

Africa, Caribbean & Americas Country Profiles — Global Relocation & Investment Guide

Compiled May 2026 | Research covers 2024–2025 data across 40+ verified sources

PART I — AFRICA

1. MAURITIUS

English Proficiency

Official language alongside French and Kreol Morisien. English used in government, courts, and business. Population practically bilingual (English/French). **EF EPI: High Proficiency regionally.** No language barrier for English speakers.

Visa & Residency Options

Premium Visa (Digital Nomad / Long-Stay):

- Min monthly income: **\$1,500 USD** (+\$1,500/additional adult; +\$500/child).
- Proof of remote work/business outside Mauritius + travel + health insurance.
- **Zero government application fee** — entirely online.
- Duration: 1 year, **renewable indefinitely**. Processing: as fast as 7 days.

Residence Permit via Property (PDS/IRS/Smart City):

- Investing in approved scheme property → residence permit valid while property held.
- Min investment in PDS: **\$375,000 USD** (current scheme thresholds).

Investor/Business Residency: Min business investment MUR 6 million (~\$135,000) over 3 years.

Retired Non-Citizen Permit: Min transfer of \$1,500/month (\$18,000/year) to local bank. Valid 10 years, renewable.

Taxation

- **Flat 15% income tax** — one of the lowest globally.
- Foreign-sourced income taxed **only if remitted to a Mauritian bank account** (de facto remittance basis).
- **No capital gains tax, no wealth tax, no inheritance tax.**

- Premium Visa holders staying under 183 days avoid tax residency entirely.
- **2025 Finance Act:** Fair Share Contribution (FSC) of 15% on net income exceeding ~\$265,000 — only affects very high earners.
- Corporate tax: Flat 15%; Global Business Companies (GBCs) enjoy additional treaty benefits.

Property Rights

- **2025 rule change (Finance Act 2025):** Foreigners may only buy property within **government-approved schemes** (PDS, IRS, Smart City, G+2/R+2 developments).
- Standalone freehold land outside schemes: **Restricted to Mauritian citizens.**
- Approved scheme purchases typically yield **freehold title** within the scheme boundary.

Farmland/Agricultural Land

- **Restricted.** Foreign nationals cannot purchase agricultural land or beachfront property without special government approval.

Cost of Living (1 Person, Comfortable)

~\$1,500–\$2,500 USD/month. 1-bed Grand Baie/Tamarin: €900–1,800/month (\$980–\$1,960). Port Louis modest: \$300–\$450/month. Mauritius ~45% cheaper than the US overall; rent ~72% cheaper.

Healthcare

- Two-tier: free public + private sector.
- **Wellkin Hospital, Clinique Darné** — cater to expats with advanced technology.
- Medical tourism destination. Artemis Cascavelle Hospital (110+ beds) opened April 2026.
- Private health insurance: ~\$150–\$300/month.

Safety

GPI 2024: Rank #26 globally — Africa's safest country for 5 consecutive years. Very low crime; mostly petty theft. Safer than Britain, New Zealand, Sweden by crime comparison. Solo women: safe with normal precautions.

Internet & Infrastructure

- Fixed broadband: ~55–69 Mbps (100% fiber-to-home since 2017).
- Coworking in Port Louis, Ebène Cybercity, Grand Baie.

Path to Citizenship

- **Naturalization: 5 years** (Commonwealth citizens); **7 years** (non-Commonwealth).
- **By investment: \$500,000 + 2 years** residence.
- **Dual citizenship: Allowed by birth/descent;** those naturalizing generally must **renounce** prior citizenship.

Expat Community

Well-established and growing. Large South African, French, and European communities in Grand Baie, Tamarin, Moka, Black River area. ~15,000–20,000 expats total.

Arab Diaspora Notes

- **Muslim population: ~17%** — Islam has been part of Mauritian society since the 19th century.
- Mosques in every major town; **Jummah Mosque** (Port Louis, built 1850s).
- Halal food widely available; Port Louis Central Market largely halal; supermarkets stock halal-certified meat.
- **Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha are national public holidays.**
- **Rating: ★★★★★ — Excellent Muslim-friendly environment**

STR / Airbnb Data

Metric	Data
Legal Status	Legal; low regulation profile
ADR	\$182 average; Black River: \$120; luxury: \$207–\$853
Occupancy	Overall: ~38.5%; Black River: ~58%
Monthly Revenue	~\$1,503 avg; Black River: ~\$12,506
Best Areas	Flic en Flac (Black River), Grand Baie, Trou aux Biches, Blue Bay
Key Risk	Ranks lowest 38% for Sub-Saharan Africa STR yield; foreign property purchase restricted to approved schemes

Sam's Business Score: 8.5/10

- **World Bank: Rank 13 globally; Africa's top business destination**
- Global Business Licence (GBL): Corporate tax effective ~3% via 80% partial exemption on foreign-source income
- 100% foreign ownership; no withholding tax on dividends
- Formation: ~2–4 weeks (FSC licensed management company required)
- Access to **45+ Double Tax Agreements** (India, Africa network, France, UK, UAE)
- **Best holding structure for African investments**

2. RWANDA

English Proficiency

Official language (alongside Kinyarwanda and French). Rwanda switched primary education medium to English in 2008. English widely spoken in Kigali's business, government, and tourism sectors.

Visa & Residency Options

Investor Permit:

- Min investment: **\$250,000 USD** (various sectors — real estate, agriculture, manufacturing, ICT, hospitality).
- Rwanda Development Board (RDB) facilitated; investment certificate issued.
- Processing: **7 business days**. Provides multi-year residency.

Citizenship by Investment (Direct Route):

- Min investment: **\$100,000 USD** in Rwanda's economy.
- Timeline: 1–3 years with government discretion.

No dedicated retirement or digital nomad visa as of 2025.

Taxation

- Progressive: 0% (up to RWF 360,000/year), 20%, **30% on higher income**.
- **Worldwide taxation** for tax residents — residents taxed on global income.
- Non-residents: Rwanda-sourced income only.
- Investment incentives: RDB offers **tax holidays up to 7 years**, reduced corporate rates (15%) for qualifying investments.
- **No capital gains tax on publicly traded securities**.

Property Rights

- Foreigners **cannot own freehold land outright** — all land is government-owned in Rwanda.
- **Long-term leases: Up to 99 years** (residential); foreigners can hold these leases.
- Investment certificate required from RDB for land plots over 300 sqm or multiple units.

Farmland/Agricultural Land

- Cannot own freehold. **Commercial agricultural leases available** via Rwandan-registered company with RDB investment certificate.

Cost of Living (1 Person, Comfortable)

~**\$1,700–\$2,500 USD/month** in Kigali. 1-bed city center: ~\$567/month. 1-bed outside center: ~\$364/month. Groceries: ~\$146/month.

Healthcare

- **King Faisal Hospital Kigali** — 160-bed quaternary; COHSASA-accredited (ISQua-endorsed).
- Surgery, cardiology, oncology, critical care, dental.
- Best in Central/East Africa for specialized care; still below Western standards.
- Comprehensive insurance with **medical evacuation** coverage essential.

Safety

GPI 2024: Rank #92 (improved 4 places YoY). Crime safety index: 73.2 — **highest in Africa**, only African country >60 points. Kigali: Clean, well-policed. Solo women: One of Africa's safest cities.

Internet & Infrastructure

- Fastest broadband per capita in Africa.
- Fixed: ~29–33 Mbps. Mobile: median 21 Mbps.
- Coworking: **Norrskén House** (major hub), Impact Hub, Kigali Innovation City.

Path to Citizenship

- **Standard: 15 years** legal residence.
- By marriage to Rwandan: **3 years**.
- CBI: \$100,000 investment; 1–3 years government discretion.
- **Dual citizenship: Rwanda ALLOWS dual citizenship** — no requirement to renounce prior nationality.

Expat Community

Growing, emerging. NGO workers, diplomats, tech entrepreneurs. ~5,000–10,000 expats; large international organization presence (African Union, UN). Digital nomad scene at Norrskén House.

Arab Diaspora Notes

- Muslim population: ~2% of Rwanda.
- **~500 mosques nationwide**; Kigali Mosque serves as central hub.
- Halal food in Kigali: Khana Khazana, Umut Cafe (Turkish/Mediterranean).
- **Rating: ★★★★★** — Moderate; functional infrastructure but not culturally prominent

STR / Airbnb Data

Metric	Data
Legal Status	Legal; no specific licensing framework
ADR	Kigali: \$42 typical; top 25%: \$81+; Kinyinya: \$147+
Occupancy	~37% average
Monthly Revenue	~\$808 average; 338 active listings
Best Areas	Kigali (Kinyinya, Kicukiro), near Volcanoes National Park
Key Risk	Very small market; low revenue; primarily business/NGO traveler base

Sam's Business Score: 8/10

- **World Bank: Rank 38 globally; #1 in Africa**

- Formation: **6 hours** (online; no physical presence required)
 - **\$0 government registration fees**
 - Corporate tax: 28% (reduced from 30% in 2024); 0% for international HQ companies
 - 100% foreign ownership; no sector restrictions for foreign investment
 - RDB offers tax holidays up to 7 years (15% CIT for qualifying investments)
 - Kigali SEZ (KSEZ) available
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3. SOUTH AFRICA

English Proficiency

One of 12 official languages — dominant language of business, government, media, and higher education. **EF EPI: High Proficiency.** Widely spoken across all demographics in cities.

Visa & Residency Options

Retired Person Visa (Section 20):

- Min income: **ZAR 37,000/month (~\$2,072 USD)** from pension, annuity, dividends, or rental income.
- **No minimum age requirement** (unique globally).
- Duration: up to **4 years**, renewable.
- No investment requirement.
- Documentation: proof of income, private medical insurance, bank statements.
- Processing: 8–12 weeks.

Financially Independent Permit (Permanent):

- Net worth of **ZAR 12 million (~\$670,000 USD)**. Direct permanent residence.

No formal digital nomad visa as of 2025 (discussed but not launched).

Taxation

- **Worldwide taxation** for residents — South Africa taxes residents on global income.
- Rates: Progressive 18–45% (top rate above ZAR 1.87M/year).
- **Foreign employment exemption:** Up to **ZAR 1.25 million/year (~\$70,000)** exempt if working abroad for 183+ days (60 continuous).
- Capital gains: Up to 18% effective.
- No wealth tax, no inheritance tax (estate duty 20% on net estate above ZAR 3.5M).
- **80+ double taxation agreements.**

Property Rights

- **Full freehold ownership** available to foreigners — same rights as citizens. No nationality restrictions. No price minimums.
- Agricultural land: Currently unrestricted for foreign purchase; political scrutiny ongoing around land reform. No legislation enacted restricting foreign agricultural ownership as of 2025.

Farmland/Agricultural Land

- **Legally permitted** for foreigners — no blanket prohibition. Due diligence on restitution claims essential for rural/agricultural land.

Cost of Living (1 Person, Comfortable)

~\$1,500–\$2,000 USD/month (Cape Town or Johannesburg). Cost index: 38.6/100 (NYC = 100) — highly affordable for Western-income earners.

Healthcare

- **Ranked #1 in Africa; #49 globally** (Health Care Index 2025).
- **215 private hospitals** with international standards (Netcare, Mediclinic, Life Healthcare).
- GP: \$20–\$40; specialists: \$50–\$100. **Strong medical tourism destination.**
- Use private healthcare only — public system severely strained.

Safety

GPI 2024: Rank #127. Crime Index 2024: 75.4 — highest in Africa; ranked 5th most dangerous globally by Numbeo. Homicide rate: ~36/100,000.

- **Mitigation:** Most expats live in gated communities. Cape Town Atlantic Seaboard and Johannesburg northern suburbs have reasonable day-to-day safety.
- Solo women: Significant caution required; avoid walking alone after dark; use ride-shares.

Internet & Infrastructure

- Urban: 40–80 Mbps fiber widely available. **Load-shedding (rolling blackouts):** Infrastructure risk — improved 2024–2025 but requires UPS/generator backup.
- Coworking: Workshop17, Regus, The Workspace (Cape Town, Jo'burg, Pretoria).

Path to Citizenship

- Permanent residence: 5 years continuous temp permit. Naturalization: 5 years as PR. **Total: ~10 years.**
- **Dual citizenship: NOW FULLY ALLOWED** — Constitutional Court ruled 2025 that stripping citizenship for acquiring another nationality is unlawful.
- Language requirement: Proficiency in at least 1 of 12 official languages.

Expat Community

Very large and well-established. Hundreds of thousands of expats across Cape Town, Johannesburg, Durban, Pretoria. Strong British, European, American, Australian communities.

Arab Diaspora Notes

- Muslim population: ~~2%~~ (1.1 million) — historic **Cape Malay community (350+ years)**, plus immigrant communities.
- **~1,000 mosques nationwide** — strong in Cape Town (Bo-Kaap neighborhood, historically Muslim), Johannesburg, Durban.
- **Bo-Kaap (Cape Town):** Historic Muslim quarter; Nurul Islam, Shafee mosque; one of Africa's oldest Muslim communities.
- **Fordsburg/Mayfair (Johannesburg):** Predominantly Muslim with halal markets, restaurants, Islamic schools.
- Multiple halal certifying bodies (SANHA, NIHT); extensive halal-certified restaurants and butcheries.
- **Rating: ★★★★★ — One of Africa's most established Muslim communities**

STR / Airbnb Data

Metric	Data
Legal Status	Legal; Cape Town by-law permits STR (max 30 consecutive days same guest)
Recent Regulations	2025–2026: Cape Town using occupancy data to assess commercial rates for primarily-STR properties
ADR	R1,719 (~\$92); top areas command \$150–\$300
Occupancy	63–71% median; top hosts: 70–80%
Annual Revenue	R451K (\$24K) per listing
Best Areas	V&A Waterfront, Sea Point, Camps Bay, Clifton, CBD; Cape Winelands
Key Risk	Commercial rate reclassification risk for full-time STR operators; safety concerns affect some areas

Sam's Business Score: 6/10

- World Bank: Rank 84
 - Corporate tax: 27% (from 28% April 2023)
 - Formation: ~1 month online via CIPC; low government fees
 - 100% foreign ownership in most sectors
 - **BEE (Black Economic Empowerment) requirements** in some sectors — significant barrier
 - Exchange controls; currency volatility (ZAR)
 - Dividends tax: 20%
 - Free zones: Coega IDZ, East London IDZ, Dube TradePort
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4. KENYA

English Proficiency

Official language alongside Swahili. Used in government, courts, education, and business. **EF EPI: Moderate to High.** One of East Africa's most English-accessible countries.

Visa & Residency Options

Class K Permit (Retirement / Ordinary Resident):

- Min age: 35+ (45+ preferred for approval). Not working in Kenya.
- Income: **\$24,000 USD/year** (\$2,000/month) from outside Kenya.
- Processing fee: KES 20,000 (~~\$155~~) + ~~KES 250,000~~ (~~\$1,940~~)/year issuance.
- Duration: 1–2 years, renewable. Restriction: No employment or income generation within Kenya.

Class G Permit (Investor Visa):

- Min investment: **\$100,000 USD** in a registered Kenyan business.
- Processing: Same fees as Class K. Investor + dependents can live and work in Kenya.
- Requires company registration, PIN, tax compliance, business plan.

No digital nomad visa or golden visa as of 2025.

Taxation

- **Worldwide taxation** for residents (183+ days/year).
- Rates: Progressive 10–30% (top rate on income above KES 800,000/month).
- Non-residents: Kenya-sourced income only.
- **No capital gains tax** on securities traded on Nairobi Securities Exchange.
- Special Economic Zones: 10% for 10 years then 15%; EPZ: 0% for 10 years then 25%.

Property Rights

- **CRITICAL: No freehold title for non-citizens** (Article 65 of Kenya's Constitution).
- Foreigners: **Leasehold only — maximum 99 years.**
- **Practical route:** Register a Kenyan company with 51%+ Kenyan shareholding.

Farmland/Agricultural Land

- **Non-citizens barred from directly owning agricultural land.**
- Indirect ownership via majority-Kenyan company; Land Control Board restrictions apply.
- Presidential exemption required for non-citizen agricultural transactions (very rare).

Cost of Living (1 Person, Comfortable)

~\$1,200–\$1,500 USD/month (Nairobi). 1-bed Westlands/Karen: \$400–\$800/month. **70% cheaper than NYC.**

Healthcare

- **Aga Khan University Hospital Nairobi** — gold standard for expat healthcare in East Africa (JCI-equivalent).
- Nairobi Hospital, MP Shah Hospital also excellent.
- Private insurance with medical evacuation essential; serious cases may require South Africa or Europe.

Safety

GPI 2024: Rank #126 (dropped from #117 in 2023). Elevated crime in Nairobi. Use gated neighborhoods (Karen, Runda, Lavington, Westlands); Uber/Bolt for transport. Solo women: Caution required in Nairobi; Mombasa coastal areas generally safer.

Internet & Infrastructure

- Nairobi: ~31–37 Mbps fixed broadband.
- Coworking: Nairobi Garage, iHub, Nailab — strong ecosystem.
- Mobile: Safaricom 4G widely available; 5G launching.

Path to Citizenship

- **Naturalization: 7+ years** legal residency.
- By marriage to Kenyan: 7 years.
- **Dual citizenship: Kenya ALLOWS dual citizenship.** Disclosure within 3 months required.

Expat Community

Large and well-established. ~50,000–100,000 expats. Strong UN/NGO community (UNEP, Habitat HQ in Nairobi). Growing digital nomad community.

Arab Diaspora Notes

- Muslim population: ~**11%** (~5.2 million) — concentrated in Mombasa/coastal and northeastern counties plus Eastleigh (Nairobi).
- **Jamia Mosque** (Nairobi); historic Mombasa mosques (Fort Jesus area).
- **Mombasa:** Predominantly Swahili Muslim city; halal food ubiquitous; centuries of Arab trading history.
- **Nairobi Eastleigh:** Known as "Little Mogadishu" — Somali Muslim hub with extensive halal restaurants.
- **Rating: ★★★★★** (especially in Mombasa and coastal areas)

STR / Airbnb Data

Metric	Data
Legal Status	Legal; no specific STR licensing nationally
ADR	Nairobi: \$44; prime areas (Kilimani, Westlands): \$60–\$90
Occupancy	Market avg: ~46%; prime areas: 70–80%
Annual Revenue	~\$7K per listing
Gross Yield	10–15% vs. 4–6% for traditional rentals; top performers: 15–25%
Best Areas	Kilimani, Westlands, Karen, Lavington (Nairobi)
Key Risk	High saturation in prime areas; furnishing costs KES 200K–2M

Sam's Business Score: 7/10

- World Bank: Rank 56
- Formation: 1–2 weeks (eCitizen/BRS online); official fee KES 10,650 (~\$82)
- Corporate tax: 30% standard (high); EPZ: 0% for 10 years; SEZ: 10% for 10 years
- 100% foreign ownership in most sectors
- 45 Export Processing Zones, Nairobi SEZ, Mombasa FTZ
- Africa's tech capital; major startup ecosystem (Nairobi "Silicon Savannah")

PART II — CARIBBEAN & AMERICAS

5. BARBADOS

English Proficiency

Sole official and primary language. Native English-speaking island. Bajan Creole is the informal dialect but mutually intelligible. **EF EPI: Very High Proficiency.** Zero language barrier.

Visa & Residency Options

Welcome Stamp (Digital Nomad Visa):

- Min income: **\$50,000 USD/year** (provable remote income).
- Cost: **\$2,000 USD** (individual); **\$3,000 USD** (family).
- Duration: **12 months.** Reapply at 25% discount.
- Must maintain private health insurance; cannot work for Barbadian employers.
- Processing: A few working days; entirely online.
- **Tax benefit: Welcome Stamp holders are exempt from income tax in Barbados.**

Special Entry Permit (Long-Term Residence): Up to 5 years for those with independent means.

Taxation

- Income tax: 12.5% on first BBD 50,000 (~\$25,000 USD); **28.5%** above that.
- **Worldwide taxation** for residents; non-residents taxed on Barbados-source income only.
- **Welcome Stamp holders: Fully exempt from Barbados income tax.**
- No wealth tax, no capital gains tax, no inheritance tax.

Property Rights

- **Full freehold ownership** available to foreigners — same rights as Barbadian citizens.
- **No restrictions.** All foreign funds used for property purchase must be **registered with Central Bank** (required but straightforward).
- Can also own agricultural land.

Farmland/Agricultural Land

- **Foreigners can own agricultural land** in Barbados. Some agricultural-sensitivity parcels may have additional processes. Barbados is a small island — limited agricultural land available.

Cost of Living (1 Person, Comfortable)

~**\$2,500–\$3,500 USD/month**. 1-bed apartment: \$1,000–\$2,000/month. Groceries: ~55% more expensive than the US (\$300–\$450/month). Oriented toward high-income earners.

Healthcare

- **Best healthcare system in the Caribbean** (internationally cited).
- Queen Elizabeth Hospital (1,000+ beds public); Bayview Hospital (new 2024); Sandy Crest Medical Centre.
- GP: \$80–\$150 USD (private). English medium throughout. International insurance: ~\$150–\$400/month.

Safety

Third lowest Crime Index and third highest Safety Index in the Caribbean (Numbeo). Low violent crime. Solo women: Generally very safe by Caribbean standards.

Internet & Infrastructure

- Average broadband: ~**97 Mbps** (2nd fastest in the Caribbean). Excellent fiber. Direct flights to UK, US, Canada.

Path to Citizenship

- **Naturalization: 7 years** (or 5 years via certain investor/PR routes). Good character; English knowledge; declared intent to remain.
- **Dual citizenship: Barbados ALLOWS dual citizenship.**

Expat Community

Well-established. British, Canadian, American communities. Corporate expat presence in financial services. Growing digital nomad community since Welcome Stamp. ~8,000–15,000 long-term expats.

Arab Diaspora Notes

- Muslim population: ~~3,000~~ (1% of 280,000).
- **Syrian/Lebanese Arab-Bajan community** — mainly commercial families with longstanding presence.
- 5 mosques including Jama Masjid and Madinah Masjid (near Bridgetown).
- Halal food: Sahara Arabic Grill and Falafel, KFC Hadley House (halal-certified), local Muslim butchers.
- **Rating: ★★☆☆☆** — small but functional; Arab-Bajan business families have historic presence

STR / Airbnb Data

Metric	Data
Legal Status	Legal; VAT applies to STR income
ADR	\$167 average; Bridgetown: \$172; luxury: \$300–\$600+
Occupancy	Island avg: ~68%; peak: 73–88%
Annual Revenue	~\$42K median
Best Areas	West Coast (Platinum Coast: Sandy Lane), South Coast (Worthing, Rockley)
Key Risk	High property prices; Caribbean hurricane season (June–Nov) reduces occupancy

Sam's Business Score: 5.5/10

- World Bank: Rank 128
 - IBC: 1–5.5% statutory; **15% minimum top-up tax from Jan 2024** (OECD BEPS Pillar 2 erodes prior advantage)
 - Formation: 2–3 weeks; \$1,015 minimum government fees
 - 100% foreign ownership; free repatriation; no withholding tax on IBC dividends
 - **IBC advantages largely eroded by 2024 Pillar 2 — Cayman or BVI now more competitive for pure offshore**
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6. BELIZE

English Proficiency

Sole official language and primary medium of education, law, and government. **Only English-speaking country in Central America.** EF EPI: High Proficiency. Spanish is widely spoken as a second language, but all official dealings in English.

Visa & Residency Options

Qualified Retired Persons (QRP) Program:

- Min age: **45 years**. Income: min **\$2,000 USD/month (\$24,000/year)** from outside Belize.
- Min stay: Only **30 consecutive days/year** in Belize.
- Application timeline: 1–2 months.

QRP Key Benefits (comprehensive):

- **Permanent exemption from ALL Belize taxes** — income, estate, capital gains, most import duties.
- **Import duty exemption:** Personal and household effects (no dollar limit); vehicle (up to 5 years old, new vehicle every 4 years).
- QRP Resident Card: Multiple-entry, no visa required.
- Dependents: Spouse and children under 18 (up to 23 if in university) included.

Permanent Residency (Standard): 1 year of continuous residence in Belize. No income minimum.

No dedicated digital nomad visa.

Taxation

- **Territorial system** — only income sourced within Belize is taxed.
- Foreign income: **Completely exempt** — pension, investment income, rental income from abroad, business income from outside Belize — all tax-free.
- **No capital gains tax; no inheritance/estate tax; no wealth tax.**
- **QRP holders: Explicitly exempt from all Belize taxes — legally reinforced.**
- Belize dollar (BZD) pegged **2:1 to USD** — no currency risk.

Property Rights

- **Full freehold title** available to foreigners. The Alien Landholding Act (which required a special license) was **abolished in 2001**.
- Foreigners can buy, sell, lease, and bequeath property freely. No price minimums or permits required.

Farmland/Agricultural Land

- **Foreigners can own farmland and agricultural land directly** — no restrictions. Large acreage available especially in Cayo, Orange Walk, and Toledo districts.

Cost of Living (1 Person, Comfortable)

~\$1,500–\$2,000 USD/month (couple; single slightly less). Comfortable single: ~\$1,500. 2-bed inland (San Ignacio): \$600/month; coastal condo (Ambergris Caye): \$1,200+/month. **50% cheaper than the US overall.**

Healthcare

- Basic and emergency care with private clinics. Karl Heusner Memorial Hospital (Belize City) main public facility.
- **Serious conditions: Medical evacuation to Mexico or the United States** (Merida or Houston). Healthcare is the **primary drawback** for Belize. Carry international insurance with medical evacuation coverage.

Safety

- **Belize City:** Very high crime — gang violence, street crime, property crime common.
- **Expat areas (Ambergris Caye, Placencia, Hopkins, San Ignacio):** Generally safe; violent crime rare.
- Solo women: Expat areas safe; Belize City requires significant caution.

Internet & Infrastructure

- Fixed: ~56.8 Mbps (Belize Telemedia). Rural: satellite-dependent, slow, expensive.
- Coworking: Limited; primarily Belize City. Most expats work from home or beach cafés.

Path to Citizenship

- **Naturalization: 5 years** legal residence. By marriage to Belizean: **1 year + residence.**
- **Dual citizenship: Belize ALLOWS dual citizenship** (Section 27 of Belize Constitution, amended 2017).

Expat Community

Well-established on islands and south coast. Ambergris Caye: Several thousand Americans, Canadians, Europeans. San Ignacio: Smaller inland community. Total: ~15,000–25,000 expats.

Arab Diaspora Notes

- Muslim population: ~577 persons (0.2% of ~400,000). Very small.
- **Lebanese-origin Arab community (~10,000)** — but largely Christian (Maronite).
- 3 mosques: Masjid al-Falah (Belize City), Masjid Noor, mosques in Belmopan and Orange Walk.

- Halal food: Very limited; no established halal restaurant scene.
- **Rating: ★★☆☆☆** — Arab community exists but largely Christian; Muslim infrastructure minimal

STR / Airbnb Data

Metric	Data
Legal Status	Legal; no national STR prohibition
Annual STR Revenue	\$53.4M total market (Oct 2024–Oct 2025 — 3rd largest in CARICOM)
ADR	\$100–\$200 in prime areas
Best Areas	Ambergris Caye (San Pedro), Caye Caulker, Placencia
Key Risk	Seasonal; eco-tourism infrastructure limits; limited banking for foreigners

Sam's Business Score: 5/10

- World Bank: Rank 135
- **IBC: 0% on offshore income** (income derived outside Belize)
- Formation: 2 business days; \$100–\$1,000 registration
- Free repatriation; no withholding tax on dividends to non-residents
- **OECD grey-listing concerns; limited banking relationships; no DTA network**
- Better as a holding/privacy structure than an operating base

7. PANAMA

English Proficiency

Spanish is official; English spoken fluently in **Panama City's business, financial, and expat districts** and on the Caribbean coast (Bocas del Toro). EF EPI: **Moderate**. Not widely spoken in rural/interior areas. Expats in Panama City navigate comfortably in English; Spanish essential elsewhere.

Visa & Residency Options

Pensionado Visa (Retirement) — One of world's most generous:

- Income: Min **\$1,000 USD/month** from a lifetime pension (government or private corporation); or \$750/month if purchasing qualifying Panamanian property.
- Additional dependents: \$250/month per dependent.
- **No minimum age**. Any verified lifetime pension qualifies.
- Status upon approval: **Immediate Permanent Residency**.
- Maintenance: Only **one visit to Panama every 2 years**.

Pensionado Benefits (Law 6 of 1987):

- Up to **50% off entertainment** (movies, concerts, sporting events)

- **25% off restaurants, hotels, domestic airline tickets, utilities**
- **20% off medical consultations** (up to 50% off hospital rooms and surgeries)
- **20% off professional and technical services**
- Tax-free import of one vehicle and household goods (first year)

Qualified Investor Visa:

- **\$300,000 USD** investment in real estate or qualifying business.
- **Immediate permanent residency** in 30–45 business days.

Friendly Nations Visa:

- Citizens of ~50 "friendly nations" (including most Western countries AND most Gulf states).
- Permanent residency via demonstrating economic ties (property, company, employment).
- Min: \$5,000 bank balance + local company or property.

Taxation

- **Fully territorial** — only Panama-sourced income taxed.
- **Foreign income completely exempt** — dividends from foreign companies, foreign rental income, foreign employment income, foreign business profits: **all tax-free even if remitted to a Panama bank account.**
- Income tax rates on Panama-sourced income: 0–11% (up to \$11,000); 15% (\$11,001–\$100,000); 25% (above).
- **No worldwide income tax; no inheritance tax; no estate duty; no net wealth tax.**

Property Rights

- **Full freehold ownership** for foreigners — constitutional rights same as Panamanians.
- Primary restriction: Cannot buy land within **10 km of Panama's international borders.**
- "Right of Possession" (ROP) in rural areas: Not fully titled; insist on titled (Tierra Titulada) property.
- **Law 468 (April 2025):** Eliminated certain property tax exemptions for first residential sales after Dec 31, 2025.

Farmland/Agricultural Land

- **Foreigners can purchase agricultural land** — no specific restrictions outside 10 km border zone.
- Rural agricultural land: \$5,000–\$25,000/hectare in interior provinces.
- Right of Possession properties in rural areas require extra due diligence.

Cost of Living (1 Person, Comfortable)

- Panama City: ~**\$1,500–\$2,500 USD/month.**
- Boquete (highland expat town): **\$700–\$1,200/month** for comfortable 1–2 bed.
- Bus/metro: \$0.25–\$0.35/ride.

Healthcare

- **Pacífica Salud (formerly Punta Pácifica):** Only **Johns Hopkins-affiliated hospital in Latin America**. Annual Johns Hopkins audits maintain standards.
- Medical procedures **70–75% cheaper than the US** with equivalent quality.
- Hip/knee replacement: ~\$20,000 Panama vs. \$80,000–\$90,000 US.
- Multiple JCI-accredited facilities in Panama City.

Safety

GPI 2024: Rank #96. Violent crime concentrated in specific areas (Colón, Darién province; drug-trafficking related). Most of Panama's expat areas (Highland towns, Pacific beaches) considered safe for families and retirees. Solo women: Generally safe in Panama City expat areas and Boquete.

Internet & Infrastructure

- Urban: 50–100 Mbps; fiber to 1 Gbps available in some areas. Cost: ~\$25–\$35/month for ~100 Mbps.
- 5G launching; Starlink in rural areas (2026).
- Coworking: WeWork, Selina, local spaces in Panama City and Casco Viejo.

Path to Citizenship

- **By naturalization: 5 years** continuous residency as PR; 3 years if married to Panamanian or with Panamanian children.
- **De facto dual citizenship widely practiced** — Panama requires oath renouncing prior citizenship but most foreign governments don't recognize this; rarely enforced in practice.

Expat Community

Very large and well-established. Panama City: ~25,000–50,000+ expats. Boquete: Major retirement hub (2,000–3,000 expats). Bocas del Toro: Popular with younger digital nomads.

Arab Diaspora Notes

- Muslim population: ~24,000 (0.7%). Arab Muslims, Indian, Pakistani, Palestinian, Jordanian, Lebanese communities.
- **Lebanese diaspora:** Established business community; Arab club, Islamic school in Colón.
- 4+ mosques: Madina Masjid (Panama City), Islamic Cultural Center of Colón.
- Halal restaurants: Al Basha, Beirut, Mumbai Grill, Sabor de la India.
- **Friendly Nations Visa includes most Arab/Gulf states** — easy residency access for Gulf nationals.
- **Rating: ★★★★★** — functional Muslim infrastructure; historic Arab-Panamanian community

STR / Airbnb Data

Metric	Data
Legal Status	Legal; no national STR ban
ADR	~\$105 average; Casco Viejo/Punta Pacifica: \$150–\$180
Occupancy	~40% average (H1 2026)
Monthly Revenue	~\$1,250 average
Best Areas	Casco Viejo (Panama City), Punta Pacifica, Coronado (beach), Boquete (mountains)
Key Risk	Moderate occupancy; rainy season (May–Nov) suppresses demand

Sam's Business Score: 7.5/10

- World Bank: Rank 86
- **Territorial tax: 0% on all foreign-sourced income for the corporation** — exceptional structure for international businesses
- Formation: ~1 week; \$1,000–\$2,500; no minimum capital
- Corporate tax: 25% on Panama-sourced income; 0% on foreign-sourced income
- **Colón Free Zone:** Largest in Western Hemisphere
- 100% foreign ownership; single director of any nationality
- 2024 FATF grey-listing impacts banking KYC; complex for non-residents

8. CAYMAN ISLANDS

English Proficiency

Sole official and primary language — British Overseas Territory. Native English-speaking island. All government, business, law, and daily life in English. **Equivalent to native-level.**

Visa & Residency Options

25-Year Residency Certificate (Persons of Independent Means):

- Min investment: **\$1.2 million USD** in real estate (30 days/year min stay) OR \$2.4 million (1 day/year).
- Application fee: \$1,200 + \$24,300 certificate issuance fee + \$1,200/dependent.
- Duration: 25 years (renewable).

Certificate of Permanent Residence:

- Min investment: **\$2.4 million USD** in real estate.
- Permanent residency; eligible for BOTC citizenship after **5 years** residence.
- No income tax.

No budget residency route. Cayman is exclusively for high-net-worth individuals.

Taxation

The Cayman Islands has NO direct taxes of any kind:

- No income tax, no capital gains tax, no corporate income tax, no inheritance or estate tax, no wealth tax, no sales tax.
- Only government fee: One-time **stamp duty of 7.5%** on property purchase.
- No annual property taxes.
- **Zero-tax jurisdiction** — among the world's most tax-efficient residences.

Property Rights

- **Full freehold ownership** for foreigners. Same rights as Caymanians. No restrictions on size, value, or type.
- No annual property tax. 7.5% stamp duty one-time only.

Farmland/Agricultural Land

- **No restrictions on foreign ownership of any land type.** Very limited agricultural land on the islands.

Cost of Living (1 Person, Comfortable)

~\$4,000–\$6,000 USD/month. 1-bed city center: ~\$2,778/month. **Cost of living: 71.8% HIGHER than the US average.** Almost everything imported. Target demographic: High-net-worth individuals.

Healthcare

- **Highest healthcare standards in the Caribbean.**
- **Health City Cayman Islands:** JCI-accredited; state-of-the-art cardiology, orthopedics, neurology.
- Health insurance **mandatory for all residents.** Proximity to Miami (1.5 hours) for complex procedures.

Safety

Among the safest territories in the world — lowest Crime Index in the Caribbean (Numbeo). Highest Safety Index in the Caribbean. Very small, close-knit community (~70,000 people). **Extremely safe for solo women.**

Internet & Infrastructure

- Average broadband: ~**118.83 Mbps** (June 2024 — fastest in the Caribbean). World-class telecom (British standards). Excellent 4G/5G coverage.

Path to Citizenship

- **Naturalization: 5 years** on qualifying permit.
- Grants **British Overseas Territories Citizenship (BOTC)** — ~150-country visa-free access; 6-month UK visit rights.
- **Dual citizenship: Allowed** — no requirement to renounce prior nationality.

Expatriate Community

Highly established, professionally oriented. Expatriates make up ~~60% of resident population~~ (42,000 of 70,000). Global financial center workers — UK, US, Canada, Jamaica. Tight-knit, wealthy, international.

Arab Diaspora Notes

- Muslim population: ~258 (0.4%). Very small.
- Islamic Society of Cayman Islands (est. 2000); Ahmadiyya mosque on Walkers Road.
- Halal food: Very limited; a few Indian restaurants.
- **Rating: ★★☆☆☆** — extremely small Muslim community; not suitable for those requiring robust Muslim support

STR / Airbnb Data

Metric	Data
Legal Status	Legal; Tourism Accommodation Law registration required
Recent Regulations	2026: STR market cited as compounding housing crunch; potential future restrictions discussed
ADR	Seven Mile Beach: \$600+ per night (luxury); West Bay: KYD 500+
Occupancy	~42% avg; peaks 70–80% (March); troughs 30–40% (September)
Best Areas	Seven Mile Beach, North Side, West Bay, Cayman Brac
Key Risk	Very high property prices; regulatory risk increasing; small market

Sam's Business Score: 7/10 (investment/holding structures only)

- No World Bank ranking (BOT); globally top-rated offshore
 - Formation: 3–4 working days; express 24-hour available; \$1,699–\$3,500 all-in
 - **Corporate tax: 0% absolute — no income, capital gains, payroll, or withholding tax**
 - Tax exemption certificate available for 20 years (\$2,500 one-time)
 - 100% foreign ownership; min 1 director of any nationality
 - **Best for investment funds, hedge funds, or holding vehicles; less ideal for operating company**
 - High annual fees; OECD scrutiny; substance requirements for banking
-

AFRICA & CARIBBEAN/AMERICAS — QUICK COMPARISON TABLE

Countr y	Monthl y Budget	GPI 2024 Rank	English	Income Tax	Freehold?	Farmpla nd?	Citize nship	Dual OK	Sam Score
Mauriti us	\$1,500– \$2,500	#26 (Safest Africa)	Official	15% flat	Approved schemes only	Restrict ed	5–7 yrs	Birth/ desce nt	8.5/10
Rwand a	\$1,700– \$2,500	#92	Official	0–30% worldwid e	99-yr lease	Lease/ compa ny	15 yrs / invest	YES	8/10
South Africa	\$1,500– \$2,000	#127	Official (1 of 12)	18–45% worldwid e	Yes, freehold	Yes	10+ yrs	YES (2025)	6/10
Kenya	\$1,200– \$1,500	#126	Official	10–30% worldwid e	No (99-yr lease)	No (restric ted)	7+ yrs	YES	7/10
Barbad os	\$2,500– \$3,500	Top 3 Caribbean	Sole official	12.5– 28.5% worldwid e	Yes, freehold	Yes	5–7 yrs	YES	5.5/10
Belize	\$1,500– \$2,000	Mid Caribbean	Sole official (Central America)	Territoria l only	Yes, freehold	Yes	5 yrs	YES	5/10
Panam a	\$1,500– \$2,500	#96	Business English	Territoria l only	Yes, freehold	Yes	5–7 yrs	De facto YES	7.5/10
Cayma n Islands	\$4,000– \$6,000 +	Lowest crime Caribbean	Sole official	ZERO taxes	Yes, freehold	Yes	5 yrs (BOTC)	YES	7/10 (holdi ng)

BRAZIL (Benchmark from existing research)

From Brazil and South America Real Estate Investment Master Report 2026 (existing file)

- **Language:** Portuguese (official); English in business/finance districts of São Paulo, Rio, Florianópolis
- **Currency:** BRL; CAD to BRL ~4.15 (2026 — historically high purchasing power for Canadians)
- **Airbnb hotspots:** Florianópolis (net yield ~8.5%), Rio de Janeiro (Ipanema/Leblon), Praia do Pipa (10% net yield)
- **Ecotourism investment areas:** Fastest-growing segment in Brazil
- **Tax:** Canada-Brazil Tax Treaty in force (Foreign Tax Credits available); CPF tax ID required (available at Brazilian Consulate in Ottawa); T1135 filing if cost basis exceeds \$100,000 CAD

- **Visa:** Brazil offers Digital Nomad Visa (min ~\$1,500/month income); retirement-friendly long-term visas
- **Property:** Foreigners can own freehold property in Brazil; no nationality restrictions; farmland has additional restrictions (rural land law)
- **STR summary:** Strong Airbnb market; Florianópolis 8.5% net yield; Praia do Pipa 10% net yield; Rio de Janeiro (Ipanema/Leblon): highest liquidity
- **How Brazil compares:** Strong STR yields comparable to Georgia and Kenya; very affordable for Canadian investors due to FX advantage; less English-friendly than this guide's primary focus but English available in investment/tourist markets

Sources: Brazil and South America Real Estate Investment Master Report 2026

(C:\Users\miche\Documents\Organized\02 - Personal Documents\Google Drive Backup\07 - Real Estate Investment Research), Airbtics, PwC Tax Summaries, Brazil Ministry of External Relations.