

# About Suriname



## *The country that could become the logistic gateway of South America*

A survey in 2019 has shown that most people in the world never heard of the country Suriname. That is why proudly introduce Suriname to you, the gateway to the Amazone.

### **Geography**

Suriname is located on the northeast coast of South America, bordering French Guiana to the east, Guyana to the west and Brazil to the south. The country is 163,820 km<sup>2</sup>. The capital Paramaribo, located on the Suriname River, is the largest city in the country. The current president is Chan Santokhi (2020) – of Indian origin – is democratic elected former chief of police.

The northern coast of Suriname was fairly swampy, but due to Dutch engineering, this land is no longer swampy so much as it is now fertile lowlands. Rivers pass through this stretch of land and the soil is very fertile as well, allowing plant life and animals to flourish in the region. Due to this, the coast is the most densely populated region of Suriname.

Further inland, to the south, the lands aren't as fertile as the flatlands are somewhat sandy. Beyond this sandy stretch, further south, the land slowly rises in elevation and is almost completely covered with forests, in fact, most of the country is covered in forests and very few people live in these areas.

The country's small population and the large percentage of forests in the country complement each other well as the settlement hasn't expanded much over time.

In the far south of Suriname, the highlands rise up to elevations of about 4,000 (1,200 meters), which is the highest point in the country. Like the forests to the north, this region is also forested and very sparsely populated.



## **Population**

The Surinamese population has a very diverse composition. Suriname has a very diverse population of about 500,000. This diverse group includes people of Indian (Hindu) background, Chinese (Javanese) background, and local groups (Creoles and Maroons). The relationships between the groups are as follows:

27.4% Hindus	17.7% Creoles	14.7% Maroons	14.6% Javanese
12.5% Mixed Race	13.1% Other groups		

## **Languages**

The official language of Suriname is Dutch. Besides Dutch also English, the local creole language (Sranan Tongo) is widely spoken, as well as the languages of the various ethnic groups are frequently spoken. Many of those of Indian origin follow Indian customs and speak Hindustani.

## **Religions**

The religions practiced in Suriname are Protestant Christianity, Roman Catholic Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and the Maroon and Indigenous religions.

## **Climate**

Suriname has a tropical climate, with a large and small rainy season, as well as a large and small dry season. The temperature fluctuates between 24 and 32 degrees Celsius. Suriname understands the rains as they tend to be fairly regular in the country. However, standing near the equator, the country doesn't have temperature extremes like many other countries do.

The greatest variations in weather come in the rainy and the dry seasons, although it tends to rain year-round in Suriname. These rains have led to a heavily forested country and have encouraged people to settle and remain on the Caribbean Sea coast. This coast gets a great deal of rain, is home to lakes and rivers, and has numerous plants and animals, making the coast an ideal home for the people that can handle the heat, rain, and humidity.

The drier of the two dry seasons is August to November, but February to April also tends to be relatively dry in Suriname. Relatively dry is the key as it rains regularly throughout the year in Suriname, even in these dry months, during which time getting up to 4 inches (100 mm) of rain per month is not uncommon. Temperatures during the dry month, and year-round, are about 72-85°F (22-30°C) from average daily lows to average daily highs in the capital of Paramaribo.

In the wet seasons, which run from December to January then again from April to July, the temperatures are nearly identical to the temperatures during the dry season. The rains tend to be heavier as getting 10 inches (250 mm) of rain per month during this time is not uncommon. In most years the months of May to July get the heaviest rains.



## History

In 1593 Suriname was taken over by the Spaniards, but they already left quickly. Also, the Dutch founded a branch, which kept not stand. After 1650 established a group of English settlers established themselves successfully from Barbados on the Suriname River.

In 1667 the Zealanders led by Abraham Crijnsen conquered Suriname and following the Peace of Breda they were able to keep possession. In 1682 the province of Zeeland wore the colony to the West India Company (WIC), which founded a separate public company. One-third of the shares was acquired by the WIC, one-third of the city of Amsterdam and one-third of the family Van Aerssen of Sommelsdijk.

In 1863 slavery was abolished in Suriname and in 1873, the former plantation slaves were really free. In that year their obligation to close an annual contract with a plantation owner fell off. After the abolition of slavery Chinese were contracted to work on the plantations. The plantation owners continued to search for new employees and Indians were contracted to five years to work on the plantations in 1873. In 1890 there were contract workers from Java, in the former Dutch East Indies.

In 1954 Suriname was recognized by the Netherlands as overseas territory rather than a colony. Suriname was fully incorporated into the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

On November 25, 1975, Suriname became an independent republic: Republic of Suriname.

## Economy

A large part of the workforce is employed in the government or semi-government institutions. This government is the largest employer in the service industry. The private companies focus mainly on trade and services. Suriname is rich in natural resources such as bauxite, timber, gold and oil. The revenues from the mining sector contribute largely to the economy of the country.

## **Airport**

The Johan Adolf Pengel International Airport is approximately 45 km from the capital of Paramaribo.

## **Travel to Suriname**

The tourist card (single entry / one entry) was introduced on November 25, 2011. From that date foreigners of Surinamese origin and owners of the nationality of the Netherlands, France, Canada, USA, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela, which for tourism purposes wish to visit the Republic of Suriname, have the possibility to travel off on a tourist card. To enter Suriname, you must have a passport on arrival that is at least valid for 6 months. For more information about the tourist card and visa policy, please contact the Embassy or Consulate of Suriname.

## **Banks**

Some banks established in Suriname are: SPSB, The Surinaamsche Bank (DSB), Republic Bank, Hakrinbank en Volkskredietbank. The banking hours are Monday to Friday from 7:30 to 14:30.

## **National holidays 2013**

New Year	01 Jan
Revolution Day	Feb 25
Holi	27 Mar
Good Friday	29 Mar (varies from year to year)
1st Easter	31 Mar (varies from year to year)
2nd Easter Mon	01 Apr (varies from year to year)
Labor day	May 1
Abolition Day	01 Jul
Day of Indigenous people	09 Aug
Ied-UL-Fitr	08 Aug
Day of the Maroons	10 Oct
Diwali	03 Nov (varies from year to year)
Ied-UL-Adha	15 Oct (varies from year to year)
Independence Day	25 Nov
1st Day of Christmas	25 Dec
2nd Day of Christmas	26 Dec

## **Timezone**

The time zone in Suriname is Greenwich Time, GWT-3.

## **Currency**

The legal tender is the Surinamese dollar (SRD). In addition, currencies such as the U.S. Dollar and the Euro are accepted. Foreign currencies can be exchanged at the banks and the Cambios (exchange) Credit cards (American Express, Mastercard, Diners Club) are not very common in Suriname. They are accepted by some larger hotels.

## **Wildlife, Flora and Fauna**

Biodiversity in Suriname is high, mostly because of the variety of habitats and the temperature. The average annual temperature in the coastal area is between 26° and 28° Celsius. Suriname can be divided into four major ecological zones, namely from north to south: The young coastal plain, The old coastal plain, The Savannah or Zanderij belt and The interior residual uplands. There are four categories of wild animals, namely protected animals, game species, cage species and predominantly harmful species. The giant anteater, red-faced spider monkey, ocelot, jaguar, bush dog and the Guiana dolphin are some of the mammals that are under complete protection in Suriname.

Suriname is a very heavily forested country, much of which is rain forest; due to this, the wildlife is very impressive. Most of the animals and plants in the country are woodland in nature as this tropical country is home to dense rain forests and all the animals that live in these forests. There are hundreds of mammals in the forests of Suriname, with some of the most common being deer, wolves, opossums, rabbits, squirrels, mice, rats, bats, tapirs, and sloths. There are also a large number of monkeys and cat species, although they tend to be much less common. Ocelots, tamarins, howler monkeys, spider monkeys, marmosets, jaguars, and cougars (puma) can all be found in the dense forests. Numerous other mammals can also be found in smaller numbers, such as the porcupine, armadillo, and anteater.

The sea life in Suriname itself is fairly limited as the country boasts many rivers and a few large lakes, but the small country size still limits the freshwater fish life to catfish, pike, and a few others. Off the coast, the animal life is much more impressive. While the waters have some mammals like whales, dolphins, and manatees, these waters are also home to thousands of fish and shellfish. Sharks, marlins, barracudas, grouper, snapper, mackerel, eels, rays, jellyfish, shrimp, crab, seahorses, starfish, and sea urchins all call these waters home.

The forests and coastline also attract hundreds of bird species every year. These range from woodland birds and rain forest birds to waterfowls and others. Among these birds are sparrows, cardinals, parakeets, woodpeckers, hummingbirds, parrots, toucans, macaws, eagles, egrets, condors, frigate birds, pelicans, and pigeons among many more.

The reptilian, amphibian, and insect life in Suriname are also diverse. Many of these animals are spiders, including the tarantula and black widow, snakes, including the rattlesnake, and frogs. In or near some of the rivers the amphibian population spikes a bit as the number of

frogs and lizards increase. The number of insects is quite substantial, including flies, mosquitos, butterflies, beetles, moths, ants, and more.

When it comes to native plant life, South America is home to many famous edible plants and these plants quickly spread throughout Suriname, South America, and beyond. The pineapple is from the region where Brazil and Uruguay meet while potatoes and tobacco originated in the Andes Mountains. A few others, including cacao trees (used to make chocolate), peanuts, and tomatoes are also from South America, although their actual origin is unknown. Peppers, both sweet and hot peppers are from Central America or northern South America while vanilla, avocado, papaya, and corn (maize) are likely from Central America itself. No matter each food's origin, what is known is that these foods spread throughout the continent and to the country of Suriname with the help of pre-historic people, animals, and winds. These people have had these foods for nearly as long as people have inhabited the region and each makes an important part of the people's diet and culture now and for thousands of years into the past.

More than just the edible plants, Suriname hosts numerous other trees and plants. Lilies, orchids, hibiscus, oleander, pine trees, eucalyptus trees, cedar trees, mahogany trees, and cypress trees are all common.

## **Paramaribo**

Paramaribo is the capital of Suriname, with a population of 240.000 people. Most people that visit Suriname start off with a hotel stay in Paramaribo. Various hotels and resorts will welcome you with open arms. And there you will start your first taste of Suriname culture.



## **Ecotourism**

There are various places you can visit deep in the forest of Suriname. But what you will notice is that every there is a lack of western society facilities, except mobile phone coverage and WIFI/internet. There is yet hardly commerce in the small village and facilities that are there are still small scale.

The huge benefit of this that it keeps the rainforest, its wildlife and nature untouched.

Having a holiday without a lot of luxury in Suriname is very different from having a holiday somewhere. But what you get in return is worth much more. Everyone that has visited Suriname will have new memories for a lifetime.

## Student life

We invite students, teachers, professors and educational institutions to come to Suriname, but within limits and with respect to the country. Also we try to increase entrepreneurship in Suriname among students. Domestic and foreign. Here you can find out how you can study, innovate and start up a new business as student in Suriname.

## Research in the Amazon

Suriname maybe one of the greatest places to study. *The country is covered by 93% with the untouched Amazon rainforest.* That means that the most beautiful nature, flora and fauna is never far away. Actually it is everywhere at your doorstep.



Suppose you want to study how and why fruits and vegetables grow so easily, you have more to study than you can do in one lifetime. Suriname has many species of trees and still undiscovered species of trees. But that also goes for frogs, birds, bugs, snakes and many other animals and plants. So if you want to discover new unseen things, Suriname is your place of study.

Next to flora and fauna, Suriname has many different ethnic and religious groups that live in harmony together. We also have people living in the rainforest that make use of unknown forest medicines. So the Surinamese culture, traditions and habits are also very interesting topics to study and research.

## Be an Adventurer

Suriname is not yet a common country to come for a study. There is only one university in the capital Paramaribo, and there are no foreign universities that have started up yet. The benefit of this is that you as a student, teacher or professor, can be an adventurer to do things for the first time.

Normally Surinamese people are friendly, warm and open. So if you are discovering new places and need help or have questions, you will always find someone that will help you.

### **Primary School Education and Innovation**

It is the vision of the minister of education that innovation in primary school education is not equal to bringing as many computers as possible into the classroom. Of course, digital education has its benefits, but educating children is a complex activity involving a lot of psychological challenges.

In Suriname, we welcome foreign primary schools and institutions that want to innovate and bring a new way of education into the country but respect the vision and policies on education.

### **Start up a Company as Student**

Next to studying in Suriname, we want to stimulate students to start up companies in Suriname. We have a special start up package to make it very easy to start up a company in Suriname as a student. For more information, please contact us.

### **Internships**

The following organizations are currently open for internships:

- Academic Hospital Paramaribo
- Paramaribo Zoo
- Embassy in Brussels

Please contact the ministry of education for details and more options for internship.

### **Contact Information**

If you plan to come to Suriname for study, for an internship or want to start up an educational institute, please contact the following organizations:

#### **Ministry of Education**



Dr. S. Kafiluddistraat 117 - 123  
Paramaribo, Suriname  
+597 498850 / +597 497954  
communicatieminowc@gmail.com

### **University of Suriname**

Leysweg 86 | P.O.B: 9212  
Paramaribo, Suriname  
+597 465558  
info@uvs.edu  
<http://www.uvs.edu>

### **Polytechnic College Suriname**

Slangenhoutstraat 99a  
Paramaribo, Suriname  
+597 402509  
info@ptc.edu.sr  
<https://www.ptc.edu.sr>

### **Visa**

For some countries people are required to get a visa before traveling to Suriname. Contact the authorities in your country to check if you need a visa for Suriname.

### **Contact**

For more information about tourism, please contact the department of trade, industry and tourism:

### **Department of Trade, Industry and Tourism**

Havenlaan # 1  
+597 403022 / 402080  
secretariaat@minhi.gov.sr

## **Healthcare in Suriname**

Suriname is constantly in direct need of various basic medical care supplies, equipment and personnel.

## **About NHS Suriname**

The National Healthcare System (NHS) in Suriname needs modernization. In Suriname the NHS is abbreviated with VG (from the Dutch word Volksgezondheid). In order to be able to modernize the NHS in Suriname, international collaboration is required.

This in the areas of capacity, expertise, education, research, build-up of new facilities and institutions, investment and funding. To enable international collaboration, the NHS in Suriname is made more open and accessible with the information on this page.

Next to that on this page important healthcare organizations and contacts from other countries are put on this page. In this way people in healthcare from different countries can more easily create relationships, form networks, exchange knowledge & expertise and improve the NHS in Suriname.

## **Highlights on NHS Suriname**

The healthcare system in Suriname is the responsibility of the Ministry of Healthcare (VG).

In Suriname, health care in principle is accessible to all Surinamese. Young and elderly people are insured at the expense of the state. The quality of health care appears to have declined sharply in recent years. For example, certain medical procedures cannot be performed in hospitals due to a shortage of work materials. Certain medicines are also sometimes not available. This is mainly due to a shortage of resources and reduced subsidies.

Doctors (General Practitioners) care for large numbers of patients in some places. There are four hospitals in the capital Paramaribo and also a number of medical centers. Health care in rural areas is mainly provided by a private organization called Medische Zorg, it is a medical mission. Various medical posts in the villages on the Upper Suriname River provide medical assistance to the inland residents.

This does not mean that everyone in rural areas have good access to healthcare services. For instance, already 16 years in a row the US Army comes for once a year to rural areas to provide in a few weeks healthcare services at once to thousands of people.

Some villages are a four hours drive away from Paramaribo, such as the Maroon village Djoemoe, which is only accessible by boat. For this reason, it is important in emergency situations that the patient can be brought to Paramaribo as quickly as possible.

Of course it would be better if every district and large resort in Suriname would have at least the minimum of healthcare facilities present.

### **Ambulances**

Currently (26/7/2022) many people in Suriname have no access to Emergency Response.

Some districts are large in size and hard to travel because of rainforest, waterways and lack of roads. The time it takes for an ambulance to reach the people is quickly over 4 hours.

### **List of Hospitals and Clinics in Suriname**

<b>Hospital</b>	<b>Location</b>
's Lands Hospitaal	Paramaribo
Academisch Ziekenhuis Paramaribo	Paramaribo
Sint Vincentius Ziekenhuis	Paramaribo
Diakonessenhuis	Paramaribo
Militair Hospitaal Dr. F.A.C. Dumontier	Paramaribo
Psychiatrisch Centrum Suriname	Paramaribo
Detoxificatie Kliniek	Paramaribo
Mungra Medisch Centrum	Nieuw-Nickerie
Pietronella Ziekenhuis Wageningen	Wageningen
Streekziekenhuis Marwina	Albina
Atjoni Ziekenhuis	Atjoni
Regionaal Ziekenhuis Wanica	Lelydorp