



## MUSIC AND DANCING

Our taste in music is as varied as our ancestry. Country and folk music is popular with the older generation. This might be attributed to the outflow of Saints to Ascension Island in the 1940's, to work on the construction of the Wideawake Airfield. There they met Americans who often were from the southern United States and were, by and large, fans of country music. Younger Saints are more influenced by hip hop and R&B, while the dance and club genres are growing in popularity, as is new age and contemporary music.

Saints enjoy dancing to country or folk music and some of the favourite dances include the Boston, Heel & Toe Polka, Palais Glide, Valetta, Lambeth Walk, the Hokey Pokey and also a bit of barn dancing and waltzing. Dancing usually takes place at weddings and birthday parties as well as at regular community dances.

## HOLIDAYS

St Helena Island, like anywhere else in the world, celebrates a number of public holidays, but it is the unique way in which Saints celebrate that make these events special. For more information, please have a look at our website.

Following is a list of holidays celebrated on the island:

Month	Holiday
Feb/March	Shrove Tuesday
March / April	Maundy Thursday
May	St Helena's Day
August	Scouts Sports Day
October	Carnival
December	Christmas Day
	Boxing Day
	New Year's Eve



# St Helena Island

Secret of the South Atlantic

## ABOUT ST HELENA

St Helena is a small British Overseas Territory situated in the South Atlantic Ocean. One of the remotest places on Earth, it is also one of the most extraordinary places to visit. Its unique character and unspoilt beauty lies in contrasting and spectacular scenery, a rich cultural heritage and an environment extremely rich in biodiversity. These are just a few of the reasons why this remote jewel is a perfect location for active exploration and discovery.

- Walking and hiking
- Birding and wildlife
- Indigenous Fauna and Flora
- Diving, snorkelling, fishing and other marine activities
- Whale Shark, dolphin and whale tours
- Historic legacy and cultural tours
- Astronomy and photography
- Napoleon

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

 [visit.sthelenaisland](https://www.facebook.com/visit.sthelenaisland)  
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BEING  
A SAINT  
ST. HELENA  
ISLAND

*One of St Helena's greatest attractions is its unique culture. The friendliness of the people; the feeling that one has stepped back in time; a great sense of community and pride in traditions and customs – these are but a few of the reasons why visitors become enchanted with St Helena and the Saints.*



[www.sthelenatourism.com](http://www.sthelenatourism.com)



## BEING A SAINT

One of St Helena's greatest attractions is its unique culture. The friendliness of the people; the feeling that one has stepped back in time to an era where greeting passers-by and chatting on the side of the road is a way of life; a great sense of community and pride in traditions and customs – these are but a few of the reasons why visitors to St Helena become enchanted with this rocky outcrop in the middle of the South Atlantic Ocean. Saint-ness is experienced with all of the senses, be it the taste of delicious local fishcakes, the wafting aroma of a cup of premium St Helena coffee, the sounds of a local band drifting up from the Wharf, the vibrant colours of a local parade or the straining of mind and muscle as you race up Jacob's Ladder. Want to be a Saint? Here's how to speak like a Saint, eat like a Saint, dance and sing like a Saint, celebrate like a Saint and even greet and drive like a Saint.

## WAVING AND GREETING

Don't be surprised if you are greeted by a complete stranger when making your way down Main Street in Jamestown - you have not been mistaken for someone else. St Helena is well known for its friendliness and for extending a warm welcome to all, including newly-arrived visitors. At the very least it is expected that you greet everyone you pass, if not engaging in a short (or longer!) conversation before repeating the process with the next passer-by. When driving it is customary to wave at vehicles you pass, and this is often extended to pedestrians along the roadside.



Scouts Funday



Festival of Lights



Pancake race



St Helena's Day



## DRIVING ON ST HELENA

## LANGUAGE

## SAINT FOOD

On St Helena we drive on the left-hand side of the road, the same as in the UK. The majority of the roads have only a single lane, therefore you are encouraged to use the horn during daylight hours when approaching the bends to alert other drivers of your approach.

Road courtesy dictates that drivers coming down the road give way to the up-coming traffic, even if there is an obstruction on the up-coming side of the road. It is also the custom for drivers to put their hands up in greeting as they pass each other.



On Ladder Hill Road drivers often have to reverse to the nearest bay to allow the up-coming traffic to pass; this can be a bit tricky for those who are not used to our roads. The normal speed limit is 30mph (48kph), unless otherwise stated. And our visitors may want to keep in mind that road signs show miles per hour and not kilometres!

When you walk along the roadside you are encouraged to face on-coming traffic, although on some roads such as Ladder Hill and Side Path this is not possible. Here you have to walk along the outside wall in both directions in order to be visible to all vehicles. Often you will have to stop along the roadside to allow the vehicles to pass you, as these roads are very narrow in places.

Travel to anywhere in the world and one of the first considerations will be the language. Whilst, as a UK overseas territory, the first language spoken on St Helena is English, we have a dialect distinctly our own. Our tongue has evolved into a unique way of speaking, where we have a tendency to shorten words, create new words and speak a lot faster.

If you hear St Helenians speaking amongst themselves you might find it hard to understand; although Saints can generally speak English really well and will automatically do so when speaking to anyone they identify as a visitor.

These are a few examples of the more common Saint expressions and pronunciations:

Saint	English
How you?	How are you?
Eierce (pronounced like pierce)	Yes
Tank you	Thank you
See you	Goodbye
Mussie	It must be
Jorb	Job
Who you is?	Who are you?
Dis now	Soon or much later
That's nuff	That is enough
Bread	Bread
Oh la	Look
Dat	That
Deaddy	Daddy
Gotta	Got to

In conversation:

- How you? Not too bad lovie.
- Phew ya that's nuff now!
- That's right or what? Mussie.
- Ok lovie see u dis now.
- Where you come from? Over the boondocks.
- Hey u see dat jorb in the newspaper?
- I gotta go now, see u.

St Helenian food reflects the many historical influences of the island such as Portuguese, British, Southeast Asian, Malay, Chinese and African. However, over the generations Saint food has evolved into dishes unique to the Island.

Being surrounded by the ocean, fish is certainly the most common element in our dishes. Tuna, wahoo, dorado, bullseye, mackerel, jack, soldier and conger eel are just a few types of fish found in our waters and used in many of our dishes. The most popular fish-based dishes are fishcakes, fish 'n batter, tuna curry, poke mince, chutney, stuffed tuna and fish soup.

"Around the Mast" or "plo" is a one-pot curried meal. The primary ingredient is rice, combined with a choice of meat or fish and vegetables. Plo is quick and easy to prepare for a family or larger group, which makes it the favourite meal for a day's outing – it is particularly tasty when cooked on an open fire.

St Helenian black puddings are one of a kind. More like sausage than pudding, this dish is made with pig or calf intestines. It consists of a mixture of rice, bacon and herbs, combined with the blood of the animal. The rice mixture

is then stuffed into the intestines and boiled. Once boiled the puddings turn black – hence the name. Black puddings, combined with fishcakes and curry, is the traditional homecoming meal made for family returning to the island.

On week nights it is common for meals to vary, but on St Helena Sunday's meal is as predictable as it gets. Sunday lunch for decades has been, and continues to be, curry and rice, roast potatoes, roast meat and vegetables. Traditional St Helena curries range from beef and chicken to spare ribs, pork and goat meat.

"Bread 'n Dance" or tomato paste sandwiches consist of tomato paste made with fresh or tinned tomatoes, combined with herbs and spices, and served on sandwiches. Its island name, Bread 'n Dance, was derived years ago when it was a favourite nibble provided at community dances.

Pumpkin fritters, coconut fingers, fruit duff, fudge, ginger beer and syrup juice are just a few of many home-made delights that have been passed down through the years and remain uniquely Saint.



Maunday Thursday



Making fish cakes with Tim Wonnacott



Christmas Eve