



CN: (1) Color the name "Bahamas" on the large map. (2) Color the larger islands shown on the smaller map. (3) Avoid coloring the squares representing the island capitals.

NORTH AMERICA: WEST INDIES

Believing he had reached the East Indies, Christopher Columbus named these islands the "Indies." Columbus made four voyages to the West Indies from 1492 to 1500, naming many of the islands and claiming them for Spain. Spain used these islands as a base for the exploration and plunder of the New World. A century later, other nations arrived to pirate Spain's treasure-laden galleons and contest the ownership of its colonies. Natives of the region were virtually wiped out by the Europeans. Those that did not succumb to Old World diseases died from overwork, beatings, and executions. Africans were forced to replace them on farms and plantations. Except in Cuba and Puerto Rico, the West Indies are populated mainly by pure or mixed-blooded (mulatto) descendants of black slaves. Catholicism dominates the former Spanish and French colonies; Protestantism is the religion on islands owned by the British, Dutch, Danes, and the U.S. Residents of Haiti practice voodoo. Many of these islands gained their independence after World War II.

The West Indies archipelago contains over 7,000 mostly uninhabited islands, cays (small islands), coral reefs, and rocks, which form the northern and eastern boundaries of the Caribbean Sea. The islands fall into three groups: (1) The Bahamas are coral islands off the coast of Florida. (2) The Greater Antilles, which include the larger islands of Cuba, Hispaniola (shared by Haiti and the Dominican Republic), Jamaica, and Puerto Rico, are worn-down peaks of sunken mountains. (3) The Lesser Antilles are an arc of smaller volcanically formed islands. Trade winds, blowing from the east, keep the temperature of this tropical region comfortable. Agriculture flourishes in volcanic or alluvial soil. Sugar is king, followed by bananas. On most of these islands, tourism has become the major industry.

ANTIGUA & BARBUDA_A

Area: 172 sq.mi.(445 km²). Population: 68,000. Capital: St. John's, 36,100. Government: Constitutional monarchy. Language: English. Religion: Protestant. Exports: Sugar, cotton, rum, light industry. □ Antigua, the larger of the two islands, includes the capital of St. John's and 98% of the population.

BAHAMAS_B

Area: 5,382 sq.mi.(13,939 km²). Population: 305,000. Capital: Nassau, 195,000. Government: Constitutional monarchy. Language: English. Religion: Protestant. Exports: Tropical fruit, fish products, petrochemicals. □ Fifty miles (80 km) from Florida are the Bahamas, over 2,000 islands and coral reefs, only 29 of which are inhabited. Columbus may have landed in the New World on San Salvador Island. After the American Revolution, southern planters loyal to England fled to the Bahamas with their slaves. The country is still functioning as a haven for foreigners, but now it attracts bank deposits.

BARBADOS_C

Area: 166 sq.mi.(430 km²). Population: 280,000. Capital: Bridgetown, 7,500. Government: Constitutional monarchy. Language: English. Religion: Mostly Protestant. Exports: Sugar, molasses, rum, fish. □ Barbados, one of the world's most densely populated countries, is the most easterly of the islands. Barbados has been called "England in the Tropics." Residents speak with a British accent, play cricket, and drive on the left side of the road.

BRITISH TERRITORIES_D

Anguilla: 35 sq.mi.(91 km²). Population: 12,500. Capital: The Valley. *Bermuda*: 21 sq.mi.(53 km²). A group of islands north of the West Indies, about 850 mi.(1,360 km) east of Charleston, South Carolina. Population, 64,500. Capital, Hamilton. *British Virgin Islands*: 59 sq.mi.(153 km²). Population, 22,000. Capital, Road Town. *Cayman Islands*: 100 sq.mi.(259 km²). Population, 37,700. Capital, Georgetown. *Montserrat*: 38 sq.mi.(98 km²). Population, 10,000. Capital, Plymouth. *Turks & Caicos Islands*: 166 sq.mi.(430 km²). Population, 18,250. Capital, Cockburn Town.

CUBA_E

Area: 44,219 sq.mi.(114,527 km²). Population: 11,230,000. Capital: Havana, 2,200,000. Government: One-party socialist republic. Language: Spanish. Religion: Roman Catholic. Exports: Sugar, tobacco, nickel, citrus, fish. □ Only 90 miles (144 km) from Florida is the largest island in the West Indies. Cuba grows the world's largest export crop of sugar, and a famous tobacco. After seeing natives smoking cigars, Columbus brought tobacco to Europe. The majority of Cubans are of Spanish descent. Fidel Castro's communist regime (the only one in the Western Hemisphere) has eradicated the poverty, hunger, disease, and illiteracy that characterize so much of Latin America. Although democracy and political freedom remain curtailed, greater economic freedom has been allowed to deal with the crisis caused by the end of Soviet aid and by the crippling 30-year-old American embargo on trade with Cuba. The Pope's visit in 1998 brought hope for fewer restrictions on personal freedoms.

DOMINICA_F

Area: 295 sq.mi.(764 km²). Population: 68,000. Capital: Roseau, 20,000. Government: Republic. Language: English. Religion: Mostly Roman Catholic. Exports: Bananas, coconuts. □ Dominica was named for Sunday (Domingo), the day that Columbus set foot on its soil. The extremely rugged terrain includes dense rain forests filled with exotic wildlife. Several hundred Caribs, the only remaining Indians native to the Caribbean, live here on a small reservation. The Caribs were a fierce tribe who migrated to the West Indies from South America; the word "cannibal" is derived from their name.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC_G

Area: 18,750 sq.mi.(48,563 km²). Population: 8,750,000. Capital: Santo Domingo, 2,200,000. Government: Republic. Language: Spanish. Religion: Roman Catholic. Exports: Sugar, coffee, cocoa, food products, gold, nickel. □ Christopher Columbus is believed to be buried in the capital, Santo Domingo, the oldest European city in the Western Hemisphere. Its university was established in 1535. The city was the headquarters for the early Spanish exploration of Latin America. The nation occupies two-thirds of the rugged island of Hispaniola, which it shares with Haiti (it was part of Haiti until 1844).

FRENCH TERRITORIES_H

The French Antilles include: *Guadeloupe*: A group of 8 islands, 685 sq.mi.(1,774 km²). Population, 432,000. Capital, Basse-Terre. *Martinique*: 426 sq.mi.(1,103 km²). Population, 419,500. Capital, Fort-de France.

GRENADA_I

Area: 133 sq.mi.(344 km²). Population: 98,900. Capital: St. George's, 4,400. Government: Constitutional monarchy. Language: English; French patois. Religion: Roman Catholic; Protestant. Exports: Bananas, nutmeg, mace, sugar. □ Grenada, the "Isle of Spice," made headlines in 1983 when the U.S. invaded the island and overthrew the Marxist government. The U.S. was concerned that Grenada could spread communism throughout Latin America.

HAITI_J

Area: 10,715 sq.mi.(27,752 km²). Population: 7,150,000. Capital: Port-Au-Prince, 1,300,000. Government: Republic. Language: Haitian Creole; French. Religion: Voodoo; Roman Catholic. Exports: Coffee, sugar, cocoa. □ Haiti, formerly the early Spanish colony of Hispaniola, was seized by French pirates and later became a French possession. In 1804, plantation slaves revolted and Haiti became the Caribbean's first independent state and the world's first black republic. Corrupt and oppressive dictators (two of the more recent were father and son: "Papa Doc" and "Baby Doc" Duvalier) have made Haiti the poorest and most illiterate nation in the Western Hemisphere.

JAMAICA_K

Area: 4,244 sq.mi.(10,992 km²). Population: 2,700,000. Capital: Kingston, 570,000. Government: Constitutional monarchy. Language: English. Religion: Mostly Protestant. Exports: Bauxite, sugar, bananas, coffee, rum, tobacco. □

Once the most important sugar and slave center in the region, Jamaica is now one of the world's leading producers of bauxite (aluminum ore). Heavy rainfall is responsible for the dense forests, rushing rivers, and cascading waterfalls. Jamaica's scenic beauty and carefree lifestyle—which tourists find so attractive—mask the island's underlying poverty.

NETHERLANDS ANTILLES_L

The Dutch possessions consist of two groups of islands: (1) Close to Venezuela are *Aruba*, *Bonaire*, and *Curacao*. Aruba actually became an independent nation in 1996; 75 sq.mi.(193 km²). Population, 71,000; Capital, Oranjestad. *Bonaire*: 111 sq.mi.(288 km²). Population, 13,000; Capital, Kralendijk. *Curacao*: 171 sq.mi.(444 km²). Population, 171,000. Capital, Willemstad. Aruba and Curacao have huge refining facilities for Venezuelan oil. (2) East of Puerto Rico are *Saba*, *St. Eustatius*, and the southern part of *St. Martin*; all are very tiny islands.

PUERTO RICO_M

Area: 3,435 sq.mi.(8,897 km²). Population: 3,750,000. Capital: San Juan, 470,000. Government: Self-governing commonwealth of the U.S. Language: Spanish; English. Religion: Roman Catholic. Exports: Pharmaceuticals, chemicals, light industry, sugar, bananas, coffee. □ The U.S. acquired Puerto Rico from Spain following the Spanish-American War of 1898. U.S. aid and investments have made Puerto Rico the region's most industrialized island. Most Puerto Ricans are of Spanish descent. They are U.S. citizens but cannot vote in presidential elections. Statehood is a controversial issue.

ST. KITTS - NEVIS_N

Area: 101 sq.mi.(262 km²). Population: 42,300. Capital: Basseterre, 15,000. Government: Constitutional monarchy. Language: English. Religion: Protestant. Exports: Sugar, cotton, vegetables. □ St. Kitts-Nevis is a two-island nation lying east of Puerto Rico. The majority of the population lives on St. Kitts (also called St. Christopher), once the base for British operations in the Caribbean.

ST. LUCIA_O

Area: 237 sq.mi.(614 km²). Population: 160,000. Capital: Castries, 50,000. Government: Constitutional monarchy. Language: English. Religion: Roman Catholic. Exports: Bananas, coconuts, light industry. □ The second language spoken here, French patois, is a reminder of the island's history; ownership alternated between the British and French prior to independence in 1978.

ST. VINCENT & GRENADINES_P

Area: 150 sq.mi.(389 km²). Population: 116,000. Capital: Kingston, 16,000. Government: Constitutional monarchy. Language: English, French. Religion: Protestant; Roman Catholic. Exports: Bananas, coconuts, arrowroot. □ St. Vincent and 100 islands of the Grenadine chain make up this nation.

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO_Q

Area: 1,990 sq.mi.(5,154 km²). Population: 1,160,000. Capital: Port of Spain, 64,000. Government: Republic. Language: English. Religion: Roman Catholic; Protestant. Exports: Oil products, asphalt, sugar, rum. □ Trinidad has produced oil for over 100 years. It also refines oil from Venezuela, only 7 mi.(11 km) away. Pitch Lake is the world's largest deposit of natural asphalt. Calypso music, which began in Trinidad, is often played and sung to the beat of empty oil drums. Forty percent of the population are "real" Indians, descended from 19th century immigrants from India. Trinidad is heavily industrialized, whereas Tobago remains rural, with only 5% of the population.

VIRGIN ISLANDS (U.S.)_M

Area: 132 sq.mi.(342 km²). Population: 122,500. Capital: Charlotte Amalie, 12,500. Government: Self-governing territory. Language: English. Religion: Protestant. Exports: Refined petroleum products, light industry, rum. □ The Virgin Islands were so named by Columbus because of their pristine beauty. In 1917, the U.S. purchased the hilly Virgin Islands from Denmark. St. Croix (kroy) is the largest and most industrialized island. St. John is mostly a National Park. St. Thomas is a shopper's paradise and favored most by tourists.