

# Antigua and Barbuda Visitor Arrivals Quarterly Report: JAN-MAR 2025



## Foreword

This report provides a quantitative analysis of Visitor Arrivals to Antigua and Barbuda for the First Quarter of the year 2025. Data for this report was provided by the Immigration Department from the Embarkation/Disembarkation (E/D) cards and the Cruise Ships' manifests. This report was prepared and published by the Research and Statistics Department in the Ministry of Tourism & Investment.

## Classification

Visitors are classified as individuals who stay more than 24 hours, but less than one year, within a country outside of their usual country of residence. People who are in transit and/or spend less than a day are not classified as visitors. Total Sea Arrivals are comprised of tourists arriving by Cruise and Yacht, with Cruise visitors spending less than a day, and Yacht visitors a day or more.

## Introduction

This analysis provides an overview of visitor arrivals for the first quarter of **2025**, comparing the performance against the same period in **2024**. Overall, **visitor arrivals increased by 4%**, reflecting continued growth in Antigua and Barbuda's tourism sector.

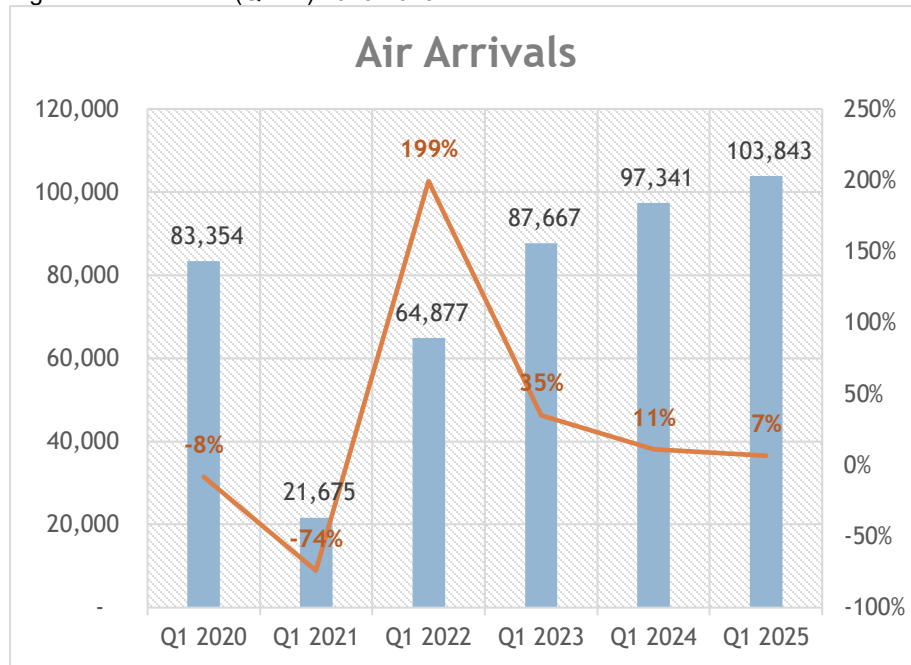
## Arrivals by Air

Table 1: Combined Visitor Arrivals (QTR1) 2024-2025

Mode	2024	2025	% Change 24/23
Air	97,314	103,843	7%
Cruise	418,103	430,677	3%
Yacht	9,102	9,519	5%
Total by Sea	427,205	440,196	3%
Overall Total	524,546	544,039	4%

In the first quarter of 2025, Antigua and Barbuda recorded a 4% year-over-year increase in total visitor arrivals, reflecting continued momentum in the country's tourism recovery and growth strategy. Air arrivals rose by 7%, signaling steady demand and improved airlift to the destination. Cruise arrivals increased by 3%, maintaining strong performance in this segment. Yacht arrivals grew by 5%, reversing the previous year's slight decline. Overall, sea arrivals were up by 3% in the 2025

Figure 1: Air Arrivals (QTR1) 2020-2025



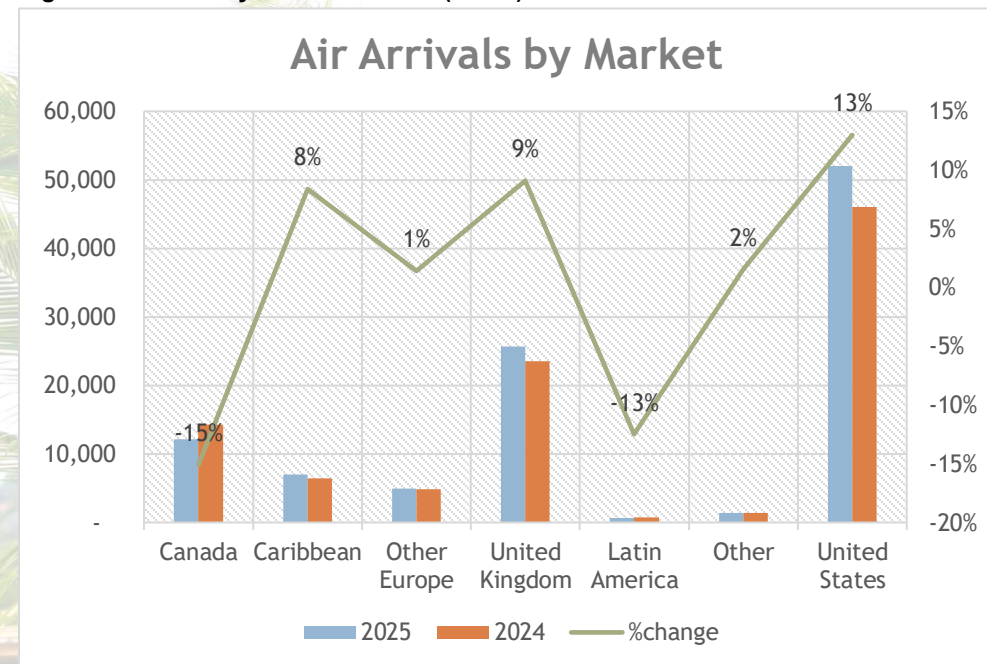
The first quarter air arrival data for Antigua and Barbuda from 2020 to 2025 reflects a dynamic period of decline, recovery, and stabilization in the tourism sector. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was most severe in Q1 2021, with arrivals plummeting by 74%. However, a strong rebound followed in 2022, with air arrivals surging by 199%, signaling a swift recovery in global travel demand. This upward momentum continued into 2023 and 2024, with air arrivals growing by 35% and 11%, respectively. In Q1 2025, Antigua and Barbuda welcomed 103,843 air visitors, representing a 7% year-over-year increase

from Q1 2024. While growth has moderated compared to the post-pandemic surge, the current trend indicates a return to pre-pandemic growth patterns and a stable recovery trajectory.

Overall, the sustained year-over-year increases from 2022 to 2025 demonstrate resilience in the tourism industry, supported by improved airlift, targeted marketing, and restored traveler confidence.

### Arrivals by Market

Figure 3: Arrivals by Source Markets (QTR1) 2024-2025



Air arrivals to Antigua and Barbuda for the first quarter of 2025 totaled 103,843, reflecting a 7% increase over the 97,341



visitors recorded during the same period in 2024. This growth signals continued momentum in the country's tourism recovery and sustained interest across key source markets.

The United States led the way with the largest absolute increase, rising by 13% to reach 51,980 arrivals, an addition of nearly 6,000 visitors. This further cements the U.S. as Antigua and Barbuda's top air source market. The United Kingdom also recorded strong growth, increasing by 9% to total 25,675 arrivals, underscoring its position as another vital contributor to the country's tourism economy. The Caribbean market grew by 8%, indicating rising demand for intra-regional travel and the success of regional marketing efforts. Smaller but consistent gains were also observed in the Other Europe and Other categories, with modest increases of 1% and 2% respectively, demonstrating the value of maintaining a diversified market strategy.

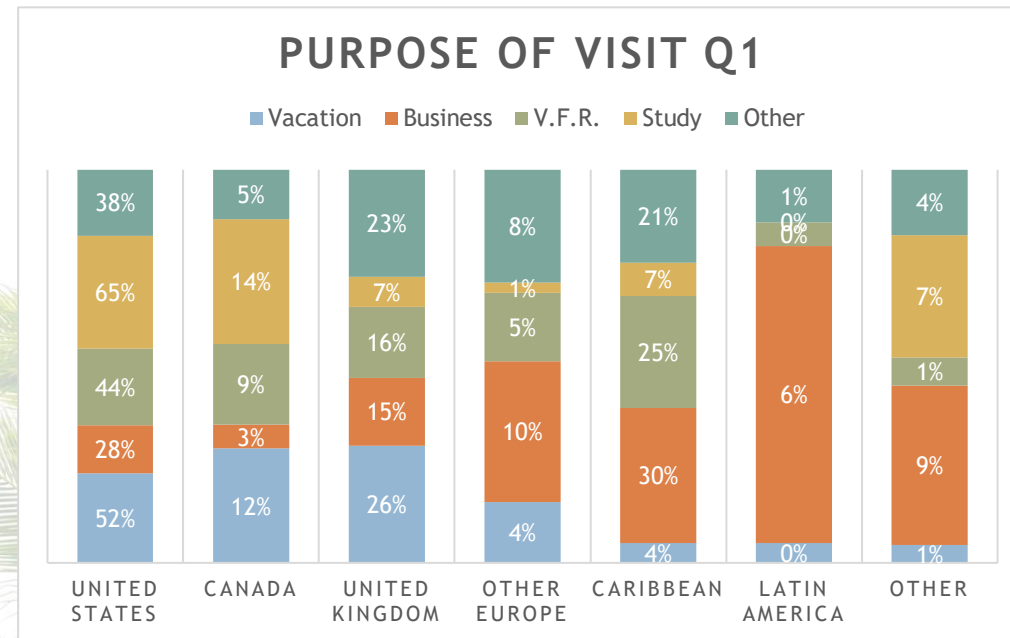
Despite these positive trends, two markets experienced declines. Canada fell sharply by 15%, a loss of over 2,100 visitors, likely influenced by seasonal factors, economic constraints, or airlift changes. Latin America also saw a 13% drop, though the overall impact was minimal due to its relatively small visitor base.

In summary, Q1 2025 showcased solid performance across most markets, led by significant gains from the U.S. and U.K., and supported by regional growth within the Caribbean. The

data points to continued opportunities for strategic investment in core markets, while also suggesting a need to re-examine and potentially re-engage markets showing signs of decline.

## Purpose of Visit

Figure 4: Purpose of Visit (QTR1) 2025



The United Kingdom is the second most prominent contributor across most categories, particularly in vacation (26%), business (15%), and other purposes (23%), suggesting varied travel motivations and continued engagement with the destination.

Canada also contributes steadily, making up 12% of vacationers and showing consistent, if modest, presence across all other categories, including study (14%) and V.F.R. (9%). This reflects the country's mix of leisure travelers and family-linked visits.

The Caribbean region continues to play a significant role in business travel (30%) and V.F.R. (25%), indicating strong regional and cultural ties that influence travel behavior. This market also contributes to vacation and other purpose segments, reinforcing its multi-purpose travel pattern.

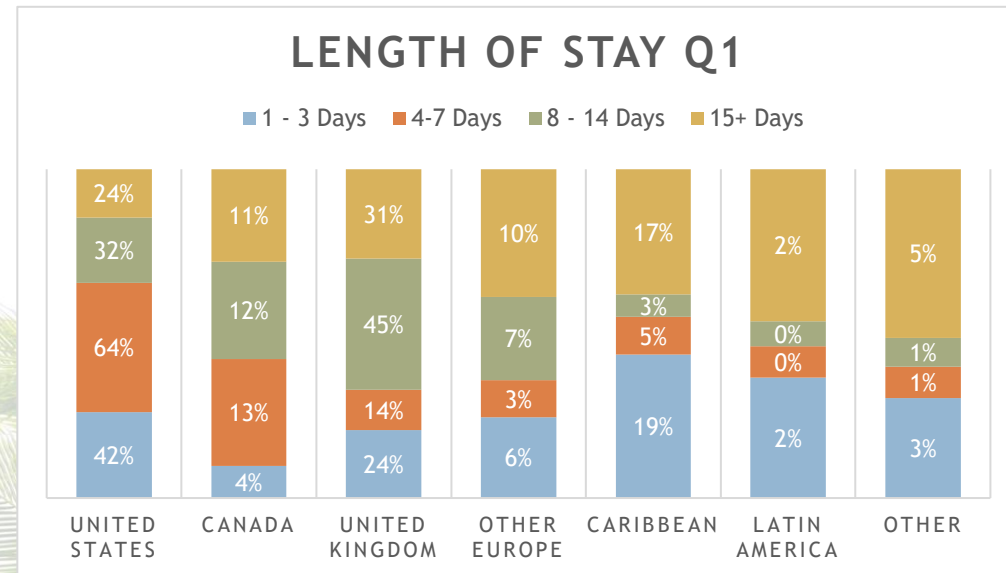
Other Europe, Latin America, and the Other category account for smaller shares across the board. Notably, Other Europe makes up 10% of business travelers and 8% of those in the “other” category, while Latin America contributes marginally to business travel (6%) but remains low in all other segments.

In summary, vacation and business remain the top two reasons for visiting Antigua and Barbuda, with strong representation from the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and the Caribbean. The continued presence of V.F.R. and study travelers indicates that beyond leisure, the destination also benefits from education, familial, and professional ties. These insights support the need for diverse marketing strategies that cater to leisure,

educational, and business segments to sustain growth in all visitor categories.

## Length of Stay

Figure 5: Length of Stay (QTR1) 2025



The table above presents the distribution of visitor arrivals to Antigua and Barbuda in the first quarter of 2025, categorized by source market and length of stay. The average length of stay remains steady (10 days), indicating sustained interest in moderate to extended vacation durations.

The United States continues to dominate across all stay categories, with particularly strong representation in the 4–7 day



range (64%), suggesting that U.S. travelers prefer week-long getaways. Notably, a substantial portion also stays 1–3 days (42%), reflecting the presence of short leisure breaks or business-related visits, while 24% stay 15+ days, possibly combining leisure with remote work or long-term stays.

The United Kingdom shows a distinct preference for longer stays. 45% of UK visitors spend 8–14 days, and 31% stay 15+ days, making them key targets for extended-stay promotions and packages. This pattern suggests that British travelers view Antigua and Barbuda as a long-haul vacation destination, often staying for two weeks or more.

Canadian visitors display a relatively even distribution across longer durations, with 13% staying 4–7 days, and roughly 11–12% choosing both 8–14 days and 15+ days. This balanced spread indicates flexibility in travel planning and continued potential for attracting repeat visitors from this market.

The Caribbean market remains predominantly short-term, with 19% of visitors staying 1–3 days. However, a notable 17% stay 15+ days, pointing to visits with friends and relatives or extended regional holidays. This dual trend presents an opportunity to

market both short-term leisure escapes and longer cultural or family-centered visits.

Visitors from Other Europe, Latin America, and Other Markets contribute smaller volumes. These markets show relatively low figures across all stay categories, although 10% of Other European visitors do stay 15+ days, which may reflect multi-destination or winter escape travel patterns. These regions may benefit from targeted promotions and expanded airlift to stimulate interest and longer stays.

In summary, the Q1 2025 data shows a continued preference for moderate to long stays, with the majority of visitors choosing 4–7 days or 8–14 days. The U.S. and U.K. remain dominant long-stay markets, while Canada and the Caribbean also contribute significantly. Strategic marketing efforts focused on long-stay incentives and diversified travel experiences can help Antigua and Barbuda sustain and expand this positive trend.

## Arrivals by Sea

Table 2: Sea Arrivals (QTR1) 2025/2024

Type of Vessels	2024 QTR1		2025 QTR1		Calls % Change 24/23	Pax % Change 25/24
	Calls	Pax	Calls	Pax		
<b>Cruise</b>	208	418,103	235	430,677	12.98%	3.01%
<b>Yacht</b>	2,016	9,102	1,980	9,519	-1.79%	4.58%
<b>Total</b>	2,224	427,205	2,215	440,196	-0.40%	3.04%

The first quarter of 2025 saw continued positive momentum in sea arrivals to Antigua and Barbuda, with total passenger numbers increasing by 3.04%, from 427,205 in Q1 2024 to 440,196 in Q1 2025.

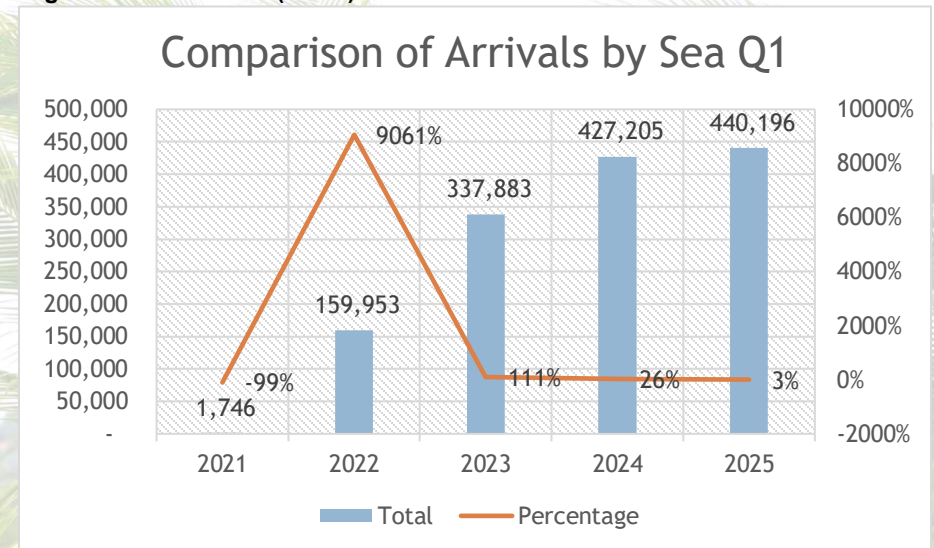
Cruise tourism remained the dominant contributor to sea arrivals. The number of cruise calls rose by 13%, from 208 to 235, while passenger arrivals increased by 3%, totaling 430,677. The increase in ship calls suggests stronger engagement with cruise operators and improved scheduling, although the modest passenger growth may indicate varying ship occupancy levels or itinerary changes. Nevertheless, the cruise segment continues to provide substantial visitor volume, reinforcing its critical role in the country's tourism economy.

In contrast, yacht tourism experienced a 1.8% decline in vessel calls, falling from 2,016 to 1,980. Despite this, the

number of yacht passengers increased by 4.6%, from 9,102 to 9,519, indicating that yachts may be carrying more passengers per vessel or staying longer, which could potentially boost on-island spending.

Overall, while the total number of vessel calls declined slightly by 0.4%, the total sea passenger arrivals grew by just over 3%, driven mainly by cruise tourism. This suggests that Antigua and Barbuda continues to maintain a strong presence as a preferred destination on both regional and international sailing and cruise itineraries.

Figure 2: Sea Arrivals (QTR1) 2020-2024



The trend in sea arrivals to Antigua and Barbuda from 2021 to 2025 highlights a remarkable recovery and stabilization of the sector following the sharp downturn caused by the COVID-



19 pandemic. Total sea arrivals plummeted to just 1,746 in Q1 2021 as global travel restrictions brought cruise and yacht tourism to a near halt.

In 2022, the sector began its recovery, surging to 159,953 arrivals, a dramatic 9,061% increase over the previous year, signaling the return of cruise operations and renewed visitor confidence. The upward momentum continued in 2023, with sea arrivals more than doubling to 337,883, a 111% year-over-year increase, marking a robust bounce-back.

By 2024, total sea arrivals reached 427,205, up 26% from 2023, surpassing pre-pandemic performance levels and solidifying Antigua and Barbuda's position as a key Caribbean cruise destination. In Q1 2025, arrivals grew again, though at a more moderate rate of 3%, totaling 440,196 sea visitors. This leveling off suggests a shift from post-pandemic recovery to a more stable and mature phase of growth.

Cruise arrivals have been the main driver of this resurgence, accounting for the vast majority of passengers and showing consistent annual increases in both ship calls and visitor numbers. Yacht arrivals, while more modest, have shown steady improvement and appear to be stabilizing, contributing to the diversity of the tourism product.

Overall, the data reflects a resilient and expanding sea-based tourism sector, with strong cruise performance leading the recovery and gradual stabilization setting the stage for sustainable growth moving forward.

