

What People Love About St George

The town of St. George is unlike anywhere else in Bermuda. Part of its magic may result from the small scale and slower pace of life at the eastern extremity of the island, where there are also fewer people passing through. Many of the people you meet in the town live there and have done so for their whole lives. In many cases their families have lived in St. George for generations. People tend to know each other, and the town’s shops, restaurants, bars, clubs, and places of worship provide venues for residents to repeatedly interact and bond. There is a sense of community that comes from living together in a small town. St. George is unique and many of its people will tell you that it is God’s country and that they would not want to live elsewhere. Newer residents often share that opinion.

The following main themes emerged when people were asked what they most value about St George.

1. HERITAGE

Clearly important to many in the community the fact that the ‘old town’ is steeped in over 400 years in history represents a source of pride to many. It’s place as “Bermuda’s first capital”, the “small town, old world charm”, the “architecture”, its “narrow streets and winding alleys” and “cobblestones” that make it different from the rest of Bermuda. For many, its UNESCO designation was also important.

2. SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Probably more than anywhere else in Bermuda, St George offers a clear sense of people supporting one another. People used terms such as “family oriented”, “close knit”, “safe”, “polite and friendly” “traditions” “multigenerational familial background”, “the many different people that live here in peace”, “community values” and “community spirit”, and “like a village”.

3. ACCESSIBILITY

Many people value the ease of living and working in St George: “everything is easily accessible whether you arrive by foot, bike, car or boat”. Some stressed proximity to the water, an offering of “small and unique stores”, “restaurants”, “banks”, “served by lots of bus

routes” “free parking”, “amenities close by”, “good schools”, “churches”, “provision of services through locally-owned businesses” and “self sufficient – all necessary services are available”. The “seasonal events and festivals” were also celebrated.

4. SCENIC

People value the fact that St George is; “peaceful”, “quiet”, “quaint”, “tranquil”, and “lacks the hustle and bustle of Hamilton”. They appreciate the “cleanliness”, beauty of the gardens”, “harbourside view”, “vistas”, “natural beauty of open spaces”, “forts and walking trails”, “fishing sights”, “beautiful beaches within walking distance” and “photo opportunities”.

5. GOVERNANCE

Some feedback recognised “good governance”, the fact that the town “remains out of Government”, that it is “self governing”, there is a “stable administration”, “leadership”, “always something going on to improve the town” and, “a politician who is visible”.

6. RESILIENCE

Finally, “fortitude”, “innovative”, “strong”, “pride” “creative” and “tenacity and ability to make the most of constrained circumstances” were terms used by some respondents to describe the Town – a clear nod to the fact that it is still a living historic town, even though it may be struggling.

