

Agents **News**

Caribbean Training Programme Newsletter



Welcome to CTP Issue 52

Your personal update on Caribbean news from the Caribbean Tourism Organisation.



Caribbean Training Day Highlights @ WTM

The Caribbean Tourism Organisation hosted 'a Caribbean Training Day' at World Travel Market London, on Wednesday 9 November. The sessions started with presentations

from ten Caribbean partners including Almond Resorts, Aruba Tourism Authority, Bahamas Tourist Office, Bermuda Department of Tourism, Dominican Republic Tourist Board, Grenada Board of Tourism, St. Kitts Tourism Authority, Saint Lucia Tourist Board, Sirenis Hotels & Resorts, Turks & Caicos Islands Tourist Board and the Caribbean Tourism Organisation.

The day included lunch and a Treasure Hunt around the Caribbean Village area which allowed agents to network with key Caribbean specialists and celebrities, whilst gaining extensive knowledge on the region.

There was also a grand prize draw where participating agents stood the chance of winning a range of great prizes. The prize winners were:

Saint Lucia Coffee Table Book – Winner: Philip Richardson - Kuoni Travel

Dominican Republic Goody Bag – Winners:
 Sylvia Feldman - Travel Counsellors and Lisa Drake - Hays Travel

St. Kitts Cooler Bag – Winners: Cathie O'Dea - Travel Counsellors and Lesley Clements - Travel Counsellors.

LIAT Airline Flight Tickets – Winner: Charles Hope - Easypzee Travel

Almond Resorts 3 nights complimentary Stay –
 Winner: Gail O'Donogue - Travel Counsellor

Apple iPad2 courtesy of Grenada Board of Tourism & CTO - Winner: Gail O'Donogue - Travel Counsellor

The training day ended with the popular Caribbean Village Street Party which was sponsored by the Trinidad & Tobago Tourist Office; and included a combination of Caribbean music, dancing, food and rum.



Destination Profile – Curaçao



Curaçao is an island where it's always summer and you will feel right at home. It is a unique destination in every way! Located approximately 40 miles off the coast of Venezuela, the island boasts magnificent bays, spectacular diving areas, colourful colonial architecture and a comprehensive calendar of events packed with adventures and experiences with 'something for everyone'. Swing along to the rhythm of the compelling Caribbean music, an immensely varied multicultural richness and a refined taste of local cuisine. The island is also very well known for the locally produced "Blue Curaçao" rum. Willemstad the islands capital possesses the colourful Handelskade, the ever-bustling floating market, the old pontoon bridge (also nicknamed "the Swinging Old Lady"), and is on the UNESCO World Heritage Site List. Discover the colourful and vibrant island of Curaçao.

For more information visit www.curaçao.com.

Educationals

Sandals Wedding FAM trip to Saint Lucia and Antigua
 4th-8th December

A Fam Trip to Bermuda will be held in 2012 for top selling Bermuda Specialists. Dates TBA May or September.

Win a Fam Trip Place to the Dominican Republic!
 Register and complete the Dominican Republic online training programme on www.domreps.co.uk to have a chance to visit this amazing destination in 2012. Send your certificate to the Dominican Republic Tourist Board on uk@godominicanrepublic.com no later than 31 December 2011 to be entered in the PRIZE DRAW!

JAMAICA 3D

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UK Chapter Member Highlight



Marriott's Caribbean Resorts are comprised of 17 beautiful resorts in some of the top destinations in the Caribbean – Aruba, St. Thomas, St. Kitts, Grand Cayman, Curaçao, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico and Trinidad. These resorts offer a variety of amenities, including world-class spas, challenging golf courses, state-of-the-art casinos, flexible meeting facilities, unique wedding packages and spectacular honeymoons.

From full service luxury resorts to economy comfort lodging, you can choose the ideal accommodation from any of their three hotel brands throughout the Caribbean.

The resorts include:

- Grand Cayman Marriott Resort
- Courtyard by Marriott Grand Cayman
- Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino
- Renaissance Aruba Resort & Casino
- Renaissance Curacao Resort & Casino
- Curaçao Marriott Beach Resort & Emerald Casino
- St. Kitts Marriott Resort & The Royal Beach Casino
- Frenchman's Reef & Morning Star Marriott Beach Resort (St. Thomas)
- Courtyard by Marriott Santo Domingo
- Renaissance Santo Domingo Jaragua Hotel & Casino
- Courtyard by Marriott Isla Verde Beach Resort
- San Juan Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino
- Renaissance St. Croix Carambola Beach Resort & Spa
- Courtyard by Marriott Port of Spain
- Courtyard by Marriott Bridgetown
- Courtyard by Marriott Aguadilla
- Courtyard by Marriott San Juan Miramar

For more information please visit the Marriott's website at www.marriott.com

Welcome New Chapter Member

Prestige Caribbean

3 Copenhagen Gardens, Chiswick W4 5NN
Telephone: 020 8994 2244
Email: reservations@prestigecaribbean.com
Website: www.prestigecaribbean.com

Paradise Promotions

2 Angelo Mews, London SW16 4AB
Telephone: 020 8679 2508
Email Address: victoria@paradise-promotions.co.uk
Website: www.paradise-promotions.co.uk

Incentives & Special Offers

Almond Resorts: In January 2012 there will be a full page competition in the Cosmopolitan magazine - supported by the Barbados Tourism Authority. In Spring 2012 Almond Resorts will also have a promotion on Mentos Mint packs in store to win a holiday to Barbados, supported by the Barbados Tourism Authority. The promotion will be featured in all UK major grocers, and will include viral marketing efforts.

Bahamas Flavour in conjunction with **The Bahamas Tourist Office**, London invites you to come and join in the fun at their Travel Agent Incentive Evening on Thursday 9th February 2012. To register your interest for this event, **please RSVP by 9th January 2012** to: info@bahamasflavour.co.uk. Visit www.bahamasflavour-online.co.uk/invitationoct11/ for more information.

The Jewel Resort, Jamaica is offering Amazon vouchers for any bookings made. For more information visit www.jewelagents.com

The **Bahamas Tourist Office** has issued the ultimate romantic proposal – the 16 Islands Wedding Invitation. Brides-and-grooms-to-be looking for wedding inspiration should take a couple of minutes in front of a camera to say why they would like to win a free wedding in The Bahamas. Sixteen couples will each win a luxury wedding - including a designer dress, rings and wedding ceremony on one of the main 16 Islands of The Bahamas. And all they have to do is choose their island, switch on the camcorder and say why that island is the one for them. The BTO will then select the 16 couples who will marry simultaneously on 16 May 2012, at 16:00 hrs on 16 different Islands of The Bahamas. For further information, please visit www.bahamas16weddings.co.uk

Industry partner **Kuoni** is on board to co-ordinate all ex-UK travel arrangements and has put together a range of special packages for family and friends who want to join their winning couple on the big day. A **new sales incentive** commenced on 16 September and will run through until 31 December and is open to all travel agents as well as Kuoni reservation staff and Kuoni agencies. **£25 in bonusbond gift vouchers is awarded for each booking to the Sheraton Nassau Beach Resort and £20 for each Atlantis Paradise Island, Sandals Royal Bahamian and Sandals Emerald Bay booking.** The booking reference must be sent to agency@kuoni.co.uk.

Sandals® Weddings by Martha Stewart™ are now offering brides-to-be the Beautiful Beginnings theme FREE with stays of **five nights** or longer in any room category at any one of the 18 Luxury Included® Sandals Resorts and Beaches Resorts located in Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Antigua, The Bahamas and Turks and Caicos. For more information about any of the above, please call 0207 590 0210 or visit www.sellingsandals.co.uk.

Cotton House Mustique Early Bird special offer – book 7 nights by 15th December 2011 for a stay between now and 31st March 2012 and clients will receive \$200 resort credit to use in the spa or hotel. Contact your regular tour operator or Cotton House for more details.

Grenada Board of Tourism has now introduced a photo competition to each agent fam they host to Grenada. Participants are invited to submit photos that best encapsulate 'the spirit of Grenada' when they get back to the UK.

A brand new trade incentive is being launched by **Hayes & Jarvis and Sovereign**. For every £100 turnover that shops do for the Specialist Holidays Group brands they will get 1 point - each point is worth 30p. Agents can then exchange the points for shopping vouchers or, if they wish to go away with one of the Specialist Holidays Group brands, they can exchange it for a discount. If the points are exchanged for holidays with SHG the value will be doubled. Incentive runs until 31 October 12. Exchange can be done at anytime but agents must have enough points to claim a min of £10 for the shopping vouchers. Contact tradesupport@specialistholidays.com to register or for enquiries.

Divetech and Cobalt Coast Dive Resort, Grand Cayman are kicking off the New Year with the "Premium Dive Package". Stay 7 nights in an oceanfront suite, dive 6 days, eat 3 meals a day served pool side and enjoy up to 5 premium drinks daily at US\$ 2400 per person (January 1-April 28, 2012). Packages include gratuity, accommodation tax and service charges, round trip-airport transfer plus unlimited shore diving at Divetech's two shore diving locations: Cobalt Ridge & Lighthouse Point. Call 1-888-946-5656 (Toll Free), visit Cobalt Coast, or visit Divetech.

Earn £20 and £25 vouchers on special Bahamas bookings.

Book The Bahamas and we'll give you a £25 gift voucher for every Sheraton Nassau Beach Resort booking and a £20 voucher for every Atlantis Paradise Island, Sandals Royal Bahamian Spa Resort & Offshore Island or Sandals Emerald Bay bookings with Kuoni by 31 December 2011. Please email your bookings to agency@kuoni.co.uk and to discover more about our islands, please visit www.nassauknowledge.com



Training

The **Bermuda Department of Tourism** has updated their online training with Travel Uni. They have made the training more agent friendly, highlighting the unique selling points to assist agents to gain destination knowledge and sell more. Prizes will vary each month and will include more hotel stays as there is no better way to learn about a destination than first-hand experience.

The **Cayman Islands Department of Tourism** offers agents training in cooperation with Travel Uni on www.caymanislandsacademy.com. The main training consists of 4 modules. There is an additional module about diving and the new "Romance module" will be launched in the next few weeks. Small prizes for the completion of selected modules will be offered, so do not miss out!

The **Grenada Board of Tourism** has launched a new travel agent initiative as part of its familiarisation programme. All fam trips will include a photo competition with agents invited to submit an image that best evokes their Grenada experience. Carol Smith – The Cooperative, is the first winner from the Tourist Board's October 2011 fam trip for her image of smiling Grenadian children.

The **Bahamas Tourist Office** is launching a new Bahamas training soon on www.nassauknowitall.com. The training will enhance knowledge of the destination for agents to grow their Bahamas sales. If you need further information, please do not hesitate to contact The Bahamas Tourist Office on 0207 355 0800 or email info@bahamas.co.uk. Happy selling!!!

The **Turks and Caicos Islands** online travel agents training programme, TCI Expert, has been completely re-designed and updated. The new programme was launched at WTM and to celebrate the launch the Turks & Caicos Islands Tourist Board is offering agents the opportunity to enter a competition to win a luxury holiday for two, including flights to the TCI. To enter the competition simply: Register to become a Turks and Caicos Expert at www.turksandcaicosexpert.co.uk; Complete the training course; and book at least two 5 star holidays, to any of the following resorts in the Turks and Caicos Islands, before 28 February 2012, making sure to log all bookings on the training website. The resorts are Grace Bay Club, the Gansevoort, Parrot Cay, the Regent Grand, the Regent Palms, the Somerset and the Veranda.

Congratulations

We are pleased to recognise the following Caribbean Training Programme (CTP) travel agents who have achieved their Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum Certificate. Well done everyone for taking the time to enhance your Caribbean product knowledge!

Bronze Certificate

Anna Reed, Ocky White Travel · Lisa Ridley, Cockermouth Travel Ltd
Melanie Salt, Gates Travel · David Simkiss, Blue Bay Travel

Gold Certificate

Paula Coull, Broadway Travel · Jaclyn Wood, Blue Bay Travel

Platinum Certificate

Kevin Baskeyfield, Blue Bay Travel
Leighton Glover, Blue Bay Travel
Lisa Mousley, CBT International Travel
Nicola Johnston, Blue Bay Travel

Training Programmes

Air Europa	www.aireuropaexperts.com
Almond Resorts	www.almondtraining.com
Barbados Tourism Authority	www.bajanclub.org
Couples Resorts	www.gptrainingacademy.com
AMResorts	www.amragents.com
Elite Island Resorts	www.agentelitetraining.com
Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines	www.focusonfredolsen.com
Grand Pineapple Beach Resorts	www.grandpineappletraining.com
Grenada Board of Tourism	www.onlinetraveltraining.co.uk/grenada.aspx
Group Promotions Training Academy	www.gptrainingacademy.com
Occidental Hotels & Resorts	www.occidentalexpert.com
Puerto Rico Tourism Company	www.puertoricotravelexpert.co.uk
Rex Resorts	www.rexpertonline.com
Sandals and Beaches Resorts	www.sellingsandals.co.uk
Sunset Resorts	www.gptrainingacademy.com
Saint Lucia Tourist Board	www.saintluciaexpert.com
St. Vincent & The Grenadines	www.svgacademy.com
The Crane Barbados	www.thecraneacademy.co.uk
Trinidad & Tobago Tourist Office	www.learnTNT.com
Turks & Caicos Tourist Board	www.turksandcaicosexpert.co.uk
Travel Uni	www.traveluni.com

Antigua & Barbuda Tourism Authority
Aruba Tourism Authority
Bermuda Dept of Tourism
Cayman Islands Dept of Tourism
Dominican Republic Tourist Board
Jamaica Tourist Board
Jolly Beach Resort

How I have benefited from the Caribbean Training Programme.

By Lisa Mousley, Owner, CBT International (Travel); CTP Platinum Agent



I have been on the CTO Training Programme for a few years and have slowly made my way up the levels. I have really enjoyed doing the training, from the filo-fax which we initially received, the promotion evenings organised by the Tourist Boards, the training sessions which the CTO organised in the UK and more recently the Fam Trip organised by the CTO in September and supported by British Airways and the tourist boards of St Kitts & Nevis, Anguilla and Antigua.

All the training sessions have been very informative and I have learnt a lot over the years and can now quite confidently declare myself a 'Caribbean Specialist'. I have visited many of the Caribbean Islands, mainly on fam trips, but also on holidays and can now quite confidently talk about the different islands and properties which I have visited. It has helped to increase my Caribbean business, so much so that I am now marketing my business as a Caribbean Specialist Agency. ➡



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My latest trip was probably the most enjoyable and as we visited four islands on the one trip, and it highlighted the diversity of the islands and the very different accommodation types, attractions and local restaurants available. We sampled some of the fine-dining restaurants on Anguilla, both local ones on the beach and ones in luxury hotels such as Cap Jaluca. We also visited the local Karaoke bar on Nevis, the very lively local bars on the Strip in St Kitts, and the wonderful Plantation House Restaurants where we enjoyed the hospitality of the owners.

An amazing experience was the tiny 8-seater planes chartered via Anguilla Air Services for our flights from St Kitts to Anguilla and from Anguilla to Antigua. The crew on the Catamaran excursions were very hospitable, allowing us to make our own Rum Punches behind the bar and we had a wonderful bus driver on Antigua. Everybody involved made it a trip to remember. I would very much like to thank the CTO and the tourist boards that organised the trip, BA for sponsoring it and most importantly Lorraine, Jennifer, Mekesha and Joel who hosted the trip.

My trip to Antigua & Barbuda

By Kevin Baskeyfield, Caribbean Sales Manager, Blue Bay Travel; CTP Platinum Agent



I was kindly invited by the Antigua & Barbuda Tourism Board to visit their lovely islands and to experience everything they have to offer. I was soon able to discover that there is so much more to Antigua & Barbuda than those 365 magnificent beaches for which the islands are famous, during our one week stay.

Antigua has a significant range of stunning hotels to suit individual requirements and budgets. We visited some 14 hotels during our stay. So, what is there to do in Antigua, other than living as the proverbial "beach-bum" for the length of your stay? Well, in a nutshell, there is something for everyone. From adventure, to culture, to history, Antigua has it all. It is very easy to navigate the island of Antigua as it is no more than 14 miles long and they drive on the correct (left) side of the road!

The highlight of my Antigua experience was the visit to Shirley Heights Lookout which is, without question, the most famous view in the Caribbean. Overlooking English & Falmouth harbours, this panoramic view, on a clear day, takes in Guadeloupe & Montserrat.

Barbuda is Antigua's sister island and is well worth a visit. It is one of those very few islands in the Caribbean that remains and probably will remain for some time, undeveloped as to seem positively deserted at times. The 90 minutes ferry ride is not the smoothest but the first view of Barbuda's famous pink, sandy beaches makes the journey totally worthwhile. A full seventeen miles of untouched powdery sand, merging into clear, turquoise waters makes for a breathtaking landscape, a photographer's paradise. While on the island, make sure to take in a visit to the island's Frigate Bird Sanctuary.

But back to what Antigua is famous for, those magnificent beaches. Dotted all the way around this relatively small island, the white (and sometimes pink) sand, merging into the clear, turquoise-coloured waters of the Caribbean Sea, lends to a true Caribbean destination. The Antiguan people are extremely friendly and are incredibly proud of their country.

My thanks to everyone at the Antigua & Barbuda Tourism Authority for the opportunity they afforded to us. The experience was made even more special by the group of fellow agents who joined me, a very special group of people who became and will remain dear friends of mine.

The benefits of joining the Caribbean Training Programme are numerous. Not only will you glean invaluable information about the Caribbean and its diversity, you will be put forward for their many Fam Trips, entered into the

annual prize draws for prizes such tickets for the CTO Summer Ball, while Platinum qualified Agents are recognised as top sellers by being listed in the CTO Publication.

I truly enjoyed my visit to Antigua and I know you will also.

If you require any further information about Antigua & Barbuda and it's hotels, please feel free to call me on my direct telephone number 08 444 999 336.

NEWS from...

In January – February 2012 **Almond Resorts** will have a 32-page, dedicated tactical brochure with Thomas Cook Signature that will promote their exclusive worldwide offers. The Thomas Cook Signature brochure will be racked in 1200 Thomas Cook, Co-op, Going Places stores and feature two Barbados and one Saint Lucia hotel in the Thomas Cook Holidays January campaign.

Following **AMResorts** hugely successful **SUPER SEPTEMBER INCENTIVE**, they have collated the bookings and are happy to announce the lucky winners:

First Place – Diane Ibson, Blue Bay Travel
Second Place – Lai Yap, Kenwood Travel
Joint Third Place – Peter Davies & Jaclyn Wood, Blue Bay Travel

Visit www.gotobermuda.co.uk/get-here/maps-and-brochures to download **Bermuda** brochures. You can download Capture Bermuda – generic information; East to West – Guide of the island and Rendezvous – Activities through the year, many of which are FREE.

Want to brighten up your shop window? Why not put a drop of Cayman Islands sunshine there to stimulate winter business. **The Cayman Islands Department of Tourism** has just designed an attractive new window display set! They also have colourful posters and informative brochures. If you would like to receive any of these, free of charge, please let them know the numbers required as well as your agency details and they will send you a selection! Please contact Suvi at info-uk@caymanislands.ky or call 020 7491 7771.

Cotton House Mustique welcomes the arrival of a new General Manager, Eleonore Astier-Petin who joins the hotel from Bora Bora where she worked for 5 years.

Compass Point will re-join the **Nassau Paradise Island Promotion Board** from January 2012.



Naomi Campbell
Blue Bay Travel

The **Grenada Board of Tourism** is pleased to announce the lucky winners for the training and sales incentive which took place from August – October 2011 and have awarded the following prizes: £250 to Naomi Campbell, of Blue Bay Travel, for her fantastic sales figures of 122 room nights; £175 to Gretchen Kibbler of Tropic Breeze for her 85 nights and £50 to Susan Moore of SN Travel for 67 room nights.

The **Grenada Board of Tourism** also reports a 6% increase in UK visitors to the Caribbean island year on year for the first five months of 2011. Based on visitor arrival figures for January to May, Grenada – including sister islands Carriacou and Petite Martinique welcomed 12,576 UK travellers, compared to 11,769 in the same period last year.

Sunrise Marketing is now the UK & European representative for The Reefs Hotel & Club in Bermuda, joining its sister hotel – Nisbet Plantation Beach Club Nevis and also Ottley's Plantation Inn, St Kitts in the Sunrise portfolio. For enquires contact: Denise@sunrisemarketing.co.uk or tel 07825 757 485.

Product Update

A number of upgrade works at premium all-inclusive Barbados resort, **Almond Beach Village** have been completed, including 200 guest rooms, the kids' club and teen lounge, resurfacing of the Horizon pool and newly landscaped gardens surrounding the resort. Areas currently being refurbished, scheduled for completion at the end of November, include: the north adult pool, Reef restaurant, deck and bathrooms, Boardwalk Bar & Grill.

Almond Beach Club & Spa has been awarded the Earth Check Silver Award, due to the ongoing commitment and hard work to reduce energy, water consumption and total waste production.

Bianca C and the World's First Underwater Sculpture Park are to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the sinking of the cruise liner Bianca C, a replica of the 'Christ of the Deep' sculpture on St George's Carenage which was commissioned by the **Grenada Board of Tourism** to sit within the island's Underwater Sculpture Park. Both statues pay tribute to the hospitality, selflessness and spirit shown by the Grenadian people in the rescue of over 600 passengers and crew of the Bianca C in October 1961. The new statue - designed by local craftsman Troy Lewis and placed underwater in October 2011 - leans back and looks up to the surface with arms outstretched, a piece of living art for visitors to explore along other icons by Jason de Caires Taylor and Lewis.

Calabash Hotel & Villas, Grenada (www.calabashhotel.com) reopened in October for the season with refurbished bar, reception and lobby areas and confirmed that internationally renowned chef Gary Rhodes will visit in November 2011 to redesign the menu at Rhodes Restaurant.

The **Eden Roc at Cap Cana**, an ultra luxury lifestyle Boutique hotel in the **Dominican Republic** will open in February 2012, featuring 34 spacious suites each with a private swimming pool and a private massage/relaxation area. The Eden Roc is modeled on the luxurious and glamorous French and Italian Riviera, the Eden Roc at Cap Cana outlines Mediterranean Revival style and Spanish Colonial design elements. For more information please visit www.edenroccapcana.com.

New attractions in **Grenada** include The Spice Basket cultural centre (www.spicebasketgrenada.com) offering live theatre and dance performances in a setting that offers traditional cuisine and crafts; a handmade chocolate experience at Belmont Estate cocoa plantation (www.belmontestate.net) and the refreshed West Indies Cricket Heritage Centre, the only museum dedicated to the Caribbean's favourite sport (www.windiesheritage.com).

Godiva, the prestigious luxury chocolate manufacturer, announced the creation of a chocolate bar to add to their impressive and successful list of products. The bar is dedicated to the **Dominican Republic** under the name "**Santo Domingo Extra Dark Chocolate**" bar. The new chocolate treat features a product made with 85% Dominican chocolate. Beautifully wrapped, the new chocolate bar comes in a wide variety to please all chocolate lovers: hazelnut, peanuts, coffee, fruity notes of cherry and blackberry and a faint citrus note. It is available in shops that carry Godiva products. The **Dominican Republic** is one of the world's largest cocoa producers. Last year the country exported two-thirds of the eighteen thousand tons of organic cocoa sold in international markets.

World renowned P B Dye has returned to **Punta Cana** to design another breathtaking golf course. Expected to be completed in early 2012 the **Hacienda Golf Course** will be the centre piece of a new community with 400 beautiful homes www.puntacana.com/golf-spa/hacienda-golf-course.

Kittiwake is to celebrate its first anniversary - for more info go to www.kittiwakecayman.com. The ex-USS Kittiwake was a Submarine Rescue vessel (ASR-13). The Kittiwake had an illustrious service for over 54 years, being decommissioned September 30, 1994. It was sunk in front of Seven Mile Beach in January 2011 and is now a popular dive and snorkel attraction.

Le Phare Bleu (www.lepharebleu.com), Grenada's only floating restaurant - the historic Lighthouse Ship moored at Le Phare Bleu Marina - reopened for the season on 15 October 2011 sporting a completely new menu concept and a new Executive Chef from Switzerland, Ulrich Borer, who earned the Award for Best Head Chef in Switzerland in 2004.

To celebrate its 20th anniversary in the **Dominican Republic**, the **Spanish Riu Hotels & Resorts** chain will open its fifth facility in the Punta Cana region, and its third Riu Palace brand hotel. The arrival of the hotel chain to the Dominican Republic marked its international expansion. The opening of the Riu Palace Bavaro is scheduled for December 2012. The all-inclusive, 610-room facility also features 12 villas, four swimming pools and a 1,200 square-meter convention centre.

The "**Salto El Limon**" waterfall in the **Dominican Republic** is an idyllic destination situated in the Samana Peninsula, near the village of "El Limon." This is a protected area that has been declared a "Natural Monument" by the local authorities. The "Salto El Limon" waterfall is one of several scenic waterfalls found in the region. Reaching the waterfall is part of the exciting tour to the region. Visitors can reach it either on foot or on horseback. Tours could also include an exciting ride through the river itself. Interested parties should contact Santiago, the owner of Rancho Santi, who will provide the necessary equipment and experience in this adventure-filled tour through one of the country's most beautiful regions.

Windjammer Landing Villa Beach Resort, St. Lucia, is renowned as the perfect destination for families. From tots to teens and in-betweens the resort has it all and offers some amazing activities for kids. For girls of 4 to 12 yrs the resort is offering a "Pretty as a Princess" package to include a manicure and pedicure in tropical colours, hair braiding using brightly coloured beads plus a mini massage. The girls can top it off with a tropical drink and cupcake, take home a t-shirt and a selection of spa product samples.

Teens can also enjoy a beachside game of ping-pong, wake boarding, banana boat rides and more or arrange for off-site adventures. Rainforest Canopy adventures, a tropical jeep safari and ATV coastal adventures to name a few.

Contact Windjammer Landing for pricing and additional details:
UK office Tel. 01372 475783
Email: lynng@thecaribbeancollection.co.uk

Airline News

The number of flights each week from London Gatwick to Grenada will rise from four to five in December when Virgin Atlantic adds its second weekly service. Other flights are with British Airways and Monarch Airlines.

Inter Island travel between the Turks & Caicos Islands will be made easier from December 2011 with Caicos Express Airways www.caicosexpressairways.com offering scheduled flights from Providenciales to Grand Turk 4 times a day. The airline also offers 2 flights on Saturday from Providenciales to Salt Cay. Currently inter island travel is only available through Air Turks and Caicos. www.airturksandcaicos.com.

Events

Almond Resorts will join the **Saint Lucia Tourist Board** at TTG Virtual Caribbean Training on Dec 13.

8th Feb 2012 – Destinations Caribbean Roadshow, Maidenhead

Sandals - There will be a Customer Day with Toucan Travel, Basingstoke on the 22nd January.

- 8th-11th December - STAR Awards, Sandals Resorts, Sandals Grand Riviera, Jamaica
- 4th- 8th December - Wedding FAM Trip to Saint Lucia and Antigua
- 19th-22nd January - Destinations Holiday Show, Manchester Event City
- 21st-22nd January - UK Wedding Show, Rioch Arena, Coventry
- 28th-29th January - The Wedding Show, Tatton Park, Cheshire

Organised by the **Turks and Caicos Hotel and Tourism Association** (TCHTA) and the Cultural & Arts Commission (CAC) **Maskanoo** is held in Providenciales on **26 December**. Persons attending the event will enjoy a street parade, local music, island food, arts, entertainment as well as a fireworks display at the end of the event.

Junkanoo is the quintessential celebration of the islands and is a parade with colorful costumes and cultural music. Most islands celebrate Junkanoo from midnight to sunrise on New Year's morning (**1 Jan 2012**).

From late January through to early April, North Atlantic Whales are seen around the islands of Grand Turk and Salt Cay. For more information, visit www.turksandcaicoswhalewatching.com.

The President's Cup Golf Tournament in Turks & Caicos at the Provo Golf Club will begin in January 2012 www.provogolfclub.com.

Join Chef Eric Ripert for a weekend celebrating food, wine and the natural beauty of the Caribbean at the **Ritz-Carlton, Grand Cayman from January 12-15, 2012**. An incomparable roster of world famous chefs, wine experts and spirits blenders will offer tastings, demonstrations, tours and dinners that celebrate the barefoot elegance that only the Cayman Islands can deliver. For more information visit www.caymanislands.ky/cookout.

From casual beach side lunches, to sunset dinners or an elaborate banquet, to culinary events such as **Taste of Cayman and Cayman Cookout** has the perfect culinary combination to appease your palate. The Cayman Culinary Month runs from **January to February 2012**. Visit http://www.caymanislands.ky/culinary_month/ for more information.

Camper & Nicholson's - one of the oldest internationally recognised yachting business names will be taking the title role in the **Grenada Sailing Festival 2012** when the Camper & Nicholson's Racing Series will be run from the company's Port Louis Marina **27-31 January 2012**. The four-day event, now in its 19th year, will provide challenging top quality racing plus an early Regatta Season 'Tune-Up' to the international yachts visiting the Caribbean for the winter and the highly competitive crews based in the region.

Participating racers are now able to enjoy all the benefits of Port Louis, the island's newest world-class marina, with marina berths for up to 90m and top class facilities to all yachtsmen including a swimming pool, the brand new Victory Bar and Restaurant and many victualling and technical service operators on site. Racing will start and finish from Port Louis, and the courses will be concentrated on the island's southern and eastern coasts, some of the most exciting and challenging sailing waters in the Caribbean. Check the Festival website www.grenadasailingfestival.com for more details.

There will be more great sailing action on **4 & 5 February 2012** when the crowd-pulling local work boat regatta comes to **Grand Anse Beach, Grenada**. Twinning this spectacular weekend of racing with the island's Independence Celebrations enables visitors to join locals in the celebrations. There will be an all-action competition on the water and entertainment and activities, local arts and crafts, and food stalls in a Community Kitchen where all the best traditional dishes will be on offer.



The **Dominican Republic** whale-watching season is scheduled to begin in January. The annual pilgrimage of these marine mammals to the Bay of Samana, on the country's northeast coast, attracts more than 40,000 tourists each year. Visitors take the 30-minute boat ride in order to get a first-hand look at the magnificent humpback whales. The whales usually stay in the warm waters until March.

For the first time next season, visitors who do not want to get on boats to see the whales may use a brand new observatory which is situated near the town of Samana.

The whale watching season generates tremendous enthusiasm among locals and international visitors. The Bay of Samana has been declared as the "home of the humpback whales" in the Caribbean. These huge marine mammals travel to the warm waters off the north coast of the Dominican Republic for their annual mating rituals. For more information please visit <http://dr1.com/travel/special/whales.shtml>.

Bermuda can claim many famous residents and fans over the centuries. It was on a visit to Bermuda that **John Lennon** wrote his final album in 1980, Double Fantasy. During a tour of the Botanical Gardens he was captivated by the flower which was to give its name to this last Album. 30 years on, John's connections to the island are still strong for Lennon Fans, 2012 promises to be a must-visit year. Two special events will celebrate a remarkable man with the unveiling of a special memorial on **June 21**.

The annual **Batabano Carnival April/May 2012** brings the **Cayman Islands** together in a colourful cultural celebration of costume parades, music and dancing. The infectious rhythms of soca, calypso and steel drums fill the streets with electrifying energy.

The heart and soul of Batabano are the Mas' (Masquerading) Bands, who interpret social issues with creativity and imagination. The elaborate costumes and floats are traditionally inspired by the beautiful local marine environment. The islands are home to many sea turtles. The word batabano refers to the track left in the sand by the turtles as they drag themselves onto the beach to nest. For more info go to www.caymancarnival.com.

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