



Aruba Tourism
Authority

Aruba Product Update

April 2014

The Aruba Tourism Authority (ATA) is the Destination Marketing Organization for Aruba.

Our Mission:
To be an innovative and effective DMO that positions the brand Aruba as a premier tourism destination, which meets interest of it's stakeholders.

Our vision:
For the ATA to be recognized as the leading and cutting edge Destination marketing Organization

Core Values:
Empowerment Productivity
& Ownership Professional
Respect Fun & Passion.

Below we offer a synthesis of some of the most prominent and important news during the month of April 2014

ATA News

CATA (Conferencia Anual de Turismo Aruba)



On Wednesday, March 19, the Aruba Tourism Authority had the pleasure of welcoming 70 distinguished trade partners from Latin America to the 25th Conferencia Anual de Turismo Aruba (CATA). Tour operators and airline representatives hailing from Colombia, Argentina, Chile, Brazil, Paraguay, Mexico, Panama, Venezuela and Ecuador met with hoteliers and tourism executives at this important annual trade event.

CATA provides a valuable opportunity to reinforce the Aruba product and to strengthen partner relationships. Windows at Divi Links welcomed the group for dinner on their first night in Aruba. The official opening took place on Thursday, March 20, at Renaissance Convention Center with welcome words by Miriam Dabian, Area Director of Latin America and a welcome speech by Ronella Tjin Asjoe-Croes, CEO of ATA.



These were followed by remarks by Jerusha Rasmijn, Manager of Aruba Convention Bureau; Edgar Camillo, General Director of Imagen Digital; and Manuel Caro, CEO of MDE Consulting Group. A panel discussion hosted by NTN24HORAS focused on sustainable projects in Aruba in the area of energy, and images of CATA were transmitted by NTN24 throughout the Latin American región.

This morning session was followed by lunch at L. G. Smith Steak & Chop House, a De Palm Tours jeep tour and scavenger hunt, and an afternoon tram ride through the sparkling new downtown area. A cultural event followed that evening at Plaza Daniel Leo.

On Friday, the tourism marketplace took place at the Radisson Aruba Resort & Casino, providing the perfect opportunity for local businesses to elaborate on their products and conduct business with their trade partners. Hotel inspections were arranged on Saturday for participants. The conference closed with a special evening event held at Marriott Aruba Resort & Stellaris Casino celebrating the 25-year milestone of CATA, during which honors were bestowed for excellence in the Latin American market.



Aruba Meets Europe

Tour operators and airlines from 11 European countries visited Aruba the second week of April for the bi-annual Aruba Meets Europe conference. Divi Phoenix Beach Resort hosted the opening reception on Palm Beach, highlighted by an Aruban jazz band and a spectacular carnival show.

The second day began with presentations by Minister of Tourism Otmar Oduber; CEO of Aruba Tourism Authority Ronella Tjin Asjoe-Croes; and Freddy Vargas of the Ministry of Energy, followed by business sessions and panel discussions. Minister Oduber stressed the overall importance of tourism for Aruba and his appreciation for all European business brought to the island. He also addressed the EU-pre-clearance project in Aruba, and strong relationships with KLM and ArkeFly. ArkeFly will soon add a Dreamliner to their Aruba flights.

Tjin Asjoe-Croes applauded the long average stay of European visitors and the increased load factor of European flights. "It is of vital importance to deliver high value for money as well as cultural, artistic and authentic vacation experiences," she concluded. Vargas stated that recent TripAdvisor studies show that 71% of travelers prefer staying at an eco-friendlier destination so Aruba is on the right track, as are its green resorts.

The morning program on the third day was dedicated to small accommodations such as apartments, villas and studios with a marketplace at the Holiday Inn Resort ballroom. This was followed by an exciting jeep tour and scavenger hunt organized by De Palm Tours and ATA.

The final day featured a market place at Renaissance Convention Center attended by larger hotels, local destination management companies and activities.

In the evening, the group was treated to a drive on the Kukoo Kunuku party bus, a tram tour through the recently renovated downtown area in Oranjestad, and a carnival extravaganza and dinner at historic Fort Zoutman catered by the Renaissance Aruba Resort.

Tirso Tromp, director of ATA Europe, commented, "We attracted representatives from tour operators and airlines from all over Europe of which many were new to Aruba. Looking at the positive numbers in Q4 2014, the steady numbers of Dutch travelers and the potential of growing markets such as Italy and Germany, we can be very optimistic about the remainder of this year and even next year."





Resorts

Boardwalk Small Hotel

Ronella Tjin Asjoe-Croes, CEO of the Aruba Tourism Authority (ATA) officially launched the newest guest amenity of Boardwalk Small Hotel, Aruba's Treasure Box. By means of a 'treasure hunt', Tjin Asjoe-Croes discovered Aruba's Treasure Box on the hotels' lush grounds. Each box contains 10 small cards with information and directions to must-visit places, hotspots and hidden gems such as lesser known local eateries and beautiful viewpoints on the island and is offered to all guests as an in-room amenity. Aruba's Treasure Box is supported by Boardwalk's online concierge providing extensive island information, both pre-arrival as well as on island.

Boardwalk-owner Kimberly Rooijackers elaborated on the idea for Aruba's Treasure Box. "Boardwalk Small Hotel approaches Aruba as a treasure box full of hidden gems. We want to assist our guests in discovering the island in a new and unique way. Basically it already starts right here on property, since Boardwalk is situated on a historic coco-plantation".

When returning from their discovery trip guests are also asked what they liked best or what other types of hidden gems they found themselves. This way the Treasure Box becomes a lively, fluid and ever-evolving process, offering unique island experiences. Locals can actively participate by directing tourists to their own favorite hangouts and less traveled spots so they can experience an authentic 'taste' of Aruba.



Radisson Aruba Resort, Casino & Spa

Easter Brunch

The Radisson Aruba Resort, Casino & Spa celebrated Easter Sunday with a special brunch buffet held in the Grand Caribbean Ballroom. The buffet included stations for breakfast, omelet, pasta, salad, seafood, hibachi grill and more, along with a selection of kid-friendly items. Guests enjoyed an Easter egg hunt, face painting, trip giveaway, and bingo in the casino, along with musical entertainment from local favorite, Francis Jacobs.

International Women's Day

The resort paid homage to all women on staff with a special luncheon for International Women's Day on March 7. All female colleagues enjoyed a delicious and healthy meal from the buffet and a presentation on healthy eating given by guest speaker and nutritionist, Angelique Salsbach.

Beach Clean Up

A group of Radisson Aruba employees participated in a beach clean-up on March 13 at Boca Druif, a less accessible beach loved by locals for body boarding located near the coast. The resort takes it upon itself to organize several coastal clean ups each year to help preserve the beautiful island they call home.

World Down Syndrome Day

The Radisson Aruba Resort, Casino & Spa observed World Down Syndrome Day on March 21 with a run / walk along the beach. 6 employees participated in the 3.1 mile trek to raise awareness of this syndrome and to recognize the accomplishments of all the people with DS.





Blue Residences

Blue Residences, the first upscale condominium resort to open on Aruba's Eagle Beach in 20 years, broke ground on March 3 when it officially welcomed its first guests. The property just debuted its first tower - consisting of two five-bedroom penthouses, four three-bedroom penthouses, 12 three-bedroom units and 24 two-bedroom units, totaling 42 units. A second tower is scheduled to open in September 2014, while the third tower will open in Spring 2015. Upon its completion, the resort will boast 124 total units.

Spacious units, ranging in size from one to five bedrooms, are decorated in a sleek contemporary design and will each feature unobstructed views of the ocean, elevated ceilings, a roomy balcony, upscale appliances and electronics, wireless Internet, fully-equipped kitchen, living and dining room, cable TV, and a washer and dryer. Ground floor suites will additionally feature a private Jacuzzi terrace. Deluxe ocean view hotel rooms (no kitchen) are available as well.

Visitors can enjoy on-site amenities including a beach protected by a jetty, an infinity swimming pool, full-service spa, fitness center, upscale restaurant and bar, mini market and deli and a landscaped sundeck. In addition to poolside butler service, guests have access to a Thrifty Car Rental desk, concierge services by De Palm Tours, pre-arrival grocery stocking, daily maid service, water sports at Eagle Beach and golf privileges at two nearby courses.

Blue Residences is a member of Preferred Residences, a luxury resort exchange program that offers owners high-touch exchange services and year-round leisure and lifestyle benefits tailored especially for sophisticated, affluent travelers. As a Preferred Residences member, new purchasers will have a rich array of benefits.



Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino

New Culinary Team

Aruba Marriott welcomes three new members to its culinary team: Teddy Bouroncle, Executive Chef; Miguel Garcia Executive Sous Chef; and Romeo Penacino, Executive Sous Chef.

In the position of Executive Chef, Teddy will oversee the overall success of the daily kitchen operations for the three Marriott properties, as well as supervise all kitchen areas to ensure that a consistent, high quality and innovative product is delivered. Miguel and Romeo will be supporting Teddy.



Awards

Aruba's "Happy Returners" Campaign has been Awarded the Highly Coveted Effie Award.

The Effie Awards were launched in 1968 by the New York American Marketing Association as an awards programs to honor the most effective advertising efforts. The award now honors all forms of effective marketing communications and the companies and individuals creating effective work on six continents and over forty countries.

The winners are selected by a jury of advertising and marketing professionals including CMOs and Marketing VPs of companies such as Remy Cointreau, PepsiCo, Pizza Hut, Subway, Marriott and Amazon, along with CEOs and Presidents of prominent advertising agencies.

Other than the ATA, the other two winners are Expedia and Lincoln Children's Zoo. Winners don't yet know whether they have earned a Gold, Silver or Bronze Effie Award, which will be announced at a gala event on June 5 in New York. Winners in other categories this year are Mercedes-Benz, IBM, Apple, Adidas, GEICO and other world-class marketers.

Effies are given based on an evaluation of strategy, creativity and, most importantly, results. They are, arguably, the most prestigious accolade in marketing... and the hardest to win. This is a shared honor between the ATA and all partner agencies.

2014 WINNER
 CATEGORY: TRAVEL/TOURISM/DESTINATION
 ENTRY: "MANY HAPPY RETURNERS"



We boldly put our "Happy Returners" front and center. Typically, island destinations show a heavily photo-shopped, highly manufactured reality—pretty pictures snapped in carefully crafted locations that rarely connect on a deeper level. The Aruba "Happy Returners" campaign needed to go beyond that and deliver depth of emotion and context. In essence, we devised the ultimate "brand trust fall" by putting Aruba in the hands of its dedicated loyalists with the belief that their happy stories would be more powerful than anything we could construct or script.



Noble Kommunikation Named Top PR Agency in Germany

For the 5th consecutive year, Noble Kommunikation has been voted as the #1 PR agency in Germany. Tallying votes by 126 journalists, Noble came in first among 200 agencies not only in the overall rating but also surpassed all competitors in each of the four individual categories (creativity, press release writing, event and press trip organization and answering of media inquiries).

Aruba Receives the Cruise Insight 2013 Award

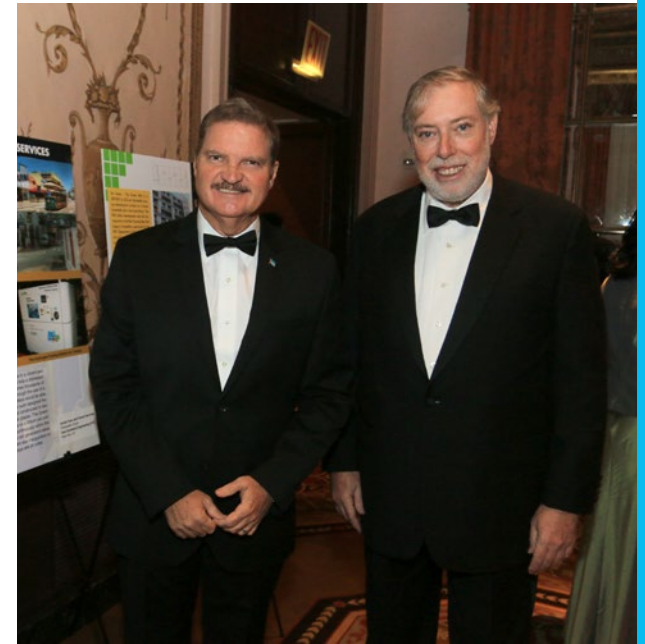
The Aruba Tourism Authority is pleased to announce that the island of Aruba has won the Cruise Insight 2013 Award for “Best Destination Experience”. The awards were published and presented during the annual Cruise Shipping Convention in Miami, Florida, in March 2014. As in previous years, Aruba participated with a booth at this important event accompanied by delegates from the Aruba Ports Authority, Maduro & Sons, Fofoti Transfers and Armada Port Agency. The Minister of Tourism Otmar Oduber; his Senior Advisor, Myrna Jansen, and the CEO of ATA, Ronella Tjin Asjoe-Croes also attended the event to make use of the opportunity to meet with cruise executives for the destination.



Aruba Awarded Sam Schwartz Diamond Award for Urban Renovation and Streetcar

The American Association of Engineering Companies (ACEC) has awarded Aruba the distinctive “Sam Schwartz Engineering” award for urban renovation and the new streetcar. Every year, ACEC holds a competition for their Engineering Excellence Awards (EEA). This is to honor exemplary achievements of their projects around the world. The Aruba Tram has been recognized by ACEC with the “Diamond Award”.

Sam Schwartz Engineering was in charge as Program Advisor for the planning and urban design of Aruba’s Main Street. They offered advice



during the design, public tender and construction of the rails. They also provided advice regarding the revision of the specifications and public tender of the tram, as well as the construction and implementation of the tram itself.

The presentation of the EEA awards takes place during the ACEC annual black tie gala that attracts over 600 members and invitees, national leaders of engineering, representatives of Congress and of the American government. This year’s event took place on Saturday, March 29 in the prestigious Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York.

Restaurants

Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino



Seafood Sensation at La Vista

On March 17, La Vista Restaurant introduced its brand new Seafood Sensation dinner buffet. Guests can tantalize their senses with the widest variety of fresh seafood and over 90 different food choices to enjoy! The new buffet offers a one of a kind ceviche station, fresh fish grill station, raw bar offering crab legs, shrimp, mussels and more, fresh salad bar, carving station, pizza station, dessert station, chocolate fountain and much more! The daily dinner buffet is available from 5:30-10:30pm. On Saturdays, the Seafood Sensation features the all you can eat Baked Lobster buffet.



Romance at Simply Fish

Simply Fish offers a romantic sail and dine package. Start the evening with a dreamy sunset sail with De Palm Tours, including open bar and snacks. Afterwards, wine and dine on the beach with a delightful 3-course menu with wine. This offer is available daily except Mondays. The catamaran sunset sail takes off at 5:30 PM followed by dinner at Simply Fish at 8:15 PM.



Plaza Café

A great new, healthy menu option is available at Café the Plaza in the Renaissance Marketplace. Chef Andy of the popular restaurant downtown has come up with a 'choose-it-yourself' salad idea that is catching on big-time. Guests receive a plate of mixed lettuces. To that they add their choice of main ingredients which vary from mozzarella to chicken, from crab or tuna, from beef to shrimps or rare tuna and add to this a dressing and three toppings of their choice. The toppings can be tomatoes, onions, cucumber, olives, capers, Parmesan, a boiled egg, bell peppers, bacon, croutons or relishes. Salad dressing choices are Caesar, balsamic, basil-pesto or mustard. Their salad will only set them back \$10;

any additional topping is \$1, while an additional main ingredient costs \$ 3.50.

"Reactions to the new salad are very enthusiastic," tells restaurant manager Moniek, who introduced the salad last week. She adds that regular guests who were disappointed that their favorite crab or tuna salad was not on the new menu anymore, now have a chance to order them via the new 'Create your own Salad' option.

Chef Andy has not been idle; his new daily specials and soups are also getting rave reviews. Café the Plaza is open from 8 am until 1 am.



Attractions

Caribbean Journal Recognizes National Archeological Museum

Aruba's state-of-the-art Archeological Museum has been named in the ten Caribbean museums to visit in 2014 by Caribbean Journal. "It's now been around for more than three decades, and the National Archaeological Museum of Aruba is a wonderful place to learn about the pre-Columbian inhabitants of Aruba."

Caribbean Journal is the Caribbean's leading digital newspaper, with 24/7, original content covering news, travel, politics and opinion from more than 20 countries and territories. Caribbean Journal's Travel section is the premier source for Caribbean travel and trade news.



L'America Gallery

L'America Gallery was founded from a vision by Erik Droogenbroek and Tone Moller. During their travels throughout the Caribbean and Latin America, they encountered beautiful artifacts unavailable on Aruba. Considering their passion for art and sensing demand among their friends on the islands, they decided to create a marketplace for art from the Americas. At L'America Gallery, visitors will find fabulous art pieces as well as a variety of art supplies. The gallery also features a small interesting museum, frame-making services, and exclusive wines.

Visit L'America Gallery located in Italiëstraat 24-A, behind the Certified Mall to find priceless pieces of art from Peru to Chile, Brazil to Curaçao, Aruba to Guatemala, Barbados to Colombia, Argentina to Haiti, Mexico to Puerto Rico, St. Lucia to Uruguay.

This month's featured artist is Andrea Castillo of Colombia. "Every woman that I paint is myself and my latent present. I face my canvas without a precise idea of color or composition, but about something that has hit me strongly. Every painting changes every time I meet an artist, a designer, an architect or a poet that makes a big impression on me, as if transforming me into their muse."



Philip's Animal Garden - Habitat for Rescued Animals

At Philip's Animal Garden, Philip Merryweather personally introduces visitors to his "friends," allowing them to feed, touch and interact with the animals. Joe, an Australian kangaroo, showers Philip with hugs whenever he walks into Joe's habitat. With Philip, his five Capuchin monkeys are docile and gentle. The first exotic animals that Philip rescued were two ocelots. Over the years, the land has housed additional pens, habitats and pastures for his animals to roam around freely. Philip's small collection of rescued animals has now grown into a sanctuary that is home to over 67 different species and over 400 animals, including cows, pythons, camels, an alpaca, caiman, and all kinds of exotic birds.

Two years ago, Philip started offering daily tours, where visitors are invited to see, touch and feed some of the garden's exotic inhabitants. The tours have become a huge hit on the island with both locals and tourists, and are ranked on TripAdvisor as second most popular attraction in Aruba.

The 28-year-old's plans are to eventually expand his habitat and rehabilitation center and create a world-class sanctuary with round-the-clock veterinary care. To fund his vision, Philip must continue to rely on the money from the tours, as well as donations. To save money, he produces 40% of the animals' food himself. He also builds all of their habitats by hand, often using reclaimed wood and materials. For more information, check out www.philipsanimalgarden.com, or visit Philip's Animal Garden at Alto Vista 116 for a tour.





Air Travel

US Pre-Clearance at Universal Aviation

Together with the Department of Customs & Border Protection (CBP) the USA, Aruba officially opened the USA Pre-Clearance facility at the Universal Aviation terminal. This facility will provide the service of the Inspection of Immigration and Customs to private planes heading to the USA. This is an important extension to the facility in existence at the International Reina Beatrix Airport, as Dylan di Fransisci, director of Pre-Clearance for Customs and Border Protection, (CBP) indicated in a brief speech.

“We have worked hard on insuring that this facility complies with the standard of CBP to support our mission of national security and to so extend our frontiers further,” according to Fransisci. Fransisci was grateful for the support of Claudio Stamper of Universal Aviation Aruba N.V., which is the company that manages the general aviation terminal.

There are currently 16 points of American Pre-Clearance in the Caribbean, Ireland, Middle East and Canada - in 6 different countries and 7 different time zones. The first is in Toronto and the most recent was opened in Abu Dhabi. CBP has expanded their personnel for the island from 21 to 24 agents, complying with the growth demand at the Aruba International Airport in Aruba. James T. Grimes is the Port Director of US Pre-Clearance in Aruba.

Arubans In The News

Elisa Lejuez

On March 20, a solo art exhibition of Aruban artist Elisa Lejuez officially opened at the S Artspace Gallery in Soho, New York City. The collection, titled *We kiss the joy as it flies*, was strongly inspired by Zen teachings and the basic principles of Buddhism.

Elisa's second solo exhibition in the United States featured a collection of mixed media techniques, blending the “shapes, patterns and colors that incorporate her global heritage,” according to the gallery. “In her work, you will explore a world of shapes, patterns and, colors that incorporate her global heritage; the Dutch Caribbean islands, the Netherlands, China, Africa and India.”

The well-attended opening attracted New York residents and fellow artists, representatives of US-based media as well as the Aruba Tourism Authority. Lejuez's latest collection expresses thoughts of finding balance in life.

An interview with Dutch Caribbean artist Elisa Lejuez during the opening reception and an impression of her *We kiss the joy as it flies* collection was recorded by tv news station OneCaribbeanTelevision, that aired on RCN cable in Boston, New York City, DC Metro Area, Chicago and Philadelphia as well as on 13 Caribbean islands, including Aruba. The interview can be viewed at www.onecaribbeantelevision.com.

To our tourism partners:
Thank you for providing us
with your updates

To ensure that your news is featured in
the monthly Aruba Product Update of
the Aruba Tourism Authority, please send
information as it becomes available to:

copywriter@aruba.com

with a copy to:

s.feliciano@aruba.com
m.feliciano@aruba.com
and j.tilma@aruba.com

by the 25th of each month.

A special thank you to Aruba Daily,
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Columnist Rona Coster and our tourism
partners for their contributions.



Events

Soul Beach Music Festival

Aruba is gearing up for the 14th edition of the Soul Beach Festival. The venue will stay the same at the former Nikki Beach, now named the Soul Beach Amphitheatre. Mark your calendars for May 21 – 26, 2014, for powerhouse performances by renowned artists such as Robin Thicke, Kenny “Babyface” Edmonds, Ashanti and SWV.

Ten-time Grammy Award winner Babyface and Platinum awardwinner Robin Thicke will light up the stage respectively on May 24 and May 25, together with Grammy awardwinner, composer and writer, Ashanti, best known for her hit “Foolish”. They are joined by Sisters with Voices (known as SWV), the R&B Grammy-nominated trio recently seen in their own TV reality series. “Comedy Night” will return on Friday, May 23, presented by Rickey Smiley, well-known talk show radio host, at Renaissance Festival Plaza.

Organized as always by Mark Adkins of MNL Management, Soul Beach Music Festival includes comedy night, two concert nights, beach parties at Moomba Beach and Baby Beach, and after concert parties at Reflexions. Soul Beach provides the perfect entertainment for international and local fans of soul, hip hop, R&B and zouk. “The combination of renowned artists with non stop events and all this on the island of Aruba is the perfect recipe for visitors to have an experience that will stay with them forever,” Adkins commented.

According to Ronella Tjin Asjoe-Croes, CEO of the Aruba Tourism Authority, “it is an an honor for us to host Grammy awardwinning artists on our One Happy Island. Visitors will not only experience spectacular music, international cuisine with an international flair and all the fun activities we have to offer, but also our entire island, that we open for everyone to discover and enjoy.”

For more information, visit SoulBeach.net or Aruba.com; follow on Twitter [@SoulBeachMusic](https://twitter.com/SoulBeachMusic), or become a fan of 2014 Soul Beach Music Festival Facebook.com/soulbeachmusic.