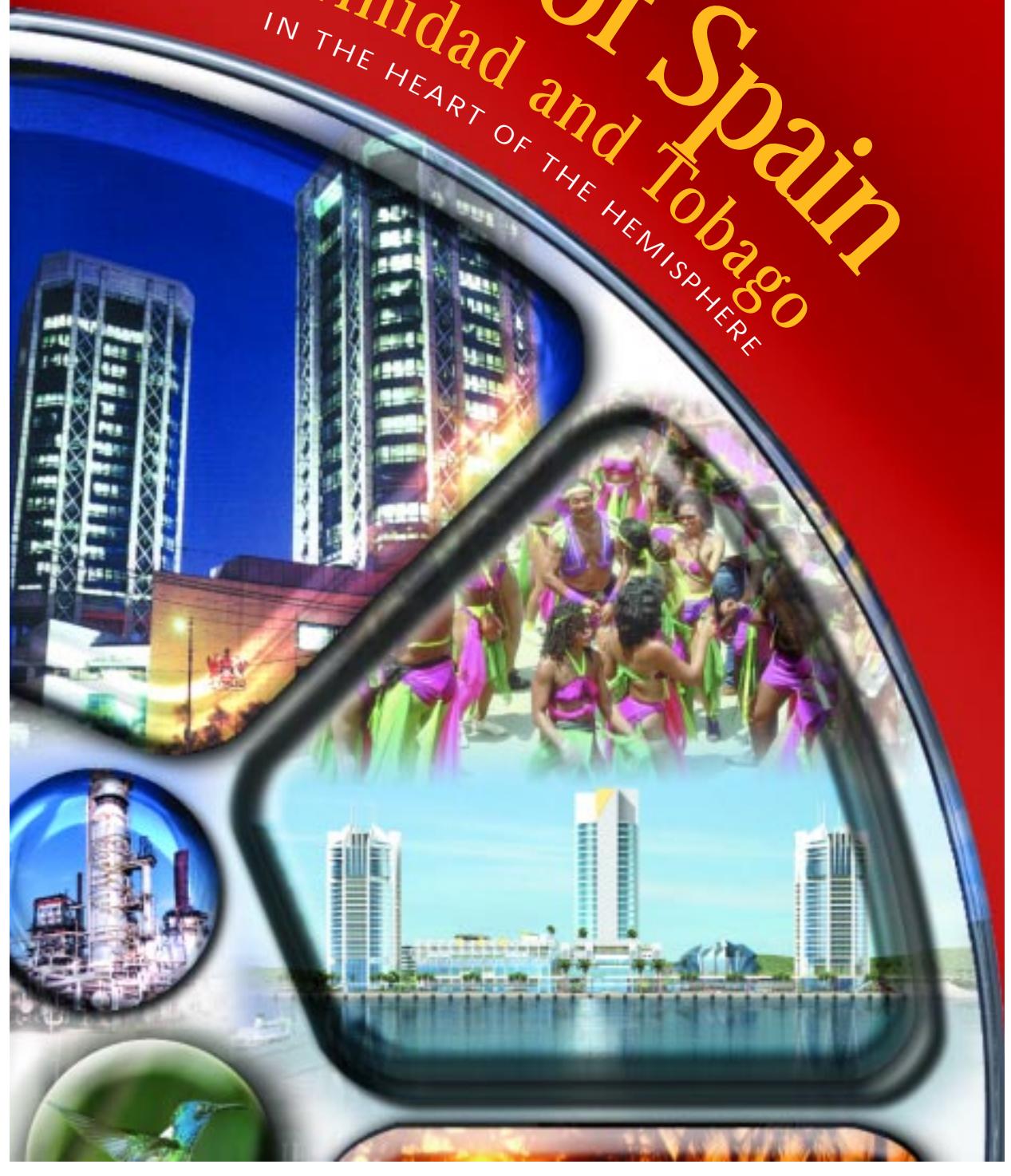




Port of Spain

Trinidad and Tobago

IN THE HEART OF THE HEMISPHERE





Port of Spain

Trinidad and Tobago

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TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

- An ideally located twin island nation
- A diverse, open economy with strong infrastructure
- A country truly integrated into the global economy
 - Warm and friendly people
 - A stable political climate
- An historically rich and cosmopolitan society

WHAT DOES PORT OF SPAIN OFFER?

- A high quality standard of living
- A vibrant and diverse culture and society
- A technological centre
- A secure and easily accessible location for the secretariat

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Port of Spain Trinidad and Tobago

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I N T R O D U C T I O N



An exciting new era for all of us in this hemisphere is upon us. We step boldly into the future, but we must do so with careful consideration as our decisions today will change the course of history.

I trust that you will carefully consider the strengths of Port of Spain as the natural home for the Secretariat of the FTAA. Ours is a vision for the Americas that comes from the centre, and offers balance, a fresh perspective, and a world of innovation.

To those countries that have already offered their support, I thank you for your commitment to this cause, for your continued good faith in us. We will prove that it has been well placed.

To those that are now joining us, I give you a warm “Caribbean” welcome.

And to those still considering our merits, I suggest you visit us and enjoy our hospitality. You will be certain, like so many before you, to come back for more.

*The Honourable Patrick Manning,
Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago*

LOCATION AND PEOPLES



Trinidad and Tobago is located at the southernmost point of the Caribbean archipelago, just seven (7) miles (10 km) off the coast of Venezuela on the South American mainland. No other country in the Hemisphere so truly links the Americas and the Caribbean as this beautiful twin island nation. Its

strategic position at the convergence point of the Caribbean, South and Central America, makes the country the nexus of regional and hemispheric development.

Trinidad, the larger of the two islands, has a total land area of 1,864 kms, and is home to the majority of the country's 1.3 million citizens. It has two major cities, Port of Spain (capital) and San Fernando. Some of its other major towns include, Arima, Point Fortin and Chaguanas. Situated just 15 minutes away from Trinidad (by air), Tobago measures 116 kms. It has three main towns, Scarborough, Roxborough and Charlotteville.

Together, the two islands offer the most ethnically and culturally diverse society in the region. The majority of the population is of African and East Indian descent with the remainder consisting of people of European, Middle Eastern and Chinese origin, as well as numerous mixtures. All have made invaluable contributions to the development of the nation's culture.



Trinidad and Tobago Carnival – Parade of the bands

GLOBAL RELATIONSHIPS

Trinidad and Tobago is a diversified, open economy that continues to demonstrate its commitment to free trade through its economic trade and investment policies. In 1973 the country became a member of the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM), which at that time comprised 13 English speaking Caribbean countries. CARICOM expanded into the non-English speaking Caribbean with its acceptance of Suriname in 1995 and Haiti in 1997. CARICOM Heads of Government are working towards the creation of a CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) by 2005. In this vein, the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas provides for the movement of goods, services, labour and capital, external trade relations, industrial policy, dispute settlement, antidumping and competition policy. Provisions pertaining to Investment, E-commerce and Government Procurement will soon be incorporated into the treaty.

To enhance its export capability, CARICOM has begun to expose itself increasingly to more competitive environments by reducing access restrictions at national and regional levels, both within its grouping and with third countries. To date, CARICOM is signatory to the following agreements:

- CARICOM – Venezuela Trade and Investment Agreement (1992)
- CARICOM – Colombia Agreement on Trade, Economic and Technical Co-operation (1994)
- CARICOM/Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement (2000)
- CARICOM/Cuba Free Trade Agreement (2001)
- CARICOM/Costa Rica Free Trade Agreement (2004)

On the horizon are possibilities for free trade agreements between CARICOM and the Andean Pact, Mercosur, Central American Common Market (CACM), Canada, and United States.

Trinidad and Tobago's integration into the global economy is driven by a desire to maximise foreign investment and global efficiencies. This arose from the increased global competition, following the country's accession into the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1962 and the Uruguay Round in 1994, which established the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Internationally, accession to the WTO in 1995, involvement in the Doha Development Agenda and negotiation of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) ensure participation in predictable rules-based fora. The participation in these fora allows for further enhancing the country's market access opportunities.



Antigua and Barbuda

Argentina

Bahamas

Barbados

Belize

Bolivia

Brazil

Canada

Chile

Colombia

Costa Rica

Dominica

Dominican Republic

Ecuador

El Salvador

Grenada

Guatemala

Guyana

Haiti

Honduras

Jamaica

Mexico

Nicaragua

Panama

Paraguay

Peru

St. Kitts and Nevis

St. Lucia

St. Vincent and the Grenadines

Suriname

Trinidad and Tobago

United States

Uruguay

Venezuela

Members of the FTAA



ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

Trinidad and Tobago's substantial oil and natural gas reserves make its economy one of the strongest in the Western Hemisphere. It is a world leader in petroleum production, the export of ammonia and is the largest exporter of natural gas. It is also well on the way to becoming the number one exporter of methanol.

The country is one of the largest producers of asphalt, ammonia and urea in the world. Trinidad and Tobago has a very diversified economy with a burgeoning manufacturing sector, a strong services sector and an important agricultural sector. At present, the country features a GDP per capita of approximately US\$9,000, an inflation rate of less than 3.0%, and an unemployment rate of 9.9% (2003).



One of our larger gas processing plants

Communication Links

Trinidad and Tobago's strong financial and manufacturing sectors, coupled with its central location in the Hemisphere, make it ideally poised to be the commercial, financial and communications hub of the Americas.

Airports

The country has two major airports: Piarco International in Trinidad and Crown Point International in Tobago. Both airports are well equipped to handle wide-bodied aircraft.

Piarco is a modern world-class facility, which provides comfortable and convenient connections to and from all the major metropolitan cities. It has well-established air routes, and is serviced by major international air carriers, including its own national air carrier, BWIA West Indies Airways Limited (BWIA).



BWIA offers daily scheduled service to and from Port of Spain and North, South and Central America, Canada, the United Kingdom, Europe and other Caribbean islands. Other international carriers with scheduled service to and from Port of Spain include American Airlines, Continental Airlines, Air Canada, British Airways, Virgin Atlantic, Aeropostal, Avior, Caribbean Star, Dutch Caribbean Airlines, LIAT, Rutaca, Suriname Airlines and several chartered operators.

DIPLOMATIC TIES AND COURTESIES

Trinidad and Tobago has strong diplomatic ties with the world, including the countries of the proposed FTAA membership. There are 24 diplomatic missions and 34 honorary consulates accredited to and resident in Trinidad and Tobago.

In addition, several regional and international organisations, including the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), the Organisation of American States (OAS) and a number of the United Nations Specialised Agencies have offices in Trinidad and Tobago; among them are: ILO, PAHO/WHO, IADB, ECLAC, UNESCO and the UNDP.

DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS	
Argentina	Guatemala
Brazil	India
Britain	Jamaica
Canada	Japan
China	Mexico
Colombia	Netherlands
Costa Rica	Nigeria
Dominican Republic	Panama
Cuba	Holy See (Vatican)
France	Suriname
European Union	United States of America
Germany	Venezuela

In its bid to secure the Headquarters of the Permanent Secretariat of the FTAA, Trinidad and Tobago is prepared to conclude a Headquarters Agreement with the Secretariat of the FTAA. The agreement could be modelled after previously concluded ones with the regional and international organisations located in this country.

HONORARY CONSULATES			
Austria	Denmark	Ireland	Senegal
Barbados	Dominican Republic	Italy	Spain
Bangladesh	El Salvador	Korea	Sri Lanka
Belize	Finland	Lebanon	Suriname
Belgium	Ghana	Mauritius	Sweden
Chile	Grenada	Mexico	Switzerland
Costa Rica	Guyana	Norway	Syrian Arab Republic
Czech Republic	Indonesia	Pakistan	Turkey
		Portugal	Uruguay

SECURITY

Trinidad and Tobago is free from terrorist threats and natural disasters

Trinidad and Tobago is free from terrorist threats which plague many major cities around the world. The twin island Republic is cosmopolitan, and various ethnicities and cultures co-exist harmoniously. However, despite the generally peaceful nature of the citizens and a relatively low crime rate, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago leaves nothing to chance. It remains acutely aware of the worldwide rise in crime and has consequently allocated greater resources to the protective services. It has equipped these forces with the necessary tools to deal with varying types of crime in order to ensure enhanced levels of safety and comfort for the country's citizens and visitors. In conjunction with the protective services, the Government has implemented several crime prevention initiatives and will provide 24-hour security for the FTAA Secretariat.

As the southernmost island of the Caribbean, Trinidad and Tobago is outside the hurricane belt and is not susceptible to earthquakes. The Government, working with the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), has developed a disaster and emergency preparedness plan. NEMA is responsible for coordinating all activities related to emergency response and recovery throughout the country.



Port of Spain

Migration Issues

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago will ensure boarding and check-in priority on the national airline (BWIA) for all FTAA delegates. Special treatment at immigration and customs facilities will be afforded to all delegates carrying Diplomatic and Official passports.



Point Lisas Industrial Estate

Seaports

Trinidad and Tobago has a number of recognised seaports. The four major ones in Trinidad are Port of Spain, Point Lisas (which won the Caribbean Port Award in 2003 for the third consecutive year), Chaguanas and Point Galeota. Port of Spain has a sheltered harbour capable of handling bulk container shipping and cruise ships. Point Lisas is a fully developed industrial port, which

specialises in handling petrochemicals, iron and steel and containerised and general cargo. Chaguanas, located on the active western peninsula, has a terminal and a dry dock facility which handles repairs. There is a great deal of large vessel movement in this area, which also houses a major bauxite plant. Point Galeota located on the southern tip of Trinidad is the main port from which bp Trinidad and Tobago LLC undertakes its major oil operations.

The primary port in Tobago is Scarborough. It is a sheltered deep-water harbour and the main link for transportation of products from Trinidad. It is also a port of call for major cruise liners. Other main towns with deep-water harbours are Roxborough and Charlotteville.

Ground Transportation (from Airport to Port of Spain)

Options	Cost US\$	Frequency
Buses	1.20	hourly
Maxi Taxis	1.00	on demand
Private Taxis	20.00	on demand
Public Taxis	1.50	on demand

Source: TIDCO

Internal Transport

Modern roads and highways link major cities and towns in Trinidad and Tobago. Public transport is inexpensive and available on demand. Ground transportation options include mini buses or 'maxi' taxis, route taxis, hired cars, private car rentals as well as an extensive and efficient public transportation network. The distance from Piarco International Airport to the proposed site of the FTAA Headquarters is approximately 25 km, and the travel time is approximately 15-20 mins.

Standard of Living

Trinidad and Tobago maintains one of the highest standards of living in the region. This is manifest in its low Consumer Price Index and stable exchange rate of US\$1 -TT\$6.30. A busy construction industry, a thriving manufacturing sector, together with a vigorous housing development thrust, have all contributed to the establishment of a low rate of unemployment.

When compared with other major metropolitan centres the low cost of utilities, transportation, food and leisure make for a high standard of living. Trinidad and Tobago's socially and culturally diverse society complemented by its stable democracy and dynamic business climate, make this twin island Republic the natural choice to be the permanent site of the FTAA Headquarters.



Mt. Irvine Golf Course, Tobago

Trinidad and Tobago has an excellent public and private education system. Primary and secondary education is free. There are 482 public primary schools and 133 public secondary schools, in addition to numerous government-assisted and private schools. Two international schools, The International School of Port of Spain and The Maple Leaf International School, cater to the needs of those wishing to pursue the American or the Canadian streams of schooling. Trinidad and Tobago is also the home of one of the campuses of the University of

the West Indies (UWI, St. Augustine). Several other tertiary level and technical institutions are also available.



University of the West Indies (UWI), St. Augustine

Translation Capability

Trinidad and Tobago's skilled workforce is unparalleled in the English speaking Caribbean. This human resource base includes translators, interpreters and bilingual speakers. Each year resources are added to this pool by graduates from the University of the West Indies degree programmes. Resources are also available from several internationally recognised and registered language schools; for example, the National Institute of Higher Education Research Science and Technology, and the Centre for Language Learning which is attached to the University of the West Indies and will be complemented by the free movement of skilled professionals from within the FTAA. Consequently, the FTAA Secretariat will have ready and immediate access to any human resource, local or regional, that may be required. Trinidad and Tobago's outstanding record and capability in the area of translating and interpreting is reflected in our successful hosting of major international events.

Medical Facilities

Trinidad and Tobago's health care service is among the best in the region. The general hospitals in Port of Spain and San Fernando provide free services. The Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex, Mount Hope (minutes from Port of Spain) is a modern hospital and teaching facility. There are several well-respected private hospitals and medical facilities available throughout the country, including a 24-hour air ambulance service for emergency situations requiring overseas attention.

Religion and Culture

Trinidad and Tobago enjoys an eclectic mix of religions and cultures. Each denomination has an observance that is featured on the national religious calendar. In the cultural sphere, the country boasts of creating the only percussion instrument of the twentieth century, the steelpan. Trinidad and Tobago has many unique art forms including chutney, parang, tassa, calypso, soca and rapso. These art forms exist alongside traditional music and culture and have been infused with the vigour of the new world to reflect the creativity and vibrancy of the people.



The scintillating sound of the steelpan

Tourism

Tourism is an important contributor to the economic development of Trinidad and Tobago. The two islands complement each other: Trinidad is fast-paced, industrialised and cosmopolitan, while Tobago, the smaller and more serene sister isle, has a wide array of wildlife, pristine beaches and outdoor activities. Both islands have a wide variety of flora and fauna, historical sites, world-class golf courses and tropical reefs.

Entertainment and Shopping

Trinidad and Tobago offers an abundance of entertainment from calypso, steelpan, chutney and jazz concerts to art galleries, casinos, Latin dancing, water-sports, outdoor activities and nightclubs. There is also a plethora of restaurants, bars, state-of-the-art cinemas and Internet cafes.

Trinidad and Tobago, in general, and Port of Spain, in particular, has excellent shopping. The islands have their own local specialties, as well as a wide range of high quality international goods at very competitive prices. There are also several malls with shops which carry duty-free goods and a variety of local and international brands.

Modern Telecommunications Infrastructure

Trinidad and Tobago is on the cutting edge of communications technology. Direct distant dialling (DDD) to any part of the world, fax transmission and high-speed Internet services are available. Videoconferencing, distance learning, interlinked worldwide sales and service centres, high quality stereo sound recording and global interactive publishing facilities are also readily available. The telecommunications service provider has recently upgraded its mobile service network to the global system for mobile telecommunications (GSM) international standard. One of GSM's great strengths is its international roaming capability. This gives consumers seamless and standardised same number contactability in more than 170 countries, including those of FTAA members. All of these services are available at a relatively low cost.



Hotel Accommodation

In Port of Spain and its immediate environs there are many three to five star hotels, with rooms ranging from standard to deluxe, and prices from US\$ 70 to 175 plus per night. These hotels which provide extensive accommodation include the Trinidad Hilton and Conference Centre, Crowne Plaza, Cascadia, Ambassador, the Normandie, Kapok, Chaconia and Marriott Courtyard; in addition to many established and recognised guesthouses, inns, all-inclusive resorts, cottages, self-catering apartments and villas.

World Class Facilities

Trinidad and Tobago has a record of providing high quality services, as evidenced by the number of regional and international conferences hosted each year.

The city of Port of Spain is currently home to many eminent international agencies such as the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) and the United Nations/Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC). Several local offices of the United Nations Specialized Agencies, including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UNAIDS are also located in Port of Spain.

The Government will provide a Conference Centre of the highest standard to house the permanent headquarters of the FTAA Secretariat, on a rent-free life-long basis. This ultra modern complex (the Port of Spain International Conference Complex, ICC) overlooking the harbour will be equipped with state-of-the-art facilities, requisite support services, technology and other conveniences determined by the FTAA Negotiators.

The proposed ICC will feature two towers of twenty stories each. One of these towers will house the FTAA Secretariat, the other a 400-room five-star hotel and a multi-storey car park. The facility will also comprise a conference hall for 2,500 persons, an auditorium with a capacity of 700 seats and an exhibition hall.



The city of Port of Spain, capital of Trinidad and Tobago

Conclusion

Trinidad and Tobago's strategic geographic position, numerous trade links, access to market opportunities, warm and vibrant people, diverse culture and rich history at the heart of the hemisphere, makes Port of Spain the ideal place to be the permanent home for the FTAA Headquarters.

AT A GLANCE

Official Name:	Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Capital:	Port of Spain
Official Language:	English
Government System:	Parliamentary Democracy
Area:	Trinidad – 1,864 sq. ml. Tobago – 116 sq. ml.
Climate:	Tropical climate with cool crosswinds
Average Temp.	Trinidad – ‘32 C’
Average Temp.	Tobago – ‘30 C’
	Dry Season – January to May
	Rainy Season – June to December
Telephone Area Code:	1 (868)
Population:	1.3 million approx.
Adult Literacy:	98.4%
Currency:	Trinidad and Tobago Dollar (TT\$)
Exchange Rate:	US\$1.00 = TT\$6.30
GDP per Capita	US\$9,000 (2003)
Inflation:	2.9% (2003)
Stock Exchange:	The Trinidad and Tobago Stock exchange is one of the most active and vibrant exchanges in the Caribbean

Contact information:

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AIR TRANSPORTATION

Air Transportation To (Port-of Spain)

From	US\$	
St. Johns , Antigua and Barbuda	222.00	1 hr 20 mins
Buenos Aires , Argentina	1019.50	7 hrs 41 mins
Nassau , The Bahamas	493.00	4 hrs 50 mins
Bridgetown , Barbados	143.00	45 mins
Belize City , Belize	660.10	5 hrs 15 mins
La Paz , Bolivia	1062.10	8 hrs 30 mins
Sao Paulo , Brazil	809.00	7 hrs
Ottawa , Canada	808.40	6 hrs 30 mins
Santiago , Chile	1112.00	7 hrs 45 mins
Bogota , Colombia	512.00	2 hrs 50 mins
San Jose , Costa Rica	333.50	3 hrs 30 mins
Roseau , Dominica	256.00	2 hrs 5 mins
Santo Domingo , Dominican Republic	367.30	2 hrs
Quito , Ecuador	786.00	4 hrs 12 mins
San Salvador , El Salvador	776.31	4 hrs 50 mins
St. George's , Grenada	111.90	40 mins
Guatemala City , Guatemala	898.80	5 hrs 30 mins
Georgetown , Guyana	157.60	1 hr
Port-au-Prince , Haiti	300.20	5 hrs 30 mins
Tegucigalpa , Honduras	918.00	5 hrs 17 mins
Kingston , Jamaica	309.49	5 hrs
Mexico City , Mexico	784.37	6 hrs 20 mins
Managua , Nicaragua	841.70	5 hrs 35 mins
Panama City , Panama	815.00	3 hrs 14 mins
Asuncion , Paraguay	1171.70	10 hrs 15 mins
Lima , Peru	565.00	5 hrs 25 mins
Basseterre , St. Kitts, Nevis	291.30	2 hrs
Castries , St. Lucia	169.30	50 mins
Kingstown , St. Vincent and Grenadines	108.50	95 mins
Paramaribo , Suriname	254.24	1 hr 30 mins
Washington, D.C. , United States	524.50	5 hrs
Montevideo , Uruguay	1062.60	10 hrs
Caracas , Venezuela	214.40	1 hr

* Fares are Annual Average on the most direct route

Sources: (American Airlines-www.aa.com); (British West Indian Airways-www.bwee.com); (Air Canada-www.aircanada.com); (TACA Airlines-www.taca.com); (Lan Chile-www.lanchile.com); (Aeropostal-www.aeropostal.com); (Copa Airlines-www.copaair.com)

NOTES

