

A rare Caribbean island where beaches aren't the draw

Jeanine Barone, CNN • Updated 22nd October 2019



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Saba (CNN) — The five-square-mile island of Saba is a special municipality of the Netherlands.

Courtesy Saba Tourist Board

Saba (CNN) — Saba should have an inferiority complex.

After all, this speck of a five-square-mile Caribbean island -- a special municipality of the Netherlands -- is left off many maps. Even for the savviest of travelers, it's often an off-the-radar destination with a name of uncertain pronunciation. (It's "say-bah.")

A scarcity of cruise ships and beaches -- short of a seasonal sandy strip that comes and goes with the tide at turbulent Wells Bay and a petite man-made curve of sand at Cove Bay -- may explain why Saba isn't a major tourist draw.

Yet, the gregarious Sabans, many with an ancestry dating back to the island's European settlement in the 17th century, hardly feel excluded. Rather, they treasure their unsung island paradise that's home to both sedate and exhilarating sights and activities, which only a cadre of mostly hard-core divers and hikers have discovered.

Whether you're a travel thrill-seeker or a mellow sort, you'll be infatuated with Saba -- perhaps because of, or in spite of, the white-knuckle flight to its volcanic shores.

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