



Aruba Tourism
Authority

Aruba Product Update

March 2016

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

Our Mission:

To increase the share of affluent travelers and the economic value of tourism for the benefit of the community and our stakeholders by positioning and developing Aruba as their preferred Caribbean destination.

Our vision:

The Aruba Tourism Authority (A.T.A.) will become the most innovative and creative DMMO in the Caribbean.

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 March 2016



ATA News

Faces of Aruba – 30 Years Status Aparte

Aruba marks the 30th anniversary of its separate status within the Dutch Kingdom with the official opening of an exhibition at Museum Hilversum, Netherlands, entitled Faces of Aruba – 30 years Status Aparte. Aruba celebrates this historic milestone by showcasing photos by well-known photojournalist Raymond Rutting. “The photo exhibition creates a true

One Happy Island spirit and shows Aruba’s authentic culture,” says Minister of Tourism Otmar Oduber. The exhibition is the result of cooperation between the Aruba Tourism Authority and Museum Hilversum. Visitors are provided with a special exhibition catalogue as well as a special audio tour with commentary by Raymond Rutting.



The exhibition shows the Aruban people and culture in all their glory. “If you really want to learn more about Aruba and its people, then these photos will speak to you...they will teach you about Aruba’s progressiveness, artistry, and dreams, but also its daily life,” says the Minister of Plenipotentiary of Aruba, Alfonso Boekhoudt. “Through the eyes of Raymond Rutting you will get to know Aruba and its people,” he adds. According to the Minister of the Interior & Kingdom Relations, Ronald Plasterk, the celebration of 30 years Status Aparte is and should be a joint celebration. “Pride is a word that fits in well with Aruba. If you look at these photos, you can really see the pride of the people shining through. Let us work together on the basis of pride and a sense of connectedness when it comes to our future together.”

Raymond Rutting traveled to Aruba on two separate occasions to portray the people of the island. Naturally he did not just visit tourist locations, but in fact, ventured further afield into the heart of the island. “With this exposition of Raymond’s powerful and colorful photos, you are instantly transported to Aruba, the people, and the island,” says Stef van Breugel, director of Museum Hilversum. “The quality of the photos is magnificent. Being a photojournalist, Raymond knows exactly how to capture beautiful unexpected moments. He truly exceeded himself in portraying the Aruban people in an artistic manner while still placing them in the right context of the island.”

Faces of Aruba – 30 years Status Aparte is on display until April 3.





Ike Cohen Monument Honoring Architects of Aruba's Tourism

The Ike Cohen Monument was recently unveiled at a ceremony held at Plaza Turismo. Ronella Tjin Asjoe-Croes, CEO of the Aruba Tourism Authority, stated that this tribute honors not only Ike Cohen, but all those in tourism who had a vision and in one way or another made important contributions to the industry that has become the most important economic pillar of Aruba. Among those named were Juancho Irausquin, Oscar Henriquez, Wichi de Palm, Ike Cohen, Raymond Maduro, Eduardo de Veer, Harold Malmberg, Ramon Richardson, Eline Bartels-Daal, Louis Pavlis, Charlie Brouns Jr., Joy Kock, Lloyd Jean-Baptiste, Manchito Ponson, Chaiben Neme, Morris Neme, Eduardo Ellis, Simon Oduber Jr., and Ewald Biemans.

The ATA and the Ministry of Tourism proudly celebrate the accomplishments and hard work of these individuals while leaving space on the monument to add the names of future tourism leaders.



ANATO

Vitrina Turística ANATO is one of the leading events dedicated to the tourism industry. The Asociación Colombiana de Agencias de Viajes y Turismo – ANATO is organized by Vitrina Turística and showcases airport services, recreation centers, and VIP and luxury tourism. This international tourism fair took place February 24-26 in Corferias, Bogotá. Aruba was well-represented by executives of the Aruba Tourism Authority and various Aruba resorts. Interviews were conducted with prominent print, TV, radio, and online media, including El Tiempo, Bluradio, Caracol Radio, El Colombiano, and Canal Uno.

Aruba Places Second in Region in Tourism Growth

The Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) has announced that the Caribbean has broken all records in tourism growth. It confirmed that Caribbean islands are on the preferred destination list of passengers hailing from various regions, including Europe, North America, and South America, and that growth in the region is much higher than that of other countries in the world. Contributing factors

are consumer confidence, low oil prices, number of flights, and the efforts of the CTO in promoting the region. The countries with the highest increases are Cuba with 17.4%, Aruba with 15%, Barbados with 15%, and Haiti with 11%. Tourism growth forecasted for the Caribbean region in 2016 is 4.5% - 5.5%, and 1% - 2% in cruise tourism.

Awards & Recognition

Aruba: A Star-Studded Destination!

Aruba stars as “best in show” for advertising and marketing this awards season. Aruba received a Platinum Adrian Award, which honors travel marketing excellence, from HSMIAI (Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International) for its “One Happy Selfie” advertising campaign. Also recognized by HSMIAI with a Silver Adrian Award was Aruba’s newest digital innovation, the Happiness Builder—a content-rich planning experience on Aruba.com where travelers can build their own custom video itineraries from more than 100 adventure, relaxation, romance, and culture video vignettes and share them.

Aruba also currently ranks as the most popular digital destination in the Caribbean, according to Caribbean & Co., an expert source on Caribbean lifestyle and luxury brands. Caribbean & Co. reports Aruba ranks No. 1 of 35 Caribbean islands for overall “destination marketing index 2015” and No. 1 of 10 Caribbean islands for Instagram. The Aruba Tourism Authority clenched the “Best Tourism Board Overall” in this year’s Travvy Awards, selected by nearly 40,000 travel agent voters, as well as a bronze award for “Most Luxury Destination.”

Travel Weekly recognized Aruba Cultura, an immersive media experience in NYC showcasing Aruba’s art, culture, and cuisine, with a Gold Magellan Award. For the second consecutive year, Aruba also received a Magellan Award for its sustainability initiatives. Aruba’s “Destination Leadership” in green energy also took first place on a global stage during the National Geographic Travel World Legacy Awards at ITB Berlin, the world’s largest tourism convention. Once again, The Knot named Aruba one of the world’s top 50 honeymoon destinations. The global recognition continued with several digital engagement-driven TripAdvisor® awards for the destination, beaches, restaurants, and properties.



Restaurants

Taste of Belgium

Taste of Belgium’s fantastic a la carte brunch is now held every Sunday from 11 am to 2:30 pm. Guests can order whatever they like and as much as they like from the special menu featuring a broad selection of dishes and beverages such as mimosas, champagne, coffee and tea, for the all-inclusive price of \$42 per person.



Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort

On the tails of being honored as one of the top 10 best hotels in the world and the #1 hotel in the Caribbean by the TripAdvisor® 2016 Travelers' Choice Awards, the adults-only boutique resort on Aruba's Eagle Beach was named the best hotel for romance in the world on TripAdvisor®. TripAdvisor® lists over 950,000 lodgings on its travel website and has received over 290 million reviews from travelers. It is a tremendous honor for the dedicated Bucuti team and for Aruba to be honored with the top position for romance in the world.



La Cabana Beach Resort & Casino

Interval International, a leading global provider of vacation services, presented La Cabana Beach Resort and Casino with the Interval International Premier Resort® designation for 2016. The annual award recognizes resorts that provide outstanding vacation experiences with state-of-the-art conveniences and modern features and appointments. La Cabana also earned the TripAdvisor® Certificate of Excellence for the fifth year in a row in 2015 for delivering excellent service, and as a result, was presented with the travel site's newly created Certificate of Excellence Hall of Fame award. In 2014, the resort achieved the highest level of certification granted by EarthCheck for its commitment to environmentally friendly practices. La Cabana is in the final stages of a multiyear, multimillion-dollar renovation program, which includes the transformation of all 449 guest rooms, as well as the refurbishment of building exteriors, common areas, and amenities. Other recent enhancements are the additions of the 8,500 square-foot Glitz Casino and the full-service Citro Spa.



The Boardwalk Small Hotel Aruba

The Boardwalk Small Hotel Aruba was recognized again among the top 25 best hotels for service in the Caribbean by TripAdvisor®, in addition to being awarded a Certificate of Excellence multiple years in a row. For 2016, TripAdvisor®'s Travelers' Choice Awards positioned the Boardwalk Small Hotel in the #9 spot out of the entire Caribbean. The Boardwalk Small Hotel offers a unique product in Aruba—an intimate resort property with 14 spacious, tastefully appointed, and fully equipped casitas. Boardwalk offers privacy and relaxation within a tropical oasis in an authentic Caribbean ambiance, with accommodations spread out around a swimming pool and Jacuzzi, enhanced by many amenities and special features.



Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa

GreenGlobe has awarded its Platinum Certificate to Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa to mark the resort's exceptional achievement of more than 10 years of continuous certification. The resort also received an impressive compliance score of 90% against accredited criteria. Birte Besocke, certification & membership manager at Green Globe, said, "This year, we would like to congratulate Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa on being the first Green Globe Member in our company's history to receive the Platinum Certificate." The completion of the yearly independent audit process demonstrates that Manchebo has a strong commitment to the principles of environmental and social sustainability. The resort has also continued to pass benchmarking against key environmental indicators, including energy and water consumption, waste production, and community commitment.



De Palm Tours

For the second year in a row, De Palm Tours has received the prestigious award for “The Caribbean’s Leading Tour Operator” from Carnival Cruise Lines. Every season, Carnival Cruise Lines recognizes the company that receives the highest ratings from both its passengers and onboard shore excursion staff for shore excursions conducted the previous season. “All the credit goes to our cruise planning and operations staff as well as to our guides and other frontline staff who are responsible for delivering the experiences to our customers,” says Warren Stanley, general manager of De Palm Tours. A ceremony will be held on board one of the Carnival ships, where representatives of De Palm will receive the actual award from Carnival.



The Kitchen Table by White

The Daily Meal is a website covering food and drink topics through articles, videos, and special reports. It produces original content from editors, industry insiders, and the user community. The Kitchen Table by White in Aruba was named #20 in its 2016 listing of the 101 best restaurants in Latin America and the Caribbean. The description read, “Sixteen (comfortable) seats at a curving counter wrapped around the kitchen, seven to eight courses of Aruban or other Caribbean specialties interpreted with finesse, and a paradisiacal setting at Aruba’s Blue Residence luxury condo complex—not a bad combination. Chef Irvin Croes changes his menu constantly, and it is often themed. Spring rolls filled with a local-style chicken and cashew stew, rich oyster soup, pan-fried fish cakes, curried lamb shank served with a seared lamb medallion, and pumpkin custard with pumpkin cream are samples of the fare.”



Resorts

Aruba Marriot Resort & Stellaris Casino

Aruba Marriott Resort Hosted “Taste of Aruba” Media Event in Chicago

To establish and strengthen relationships with travel and lifestyle media in Chicago, the Aruba Marriot Resort together with Diamond PR organized and executed a cooking competition and dinner event in order to connect with key media and educate them about the local culinary offerings available at Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino. The dinner was prepared family style by Aruba Marriott’s Executive Chef and Aruba’s 2015 Iron Chef, Teddy Bouroncle, and Executive Sous Chef, Romeo Penacino.

In total 13 media attended the event representing local and national travel and lifestyle outlets including New York Post, About.com, Upscale, Chicago Tribune, Men’s Health Magazine, Women’s Health Magazine, SELF, USA Today, Examiner.com, Fatico Magazine, Travel Insider Magazine, and XX, Will Travel.



Care Foundation by Marriott Associates Finalized Restoration of Centro di Bario Lago Heights

Founded in 1999 by the associates of the Aruba Marriott, the Care Foundation has been actively contributing to the Aruban community for the past sixteen years. With monthly financial contributions from associates, the foundation is able to give back to the community by carrying out a number of community service projects throughout the year, with a total of 10 projects carried out in 2015 including the restoration of Centro di Bario Lago Heights which started last year and was recently completed.

The restoration included repainting the facility’s exterior, repainting the facilities interior, repainting the event spaces, changing out the event space ceiling and light fixtures and gardening.



Aruba Marriott Proudly Announces the Participation of Noord Football College in the Copa Americana Miami 2016

After intense trainings, the local soccer team Noord Football College, sponsored by the Aruba Marriott Resort has confirmed their participation to the international tournament

“Copa Americana Miami 2016” in the U12 category, taking place on 23rd and 26th of June 2016.

The goal of this football academy is to provide the students with a professional physical training and technique building program to elevate their playing skills and provide them the opportunity to play on an international level.



Aruba Marriott Surprised Their Associates on Valentine's Day

On Valentine's Day the associates at the Aruba Marriott were pleasantly surprised with a special treat upon arriving to work greeted by the team of Human Resources who were dressed up as cupids.

The associate entrance at all three properties were nicely decorated with balloons in the colors red, purple, pink and white and a special photo booth was setup to add the special touch of Valentine's Day.



Activities

Fofoti Tours and Transfers

Fofoti Tours and Transfers is venturing out into more adventurous territory by introducing the all-new “Aruba UTV Adventure Tours by Fofoti.” To take advantage of the special introductory offer, adventurers have to book any of the available UTV tours between February 11 and May 30, 2016. The fleet consists of powerfully built UTVs (Utility Terrain Vehicles), designed for more maneuverability and control, excellent for exploring Aruba’s beautiful rugged coasts. These tours will include some of Aruba’s most renowned landmarks and a few less-explored sites, such as the Aruba Arikok National Park, Natural Pool, Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins, and Alto Vista Chapel. Visit www.fofoti.com or connect with them on Facebook or Twitter.



Arubans In The News

Team Aruba Drag Racing

The International Hot Rod Association (IHRA) will kick off its 2016 season with the Amsoil Nitro Nationals, March 4-6, at Orlando Speed World in Orlando, Florida. The Pro Stock team from Aruba is working to prepare the Aruba.com Mustang for its first outing of the year. “We have the great opportunity of partnering with the Aruba Airport Authority in 2016,” stated Trevor Eman. “Our Aruba.com Mustang will proudly display the Aruba Airport Authority logo on its hood. Together with the Aruba Tourism Authority, we can now talk to the fans and racers at the track about not only the vacation aspect of Aruba, but also the ‘travel to Aruba’ aspect. We could not be more grateful for the confidence and support we have received from the Aruba Airport Authority, and we’ll be sure to carry them strongly into the Winner’s Circle.”





Culture

Caribbean Queen

Each month, Caribbean Queen at the Palm Beach Plaza Mall honors one local female artist who lives and creates here. For the month of March 2016, local artist Marcha Hoost is the boutique's celebrated Caribbean Queen, showcasing her charming artwork in the store. Marcha recalls that when she took her first lampworking workshop at Terrafuse in 2006, she immediately fell in love with making glass beads. "Lampworking gives me infinite possibilities to combine colors and textures," she shares. "My inspiration comes from a variety of sources, such as antique Venetian and African glass beads and nature itself. Animals and flowers are such great designers; all you have to do is observe and learn," she adds.



Events

Bon Bini Festival

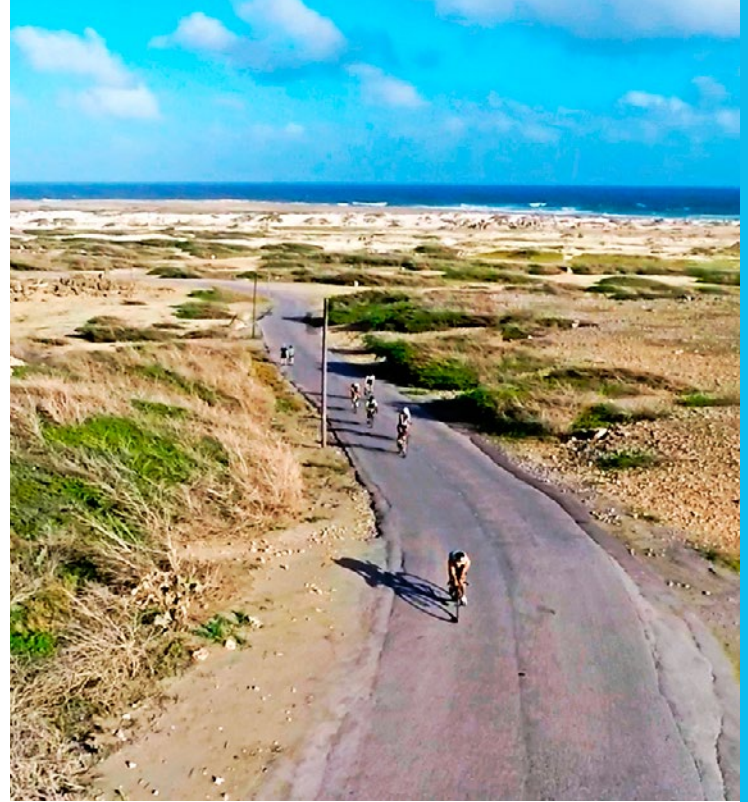
Every Tuesday from 7 pm to 8:30 pm (doors open at 6 pm), this year-round folkloric festival is held in downtown Oranjestad at Fort Zoutman, the oldest building on the island. In the inner courtyard, experience Aruban dancers in resplendent costumes, enjoy typical Aruban bands, feel the rhythm of steel drums and get a taste of the Carnival extravaganza. Browse among the stands displaying local artwork and have a taste of delicious local cuisine. Admission is US\$5.





National Flag & Anthem Day

A strong sense of pride is displayed each year as Arubans celebrate their “Status Aparte” on Flag and Anthem Day. An impressive folkloric production marking the holiday is held each year at Plaza Betico Croes in Oranjestad. This official holiday also features many cultural events showcasing the local gastronomy of Aruba, as well as sporting events and organized games for both adults and kids around the island.



Challenge Aruba Pre Event

In anticipation of the Challenge Aruba event, “Meet the Legends” took place on March 15 at the Hyatt Aruba Resort. The ambassadors of Challenge Aruba, Tim DeBoom and Marc Herremans, met with sponsors, press, and local athletes. Among their many athletic accomplishments, Tim DeBoom is a two-time Hawaiian Ironman World Champion, and Marc Herremans was the first wheelchair athlete to win the most difficult mountain biking championship in the world and is also the founder of “To Walk Again” Foundation. These notables were interviewed by triathlete Bob Babbitt, media personality and cofounder of Challenged Athlete Foundation.



Soul Beach Music Festival

This Memorial Day weekend, the 16th Annual Soul Beach Music Festival will feature award-winning powerhouses such as The Isley Brothers, featuring Ronald and Ernest Isley; Miguel; and singer-songwriter Fantasia. Previously named the #4 “Best Caribbean Celebration” by readers of USA Today and 10Best and the #1 “Caribbean Summer Festival” by Jetsetter Magazine, Soul Beach is a three-in-one experience featuring live music performances, comedy shows, and beach parties. “This year’s multigenerational artists represent some of the best performers and greatest voices in the music industry,” said Mark Adkins, executive

producer. “Join us in Aruba and enjoy the stellar comedy and music performances combined with 30 events over 5 days, plus a lifetime of sensational memories. There will be more exciting performances announced soon!”

The Isley Brothers are inductees to the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame and winners of countless music and lifetime achievements. Claiming the #1 spot on Billboard’s R&B Albums chart for the second time is Miguel’s Grammy-nominated album, *Wildheart*. Fantasia’s third album, *Back to Me*, featured the Grammy-winning single “Bittersweet.”

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:

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by the 25th of each month.

A special thank you to Aruba Daily,
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Aruba Summer Music Festival

The Aruba Summer Music Festival will take place June 24-25, 2016. A very powerful lineup of artists never before seen live in Aruba will perform during this two-day festival. The first to be announced is Chino y Nacho, a very popular merengue/urban band with multiple

hits such as Mi Niña Bonita, Mi Chica Ideal, and Me Voy Enamorando, and more than 10 million fans on social media. Last year's edition featured artists like Nicky Jam, Jerry Rivera, Elvis Crespo, Carlos Vives, and Pitbull. Packages for the festival are available.