



The Bahamas Nassau vs Freeport

If Freeport is the debutante of the Bahamas, then Nassau is the matron, but one with a swingin' past.

Its history dates back to 1666 which was when it was founded by British settlers as Charles Town. It was renamed Nassau in 1695 and New Providence Island soon became home to rum runners and pirates such as Blackbeard and Captain Kidd who plundered passing merchant ships and Spanish galleons filled with gold.

The pirates were attracted to the area because its many small cays and channels made perfect hiding spots. Today, it remains a perfect hideaway for tourists looking to escape.

Nassau is easy to navigate as the city is small with approximately 260,000 residents and tourist facilities are grouped in three areas: Cable Beach, downtown and Paradise Island.

Nassau's downtown is home to some of the oldest establishments, such as the British Colonial Hilton and Graycliff Hotel, a former 18th

century private home.

Just across the bridge from downtown lies Paradise Island. There are nine resorts competing for your attention and money, the largest of which is Atlantis Resort. It has six hotels of varying price and a mind-boggling grounds with shark pools, massive waterpark, casino, nightclubs, dolphin encounters and new ecotourism tours to nearby endangered reefs.

Those reefs attract divers from around the world. The warm and clear water holds an abundance of sea life, including dolphins, huge grouper, a variety of sharks, concha, and stingrays such as the magnificent spotted eagle ray.

If your interests lie more on land than sea, there's plenty to see on day trips around Nassau. Many old buildings still stand such as the National Art Gallery of the Bahamas and Fort Fincastle on Bennet's Hill. It's believed that its 66-step staircase was built by slaves in 1793. In a nod to the island's origins, the Pirates of Nassau Museum brings the buccaneers to life with a replica ship and shanty town, and battles at sea with exploding cannons. A more peaceful day can be spent at Ardastra

Gardens Zoo and Conservation Centre which is amazingly serene considering it's only a few minutes from downtown.

For the simplest in relaxation, just head for the nearest beach and soak up the sun. There's plenty of it.

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