

CURAÇAO - SOON TO BECEOM GAY PARADISE?



The island of Curaçao is located nearly 35 miles off the Venezuelan West coast and belongs to the Dutch-dominated Lesser Antilles. To many, the name brings to mind the famous sticky blue liquor which was first made here. It's a relatively small island, though there are many places worth seeing. Also, due to the Dutch influence, Curaçao is expected to become a popular destination for gay people; already, many gay couples from the Netherlands come here to enjoy their holiday, though most of the local gay community are still somewhat hesitant to 'come out'. There are several night clubs in the capital city, Willemstad. Only one of them is officially a gay club – the Lyrics. It is very popular among both tourists and locals. Even though nearly 80% of the Curaçao population is Roman Catholic, the atmosphere is very gay-friendly and relaxed. This may be partially due to the multicultural character of Curaçao.

Once here, tourists should visit the Kura Hulanda Museum. There is a rich collection of art and several artifacts from various cultures, though its major aim is to portray the past; Curaçao once used to be one of the major Caribbean centers for slave trading.

Nature lovers can take ATV (all terrain vehicles) and take a private tour around the island's unusual landscape, including a visit to local caves. Well worth seeing is the Christoffel National Park. Here, bird-watching enthusiasts come to observe the many numerous rare species.

Tourist can also relax on the beaches, some of which are private and generally rather small. Snorkeling on the coral reef is a fun option; though compared to other Caribbean diving spots, Curaçao is not exceptional.

Those who come here should try some of the specialties of the local cuisine, such as stobá (a stew made of papaya, beef or goat and several other ingredients) or Guiambo (a soup made from okra and seafood). And naturally, when here, no one should forget to get at least one shot of the famous blue liquor.

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