

Willemstad on Foot

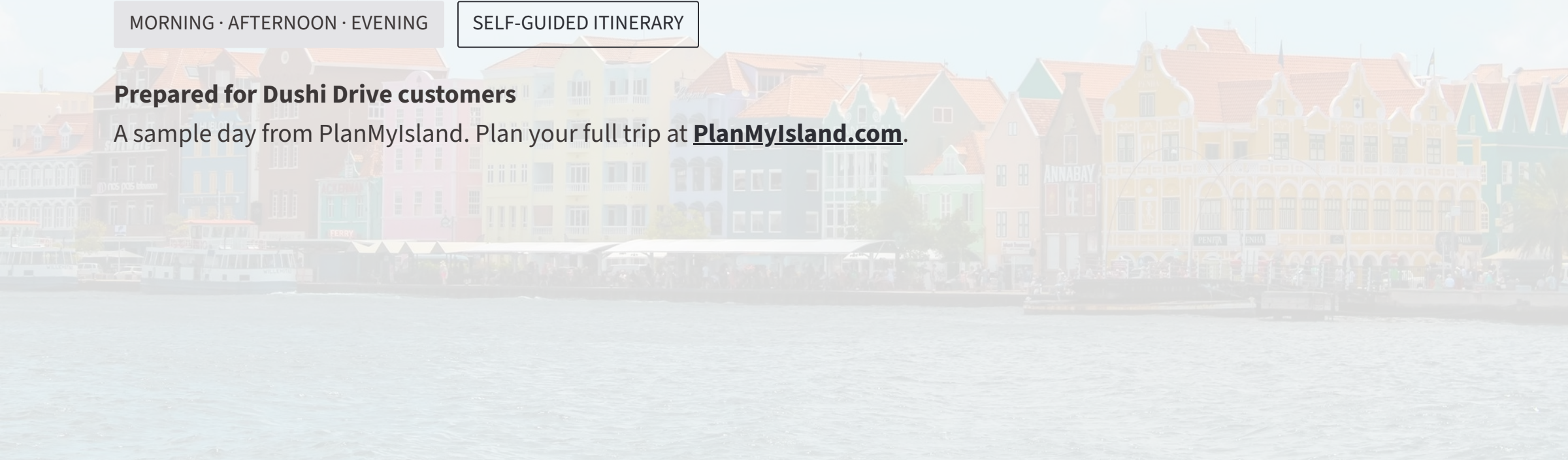
One day. Three neighborhoods. No car needed after you park.

MORNING · AFTERNOON · EVENING

SELF-GUIDED ITINERARY

Prepared for Dushi Drive customers

A sample day from PlanMyIsland. Plan your full trip at [**PlanMyIsland.com**](https://PlanMyIsland.com).



Today at a Glance

One day. Three neighborhoods. Routed so everything connects.



Park Once, Walk Everything

Renaissance Mall Garage, Otrobanda

Park at the Renaissance Mall garage in Otrobanda. Free parking is available, and the garage has more than 500 spaces across five levels. It is the easiest place to start this walk because you avoid hunting for street parking in Punda. Treat it as day-use parking; overnight parking is limited to resort guests. On arrival, follow the garage entry instructions at the barrier.

Address: Baden Powellweg 1, Otrobanda

[Open in Google Maps](#)



Day use only. Do not leave the car overnight unless you are a hotel guest at the Renaissance Wind Creek resort.



Do not rely on street parking near Handelskade or the Floating Market. In most parts of Punda and large sections of Otrobanda, paid parking applies Monday to Saturday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. at 1 Cg / XCG per hour. The Renaissance garage is private and is not part of this paid system. It stays free.



Leave nothing visible in the car. Petty theft can happen, especially when valuables are left in vehicles or unattended in busy tourist areas.

Staying nearby the night before? **Pietermaai** puts you in walking distance of everything on this itinerary and skips the parking question entirely.

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Morning: Rif Fort & the Harbor Views

9:15 AM · FIRST STOP AFTER PARKING

From the garage, walk directly through the Rif Fort complex. Built in 1828, it is now integrated into the Renaissance Mall. Walk the fort ramparts for the best harbor views in Willemstad, looking across St. Anna Bay to the Punda waterfront. Free to enter and walk through. Open daily from roughly 9 a.m.

Built 1828, now integrated into the Renaissance Mall complex	Entry Free to enter and walk through, open daily from roughly 9 a.m.	Highlight Fort ramparts offer the best harbor views in all of Willemstad
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Rif Fort on Google Maps

Walk a Few Blocks into Otrobanda Before You Cross

Most visitors treat Otrobanda as the place they parked and nothing more. Give it fifteen minutes before crossing the bridge. From Brionplein, wander the side streets inland. Otrobanda is the more lived-in, local half of Willemstad, with restored colonial houses, hand-painted murals tucked around corners, and locals playing dominoes in the shade. The street art here is some of the best on the island.

Anders Shakes (Optional) Look for Anders Shakes near Brionplein, a local batido stop. A batido is a made-to-order tropical fruit shake of fresh blended local fruit, with or without milk and sugar. Bring small cash just in case.	Kurá Hulanda Museum (Optional Deeper Stop) Klipstraat 9, a short walk inland. Covers the transatlantic slave trade, West African kingdoms, and Curaçao's own history. Budget 60 to 90 minutes. Hours can vary, so check current opening times before building it into your day. Around 10 USD per adult. Museum on Google Maps
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Cross the Queen Emma Bridge into Punda



From the Rif Fort waterfront, walk to Brionplein at the foot of the Queen Emma pontoon bridge. Cross on foot into Punda. The crossing is free and takes about two minutes. You land directly on **Handelskade**, the iconic row of pastel Dutch colonial buildings that lines the waterfront. This is one of the most photographed views in Curaçao.

Queen Emma Bridge



Bridge Tip: Know Your Flags

Blue flag: A longer full opening, often 45 minutes or more. Two free ferries run from a jetty at the bridge landing.

Orange flag: A shorter partial opening, usually around 10 minutes or less. Pedestrians can often stay on the bridge as it pivots.

Do not stand waiting at a closed bridge.

Prefer a guided walk with a local? A guided tour covers both neighborhoods with historical context most self-guided visitors miss.

[Book the Willemstad Walking Tour](#)

Punda Morning: Synagogue, Floating Market & Dushi Sign

Mikvé Israel Emanuel Synagogue

Two blocks south of Handelskade. The **oldest synagogue in continuous use in the Americas**, consecrated in 1732. The sand floor is one of the more unexpected things you will see all trip. Entry includes the adjoining Jewish Museum.

Hours: Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (last entry) | **Cost:** 18 USD per person

[View on Map](#)

The Floating Market

Walk west along De Ruyterkade from Handelskade toward the Waaigat inlet. The Floating Market sits on Sha Caprileskade, about a 7 to 10 minute walk from the bridge. Venezuelan boats dock here and sell fresh fruit, fish, and vegetables.

It runs best on **weekday mornings from around 7 a.m.** onward. Since the Venezuelan maritime border reopened in 2023, a small number of Venezuelan boats have returned to the market. Treat it as a short atmospheric stop, not a full market experience.

[View on Map](#)

Quick Photo Stop: The Dushi Sign

A two-minute walk from the Synagogue, at Wilhelmina Park in Punda, are the giant Dushi and Curacao letters. Dushi is Papiamentu for sweet or lovely, and the colorful signs are one of Willemstad's most popular photo stops. Free, takes five minutes, and the morning light is good. The Chichi statue, the proud Caribbean big sister figure, stands in the same park.

Afternoon: Lunch at Plasa Bieu

12:15 PM · THE OLD MARKET

From the Floating Market area, continue to Plasa Bieu in Punda. It is about a five minute walk. Several independent Krioyo kitchens cook in an open covered hall with communal long tables. Dishes rotate around kabritu stoba (goat stew), piska ku funchi (fish with cornmeal), kèshi yena (stuffed cheese), galiña stoba (chicken stew), and sopi (soup). There is no printed menu. Walk to each stall, see what is cooking, and point at what you want.



Kabritu Stoba

Goat stew, the most popular dish. Often gone by 1:30 to 2:00 p.m.



Piska ku Funchi

Fish with cornmeal, a Curaçaoan staple



Kèshi Yena

Stuffed cheese, a rich, savory local classic



Galiña Stoba

Chicken stew and sopi (soup) round out the rotating menu



Sit down by 12:30. The most popular dishes, especially goat, are often gone by 1:30 to 2:00 p.m. The kitchens wind down around 3 p.m.



Payment: Bring small cash. USD and XCG are both accepted but cash is strongly preferred. Confirm prices before they plate your food, especially for drinks.



Plasa Bieu hours vary by stall. Weekdays and Saturdays are the safest bet. Sunday can be limited or unreliable, so call ahead before planning lunch around it. Phone: +599 9 524 8529.

Backup if Plasa Bieu is closed or packed: Plein Café Wilhelmina at Wilhelmina Park, a ten minute walk east, serves local plates in an open air setting. Note: Marshe Nobo / Plasa Nobo (the round market next to Plasa Bieu) has been undergoing renovation. Check locally whether it is open before adding it as a stop.

[Plasa Bieu on Google Maps](#)

After Lunch: Find Shade

The Heat Window

Do not start the Pietermaai walk immediately after lunch. Use the early afternoon for shade or a long slow coffee nearby. Start around 3:30 to 4:00 p.m. when the light on the east-facing facades is at its best and the heat begins to ease.

Good Options for This Window

→ Plasa Nobo, if open

Check whether the round market next to Plasa Bieu is open, then take a quick look around one of Punda's local gathering spaces.

→ Long Slow Coffee

Find a café with interior seating and let the afternoon heat pass over you.

Late Afternoon: Walk East into Pietermaai

3:30–4:00 PM · BEST LIGHT OF THE DAY

From Plasa Bieu, walk east along the waterfront for about 10 minutes into the Pietermaai District. The first five minutes is exposed with little shade. Comfortable shoes matter here, the cobblestones are uneven and parts of the district are still under restoration.



Pastel Colonial Architecture

Pastel Dutch colonial buildings line Nieuwestraat and the side streets, almost all restored in the last fifteen years.



Perfect Photo Light

The late afternoon light on the east-facing facades is the best of the day for photos. The trade wind picks up by 4 p.m. and makes outdoor sitting genuinely pleasant.



Street Murals

Street murals appear every half block. Walk without a fixed plan and let the art surprise you around every corner.



Trade Wind Patios

The trade wind picks up in the late afternoon and makes outdoor café sitting genuinely pleasant by 4 p.m.

[Pietermaai District on Google Maps](#)

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Evening: Dinner at Kome

6:00 PM ONWARD · BOOK AHEAD

Stay in Pietermaai for dinner at Kome (6 Johan van Walbeeckplein), a chef-driven modern Caribbean restaurant known for locally sourced cooking, a wood-fired grill, custom smoker, in-house bakeshop, and a strong beverage program.

Price Range

Expect upward of 40 USD per person

Hours

Tue through Sat, noon to 10 p.m. Saturday brunch 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Reserve at komecuracao.com

Map



Kome is CLOSED Sunday and Monday. Plan accordingly. The patio fills early, so reserve online before your trip.



Thursday bonus: If your visit falls on a Thursday, stay later in Punda after dinner. **Punda Vibes** is a weekly street festival with live music, food stalls, and fireworks, one of the most enjoyable free things on the island.

End the Day on the Bridge

To get back to your car, walk back through Punda and cross the Queen Emma Bridge into Otrobanda. If a ship is passing, the bridge swings open and the whole pontoon span pivots across the bay. It is one of the best free things to watch in Willemstad, and the harbor at dusk is the right note to end the day on. From the Otrobanda side it is a short walk back to the Renaissance garage.

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Local Tips & Why This Route Works

Currency

Curaçao's currency is the Caribbean guilder (XCG), introduced March 31, 2025. USD is widely accepted at roughly **1 USD to 1.79 XCG**. Most stores, restaurants, and hotels accept debit and credit cards, but keep small cash in XCG or USD for markets, taxis, small vendors, and places that do not take cards.

The Most Common Mistakes to Avoid

✗

Parking on the street in Punda

Paying by the hour while worrying about the meter. The Renaissance garage in Otrobanda is free, covered, and a two-minute walk to Rif Fort.

✗

Arriving at Plasa Bieu after 1 p.m.

The most popular dishes, especially goat, are gone. This plan times lunch for when the main kitchens still have food.

✗

Walking Pietermaai too early

The midday heat makes this walk less enjoyable. Start around 3:30 to 4:00 p.m. instead, when the light improves, the air feels cooler, and the trade wind starts to pick up.

✗

Skipping the bridge flag system

Waiting 25 minutes at a closed bridge when two free ferries are running from the jetty. Know the flags before you cross.

Why Starting in Otrobanda Is Smarter

- 01

Park free at Renaissance garage

Free, covered, and usually removes the stress of hunting for street parking.
- 02

See Rif Fort & harbor views first

The visual reward of Handelskade hits you fresh as you land on the Punda side
- 03

Cross the Queen Emma Bridge

The whole morning unfolds without backtracking
- 04

Lunch timed perfectly at Plasa Bieu

Main kitchens still cooking when you arrive
- 05

Pietermaai in the golden hour

Best light, cooler air, trade wind on the patio

This is one day. Your full trip is built the same way. Routed around your pace, your must-dos, and what actually fits together.

Get Your Full Curaçao Itinerary

Built around your dates, pace, must-dos, and route.

[PlanMyIsland.com](https://planmyisland.com)



Scan to plan your full Curaçao itinerary