



TRAVEL TO MARTINIQUE SCORES A RECORD YEAR FOR 2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New York, March 6, 2018—In the course of a press conference held in at the Habitation Apolline in Martinique on Monday, February 19, 2018, Karine Mousseau, the Martinique Tourism Commissioner announced that a record **1,041,139 travelers** visited the Isle of Flowers in 2017.

Over 511,000 of these visitors were cruise passengers enjoying an excursion during one of the 256 cruise ship port calls and stay over visitors numbered a little over 534,000.

In her presentation, Mrs. Mousseau highlighted the percentages in terms of geographic origin of these visitors:

France: 66.3% — other European countries: 8.8% — North America: 6.8 % (only 2.4% in 2014) — Other (Guadeloupe, other Caribbean Islands, Guyana): 18.1%. It is to be noted that the average spend per visitor per day is 68 Euros (\$84 at today's rate), with American visitors spending 20% more, averaging \$110 per day.

Mrs. Mousseau attributed the steady increase of visitors from North America and most notably from the United States to the much improved access, a result of her and her team's combined efforts to attract and convince airlines to provide non-stop service from the United States to Martinique. For the third consecutive year Norwegian Air has provided non-stop service from NY/JFK to Fort-de-France—the number of flights increased to four weekly in 2017 and the added flights from new gateways like Boston-Providence and Fort-Lauderdale. American Airlines has increased its year-round service from Miami to six flights weekly during the season and Air France recently inaugurated for the 2017/2018 season direct service from Atlanta to Fort-de-France.

To increase the number of visitors to their island, the Martinique Tourism Authority offices throughout Europe and the Americas—including the United States, conducted over 250 actions, ranging from events to press trips, travel agent fams to marketing campaigns.

The Martinique Promotion Bureau, US division of the Martinique Tourism Authority in the United States used their world-class annual events to attract American guests, such as the November Raid des Alizés, an international women’s adventure race for charity, the December La Fête du Rhum at the Saint-James Distillery, the great Martinique Carnival and upcoming in March the world-class surf competition, Martinique Surf Pro.

“Every year we add to the tourism offer of our beautiful island,” said Karine Mousseau and we are very proud to announce for 2018 a new and exciting boating event, the International Martinique Flying Regatta. The general concept is that of an annual event, bringing together the most striking series of foiling or hydrofoil sailboats in the magnificent bay of Fort-de-France.” Mrs. Mousseau went on to say, “With its natural beauty, easy access, new and top notch events, Martinique is truly magnifique.”

About Martinique (us.martinique.org – martiniquepresskit.com)

The French Caribbean Island of Martinique is also known as the Isle of Flowers, The Rum Capital of the World, the Birthplace of coffee in the New 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 unparalleled in the Caribbean, so visitors here truly get the best of both worlds. The currency is the Euro, the flag and the official language are French, but Martinique’s character, cuisine, musical heritage, art, culture, common language, and identity are of a distinctly Afro-Caribbean inclination known as Creole. 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. In 2018, Martinique is highlighted in the Caribbean segment of the New York Time’s “52 Places to go in 2018.” and prominently featured in a January 2018 article in Travel + Leisure. In a 2017 review of noteworthy French Islands throughout the world ThePointsGuy.com selected Martinique as number one. Other distinctions include being named as a “Must-Visit” destination by Caribbean Journal, “Best Caribbean Destination” by About.com, and “Top Caribbean Island for Delectable Dining” by Caribbean Travel + Life.

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