 Guilders and 2,000 Guilders a month.

Transport: The transport system is not of the highest quality so it is necessary to get a car. Some companies give interest free loans to buy cars which can be quite reasonably priced.

Socialising: Curacao has a lively expatriate population with active social clubs. Most of the sporting activities centre around the water. For the less active, there are several arts clubs including pottery. Inter-company events and competitions are held on a regular basis.

Dress Code: It depends on company policy.

Taxation: There is a sliding scale of taxes from 10% to 38% but this is usually just on the basic salary only and most employers give generous benefits, including a 13th month's pay.

Getting There: Employers generally pay the cost of relocation and 1 return flight a year. There are daily international flights.

Visas: Although technically part of the Netherlands, there are still strict immigration procedures. The employer would apply for a work permit on your behalf. Documents required include notarised copies of academic qualifications, an affidavit of no convictions, medical certificate, certified copy of passport and a full chest x-ray.



KEY FACTS

Population: 138,000

Area: 444 km²

Capital City: Willemstad

Languages: Dutch, Papiamentu, English

Currency: Netherlands Antillean Guilder (ANG)

Time Zone: UTC/GMT -4 hours

CLIMATE

Curacao experiences a warm and sunny climate throughout the year with average temperatures of 81°F (27°C), which are tempered by the constant trade winds from the east. The rainy season is from October to February, but rain usually falls at night.