

Anchorage Saba

Visitor Information

Saba National Marine Park
PO Box 18, The Bottom
Saba, Netherlands Antilles



www.sabapark.org



The Saba National Marine Park (SMP) was established in 1987 with the objective to preserve and manage Saba's marine resources. The SMP was not founded to repair a damaged environment but rather to ensure the continued quality of an extraordinary resource for the benefit and enjoyment of everyone in perpetuity.

The SMP surrounds the entire island and extends from the high-water mark down to a depth of 60 metres (200 feet), including the seabed and overlying waters. The SMP is administered by the Saba Conservation Foundation, a not-for-profit organization with a mission to contribute to the development and preservation of Saba's natural and cultural heritage. The SMP raises revenue through visitor fees, souvenir sales and donations, and is one of the few self-sustaining marine parks in the world.

Christopher Columbus sighted Saba during his second voyage to the west on 13 November 1493. The island fell under Spanish rule for almost 150 years, although according to Spanish records, there is no indication that colonization was ever attempted. It is assumed that during the years of Spanish rule, ships passing Saba may have landed from time to time to explore the island. In 1632, a group of Englishmen who shipwrecked on Saba claimed that they found the island uninhabited. A Frenchman claimed the island for the King of France in 1635 and around the year 1640, Holland sent some Dutch from the neighbouring island of St. Eustatius to take up residence on Saba. The island changed nationality several times until Holland finally took possession of Saba in 1816.



Schooner 'The Mayflower' anchored at the Fort Bay, 1928.

most favourable depository for these outcasts, and most were deported to Jamaica. Later, African slaves proved to be more abundant and productive and gradually replaced the outcasts. Consequently, many European indentured servants turned to piracy for survival. For many years, Saba served as a refuge for the spoils of the pirates driven there from other islands by the colonists. The legacy of the pirates served Sabans well in later years as they continued to

'We landed thereafter on the island of Saba; there is a very large rock, where very large and palatable lizards are; several sea-turtles come to shore there. A group of 'wild people' live there, that are named Igniris and who live in caves'

From: Histoire et Voyages des Indes Occidentales et de plusieurs autres regions.

by: Cuillaume Coppier, 1645



Bringing cargo ashore was not always easy as can be seen in this picture from 1964

make a living from the sea. They engaged in legitimate trade that put them in contact with other islands. This resulted not only in trading relations, but also in marriages. Wives and husbands were constantly sought from overseas. As St. Eustatius grew into an important commercial centre, Saban men found employment as sailors and captains on both locally owned and foreign schooners. In the early 1900s, Saban men spent long periods at sea and

the island became known as the 'Island of Women' during this period. In the early days of navigation, boats were built on Saba at Tent Bay and Wells Bay. Some weighed as much as 60 gross tons. Saba also had a navigation school, founded by Capt. Frederick Simmons that started in 1909 and lasted until 1922. Schooners were later purchased in the United States and sailed back to Saba to pursue the Caribbean trade. Later, Saban vessels carried many Caribbean island workers to employment at the oil refineries in Curaçao and Aruba. This trade proved to be very profitable, and owners of these vessels became very wealthy. Saba has seen many changes since it was first settled by the Europeans in the 17th Century. Saba remained quite isolated until the development of reasonable harbour facilities and 'The Road' was built. In recent years, it has developed very quickly both socially and economically. The completion of the island's 400 metre (437 yard)-landing strip in 1963 launched a regular air service to St. Maarten.

The establishment of the Saba National Marine



After the cargo was brought to shore it still had to be carried up the steep hills to The Bottom.

Park in 1987 enhanced the island's diving business, which has become a major source of tourism income contributing to an improved island economy. Conservation efforts have successfully protected Saba's virtually unspoiled resources, resulting in a perfect destination for Caribbean travelers looking for unique land and sea adventures.

Value of the Coral Reefs

Coral reefs are very important for humankind from an economic, scientific, and recreational point of view. They act as a valuable food source for millions of people, a protector of land, a dwelling place for thousands of marine organisms and a naturalist's paradise.

They may appear sturdy, but coral reefs are in fact very fragile. Human activities constitute the greatest threat and have resulted in the decline of coral reefs. Fast population growth, dense coastal settlements, and destructive fishing techniques threaten coral reefs and their associated resources. Coastal and marine pollution also threaten the well-being of coral reefs and cause chronic stress to the marine eco-system.

In recent years, coral reefs have suffered a dramatic decline around the world. About 20% may already have been degraded beyond recovery. Unless an effective management system is implemented, it has been predicted that more than two-thirds of the world's coral reefs may

collapse ecologically within this century. Increased awareness of the importance of conservation activities will become an urgent priority to ensure the safety of such an extraordinary marine resource.

While visiting the Saba National Marine Park, you can help prevent anchor damage to coral by making use of the available mooring system.



Activities



Scuba diving

Saba is endowed with beautiful scenery on both land and sea. While visiting the island, there are a number of activities to enjoy that will allow you to experience the natural and cultural heritage of this paradise. From world-class scuba diving and snorkeling to a very wide variety of walking and hiking opportunities, Saba offers a unique environment that leaves guests deeply impressed by her splendid beauty.

From shallow patch reefs to deep water seamounts, Saba offers interesting diving at each depth for every diver's experience level.



Snorkeling

Serene coral reefs and varied fish life characterize Saba's underwater world. The Pinnacles are considered one of the most intriguing features of Saba's marine environment. They rise from the ocean floor to depths of 30m (100ft). Nourished by deep ocean currents, the pinnacles are heavily encrusted with corals, sponges, and other invertebrates and attract teeming fish life.

One of the favourite snorkeling sites is Torrens Point. Its protected nature and shallow water provide an excellent spot to encounter colourful tropical fish, turtles and many other aquatic life



Hiking

forms. You can choose to explore the small caves or swim through the tunnel that leads you to the northern side of Torrens Point.

On shore, Saba offers a variety of hiking and walking excursions. The numerous nature trails will bring you in close contact with the natural and historical features of the island. Saba's best known hiking adventure is Mt. Scenery. This well-marked trail meanders through secondary rain forest to the almost-pristine Elfin Forest at its peak.

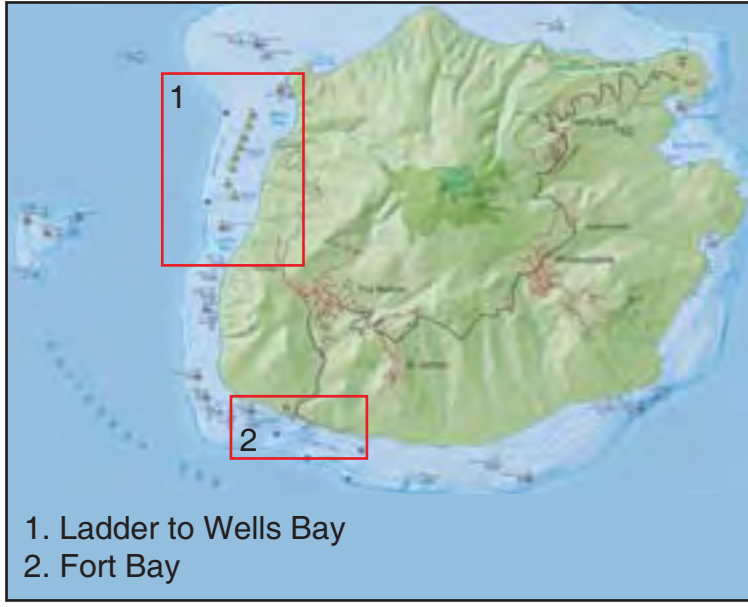


Villages

A leisurely walk through the village of Windwardside of Saba features narrow paths bordered by flower-draped walls and neat picket fences. The architecture is a vivid expression of Saba's cultural heritage. Well-kept cottages with their red shingled roofs, white sidings, green shutters and gingerbread trimmings exemplify the traditional building style. The peaceful surroundings and friendly atmosphere will leave you with long-lasting memories.

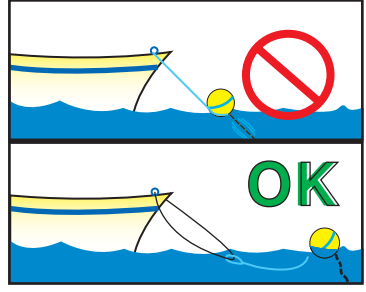
Anchorage Saba

- Safety Regulations**
While visiting the Saba National Marine Park, please conform to the following regulations for your personal safety as well as the safety of our valuable marine resources.
- ! All SCUBA diving must be done with one of Saba's licensed dive centres.
 - ! Spear fishing, turtle catching, or conch collecting is not allowed.
 - ! Water skiing, jet-skis or fishing is not permitted in the Saba National Marine Park recreational dive zone.
 - ! Anchoring in coral or anywhere within a recreational dive zone is prohibited.
 - ! Do not take coral or any other bottom-dwelling plants or animals.
 - ! Do not litter or discharge any foreign substances into the water.
 - ! When passing a boat flying a dive flag, always pass on the seaward side at least 150 meters (150 yards) away.
 - ! When approaching Fort Bay or other anchorage areas, speed may not exceed 5 knots (no wake).
 - ! All moorings are checked and maintained carefully by the park staff. Please help to keep the moorings safe and immediately report any defects to the Marine Park Visitor Centre located at the Fort Bay.



1. Ladder to Wells Bay
2. Fort Bay

- Yacht Mooring located within the Ladder to Well's Bay anchorage area specifically for use by visiting boats up to 20m (60ft) long or max. 50 tons.
- Mooring specifically for licened diving vessels up to 16m (50ft) long.
- Mooring specifically for licened diving vessels up to 32m (110ft) long.



Planning your visit

There are two designated anchorage zones within the Saba National Marine Park, the (1) Ladder Bay to Wells Bay area and the (2) Fort Bay Harbour (see maps). Upon arrival, you must proceed to the Harbour Office in Fort Bay without delay. There are no custom procedures on Saba, and the Harbour Master will handle all immigration formalities. Limited docking space is available in the Fort Bay Harbour so it is necessary for boats to anchor out and come in with a dinghy. Although it may appear that docking space is available, it is best to check with the Harbour Master first about ship traffic. Since the pier is small, it is used only as a loading/unloading dock unless given special permission by the Harbour Master. Contact the Saba National Marine Park office or Harbour Master on VHF channel 16 for direction on

anchoring, mooring use, or any other information. The Saba National Marine Park is a self-financing organisation so a nominal fee is charged to cover the cost of maintenance and management of marine resources. These fees must be paid at the Marine Park visitor centre at the Fort Bay. The current fee for visiting yachts is Naf 5, 3 euro, or US \$3 per person onboard a boat less than 30m (100ft) long.

The mooring system

Permanent mooring buoys have been placed within the Saba National Marine Park for specific users. All SMP moorings are 45cm (18-inch) float balls with a blue reflective band. They are colour-coded to indicate the varied user groups. You may find other moorings in the Fort Bay area that are not the property of the Saba National Marine Park. These are for private use only. Yellow moorings

are specifically for use by visiting yachts. They cannot be reserved and are on a first come basis. Vessels are allowed to occupy these moorings for up to seven days. White and orange moorings are used by licensed diving vessels only. However, there is one white mooring at Torrens Point that can be used by any visitor for snorkelling purposes. Use approximately 10m (30ft) of your own dock line to add scope and to alleviate tension and chafing on the mooring line. First, secure one end to a cleat on deck. Next, pull the other end through the eye of the mooring line and secure to another cleat on deck (see diagram).

Ladder to Wells Bay Anchorage Zone

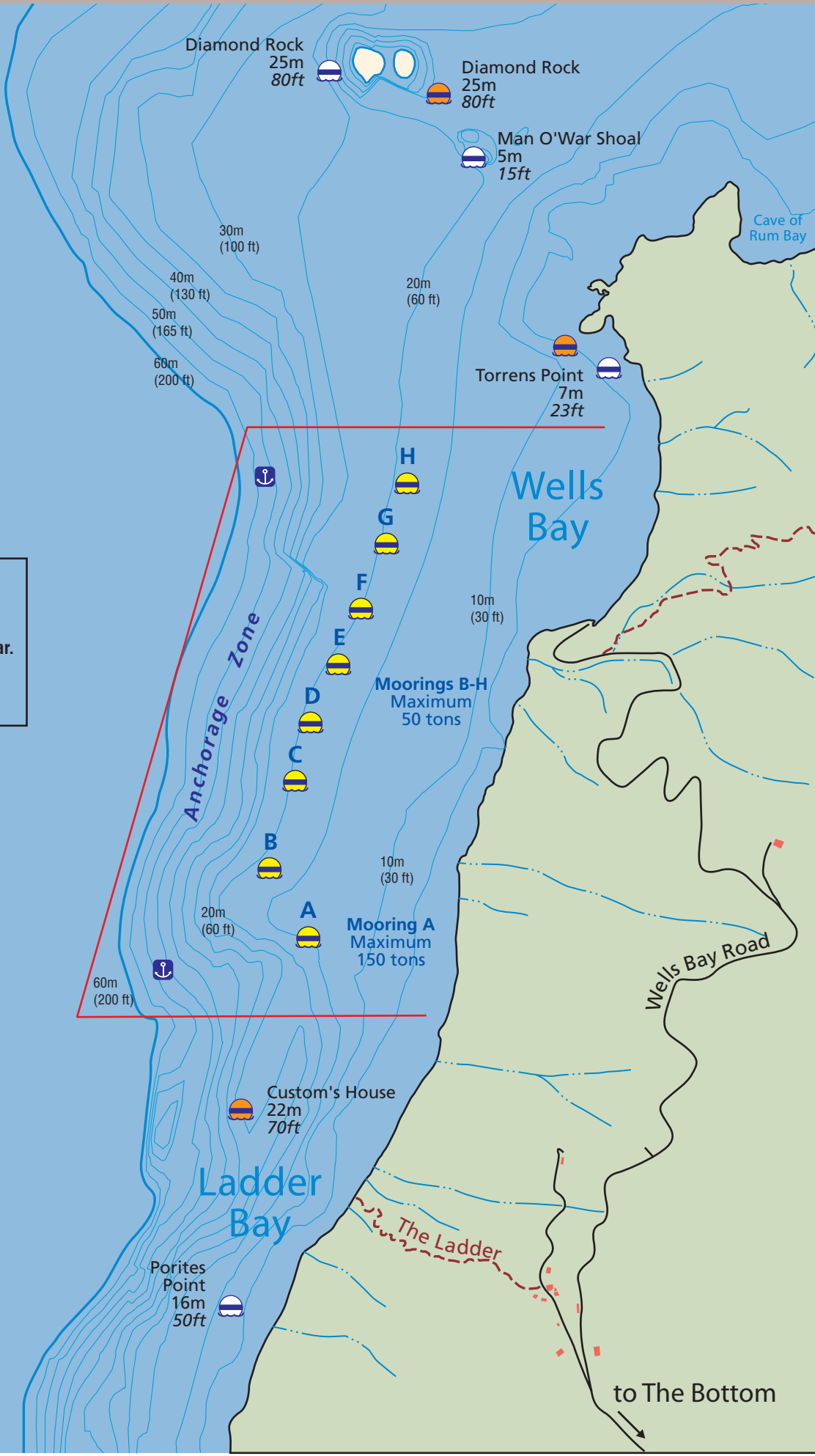
Ladder Bay to Wells Bay

The anchorage area from Ladder Bay to Wells Bay has very beautiful views and is adjacent to high cliffs embedded with huge rock.

Aside from the attractive surroundings, Ladder Bay to Wells Bay offers the best anchorage area under normal conditions, with eight yellow moorings available. For yachts larger than 20m (60ft) or heavier than 50 tons, anchorage at seaside of the yellow moorings is recommended. This area provides excellent holding in clear sand and offers plenty of swinging room.

When anchoring in this area, be sure to stay clear of the reef and boulder areas close to the shore.

WARNING!
During the winter months, ground swells originating from the storms in the North Atlantic occasionally appear. Your boat may be in serious danger when you are anchored too close to shore or with insufficient scope.



Fort Bay Harbor

Anchoring off Fort Bay is possible, but can be uncomfortable under certain conditions. For example, it is not recommended to anchor in this area during strong southeast winds or large southerly swells. However, this is the only anchorage to consider during northerly swells. The sea floor in the Fort Bay Harbour is sand, and it drops quickly down to 20m (60ft) so it is important to anchor close to shore.

The Saba National Marine Park provides moorings in the Fort Bay Harbour that are the same type as those in the Ladder to Wells Bay anchorage zone. In addition, there is one large mooring with a yellow metal buoy located just 360m (0.2 miles) southeast of the pier. It may be used by yachts of any size or small cruise ships when available, but is not recommended for overnight anchorage.

Fort Bay Anchorage Zone

