

San Salvador Island, Bahamas

The island where Christopher Columbus first set foot in the New World in 1492 remains one of the Bahamas' most remote and unspoiled destinations — an Out Island paradise for divers, historians, and anyone craving deserted white-sand beaches.

 Tender port  Typical call: 6–8 hrs  USD / BSD (1:1)  English  World-class diving

MY DAY IN PORT

Ship/Date: _____	Arrive: _____	All aboard: _____
Excursion: _____	Notes: _____	

GETTING ASHORE

Docking: Tender — ships anchor offshore; boats ferry passengers to Government Dock or Riding Rock Marina

Best For: Scuba diving, Columbus history, off-the-beaten-path Bahamian culture, empty beaches

Walk to center: You land in Cockburn Town — local sites within 5–10 min on foot; outer attractions require transport

Don't Miss: Columbus Landfall Monument at Long Bay and Dixon Hill Lighthouse — two icons of the island

 Getting around:  Taxi  \$5–\$15 ·  Rideshare  not available

TOP THINGS TO DO

- **Columbus Landfall & Long Bay Monument** — Stand at the white stone cross erected in 1956 to mark Columbus's first landfall in the Americas on October 12, 1492.
- **Scuba Diving the Wall** — San Salvador is legendary among divers for its vertical drop-off walls that plunge to over 4,000 feet.
- **Dixon Hill Lighthouse** — One of the last hand-fueled, kerosene-operated lighthouses in the world, built in 1887 by the British Imperial Lighthouse Service.
- **Watling's Castle Ruins** — At the southern tip of the island stand the ruins of a 19th-century Loyalist plantation — main house, slave quarters, kitchen, and a watchtower — all...
- **Snow Bay & East Beach** — Snow Bay on the southeast coast is famous for powder-soft, snow-white sand and shallow crystal-clear water — one of the most pristine and empty...

BEST WALKS

- **Cockburn Town Heritage Stroll** ~0.5 mi · 20–30 min · Easy · Flat — From the Government Dock, walk the main street past the Commissioner's Office, the historic old jail, and the Holy Savior Catholic Church.

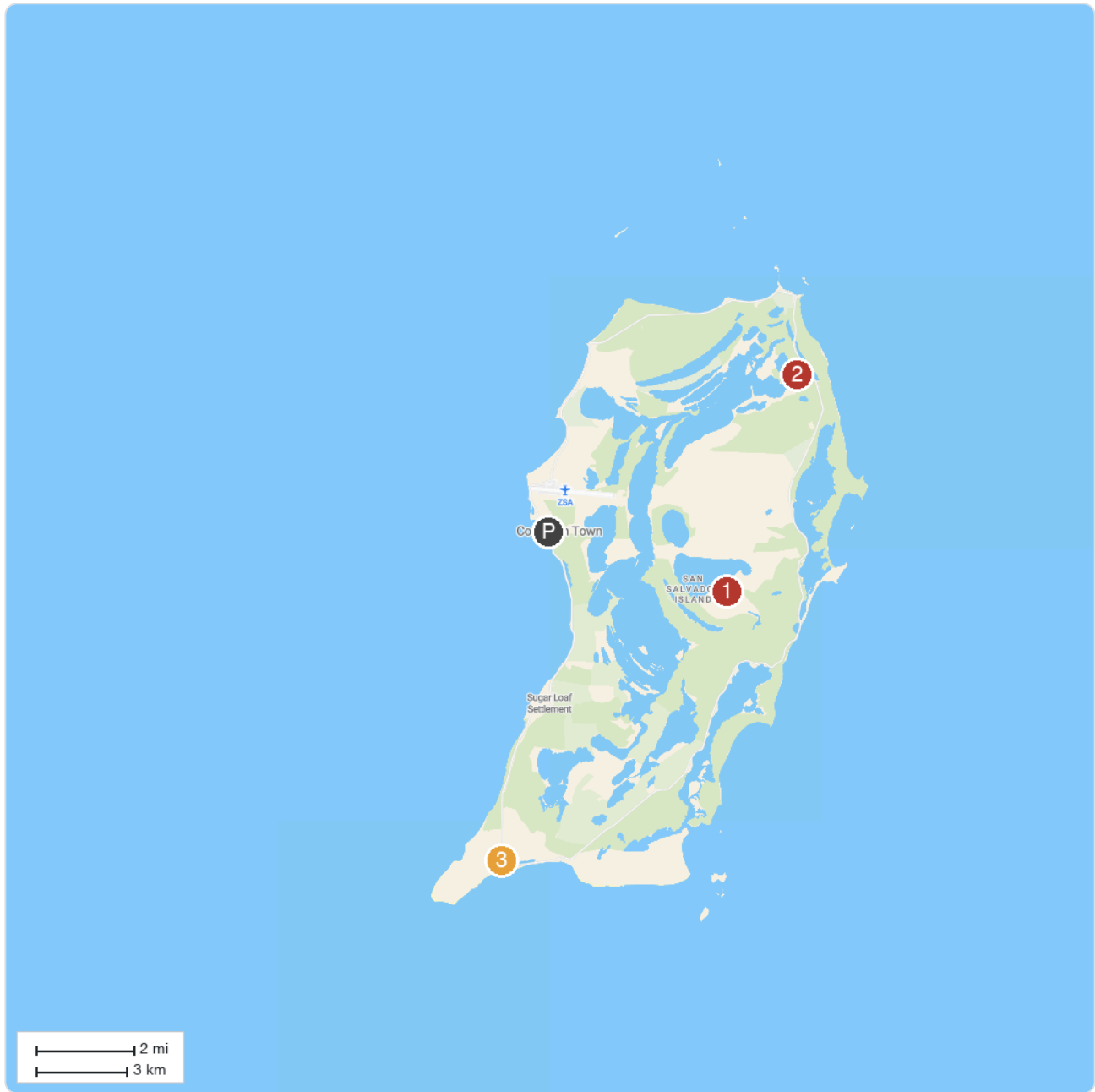
KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- Bring small bills in cash. US dollars and Bahamian dollars are interchangeable (1:1). Taxis and small vendors are cash-only, and the island's ATMs are scarce and often out of service.
- Arrange transport at the dock — and agree on a price first. There's no Uber, no bus, and no metered taxis. Negotiate a round-trip rate if you're visiting multiple sites like the lighthouse and Columbus monument.
- Pack bug spray. San Salvador's pristine lakes and lush interior come with sandflies and mosquitoes, particularly near water and at dusk. High-DEET spray is strongly recommended.
- Sunday = closed. If your ship calls on a Sunday, most shops and some restaurants in Cockburn Town will be shut. Plan for a beach or diving day rather than exploring town.
- Book diving in advance. Riding Rock Resort & Marina is the main dive operator, and trips fill fast. Contact them before your cruise if diving the wall is a priority.
- This is the real San Salvador — not Half Moon Cay. If you're on Carnival, Holland America, or Princess, you may be visiting Little San Salvador (Half Moon Cay), a private beach resort. San Salvador Island is the inhabited historic one, visited mainly by expedition and luxury lines.

San Salvador Island, Bahamas — Port Map

cruiseports.org

Red = walkable sights · Amber = excursions farther out · P = cruise terminal. Numbers match the order you'd typically visit.



- 1 Landfall Park** Long Bay memorial park with a white cross marking the presumed site of Columbus's 1492 landing.
- 3 Watling's Castle** Ruins of a late-18th-century Loyalist plantation great house at Sandy Point, with a restored lookout tower.

- 2 Dixon Hill Lighthouse** 1887 hand-operated lighthouse, the last of its kind in the Bahamas, offering 19-mile visibility from its lantern room.
- P Cruise port / terminal**