

GRAND CAYMAN OPEN WATER SWIM MAP



"I have had the good fortune to complete various swims in and around the island and I can highly recommend this map as a useful tool for locals and visitors who wish to enjoy some of the best open water swimming in the world. Swimming in our beautiful sea is a lot of fun, allows you to meet some great people and keeps you fit. I recommend it!"

His Excellency Mr Duncan Taylor, CBE, Governor of the Cayman Islands

For its sheer natural beauty, crystal turquoise waters and stunning coastline, Grand Cayman is the perfect location to experience some of the world's finest open water swimming.



With no rivers on the island and little or no water running from the land into the surrounding ocean, the sea water has an unusually pure and clear quality offering ideal conditions for swimmers. And with warm weather year round, it is a wonderful venue for outdoor water pursuits.

This guide provides the novice swimmer and more experienced professional with a compilation of some favourite open water swims. They range from shallow and easy, to more demanding deep water, strong current conditions.

Whether you are looking to take your first strokes in the sea, or searching for something more challenging, Grand Cayman offers a host of amazing swimming experiences in one of the most idyllic venues in the world.

SWIM MAP GRADINGS

Throughout this guide, each map number has been colour coded to indicate the grading of the swim; Easy, Moderate and Challenging (see below):

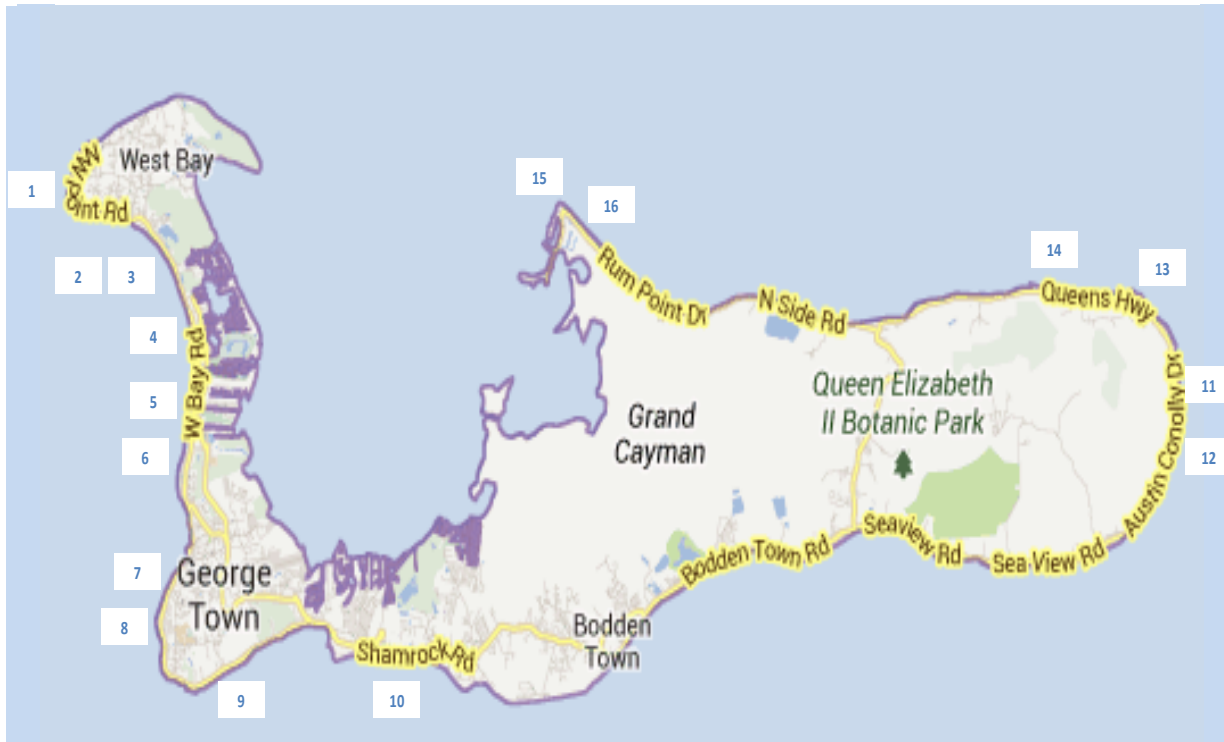


	LEVEL	COMMENTS
1	Easy (Beginner)	Easy and shallow conditions with easy entry and exit; suitable for beginner open water swimmers.
2	Moderate (Intermediate)	Must be very comfortable in open water. Some mild current at times, but normally not rough conditions. Limited egress.
3	Challenging (Experienced)	Should have considerable open water experience and be able to negotiate currents and rough conditions; these swims are along remote sections of shore with infrequent or difficult egress. Boat support is highly recommended.

CAUTION: Open Water swimming, like many sports (skiing, diving etc) can be a hazardous activity. Swimmers should exercise extreme caution and attempt only those routes which are compatible with his or her ability.

Swim at your own risk.

SWIM MAP LOCATIONS



WEST BAY [1](#)

West Bay shoreline is ironshore with limited points of egress. Water depth at the shoreline is 5-15'. Currents can be strong around the point.

SEVEN MILE BEACH [2](#) [3](#) [4](#) [5](#) [6](#)

The entire length of SMB is sandy beach with easy shallow entry. Water depth ranges 5-15 feet within 25m of shore. Swim zone extends to 200y from shore. Beware dive boat and sail boat channels at the hotels and water sports concessions. Beware recreational kayakers, paddle boarders and jet skiers. Swim areas roped off by hotels and condos are open to all swimmers. Tropical fish, lobster, turtles and rays are commonly sighted.

GEORGE TOWN SOUTH [7](#) [8](#)

The shoreline from Paradise Café to Caribbean Paradise is ironshore with limited access/egress points. Water depth at the shoreline is approx. 5-15' dropping to approx. 60' at the dive buoys. **Note:** Swimming is prohibited in George Town harbour from Cabana Bar & Grill on the waterfront to Paradise Café on South Church St.

SOUTH SOUND [9](#)

South Sound is shallow but has strong currents at various locations. Boat traffic and moorings are present throughout the sound.

SOUTH COAST [10](#)

The south coastline of Cayman varies greatly in swim accessibility.

EAST END [11](#) [12](#)

The entire east end of Grand Cayman is protected by a fringing reef creating a shallow sound with strong currents.

NORTH SIDE [13](#) [14](#) [15](#) [16](#)

A mix of shallow in-shore depths with deep water swimming. Launching/landing requires navigating through cuts in the reef. Currents and surface conditions are variable.

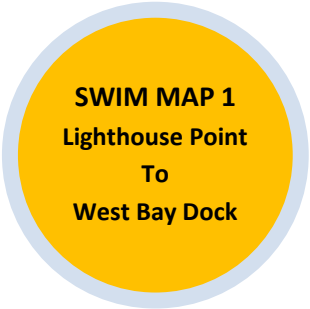
BOAT TRAFFIC

Dive boats are common along all sections of Grand Cayman's shore. They are slow and cautious within the 200y swim zone. Recreational water sports traffic is also common and may venture outside the official swim zone. **Stay vigilant for all kinds of watercraft traffic with high visibility via a bright coloured swim cap, towing a float or dive flag.**



WEST BAY

[Back To Map Locations](#)



DISTANCE

- 2.4 Km/1.4 Miles

PREVAILING CURRENT

- N to S from Lighthouse Point continuing to E around the point.

PREVAILING CONDITIONS

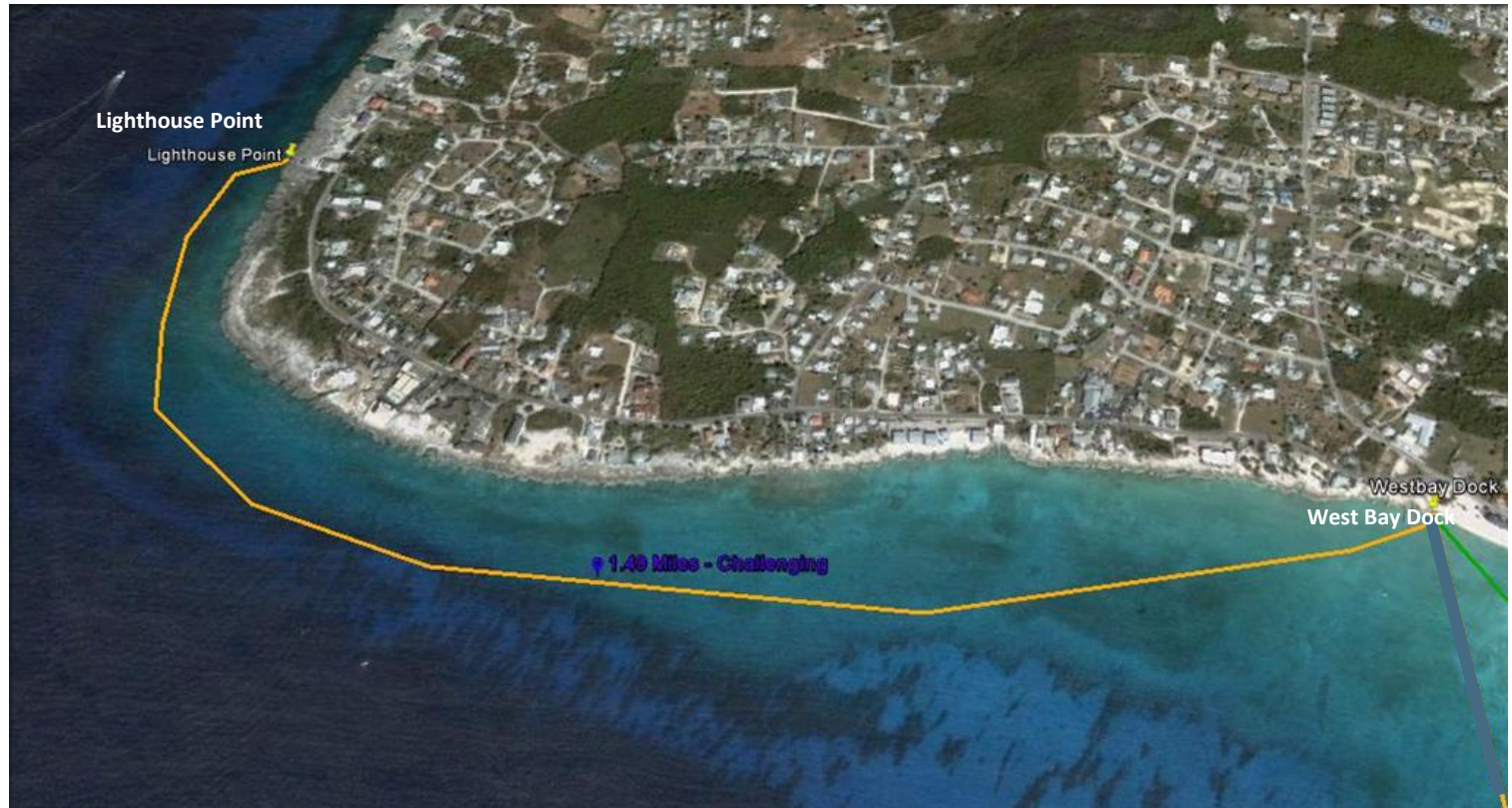
- Medium to strong current; rough waves or chop possible.
- Water depth 12-30'.
- Current runs S to N at Lighthouse Point, changing to E to W at the point, with resulting rough surface conditions.

NOTES

- Ladder at Lighthouse Point.
- Beach at West Bay dock.
- Ironshore with limited egress.
- Small beach cut in ironshore at Oceanside Plantation. Cayman wall is within 50m off shore with healthy patch reef and marine life.

NEARBY

- Public parking at Northwest Point.
- Boat ramp and West Bay dock.
- Restaurants at Macabuca, Lighthouse Point and Al Fresco.



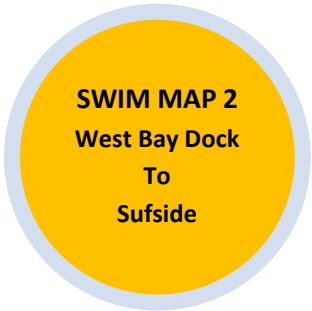
■ Easy (Beginner)

■ Moderate(Intermediate)

■ Challenging (Experienced)

SEVEN MILE BEACH

[Back To Map Locations](#)



DISTANCE

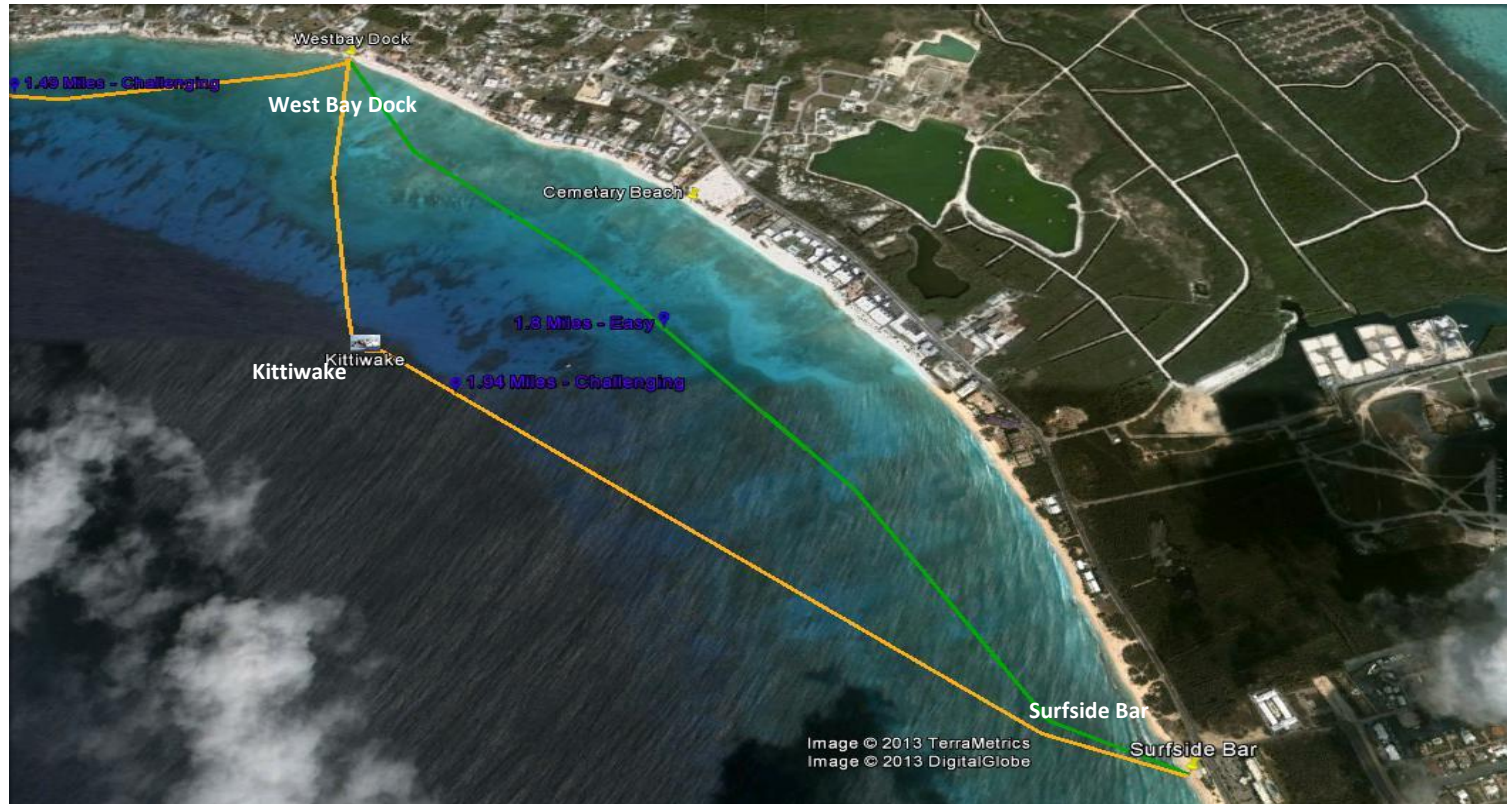
- 3.12 Km/1.94 Miles

PREVAILING CURRENT

- Variable

PREVAILING CONDITIONS

- Kittiwake wreck lies approx. 800m offshore.
- Wreck lies in approx. 45' of water.
- Dive boats.
- **Boat support highly recommended.**



NOTES

- PERMIT Required: Visit <http://www.kittiwakecayman.com/entry-fee/> for details.
- Caution: dive boats visit the Kittiwake from as early as 7am. They typically approach from offshore.
- Stay within the buoys marking the site.
- Reef nears or breaks the surface for approx ½ mile north of Surfside Beach – swim approx 30m offshore to go around it.

NEARBY

- Food at Al Fresco restaurant, gas station, Subway and Surfside.
- Public parking at West Bay dock.



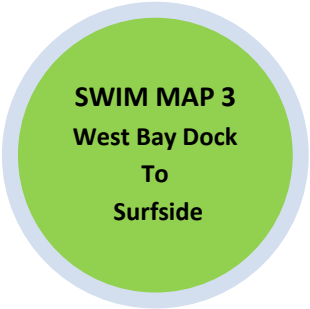
■ Easy (Beginner)

■ Moderate(Intermediate)

■ Challenging (Experienced)

SEVEN MILE BEACH

[Back To Map Locations](#)



DISTANCE

- 2.9 Km/1.8 Miles

PREVAILING CURRENT

- North To South

PREVAILING CONDITIONS

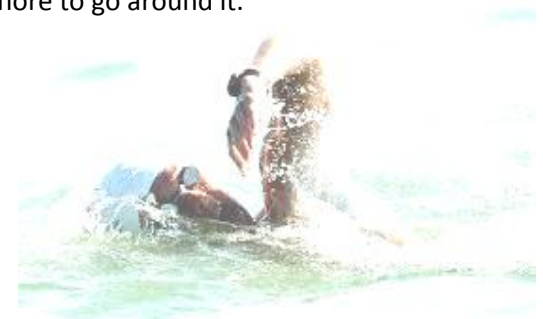
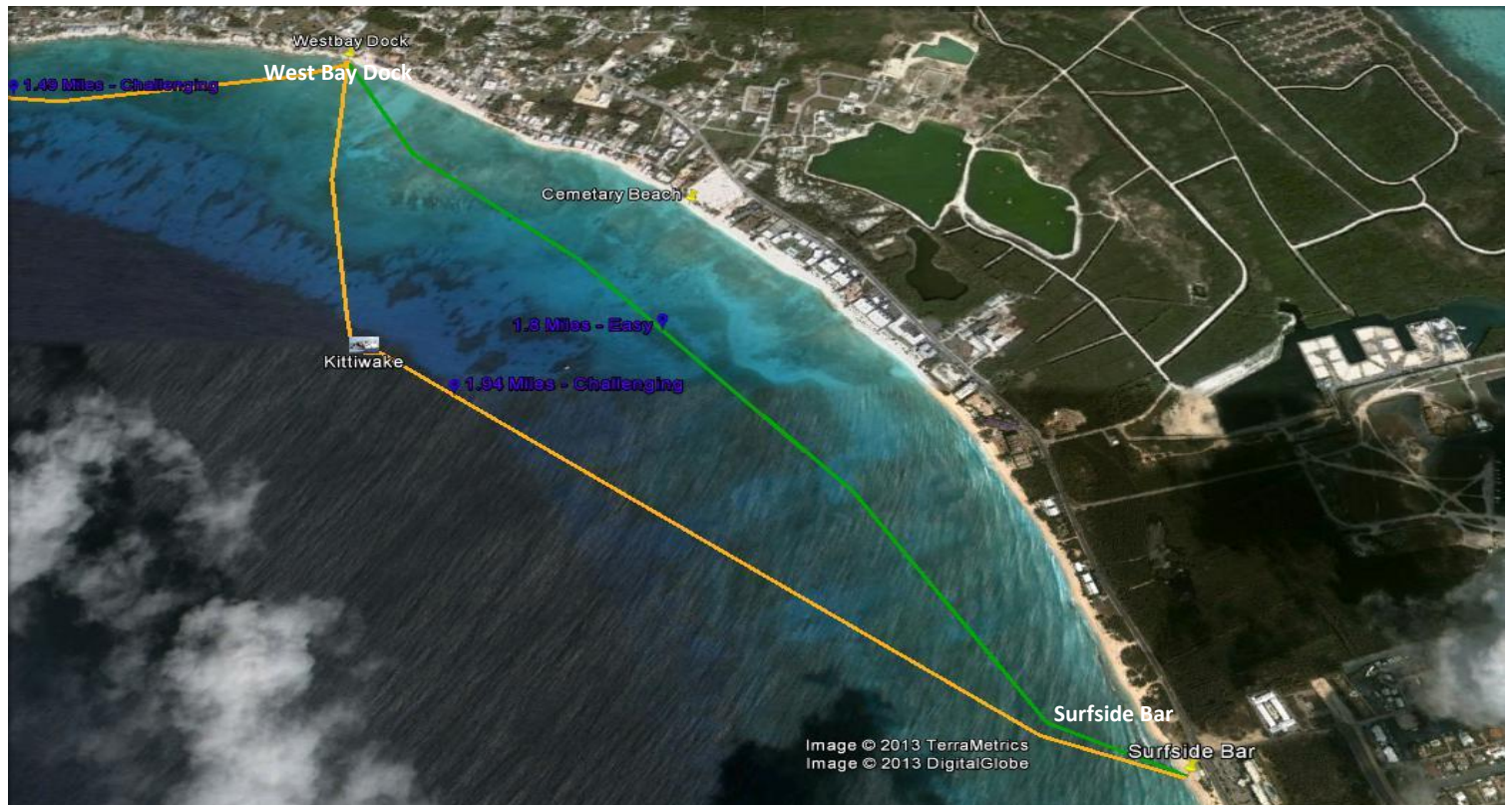
- Reef breaks surface at Discovery Point - swim approx. 75m out from shore to go around it.


NOTES


- Shallow.
- Easy entry and exit.
- Some patch reef.
- Reef nears or breaks the surface for approximately ½ mile north of Surfside Beach – swim approximately 30m offshore to go around it.

NEARBY

- Food at Al Fresco restaurant, gas station, Subway and Surfside.
- Public parking at West Bay dock.



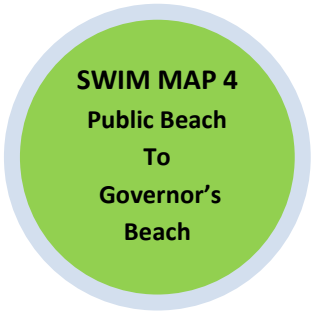
 Easy (Beginner)

 Moderate(Intermediate)

 Challenging (Experienced)

SEVEN MILE BEACH

[Back To Map Locations](#)



DISTANCE

- 0.98 Km/0.61 Miles

PREVAILING CURRENT

- North To South

PREVAILING CONDITIONS

- Generally calm.

NOTES

- Shallow; sandy bottom
- Standard course used for CIASA 800m races.
- Recreational water sports traffic.
- Boat channel at Public Beach.

NEARBY

- Public parking at Public Beach and Governor's Beach.
- Showers and restrooms at Public Beach.
- The Great House, featured in The Firm, is at the midway point of this swim.



■ Easy (Beginner)

■ Moderate(Intermediate)

■ Challenging (Experienced)

SEVEN MILE BEACH

[Back To Map Locations](#)



DISTANCE

- 1.83 Km/1.14 Miles

PREVAILING CURRENT

- North To South

PREVAILING CONDITIONS

- Current changes from N-S to S-N at Grand Cayman Beach Suites.
- Generally calm.

NOTES

- Shallow; sandy bottom. Recreational water sports traffic.
- Boat channels at Westin and Grand Cayman Beach Suites.
- Standard course used for the Flowers One Mile Sea Swim.

NEARBY

- Public parking at Governor's Beach and Royal Palms.
- Restaurants at Westin, Ritz-Carlton, Caribbean Club, Grand Cayman Beach Suites and Royal Palms.



■ Easy (Beginner)

■ Moderate(Intermediate)

■ Challenging (Experienced)

SEVEN MILE BEACH

[Back To Map Locations](#)



DISTANCE

- 0.97.Km/0.6 Miles

PREVAILING CURRENT

- South To North

PREVAILING CONDITIONS

- Break water at Treasure Island.

NOTES

- Shallow; sandy bottom.
- Recreational water sports traffic.
- Boat channel at Marriott.

NEARBY

- Public parking at Royal Palms and Treasure Island.
- Restaurants at Royal Palms, Marriott and Treasure Island.



■ Easy (Beginner)

■ Moderate(Intermediate)

■ Challenging (Experienced)

GEORGE TOWN SOUTH

[Back To Map Locations](#)



DISTANCE

- 1.96.Km/1.22 Miles

PREVAILING CURRENT

- North To South

PREVAILING CONDITIONS

- Ironshore with little egress.
- Typically some slight chop.
- Water depth 5-30'.
- Dive buoys mark the Cayman wall drop-off.
- Dive boat traffic.

NOTES

- Popularly swum as an out-and-back course starting/ending at Sunset House.
- Distance given is for the return swim.
- Ladder entry.
- Egress also at Eden Rock (ladder).
- Tarpon, turtles, nurse sharks.
- Masters swim this course every Wednesday and Friday at 5.30pm.

NEARBY

- Restaurants at Paradise Café and Sunset House.
- Limited parking at Paradise.



■ Easy (Beginner)

■ Moderate(Intermediate)

■ Challenging (Experienced)

GEORGE TOWN SOUTH

[Back To Map Locations](#)



DISTANCE

- 1.46.Km/0.91 Miles

PREVAILING CURRENT

- North To South

PREVAILING CONDITIONS

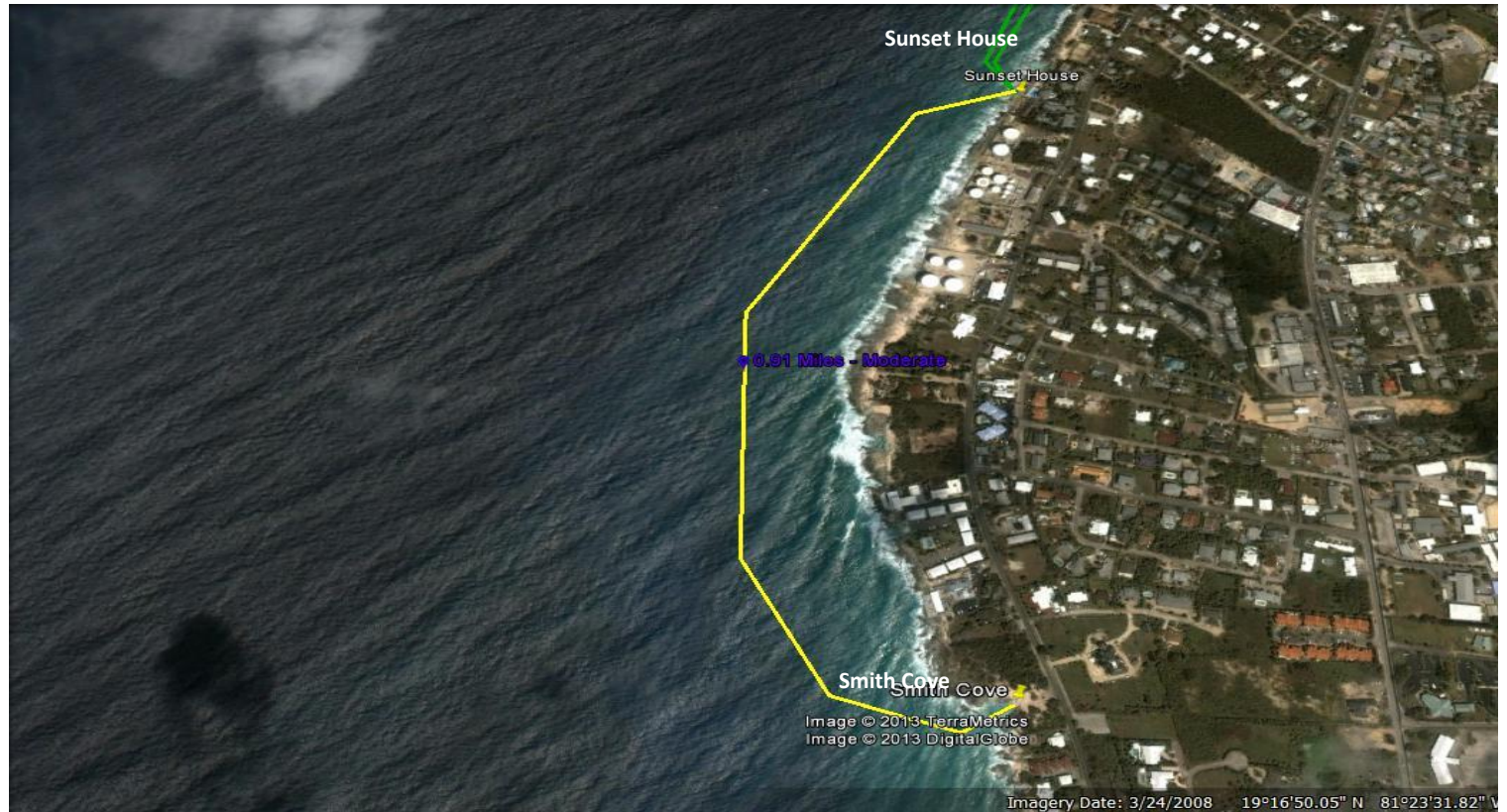
- Typically some slight chop.
- Water depth 5-30'.
- Dive buoys mark the Cayman wall drop-off.
- No public egress.
- Ironshore the whole way.

NOTES

- Ladder at Sunset House.
- Beach at Smith Cove.

NEARBY

- Public parking, showers and restrooms at Smith Cove.
- Restaurant at Sunset House.



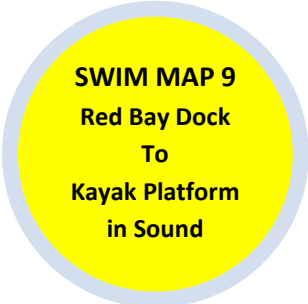
■ Easy (Beginner)

■ Moderate(Intermediate)

■ Challenging (Experienced)

SOUTH SOUND

[Back To Map Locations](#)



DISTANCE

- 4.07.Km/2.53 Miles

PREVAILING CURRENT

- East To West

PREVAILING CONDITIONS

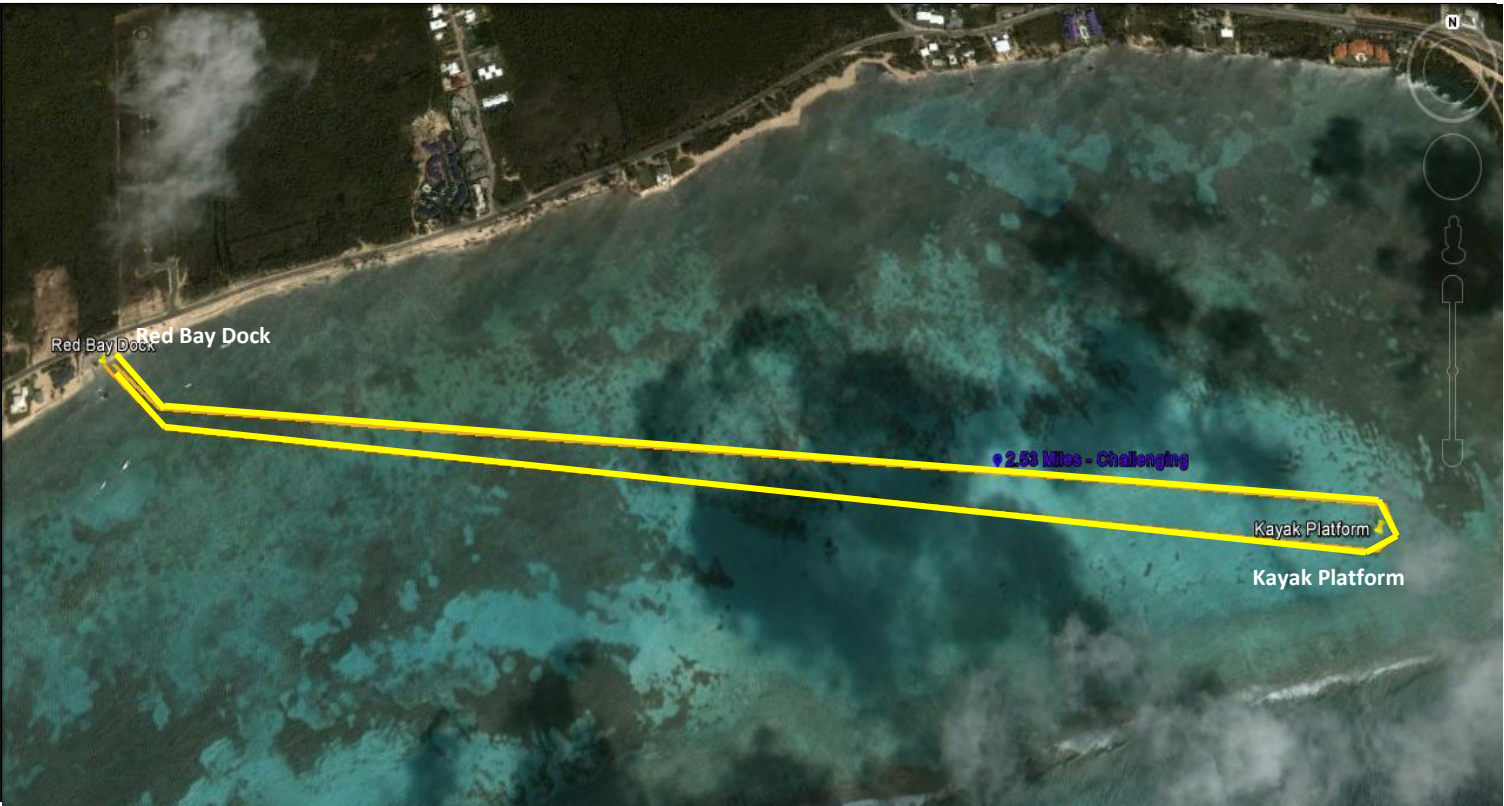
- Slight to strong current.
- Water depth 2-6'.
- Boat traffic.
- Various water craft.

NOTES

- Beach entry/exit.
- Sand and eel grass bottom.
- Kayak platform has ladder.

NEARBY

- Public parking at Red Bay dock.



■ Easy (Beginner)

■ Moderate(Intermediate)

■ Challenging (Experienced)

SOUTH COAST

[Back To Map Locations](#)



DISTANCE

- 1.83.Km/1.14 Miles

PREVAILING CURRENT

- Very strong currents at the far west end of the sound near the dock.

PREVAILING CONDITIONS

- Calm.
- Shallow.

NOTES

-

NEARBY

- Mileage given is for the circuit distance shown.



■ Easy (Beginner)

■ Moderate(Intermediate)

■ Challenging (Experienced)

EAST END

[Back To Map Locations](#)

SWIM MAP 11
Morritt's/The Reef Resort
To
Gun Bay Beach

DISTANCE

- 1.77.Km/1.1 Miles

PREVAILING CURRENT

- North To South

PREVAILING CONDITIONS

- Shallow.
- Medium to strong N to S currents.

NOTES

- Beach at Gun Bay Public Beach.

NEARBY

- Public parking and restrooms at Morritt's The Reef Resort and Gun Bay Public Beach.
- Showers and restaurants at Morritt's and The Reef.



■ Easy (Beginner)

■ Moderate(Intermediate)

■ Challenging (Experienced)

EAST END

[Back To Map Locations](#)



DISTANCE

- 5.28.Km/3.28 Miles

PREVAILING CURRENT

- North To South

PREVAILING CONDITIONS

- Shallow.
- Medium to strong currents.

NOTES

- Dive ladder at Ocean Frontiers.

NEARBY

- Public parking and restrooms at Morritt's/The Reef Resort.
- Restaurants at Morritt's/The Reef Resort, Tukka and Ocean Frontiers.



■ Easy (Beginner)

■ Moderate(Intermediate)

■ Challenging (Experienced)

NORTH SIDE

[Back To Map Locations](#)



DISTANCE

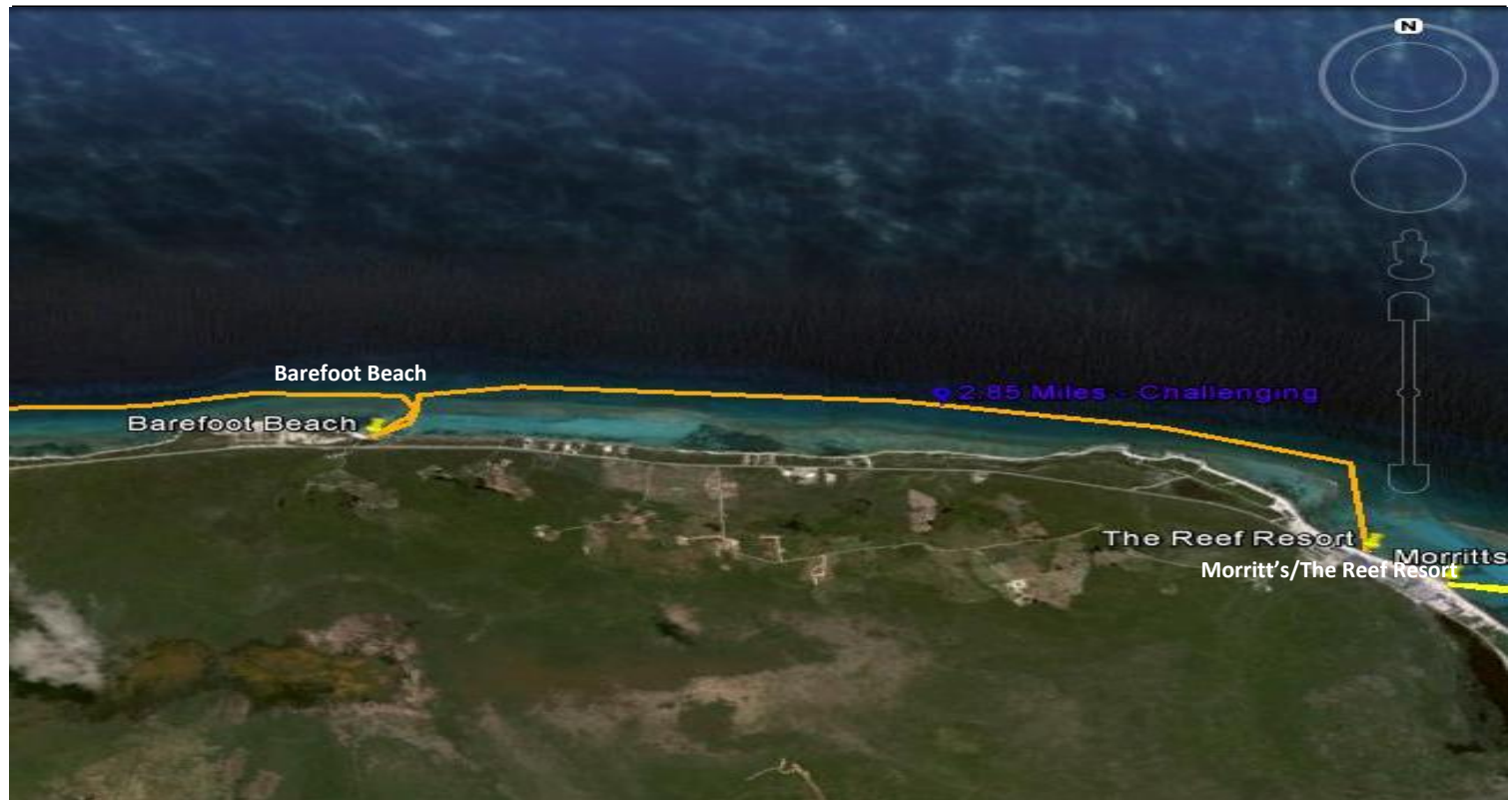
- 4.59.Km/2.85 Miles

PREVAILING CURRENT

- East To West

PREVAILING CONDITIONS

- Medium to strong E to W current.
- Isolated shoreline.
- Recommended to swim outside the reef.
- Boat support highly recommended.



NOTES

- Swim requires cutting through the reef to exit the sound at Morritt's and cutting back through the reef to land at Barefoot Beach.
- Strong head currents and waves at each reef crossing.
- This is a technical swim which can be challenging on a typical day due to the currents.

NEARBY

- Public parking at Morritt's and Barefoot Beach.
- Restaurants and facilities at Morritt's/The Reef.



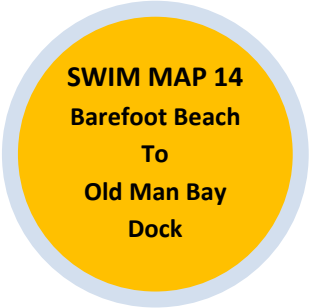
■ Easy (Beginner)

■ Moderate(Intermediate)

■ Challenging (Experienced)

NORTH SIDE

[Back To Map Locations](#)



DISTANCE

- 7.13.Km/4.43 Miles

PREVAILING CURRENT

- East To West

PREVAILING CONDITIONS

- Medium to strong E to W current.

NOTES

- Beach entry and exit.
- Beautiful reef over water depths of 12-40'.
- Healthy fish life.
- Sea weed possible.

NEARBY

- Restaurant at South Coast Bar & Grill.
- Public parking at Barefoot Beach and Old Man Bay dock.



■ Easy (Beginner)

■ Moderate(Intermediate)

■ Challenging (Experienced)

NORTH SIDE

[Back To Map Locations](#)



DISTANCE

- 0.77.Km/0.48 Miles

PREVAILING CURRENT

- East To West

PREVAILING CONDITIONS

- Very strong current near end of pier at Rum Point.

NOTES

- Beach entry and exit.

NEARBY

- Public parking at North Side Public Beach and Rum Point.
- Restaurants and full facilities at Rum Point.



■ Easy (Beginner)

■ Moderate(Intermediate)

■ Challenging (Experienced)

NORTH SIDE

[Back To Map Locations](#)

SWIM MAP 16 Driftwood To Rum Point

DISTANCE

- 3.94.Km/2.45 Miles

PREVAILING CURRENT

- East To West

PREVAILING CONDITIONS

- Very strong current near end of pier at Rum Point.
- Swim may be done inside the reef.
- Water depth ranging 2-10'.
- Current and chop are typical.

NOTES

- Beach entry and exit.

NEARBY

- Public parking at Driftwood and Rum Point.
- Restaurants and full facilities at Rum Point.



■ Easy (Beginner)

■ Moderate(Intermediate)

■ Challenging (Experienced)

THE ORIGINAL CAYMAN OPEN WATER MAP CREW



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