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MARTINIQUE HOSTS FCCA DELEGATION IN PUSH TO CONTINUE STRONG CRUISE SECTOR GROWTH

Cruise passenger arrivals up +631% since 2010

NEW YORK, NY– June 15, 2015 – The Martinique Tourism Authority hosted a delegation of Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) officials May 28–29, 2015 as part of its continuing efforts to bolster the cruise sector on the island. The visit comes as Martinique enjoys its strongest cruise results in years, posting a 631-percent increase in cruise passenger arrivals since 2010.

“Cruising has certainly been on the rise in Martinique in recent years, but we’re not resting on our laurels,” said Muriel Wiltord, Director Americas for the Martinique Promotion Bureau. “This FCCA visit continues our commitment to work closely with our cruise industry partners to always find new ways to improve our cruise travel product and better meet the needs of today’s savvy traveler.”

Leon Sutcliff, Director, Commercial Ports of Call and Government Relations for Carnival Cruises commented: “For the past few years, Martinique has improved its relationship with the cruise industry, by opening up communication, and being receptive to input from the FCCA (Florida Caribbean Cruise Association) and the individual cruise lines including Carnival Cruise Line. Martinique is making strides to improve the guest experience by listening and acting on advice from the industry. Everyone in Martinique has worked hard, and if they continue with this effort, I am sure that our guests and those that are connected with this segment of tourism will be pleased with future results. But it’s important that everyone remains focused on the work ahead.”

The FCCA is compiling research toward producing a new study on cruise passenger behavior and spending in Martinique. FCCA President Michele Paige provided a preview of the findings thus far, noting that average per-person spending amounted to US\$70 (approximately 65€) per port call, a considerable figure considering ships arrive in Martinique with up to 4,000 passengers.

“While the cruising industry in the Caribbean is facing increasing competition, Martinique is registering the fastest and most important increase in the world as a cruise destination,” said Paige.

Prospects for sustaining the impressive recent growth in the Martinique cruise sector are very encouraging for 2015-2016 as well. Already the Martinique Tourism Authority is projecting 326,388 cruise passenger arrivals, an increase of 31-percent over the 2014-2015 cruise season.

“The December 2015 completion of the Pointe Simon cruise terminal and other capital improvements designed to further beautify the downtown Fort-de-France area and ease congestion along the waterfront will raise the bar on our cruise travel product even more,” Wiltord continued. “A new 94-room hotel and new retail shops are also planned for the Pointe Simon port area, enhancing the visitor experience for those staying in port just a few hours, as well as those taking advantage of pre- and post-cruise extended stay options created by expanded homeporting options in Fort-de-France.”

For more information on travel to Martinique, please visit www.us.martinique.org. For the latest, up-to-date Martinique Promotion Bureau press kit, visit www.martiniquepresskit.com.

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Martinique Hosts FCCA Delegation in Push to Continue Strong Cruise Sector Growth

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About Martinique (www.us.martinique.org)

The Caribbean Island with French Flair, The Isle of Flowers, The Rum Capital of the World, The Isle of the Famed Poet (Aimé Césaire) – Martinique ranks among the most alluring and enchanting destinations in the world. As an overseas region of France, Martinique boasts modern and reliable infrastructure – roads, water and power utilities, hospitals, and telecommunications services all on par with any other part of the European Union. At the same time, Martinique’s beautifully unspoiled beaches, volcanic peaks, rainforests, 80+ miles of hiking trails, waterfalls, streams, and other natural wonders are the equal of neighboring Dominica to the north and St. Lucia to the south, so visitors here truly get the best of both worlds.

The currency is the Euro, the flag is Le Tricolour, and the official language is French, but Martinique’s character, cuisine, musical heritage, art, culture, common language, and identity are of a distinctly Afro-Caribbean inclination known as Creole Martiniquais. It is this special combination of modern world conveniences, pristine nature, and rich heritage that has earned for Martinique several notable distinctions in recent years, including being named as a “Must-Visit” destination for 2015 by *Caribbean Journal*, “Best Caribbean Destination” by About.com, and “Top Caribbean Island for Delectable Dining” by *Caribbean Travel + Life*. The Bay of Fort-de-France, which fronts Martinique’s charming capital city, was also recently inducted into *The Club of The Most Beautiful Bays in the World*.

Martinique’s storied history further stirs travel passions. Napoleon’s bride, Empress Josephine, was born and raised in Martinique, while the majestic Mt. Pelée volcano and St. Pierre, *The Pompeii of the Caribbean*, are found here.

A special place, to be sure, with so much to offer – *Martinique c’est magnifique!*

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