

## Tracy Edwards' Boaties Guide to Antigua

---



Antigua and Barbuda is internationally renowned for having some of the best sailing conditions and premier sailing events in the world. With stunning bays, a variety of anchorages and clear blue waters this Eastern Caribbean island is a favourite for world class racing or laid back charters. For learners and amateurs through to seasoned professionals the waters around Antigua offer some of the best sailing conditions matched with unbeatable scenery.

2017 is a particularly special year for sailing in Antigua as the island will see major anniversaries of two of its main sailing events: the 50th anniversary of Antigua Sailing Week and the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta. And to mark this very special year British sailor, Tracy Edwards, most famous for skippering the first all-female crew round the world, is championing Antigua's sailing season.

Having lived and sailed in Antigua for many years, Tracy knows Antigua to be one of the best places in the world to sail and considers Antigua and Barbuda her spiritual home. In celebration of this special year for sailing in Antigua Tracy has exclusively shared her top five favourite things to see and do on the beautiful twin islands...



### ***Nelsons Dockyard to soak up Antiguan history***

The eighteenth and nineteenth century buildings of Nelsons Dockyard have been fully restored to their original splendour and have now become a lively centre with many shops, bars and restaurants opening. During the many festivals that take place here, the dockyard is full of live music, art and traditional street food.



### ***Life on the Corner for local food and chilled vibes***

Located in English Harbour, this eclectic bar manages to deliver the perfect blend of family atmosphere during the day and transforms into a cool hangout for yachties and party goers during the evening. Sit back and relax on the terrace with a cocktail or sundowner or enjoyed the home cooked local foods from Gill. Later on, Life on the Corner turns into a night life hotspot - be sure to keep an eye out for the party nights hosted here.



### ***Treehouse at English Harbour for relaxing spas and treatments***

Inside a unique Caribbean cottage set amongst a private tropical garden, Treehouse exudes a sense of tranquillity and calmness. On offer is an extensive range of relaxing and therapeutic massages designed to relax the mind and body.



### ***Spring Hill at Falmouth for riding***

Situated close to several beaches and the historic sites of English Harbour is Spring Hill Stables. With several trail rides on offer, riders can be taken through the hills to enjoy scenic views, or trek to the beach with the opportunity to swim with the horse in the warm waters of this Caribbean island.



### ***Shirley's Heights for cocktails and sunsets***

From 4pm until late at night, the lively beats of the steel band accompany the flowing cocktails and delightful smells of the barbecue. Spectacular sunsets can be seen from the view point and are a must see while on the island.

## **More on sailing in Antigua in 2017**

***Antigua Sailing Week (29th April – 5th May 2017)*** is one of the longest running and most famous of the regattas in the Caribbean. Spectators and seafarers alike are invited to soak up the glamour and glitz of the sailing world, as well as the races themselves which can be watched from several vantage points around the island. During the event, different sets of boats and crews will take to the waters to compete each day, with highlights including Chase the Race and the Round Antigua Race.

The regatta attracts everything from serious racing boats including state-of-the-art and high-tech racing machines, to a variety of performance cruising and cruising boats. For those who wish to relax and enjoy spectating, there will be plenty on offer. Nelsons Dockyard becomes a central hub at night where it comes alive with celebrations and local beach parties. The evening events will see a variety of live musical performances from local artists and delicious traditional Antiguan food and drink.

Landlubbers can head to Shirley Heights Lookout every race day to watch the racing. The Lookout, with picture perfect views across the harbours and start lines, has long been the ultimate watch spot for the races starting on the last Sunday in April when the legendary breakfast will be served up. On the other race days, visitors will get to enjoy a fantastic Caribbean buffet as well as some other fun attractions to keep them entertained between starts.

*The Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta (19 to 25 April 2017)* sees a variety of spectacular boats come to Antigua from North America, Europe and all over the Caribbean. The event is the first in the Classic Yacht Challenge series and a vibrant spectacle for visitors to the island.

Whether you're a beginner keen to learn to sail or an experienced yachtsperson, Antigua is the perfect place. The Antigua Yacht Club and companies such as Ondeck Sailing offer a range of sailing courses for all levels, and hotels such as Nonsuch Bay Resort and Carlisle Bay offer sailing packages.

### *Sailability Programme*

Sailability, sailing for the disabled, opened just over three years ago and runs from the National Sailing Academy Grounds in English Harbour. Thousands of disabled people have been given an opportunity to enter a world filled with new sensory and physical experiences, along with social interaction and a day of respite. Specialist boats are used to give people with disabilities the chance to learn to sail, and ultimately a liberating life experience.

[www.nationalsailingacademy.org/sailability.php](http://www.nationalsailingacademy.org/sailability.php)

### *Water-based activities throughout the year*

Visitors can make a splash any time of year in Antigua with a range of water-based activities from diving and snorkelling, fishing, windsurfing and of course swimming with stingrays at the world-famous Stingray City.

