



The Official E-Newsletter of the Caribbean Tourism Organization

Welcome

Welcome to the December 2009 issue of the *CTO News*, the Caribbean Tourism Organization's e-newsletter. We welcome your feedback.

Please feel free to e-mail us at ctofeedback@lhammond.com to express your views or offer suggestions for future content.

FEATURES

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The holiday season is upon us and offers an appropriate time to reflect on our many blessings. [READ MORE »](#)

British MP's Sympathetic To Caribbean Position On UK Tax

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Tourism Human Resource Council In The Dominican Republic

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VIRTUAL CARIBBEAN

OneCaribbean.org Update

Videos and Photos from Caribbean Week Canada and CTO's activities at WTM along with presentations made at the European Marketing Forum are now on <http://www.onecaribbean.org/>.

SPOTLIGHT ON

THE BAHAMAS

CTO News celebrates the accomplishments of one CTO member destination each month. This month, our spotlight is on The Bahamas!

The Islands of The Bahamas offers the comfortable ease and instant sense of belonging. Nassau/Paradise Island is The Bahamas's capital city and offers a mixture of attractions, fine dining, fresh fish markets, water sports and boutique shopping. On Grand Bahama Island, guests will find an entire island with endless ecological wonders begging to be explored. From one of the world's longest underwater limestone cave systems to rare flowers to Gold Rock Beach—the only place you can see all six of our islands' ecosystems—there is so much to do. The Out Islands give new meaning to getting away. In addition to Nassau/Paradise Island and Grand Bahama Island, there are 698 other islands that make up The Islands Of The Bahamas. These secluded islands are home to some of the world's most amazing beaches, dive sites and fishing sites. Here, nature easily outnumbers man. For more information on travel to The Bahamas, please visit online at www.bahamas.com.

ABOUT THE CARIBBEAN TOURISM ORGANIZATION

The Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), is headquartered in Barbados with marketing operations in New York, London and Toronto. The CTO is the Caribbean's tourism development agency and comprises membership of over 30 member governments as well as a myriad of private sector entities.

INSIDER SCOOP

Special Marketing and Media Opportunities

HOT DEALS

Do you have a "Hot Deal" on offer? Find out how to place this on the home page of www.CaribbeanTravel.com: e-mail Annette Stowe at Annette@caribtourism.com.

MAKE PUBLIC RELATIONS WORK FOR YOU!

Be sure you are on our distribution list for "Hot Tip" publicity leads from top media outlets looking to promote the Caribbean. Contact Michelle Horn at Lou Hammond & Associates to subscribe: michelleh@lhammond.com.

CARIBBEAN TO HAVE BIG PRESENCE AT BOSTON AND NEW YORK TRAVEL SHOWS

Join CTO in the Caribbean Sections of The Boston Globe Travel Show – 19-21 February 2010 www.bostonglobetravelshow.com - and The New York Times Travel Show – 26-28 February 2010 www.nytravelshow.com.

THE WBLS WEDDING EXPO

WBLS invites sponsors for the Second Annual WBLS Wedding Expo to be held on Saturday, March 20, 2010 at the New York Pennsylvania Hotel. For sponsorship information please contact: Randa Guastella, Account Executive, WBLS FM, New York 10705. Tel: 212.592.0512 E-mail: Randa@WBLS.com

The CTO's mission is to provide to and through its members, the services and information needed for the development of sustainable tourism for the economic and social benefit of the Caribbean people. The organization provides specialized support and technical assistance to member countries in the areas of marketing, human resource development, research and statistics, information technology and sustainable tourism development. The CTO disseminates information on behalf of its member governments to consumers and the travel trade. www.OneCaribbean.org

HOT DATES

CARIBBEAN MARKETPLACE

10-12 January 2010 in Puerto Rico
www.CaribbeanHotelAssociation.com
For more information on events,
contact ctony@caribtourism.com



Holiday Message From Hugh Riley, Secretary General of The Caribbean Tourism Organization

The holiday season is upon us and offers an appropriate time to reflect on our many blessings as well as give thought to what lies ahead and what's truly important.

We've faced headfirst a struggling global economy, and thankfully, we're all still standing to speak about it. With struggle comes growth. Growth in our core values. Growth in realising what's truly important, such as family, life, friends, and our beautiful Caribbean. Struggle brings a deeper appreciation for what we have in each other and our Region. We live in the most beautiful place on earth and count amongst our citizens some of the most welcoming and talented people in the world. It is our people – along with the sandy beach, lush, green hills, sun-drenched days and starry, moonlit nights - that account for the heart and soul of the Caribbean tourism industry. They are our greatest asset. It is the Caribbean people who will provide the strength to continue on and thrive in both good times and times of struggle.

The challenges in the global economy are not over –yet, I'm happy however to say, interest in, and passion for the Caribbean remains high.

As we move into the holiday season, let's reflect on our true asset – our people. Caribbean tourism, like the Caribbean people, is resilient and strong. So while there is no doubt that challenges remain ahead, there are none that are impossible if we continue to work together and remember one very important fact: There is only One Caribbean! And, even during these days of a global economic crisis, here's another reality: Life Needs the Caribbean!

From all of us here at the Caribbean Tourism Organization, we wish you a very blessed, healthy, and happy holiday season. We also wish you all a prosperous New Year and look forward to working, supporting and partnering with you in the year ahead.



British MPs Sympathetic to Caribbean Position On UK Tax

The British MP, Sarah Teather, has vowed to valiantly keep pressure on the government to revoke its "ridiculous" Air Passenger Duty (APD) levied on passengers flying to the Caribbean.

Ms. Teather, who represents the Liberal Democrats in the House of Commons, organised and chaired a meeting of the All Parliamentary Group of British MPs from the three major political parties and tourism ministers and officials from Caribbean countries during

the recent World Travel Market trade show in London.

"We as MPs, of course, are being lobbied heavily by people who are from the Caribbean or who travel to the Caribbean, who live in our constituencies and they feel that this new tax is incredibly unfair because it is going to be cheaper to travel to the west coast of America, which is further away from the UK, than to travel to the Caribbean and that's just ridiculous," she said after the hour-long meeting.

During the talks at the House of Commons, the Caribbean representatives expressed their concerns about the impact of increases in the APD which took effect on November 1.

The tax, originally presented as an environmental measure, results in higher costs for passengers flying from UK airports. Under the APD, the Caribbean is placed in a category that attracts a higher charge than the United States, even though some destinations in the US are almost twice as far from the UK than any Caribbean country.

"It doesn't make any sense from an environmental perspective and it doesn't make any sense from any perspective of logic. So I'm working with the Caribbean Council and a number of Caribbean countries to lobby the (UK) government to try and make sure they don't go ahead with this," said Ms. Teather.

See an interview with Ms. Teather – as well as interviews with Caribbean delegates to WTM – on www.onecaribbean.org.

Tourism Human Resource Council in The Dominican Republic



A coalition of tourism stakeholders made up of government, education, industry, the donor community and tourism clusters, met in Santiago, in the Dominican Republic, on 19 and 20 November, 2009, to chart the way forward for the development of a Tourism Human Resource Council for the Dominican Republic.

The main aim of the Tourism Human Resources Council is to address the human resource/education and training needs of the sector in a concerted, systematic and coordinated manner. Issues raised during the discussions that needed to be addressed by the Council included how to get more youth properly trained for tourism jobs; making the tourism curricula more relevant to the needs of industry; the development of occupational standards; examining some of the labour market issues in the sector - including low pay, long working hours, seasonal work - and encouraging industry to invest more in training.

CTO's Director of Human Resources, Bonita Morgan, made a presentation on "The Importance of Developing Human Capital in the Tourism Sector" and shared the work of the Caribbean Tourism Human Resource Council. Additionally, Ruth Caceres of the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council shared information on the structure, administration, funding and work of that Council. Mrs. Morgan and Mrs. Caceres also facilitated the workshop on November 20, which created an action plan to establish the national Tourism Human Resources Council.

First Caribbean Food, Rum & Rhythm Event in London A Success

The Caribbean received added exposure in London in the run up to World Travel Market (WTM) when the CTO hosted the first ever Caribbean Food, Room & Rhythm in the British Capital.

More than 200 participants at the event enjoyed Caribbean music and sampled various Caribbean dishes and spirits made unique and attractive by the region's combination of Dutch, English, French and Spanish cultures.

Everyone attending the event, held at the famous wine and spirits tasting venue, the Vinopolis, hailed it as a success and recommended that it be repeated next year.



Caribbean Food, Rum & Rhythm was one of two pre-WTM events organised by the CTO. The other event was the European Marketing Forum attended by Ministers, Commissioners and Directors of Tourism and other

CEO Willie Walsh.

CTO UK Chapter Welcomes Over 30 Journalists To The Fourth 'Host And Reward The Media'



The UK Chapter of the CTO welcomed over 30 media to the fourth pan-Caribbean media awards event at the renowned West Indian restaurant "Caribbean Scene" in London's Royal Victoria Dock during the recent World Travel Market (WTM).

The Caribbean Travel Journalism Awards 2009 were presented during a networking evening was attended by almost 100 guests, comprising visiting Ministers and their delegations, UK Chapter members and an array of consumer and trade media, national and regional newspaper journalists and a number of freelancers.

The awards consisted of five different categories: best national newspaper feature (**Winner:** Elizabeth Day, The Observer); best regional newspaper feature (**Winner:** Rob Hollingworth, The Star - Sheffield and Doncaster); best consumer feature (**Winner:** Francesca Syz, Condé Nast Traveller); best online feature (**Winner:** Chris Leadbeater, Mail Online) and best travel trade feature (**Winner:** Chris Gray, TTG). The winners were given stylish Samsung laptops.

Carol Hay, the CTO's director of marketing for the UK and Europe, said, "It's good to have the support from our friends in the media, which is very much appreciated amongst all our Caribbean representatives. We would like to reward and thank all travel writers for their continued support with maintaining the colourful and charismatic reputation that the Caribbean region enjoys in the UK, with so many inspirational editorial pieces written each year".

Caribbean Week in Canada 2009 Hailed As A Success

The Third Annual Caribbean Week in Canada was met with great success, achieving its goal of raising awareness of the Region as a prime vacation destination for Canadian travellers. The highly-anticipated celebration was held from 23 October – 1 November, 2009. The celebration of Caribbean culture and heritage featured consumer travel shows, a press conference, Caribbean Media Marketplace, Caribbean Awards Luncheon and the second annual Caribbean Rum & Rhythm Festival in Montreal and Toronto.



The Caribbean once again paid tribute to the Canadian-based media and travel agent community during a special Caribbean Awards Luncheon held at the Fermenting Cellar in Toronto's historic Distillery District. The Awards Luncheon

followed a very successful Media Marketplace, also held in Toronto's historic Distillery District, where media gained valuable product information about various destinations within the Region.

Volleyball In The Caribbean

For the third consecutive year, the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), sponsored championship volleyball in the Caribbean, showcasing the skills of Olympic and pro players and coaches during *GObeachfest* 2009. Organized by Volleyball Vacations *GObeachfest*, the tournaments took place at Club Med Turquoise in Providenciales, Turks & Caicos, from November 7-21.



3 Olympic Gold Medallist Phil Dalhausser, 2008 Olympian Sean Rosenthal along with celebrity guests including NBC's "The Biggest Loser" celebrity trainer Kym Lyons, and former Mr. Universe Gunter Schlierkamp.

"Beach volleyball is a popular sport in the Caribbean and we were ecstatic to host such high caliber volleyball players in our Region," said Sylma Brown, Director of Marketing (Ag.) of the Caribbean Tourism Organization. "The sports tourism industry has been a driving factor in boosting arrivals to the Caribbean, so we'd like to

continue to host key events such as this to support the interests of these travellers.”

US media attendees included WPIX Morning Show reporter Lisa Mateo and cameraman Anthony Mazza, along with *Latina Magazine* travel writer Verky Arcos. The journalists not only experienced world-class beach volleyball, but also visited new restaurants, nightlife, hotels, and attractions in Turks & Caicos. WPIX Morning News has 2-3 segments slated from the hours of footage they were able to capture during the trip.

The next Volleyball in the Caribbean event is slated for January 2010 in Puerto Rico. Visit www.onecaribbean.org for more information.

NTOs Receive Training On Meeting The Media

Some 25 representatives of National Tourist Offices (NTO) in Canada and the US have received training on how to prepare for media interviews and how to effectively get their messages out. The CTO conducted workshops on How to Meet the Media for NTOs in Toronto and New York recently. The exercise covered topics like how to prepare the message, effective skills for radio and television interviews and how best to talk to the media.

“A big thank you to CTO for organizing. It was a very good event,” said Cindi Miller-Aird, one of the participants at the New York workshop. “It was very informative and engaging. It was well put together,” added Leticia Young, Marketing Associate at the Anguilla Tourist Board.

The Workshops were conducted by the CTO's communications officer, Johnson Johnrose, who will conduct a workshop on crisis communication in Tobago this month. CTO members wishing to have similar workshops conducted can contact Johnson at jjohnrose@caribtourism.com.



CTO Participates In Conference on Capacity Building



Representatives from Caribbean tourism and disaster management organisations, including the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), met recently in Montego Bay, Jamaica, for a conference on disaster risk management for the tourism sector.

The 7–11 December workshop for participating states of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), was organised to help the tourism sector adapt the Regional Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Strategy & Action Plan at the national level.

Participants are expected to be better equipped to develop their own disaster management strategy based on the regional model.

The CTO's sustainable tourism product specialist, Gail Henry represented the organisation at the conference.
