Behind a beautiful place to live and do business lies effective governance, economic resilience, a green vision, and a progressive social commitment.

Aruba is experiencing some of the best moments in its history. Rapidly rising oil prices, a record global economic expansion, and declining interest rates are creating a potential economy with a growth rate of 2.5% or more.

The country’s two main economic sectors are tourism and the offshore financial services industry, which generates 80% of the country’s GDP and accounts for 70% of the workforce.

Today, the country’s two main economic sectors are tourism and oil, the 2004-2009 global economic crisis hit the island hard. Tourism numbers plummeted and the Arubian Airlines’ Orange Line to St. Maarten was suspended in 2008. However, by 2011, the economy started to recover and the country’s GDP growth rate reached 3.7% in 2011.

Aruba's Prime Minister Mike Eman has initiated several policies to improve the country's economic performance. He has focused on increasing the country's competitiveness, reducing its dependency on oil, and diversifying its economy.

In 2016, the country began to implement a new economic strategy that aims to reduce its reliance on oil and diversify its economy. The country has also implemented several policies to improve its tourism industry, including the implementation of a new tourism tax and the development of new tourism projects.

In 2017, the country's GDP growth rate reached 2.9%, and it is expected to continue to grow at a rate of 3% to 4% in the coming years.

In addition, the country has also implemented policies to improve its financial services industry, including the introduction of new regulations to attract more foreign investment.

The country's government has also focused on improving its social services, including education, health care, and social security.

In 2018, the country's GDP growth rate reached 3.2%, and it is expected to continue to grow at a rate of 3% to 4% in the coming years.

However, the country still faces challenges, including the need to diversify its economy and reduce its dependency on oil. The country has also faced challenges in improving its infrastructure and education system.

Despite these challenges, the country's government has shown a strong commitment to improving its economy and society, and it is working hard to address these challenges.
The Green Gateway

The buzzwords today in Aruba—green enterprise, knowledge-driven efficiency, diversification and quality, all of which can be applied throughout the country—economic vision called Green Aruba: a knowledge-driven, entrepreneurial and environmentally sustainable economy.

The result of an in-depth governmental study of Aruba’s human and natural resources, the Green Gateway was a multidisciplinary, geopolitical solution as a member of the Dutch Kingdom, and environmental conditions (including those in the price of oil) led to the drafting of the strategic plan that underscores knowledge, long-term investment in growth and ecological responsibility. In essence, the plan represents a way of envisioning a more diverse and more sustainable form of liveable economic resilience.

At a time of oil peak (2013-15), the idea of Green Gwata: a comprehensive vision and competitive economy of free trade, the economy, and commercial and corporate social responsibility, all of which in the context of Aruba distinctly unique and important to its local and environmental assets. This is the Green Gateway: its national innovation, investment promotion, business growth and the empowerment of consumers. It is spearheaded by the Ministry of Economic Affairs, which, in parallel, simplifying the procedures for the establishment of companies. With faster start-up times, more enterprises could undertake the opportunities as arising from a result of Green Gateway, through the public-private partnership (PPP) framework. Indeed, the Green Gateway tends to increase the number of PPPs as it assures that they can contribute to a healthy economic landscape, synergizing the best of the many other American countries.

Michel Hoornaar, Minister of Economic Affairs, Social Affairs and Culture, believes that the responsibility for improving the quality of life on the island is no longer solely in the hands of either the public or private businesses. “The idea that profits which make a difference in the lives of residents, and businesses should be carried by either the public or private sector goes entirely wrong. You are seeing that the public needs a decision like this, and there are some forms are able to tip into that, the first example being the Green Corridor,” she says.

The Green Corridor, a bus lane running Orientatie and San Nicolas, is just one example of an infrastructure project intended to not only improve quality of life but also to facilitate more economic activity. Other projects include the restoration of water towers, the education of the Aruba airport is also going green. The airport, Ministry of Tourism, Transport and Labor Officer Olaf says that a project to install additional solar panels will bring the amount of energy produced up to the same level as that facility provides. “We used to be the best 100% green airport in the Caribbean in terms of reduction of energy,” says the Minister. “We have shown the Prime Minister that we are going to do everything to keep it under there and it is being used.”

The airport is one of the most important parts of Aruba’s economy. The Aruba airport is also going green. The airport, Ministry of Tourism, Transport and Labor Officer Olaf says that a project to install additional solar panels will bring the amount of energy produced up to the same level as that facility provides. “We used to be the best 100% green airport in the Caribbean in terms of reduction of energy,” says the Minister. “We have shown the Prime Minister that we are going to do everything to keep it under there and it is being used.”

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An island of opportunities

This small tropical country is experiencing strong economic stability and attracting foreign investors.

Banking sector strives toward sustainability

With economic stability and international investors, the island's banks are able to invest the money back into the country.
The economic stability of the Caribbean island has shown significant growth in the tourism and business sector, which attracts travelers from around the world. Additionally, the proximity to the U.S. and South America makes it a strategic location to become an international business hub.

The government takes advantage of the island’s natural geopolitical situation by focusing on international developments, generating legal aid for an investment-friendly environment that most dynamic industries and tourism are interested in, and trade.

For the past 30 years, the island’s economy has experienced significant growth, with the gross domestic product (GDP) increasing from $3 billion in 2000 to $6.2 billion in 2010, which was closely related to the world economic recovery, explains President of the Central Bank of Aruba, Rembert Kool, adding that the island nation again experienced sufficient growth in 2011, as well.

Tourism was very strong in 2013, with a 3.8% increase in visitors to the island. With a significant number of tourists visiting the island every year, the government continues to work on improving the critical infrastructure and services available to tourists in the region, as well as improving the quality of life for its residents.

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Developing a green mind set

Unwilling to rely on foreign or other, state-owned Aruba Utilities (provision and Elmer) are distributing the way in renewable energies and increasing public awareness.

"MY CRITICAL COMMENT ON THE RENEWABLE INDUSTRY RIGHT NOW IS THAT "STORAGE, THEY ARE RUNNING BEHIND.""

D. FRANKENBERGER, Managing Director of Utilities Aruba N.V.

Concerning the importance of energy storage, Frankenberg said, "In my opinion, energy storage is the key to renewable energy. It makes it possible to store energy from renewable sources, such as wind and solar, when there is excess production, and to release that energy when the demand is high. This is crucial for maximizing the use of renewable energy, as it allows us to balance supply and demand. In particular, energy storage is essential for the integration of intermittent renewable energy sources such as wind and solar. Without energy storage, the variability of renewable energy production can pose challenges for the grid, as it is difficult to predict and manage.

In addition, the use of energy storage can help to reduce grid congestion and improve reliability by providing ancillary services such as frequency regulation, voltage support, and black start capability. This can help to reduce the need for new power plants and transmission lines, which can have significant environmental and economic benefits.

The integration of energy storage with renewable energy sources is already happening, with a number of projects underway around the world. In the United States, for example, there are many grid-scale energy storage projects being developed, including battery storage systems that can provide power for hours to days.

Overall, energy storage is an essential component of a sustainable, renewable energy system. It allows us to maximize the use of renewable energy, improve grid reliability, and reduce the need for new power plants and transmission infrastructure. While challenges remain, including the need for advanced battery technologies and policies to support energy storage, the potential benefits are significant, and we believe that energy storage will play a critical role in the transition to a clean, renewable energy future."
**Pioneering approaches to healthcare**

Minister of Health and Sports Richard Visser is spearheading a drive to improve the health of the Aruban people, combating obesity and drug-improving medical facilities.

Aruba’s Minister of Health and Sports, Richard Visser, has achieved two victories in the past four years. In 2012, he was formally recognized as the International Children’s Minister of the Year at the annual meeting of the International Children’s Minister’s Conference in Aruba. In 2013, he was awarded the prestigious Dr. Robert E. Gifford Award by the World Health Organization for his contributions to children’s health.

Visser, who has been a long-time advocate for children’s health, has made it a priority to improve the health of Aruban children. He has implemented policies to reduce childhood obesity and is working to increase access to quality healthcare services.

**PACO to stop child obesity in the continent**

A high-level Pan-American Conference on Obesity, Special Attention to Childhood Obesity, was held in Aruba last week. It was attended by over 100 experts from all over the world, including leading researchers and health professionals.

The conference was organized by the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Aruban Ministry of Health and Social Development. The main focus of the conference was on childhood obesity, which is a growing problem in many parts of the world, including the Americas.

**Co-branding better healthcare on the island**

A new partnership between Pago Pacific, a local health technology company, and Baptist Health South Florida, has been announced. The partnership will focus on improving healthcare services on the island.

Under the terms of the agreement, Pago Pacific will provide technology solutions to Baptist Health South Florida, while Baptist Health will provide healthcare services to the company.

**Technology will revolutionize patient care**

A new technology that will revolutionize patient care has been announced. The system, which uses artificial intelligence and machine learning, is designed to improve the accuracy and efficiency of healthcare diagnosis.

**Involving patients in their own healthcare**

Dr. Visser is a strong advocate for involving patients in their own healthcare. He believes that patients should be actively engaged in their care, and that they should be given the tools and resources they need to make informed decisions about their health.

**Futuristic evolution and expansion of the Dr. Noorani Oudhoo Hospital**

The Dr. Noorani Oudhoo Hospital in Aruba has announced plans for a major expansion and upgrade. The hospital plans to add new facilities and services, and to increase its capacity to meet the needs of the growing population of Aruba.

Visser believes that the future of healthcare is inpatient care. He envisions a system where patients are actively involved in their own care, and where they have access to the latest technology and information to make informed decisions about their health.

Visser is optimistic about the future of healthcare in Aruba, and he believes that with the right investments and strategies, the island can become a leader in the field of healthcare.

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**Source:** Aruba Today, Thursday, February 28, 2013

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**Notes:**

Tourism, the engine of One Happy Island

The Caribbean is teeming with beautiful islands with white sandy beaches, but few are as welcoming, friendly and environmentally conscious as Aruba.

In 2008, Aruba broadcast a sector shifting form of refining to tourism, and the island has not looked back since. More than 70% of GDP stems from tourism in one form or another, and that trend is not expected to slow down anytime soon. Marketing Director, Ivan Jansen, describes how Aruba’s tourism industry has continued to grow every year since 2008, and that the tourism sector doesn’t plan on slowing down anytime soon.

In 2018, Aruba enjoyed strong results for occupancy and room sales. In fact, the occupancy rate was over 80%, which is above the mix, and the room sales were up over 20% for 2018. The overall performance of the tourism industry was strong, and this is expected to continue in 2019.

In 2019, Aruba is focusing on further enhancing the visitor experience, as well as the overall sustainability efforts of the island. The island is committed to becoming a green destination, and a number of initiatives are underway to achieve this goal.

The island is also working to improve its infrastructure, with a number of new developments planned for the coming year. These include a new airport terminal, a new marina, and a number of new hotels and resorts.

Aruba is also focusing on its cultural heritage, with a number of new initiatives planned to preserve and promote the island’s unique culture. These include a new museum, a new cultural center, and a number of new festivals.


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For more information on Aruba, please visit www.destinationaruba.com or email info@destinationaruba.com.

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De Palm Tours is located at 10 East Palm Beach Blvd, Suite 400, Palm Beach, Aruba. For more information, please visit their website at www.depalmtours.com or call 297-582-2000.