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**TOURISM IN HURRICANE IMPACTED COUNTRIES REBOUNDING**

**BARBADOS** (15 February 2017) –Hurricane affected countries are rebounding after last September’s devastation by Irma and Maria. The least affected countries are at or near normality, while the worst hit ones, which recorded decreases ranging from -18 percent to -7 percent in 2017, continue to make progress, five months after the storms.

The following is an update on the progress of some of the worst hit destinations as provided by the countries, along with the hotel picture made available by the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA).

**Hotels**

According to the CHTA, the status of 129 CHTA-member hotels in severely impacted destinations - Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, St. Maarten (Dutch), St. Martin (French) and the United States Virgin Islands - is as follows as of Friday, 9 February:

- 49 percent (63) of properties are now open, 51 percent (66) remain closed. **Note:** properties that are only hosting relief workers and/or government officials are considered closed.
- An additional 19 percent (12) of the closed properties are expected to open by September 2018
- Between September and December 2018, 32 percent (additional 20) of properties will reopen
- The status of the remaining properties has not been determined

Following are destination updates provided to the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) by member countries:

**Anguilla**

Over the holidays, Anguilla saw a number of loyal repeat visitors return to the destination for their annual holiday getaway. The majority of villas, boutique hotels and holiday apartment rentals opened in time for the holiday season.

Starting 2018 on a positive note, Anguilla added the brand new Quintessence Boutique hotel, a luxury, nine-suite hotel located in Long Bay, which opened 1 January. Traditional five-star properties start reopening this month, with Zemi Beach House on 15 February, to be followed by the Four Seasons Resort and Residences on 23 March and The Reef by CuisinArt on 1 April. The five-star Malliouhana, CuisinArt Golf Resort & Spa and the new Belmond Cap Juluca will open in November 2018.

Anguilla has over 20 attractions open and operating on the island – including the tennis academy, a championship golf course, and all types of water sports, from scuba diving to paddle boarding to kayaking and hydroplaning. The Aqua Park reopens in March. Around 10 attractions that are currently closed, including some of the off-shore cays, will soon announce reopening dates.

Approximately 70 establishments -- restaurants, food trucks, bakeries -- are open, including iconic favourites like Elvis' Beach Bar, Garvey's Sunshine Shack, Veya's, Johnno's, Tasty's and DaVida's. A brand new addition to the culinary scene, Julian's, a classic French restaurant, opened at the Quintessence Hotel. Over the course of the next few months leading up to fall (autumn) 2018, another 20 restaurants will reopen.

Electricity and water have been completely restored on Anguilla.

The Blowing Point ferry terminal has been demolished to make way for the construction of a new facility with the groundbreaking anticipated in the next few months. Visitors and residents are currently being processed on arrival through the police station at Blowing Point, and a tent has been set up to accommodate passengers awaiting departure. Ferry services are back in operation from Anguilla's Blowing Point Ferry Terminal to both St. Martin (French) and St. Maarten (Dutch).

Several private ferry companies have resumed operations to and from St. Maarten, timed to coincide with flight arrival and departures at Princess Juliana Airport, with service operating from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. All guests are currently being processed through the Simpson Bay Police Station, where the boats dock. Anguilla is in the process of concluding negotiations for the use of a facility closer to the airport.

The public ferry service from Blowing Point to Marigot Bay on St. Martin operates 10 roundtrips daily with Anguilla departures operating from 7:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. and Marigot departures running from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The Clayton J Lloyd International Airport is operating only during daylight hours. Seaborne Airlines operates one flight to and from San Juan, Puerto Rico, five days a week (Thursday through Monday). Anguilla Air Services operates four flights daily to and from St. Maarten through 12 March (reduced to three flights daily 12 March through 4 November) and one flight daily to and from St. Barth's through 4 November. Air Sunshine operates two flights daily from

San Juan, one flight daily to and from St. Maarten and two roundtrip flights to St. Thomas. Trans Anguilla Airways operates two daily roundtrip flights from St. Kitts and four flights a week to and from Antigua. Private jets and charter flights also operate into the airport. With local carriers adding service to Antigua as a third gateway to the island, this has proven to be particularly helpful to Canadian and European visitors.

As a result of the hurricane, Anguilla is now making long overdue and truly significant improvements to air and sea port facilities, which will greatly enhance visitors' experience on arrival and departure. For Winter 2018, Anguilla is working towards unveiling a refreshed and revamped tourism product.

For official updates visit <https://irma.ivotanguilla.com>.

### **British Virgin Islands**

The British Virgin Islands continues to rebuild and some of the accommodations have reopened (400 rooms and 1,000 berths), and will continue into 2019.

Anegada Beach Club reopened on 1 February. Cooper Island Resort will reopen 1 March 2018 while Oil Nut Bay (Virgin Gorda) will have a partial property opening also on 1 March 2018. Guana Island Resort and Scrub Island Resort & Spa are anticipated to open in July 2018. Other reopenings include: Peter Island Resort & Spa (partial property opening in the fall of 2018); Necker Island Resort (partial property opening Oct. 2018); Mosquito Island will reopen one house in Oct. 2018; Biras Creek (Virgin Gorda) will have a partial property opening with 12 rooms in Nov. 2018; Eustatia Resort will reopen in Nov. 2018; Rosewood Little Dix Bay (Virgin Gorda) will open in 2019 (precise date to be determined); Pussers Marina Cay is anticipated to reopen in Oct. 2019; and Bitter End Yacht Club will reopen in 2019 (precise date to be determined).

All attractions - with the exception of four museums on Tortola - are open, including the famous Baths.

Electricity has been restored to 85 percent of most islands, with the plan for full power across all islands by Easter 2018. All water plants are up and running, however there was major damage to the distribution network, so some places are without water. All mobile networks and internet access are up across the islands.

Beef Island Airport is fully operational with normal flights on LIAT, InterCaribbean, Cape Air, VI Airlinks and private charters. InterCaribbean connects the BVI to Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic and Turks and Caicos Islands.

For more info visit [www.bvitourism.com](http://www.bvitourism.com).

### **Dominica**

Nineteen of the 23 major natural sites and attractions are open to visitors.

Dominica welcomed the MV Mein Schiff 3 of TUI Cruises with over 2,000 passengers on 28 January. This was the first major cruise call to Dominica and the first call to the Roseau Cruise Ship Berth since Hurricane Maria. The ship is expected to return five additional times this cruise season.

Hotels began reopening on 1 January 2018, with 388 (40 percent) of the 960 total rooms in the country available to visitors. In addition, over 60 restaurants are open and operating.

On 8 February a groundbreaking ceremony was held for the 120-room Anichi Resort and Spa, which is being built in the northern town of Portsmouth. It will be operated under the Autograph Collection Hotels brand of Marriott and is expected to open in late 2019.

Dominica is served by LIAT (from Antigua and Barbados); Winair (Guadeloupe, San Juan and St. Maarten); Seaborne Airlines (San Juan), Air Sunshine (St. Kitts, St. Thomas, San Juan, Anguilla and Tortola); Sky High (Santo Domingo), and Trans Island Air (Barbados).

For more information on Dominica's recovery efforts visit [www.DiscoverDominica.com](http://www.DiscoverDominica.com).

### **Puerto Rico**

The Puerto Rico Tourism Company (PRTC) recently announced its rapid-pace recovery efforts and positive outlook for 2018.

Currently, there are over 120 PRTC-endorsed hotels open, along with hundreds of Airbnb listings and *paradores*, small family-run inns. This represents approximately 12,458 rooms with 2,670 additional rooms currently being revamped at Wyndham Rio Mar, Ritz Carlton Reserve, El San Juan Hotel and others. The Wyndham Rio Mar is expected to reopen in March while El San Juan Hotel will reopen in October.

Puerto Rico will also be adding 3,800 more rooms to its inventory by 2019, representing a 25 per cent increase. Some of the new hotel developments under way include: JW Marriott, ALOFT San Juan Convention Center, ALOFT Ponce, Serafina Beach Hotel, Four Season Cayo Largo and O:LV Fifty Five. Approximately \$1.9 billion will be injected into new developments and renovations.

Puerto Rico has over 120 tourist attractions open including Old San Juan walking tours, Castillo San Felipe del Morro, Castillo San Cristobal, Bacardi Tour, Cueva Ventana and Hacienda Campo Rico. Additionally, 13 golf courses and 15 casinos are open for recreation.

More than 4,000 restaurants are open throughout the island, 1,885 of which are located in the San Juan area, including Condado, Old San Juan and Santurce.

Electricity has been restored to 83.6 percent of the destination while 98.8 percent have potable water.

All airports across the island are open and operational day & night with Luis Muñoz Marin International Airport averaging 110 daily flights. Capacity is on the rise with a current monthly

seat volume of 391,000. By July 2018, seat capacity will increase by 81,000 and by early summer 2018, air access will be on par with levels this time last year. Growth is driven by newly established routes and existing frequency, in addition to larger aircraft that will result in higher seat capacity.

The airport is served by the following carriers: Air Antilles Express, American Airlines, Air Century, Air Sunshine, Allegiant, Avianca, Condor, Copa Airlines, Cape Air, Delta Air Lines, Frontier Airlines, InterCaribbean Airways, JetBlue, LIAT, Pawa Dominicana, Seaborne Airlines, Southwest Airlines, Spirit Airlines, Sun Country Airlines, Tradewind Aviation, United Airlines and Vieques Air Link.

Puerto Rico has more homeport cruises serving the island than ever before with 14 vessels – four more than last year – including Royal Caribbean’s Freedom of the Seas, Windstar Cruises’ Star Pride, SilverSeas’ Silver Wind and Viking Ocean Cruises’ Viking Sea. Cruise operations resumed less than three weeks after Hurricane Maria and the territory has since hosted 410,000 visitors. Puerto Rico expects a record-breaking 1.7 million cruise passengers, which equates to approximately \$250 million dollars in revenue.

For information visit [www.seepuertorico.com](http://www.seepuertorico.com)

### **St. Martin (French)**

The tourist office is reporting that all beaches are open and back to normal, Grand Case International Airport is open, offering offers daily flights to and from Guadeloupe, Martinique and St. Barth’s, and more than 60 restaurants are open, as are about 300 hotel rooms, with at least 10 more hotels scheduled to reopen before the end of 2018.

For updates visit [www.st-martin.org](http://www.st-martin.org) or <https://www.facebook.com/iledesaintmartin>

### **St. Maarten (Dutch)**

St. Maarten continues to rebuild and has reopened many of its tourism businesses. All telecommunications, including Wi-Fi, along with drinking water are up and running while electricity has been restored to 95 percent of the destination. There are currently 27 accommodations open, representing 669 accommodation units, while the 36 that are closed will begin reopening in the upcoming weeks and months.

Oyster Bay Beach Resort plans to reopen in April 2018 while Divi Little Bay anticipates a June 2018 reopening and the Sonesta hotels in early 2019. These openings will allow for guests to enjoy specific parts of each property with more activities to become available as the year progresses.

Eighty per cent of land based and 64 percent of sea based activities are open, including the Rainforest Adventures adventure park and zipline and Aqua Mania Adventures. On Front Street, 90 percent of the shops are open while the majority of restaurants are open throughout St. Maarten.

Airport service is still limited, however, active reconstruction efforts have begun. The structure of the terminal building held up firmly during the hurricane so that will go untouched in the reconstruction. A cleanup took place after the hurricane, but the water removal process still ongoing. A mold assessment will be conducted to determine if further mold remediation is necessary.

There are daily inter-Caribbean flights, as well as direct flights to and from major U.S. cities. As of January 2018, daily nonstop flights are available on JetBlue from New York and on American Airlines from Miami. Delta Air Lines offers nonstop flights from Atlanta four days a week.

December marked the much-anticipated reopening of St. Maarten's cruise port. Viking Cruises' Viking Sea ship and Marella Cruises' Marella Discovery sailed into port on 4 December and 5 December, respectively. Royal Caribbean's Grandeur of the Seas made its return to Philipsburg port 17 December. Princess Cruises returned 11 January, Carnival Cruise Line 15 January, and Disney Cruises 16 January. The port will welcome 14 ships during the week of 18 February.

The annual Heineken Regatta will take place 1-4 March with Carnival scheduled for 12 April – 3 May.

For information visit [www.vacationstmaarten.com](http://www.vacationstmaarten.com).

## **St. Barth**

St. Barth continues to recover and reopen tourism related businesses on a regular basis. All beaches have been cleaned and open for swimming since November, electricity and water have restored to all areas of the island, Internet service is now widely available, Wi-Fi hot spots have been installed and cellular phone service is widely available.

St. Barth's Gustav III airport is opened for commercial operations with daily flights from Guadeloupe and St Martin by St Barth Commuter, as well as daily flights from Antigua and Puerto Rico on Tradewind Aviation. Winair offers three to four daily scheduled flights from St. Maarten, Air Antilles offers flights from Guadeloupe, while Air America and Paradise Air operate charter flights from San Juan.

According to West Indies Management Company (WIMCO), a Caribbean luxury villa holiday specialist which represents private villas on St. Barth, – Tom Beach Hotel, The Sunset, Ti Morne, Auberge de Terre Neuve, Le Village St Barth, Villa Lodge 4 Epices, Baie des Anges, Les Ondines, Saline Garden, Les Sucriers, Les Ilets de la Plage and Le Nid d'Aigle are open.

Christopher is scheduled to open on 20 February, Villa Marie on 9 March, Manapany Hotel on 13 March, Eden Rock in December(no fixed date yet), Cheval Blanc, Le Barthelemy, Le Toiny, Emeraude Plage and Tropical sometime during the course of 2018, with dates still to be announced.

WIMCO Villas is also reporting over 60 percent of their villa portfolio is available for rental.

The government of St. Barth reports that 49 restaurants are open, including two on the beach, as are many of the shops. The Great Bay Express Ferry resumed service between St. Martin and St. Barth's in October, the commercial port facilities are open, as are boat charter companies Jicky Marine and Master Ski Pilou.

The St. Barth Bucket Regatta is scheduled for 15-18 March and Les Voiles de St. Barth regatta runs from 8-14 April 2018.

### **U.S. Virgin Islands**

The United States Virgin Islands continues to recover from the effects of the hurricanes, with 98 percent of the territory now with electricity. Airports on St. Croix and St. Thomas have been operational for months, and several carriers have recently increased flight service from key cities to meet the growing demand.

Cruise ship calls to St. Thomas have returned to pre-hurricane levels, with nearly 50 ships arriving in January.

All beaches and most activities and attractions have opened, with restaurants and attractions reopening each week. National Park sites, including the world-renowned Virgin Islands National Park on St. John, have reopened

In terms of accommodations, approximately 40 percent of traditional hotels/rooms in the territory are operational, many housing relief workers. Villa rentals are a popular choice, and villa accommodations of all sizes and configurations are available.

Visitors to St. Croix will find a range of accommodations from resorts such as The Buccaneer to private luxury villas, bed and breakfasts, and the brand new boutique hotel, The Fred, located in downtown Frederiksted.

On St. John and St. Thomas a significant portion of the hotel inventory remains closed for repairs and renovation. Options for overnight visitors to St. John near Cruz Bay include Gallows Point Resort, Grande Bay Resort, Hotel Cruz Bay (Cruz Bay Boutique Hotel), Estate Lindholm and Sea Shore Allure. Beyond Cruz Bay, there are numerous private villas located throughout the island that are available for vacation rental. On St. Thomas, Emerald Beach Resort, Windward Passage, Lindbergh Bay Beach as well as numerous villas, inns and bed and breakfast properties are accepting leisure visitors.

The territory will host the St. Thomas International Regatta from 22-25 March, V.I. Carnival 31 March - 28 April and St. Croix Food & Wine Experience 5-9 April.

For information visit [www.usviupdate.com](http://www.usviupdate.com).

### **About the Caribbean Tourism Organization**

The Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), with headquarters in Barbados, offices in New York and London and representation in Canada, is the Caribbean's tourism development agency comprising membership of the region's finest countries and territories including Dutch, English,

French and Spanish, as well as a myriad of private sector allied members. The CTO's vision is to position the Caribbean as the most desirable, year round, warm weather destination, and its purpose is Leading Sustainable Tourism - One Sea, One Voice, One Caribbean.

Among the benefits to its members the organization provides specialized support and technical assistance in sustainable tourism development, marketing, communications, advocacy, human resource development, event planning & execution and research & information technology. In addition the CTO, in partnership with the Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association, jointly and equally owns the Caribbean Tourism Development Company, a marketing and business development entity dedicated to promoting the Caribbean brand worldwide.

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For more information on the Caribbean Tourism Organization, please visit [www.OneCaribbean.org](http://www.OneCaribbean.org). Get the latest updates and connect with CTO via [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#).