

# CARIBBEAN EXPERIENCE WITH DIFFERENCE



The Caribbean islands tend to be associated with golden beaches and crystal clear blue waters, lots of diving possibilities, and a perfect opportunity to relax, to lie around and sunbathe in the hot sun. Well, there is another way of spending time there.

The island of Dominica is renowned for its diverse terrain, thick rain forest and most importantly, the Boiling Lake in the Morne Trois Pitons National Park, a UNESCO world heritage site. The lake was put on the map in 1870 by two Englishmen. It is a flooded fumarole not far away from the island's capital Roseau. It is filled with bubbling greyish-blue water and its surface is usually shrouded in a cloud of vapor. The Boiling Lake is approximately 200 feet across (60m) and the average temperature is around 180 - 197 degrees Fahrenheit (82 - 91,5 oC).

The hike to the lake is extremely challenging and enthusiasts willing to take the trip need to bear in mind potential dangers. Going alone would be the most unwise thing to do. Experienced guides are available not only in Roseau, but also at the official starting point of the hike, the mountain village of Laudat. From here, the trail starts out quite easy, with guides usually informing the hikers about the rainforest and its fauna and flora, pointing out some interesting exemplars on the way. The first stop is the Breakfast River, from where the hike gets very demanding. The second section leads the adventurers through the Valley of Desolation, going steeply uphill to about 2,500 ft. Once reaching the top, you are already very close to the lake.

The lake is spectacular, most hikers claim, especially in the context of a tiring, 3-hour hike. Guides usually let adventurers soak in the hot springs of the lake for some time, if only to give them some rest before they set on their journey back. The trip takes about six hours and some travelers are hardly able to move their limbs for several days afterwards. Yet the experience is unforgettable; testing and purifying at the same time.

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