

Calypso Traveler Suggestions

Money

Large sums of cash or travelers checks are unnecessary. Most every business accepts credit cards. Cash is mainly needed for the taxis and the take away food vendors.

Clothing

Most people take too many clothes. It is possible to vacation a week on Elbow Cay solely with the contents of a carry-on bag. The island is not a place to “dress to impress”. Casual comfort rules. Shorts, outdoor fishing shirts, and T-shirts are normal daywear. Nighttime at the bars and restaurants is a bit dressier - collared shirts for men in the restaurants, but still very casual. Shorts are always appropriate and flops/sandals/boat shoes are normal footwear.

A lightweight rain jacket and pants are useful for rainy days, breezy days on the boat, and when a windbreaker is needed. Lightweight long sleeved shirts and long pants are good if it's a bit chilly, for sun protection, or if you want to step up when stepping out. In the winter months, a fleece or lightweight sweater may be necessary.

Calypso has hair dryers in every bathroom. An iron and portable ironing board are located in the laundry room.

Things to Bring

Small flashlight, chargers, sunscreen, more sunscreen, hat, sunglasses, books, e-reader, comfortable walking shoes/flops, good snorkel gear, wetsuits in cooler months, lightweight raingear,

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favorite music, cards, games, laptop, smart phone, tablet, downloaded movies.

Groceries and the Kitchen

The kitchen cookware is more than adequate for most all routine cooking efforts, and there is usually a good selection of basic spices, oils, etc. If you have any special ingredients that you can't live without, bring them or stop at Maxwell's grocery in Marsh Harbour, which is comparable to a mid-sized US grocery store. Taxis will wait (for a charge) during a grocery stop on the way to the ferry dock. Sometimes splitting the party makes sense – sending some to the ferry dock with bags and others assisting with groceries - especially if you have two taxis.

There are 3 grocery stores on the Elbow Cay that stock the basics. For additional thoughts and suggestions regarding groceries, visit the Calypso website blog at www.calypsobahamas.com.

You cannot bring in any fruits or raw vegetables from the states.

Adult Beverages

Wine, beer, and liquors are readily available on Elbow Cay. The beer selection is good and the wine selection is basic but adequate. Marsh Harbour has a better selection, though prices are similar on Elbow Cay.

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House Telephone

~~The house number is 242 366 0004. The main house phone will receive any call but is restricted to local outgoing calls. There is also a VOIP phone with a NC number, which can be used to make stateside calls at no charge. Sometimes the phone system goes down on parts of the island. Just like the occasional power outage, this is part of the island experience.~~ Land lines have not been restored at this time.

Some visitors communicate with stateside numbers through their cell phones or their laptop computer/smart phones, using services such as Skype, Viber, or other available apps.

Feel free to record a generic message on the answering machine.

Cell Phones / Smart Phones

Most cell phones work fine, but voice calls may be expensive. Check with your carrier to determine rates in the Bahamas. It is recommended that cellular data be disabled on smart phones to avoid exorbitant cellular data charges. Connect to the internet through the Calypso wireless network rather than the cell system.

Entertainment

Calypso has a dedicated "away room" and a game room with nice smart HDTVs. You may use your personal Netflix, Amazon Prime, Disney Plus, or Apple accounts. Some programs are not available in the Bahamas. If you are technically inclined, sign up for a trial account with a DNS proxy or VPN service. (This has

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worked well for the house owners.) Calypso has the fastest internet service available on the island, which is usually adequate, but may be slow during periods of peak internet use, so downloading special movies to devices before leaving home is recommended. Multiple devices in use will also slow down the internet. **Current internet service is through the local cellular network and is slow relative to the US.**

The game room has a ping pong table, pool table, and sound bar that is Bluetooth enabled to stream from your own device.

The living room has a sound system with XM satellite radio, Bose speakers, and a cable that will connect to any device with a mini headphone jack. Pandora and some other music streaming services do not work in the Bahamas. (See above.)

There is a selection of puzzles and board games in the living room closet, but the quality and completeness of either are not guaranteed. Bringing your own is best.

Sun Dried T's in town has a modest selection of beach toys, and sometimes rents surf boards. There is a limited selection of donated floats and beach toys at the house, which varies considerably.

If you are planning to do a lot of snorkeling or diving, or want to insure quality and availability, bring your own gear. The dive shop on the island was destroyed (totally) by hurricane Dorian.

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Customs/Immigration

You will not be allowed to board your flight to the Bahamas without a current passport.

Your flight attendant should give you a Bahamas immigration card to complete, usually just prior to arrival. Fill it out in advance, one for each person, so the line can move rapidly through immigration. (Bring a pen!)

Taxis

Taxis are readily available just outside the customs exit at the airport terminal, and will take your party to the ferry dock, or the boat rental office if you are renting in Marsh Harbour.

At your request, the taxi will stop by the liquor or grocery store and wait. (Check the ferry schedule!) Adult beverages and basic groceries are available in Hopetown, but the selection is better in Marsh Harbour. There is a published taxi rate schedule dependent upon the number of people, bags, wait time, etc., but nobody pays attention to it. A fully loaded taxi with a modest wait should run \$35-\$50 in cash.

Cold beverages and light snacks for the 20-minute ferry ride are sometimes available at the ferry docks.

The Ferry from Marsh Harbour to Elbow Cay

The ferries actually operate on a dependable schedule! Tickets can be purchased at the ferry office or while underway if time is limited. At the ferry dock, find a cart

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or helper and take your bags to the boat for the crew to load. Make sure you get on the correct ferry – the ferry is not always docked at the Hope Town sign. Enroute, ask the captain to call the caretakers, Jamie and Laura Williams (call sign is “Water Baby”), and let them know that the Calypso party is on board. Enjoy the ride, and let that internal clock start to slow down to a Bahamas pace. Upon arrival at the dock, be sure to account for all of your bags. Depending upon the number in your party, it may take multiple trips to get all your people and bags from the dock to the house.

The ferry can be privately chartered if you do not want to wait for the scheduled ferry, or arrive after the last scheduled ferry. It's best to arrange this in advance. There may be other people from your flight interested in sharing a charter.

Please visit the [G and L Ferry](#) or [The Ferry Limited](#) websites for current schedules.

The Caretaker and Arrival at the House

All guests should have already provided Elbow Cay Properties an arrival time. Usually, Jamie or Laura will meet you either at the old Lodge Dock, or the Calypso dock if you are arriving by rental boat out of Marsh Harbour or your own boat. (If arriving by boat, you will need to establish contact with the caretaker either by cell phone (242-357-6673) and/or VHF radio as previously described.)

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The walk-through of the house with the caretaker is your best opportunity to ask questions. Please see the House Guide, usually residing on the living room coffee table, for more details about the house and area.

Securing Your Boat

The Calypso slip is located between the house and town on Nigh Creek, at a dock with about 10 boat slips, innumerable signs, and a pink gate. The house slip is the one next to the end slip on the right (facing the dock from the water) and is clearly identified with a sign.

Secure your boat the way you will almost everywhere else - with an anchor out the stern at least a boat length or two out (depending on water depth) and a bow line to the dock. Tighten the stern anchor line sufficiently to prevent the bow from getting under the dock, and leave enough slack in the bow line for the tide changes. If you have these two lines properly adjusted, you do not need lines to the pilings on either side of the boat, which are troublesome and serve no real benefit. The dock is very well protected from the wind, and there are no boat wakes, so it's perfectly okay for the boat to rub against these side pilings, which will also keep your boat out of the adjacent slip. Please visit the Calypso blog for pictures at www.calypsobahamas.com.