



Aruba Tourism
Authority

Aruba Product Update

May 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 May 2016



ATA News

Annual Tourism Conference Aruba (ATCA)

Organized by the Aruba Tourism Authority, the annual conference for strategic partners in sales and marketing of Aruba for the North American market took place in Aruba from May 3 – 6. ATCA provides travel professionals with an update on the island's overall tourism product and facilitates relationships and negotiations between tour operators and vendors. In attendance were 71 participants that have a key role in the marketing and sales of Aruba in the US and Canada. ATCA opened with a tremendous reception on the beach

at The Ritz-Carlton Aruba. Other highlights were an activities exposition, a presentation by Arnaud Colery entitled "Connecting is Happiness," and marketplace sessions. The innovative "Local Shortcuts" campaign was launched, aimed at reconnecting repeat guests with the Aruba experience and attracting a younger market. Millennials will discover a more authentic Aruba, emphasizing gastronomy, adventure, agriculture, art, music, and much more through young, engaged, and "hip" Aruba ambassadors.



Conferencia Annual de Turismo (CATA)

Held April 11 – 15, this annual conference is organized by the Aruba Tourism Authority and the Aruba Hotel & Tourism Association to create an interactive opportunity for Latin American tour operators, international airlines, and local hoteliers and activities to discuss business. Delegates from Colombia, Argentina, Chile, Brazil, Paraguay, Peru, Bolivia, Panama, Venezuela, Mexico, and Suriname attended. Carlos Rosales, author of the bestseller *Personas compran personas*, discussed happiness as a sales tool.

The full schedule included an array of hotel site inspections, the official opening at Divi Aruba All Inclusive Resort, presentations and an activities exposition in the ballroom of Paseo Herencia, a visit to the exciting renewed downtown Oranjestad area, an evening of gastronomy and wellness at Hyatt Regency Aruba Resort, marketplace sessions, and a dine-around night featuring Screaming Eagle, Papillon, Aqua Grill, and La Trattoria El Faro Blanco restaurants. Special product rates were offered to attendees by Copa and Avianca, various Aruba hotels, De Palm Tours, and Fofoti Tours.



Wellness Event in New York

Aruba Tourism Authority introduced the Aloe Wellness Month Aruba of June in New York to a prestigious group of press and influencers of travel, health, and exercise. Locals traveled to NY to highlight the island's wellness offerings, including regular yoga sessions and special retreats at the Manchebo Beach Resort. There were art presentations and workshops by the team of Korteweg, a pop-up cultural event, and a special workshop by Aruba Aloe's Jessica and Anna Posner.

Inspired by the 125th anniversary of producing aloe on Aruba, the Aloe Wellness Month Aruba in June will feature a variety of activities and products that contribute to relaxation and well-being, including dance therapy, fitness lessons, and yoga sessions. Those more adventurous will enjoy hiking, kayaking, and standup paddleboarding. Spas will offer rejuvenating aloe body treatments, and chefs at different restaurants will add an extra healthy touch to menus and interactive cooking. For more information on the Aloe Wellness Month Aruba, visit Aruba.com.





Trade Meetings in New York

During their stay in NY, executives of Aruba Tourism Authority and Aruba Airport Authority met with executives of JetBlue to discuss additional flights to the destination, in addition to meeting with digital marketing companies and various agencies in North America.



Courtesy Visit by Italian Tour Operator

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently received a courtesy visit from Laurent Parent and Giancarlo Macchia of Italiano FrancoRosso Tours (subsidiary of Alpi Tour Italia). During their stay, they visited various properties including Divi Resorts, Holiday Inn, Tropicana Aruba, and Occidental Grand. They met with ATA, AHATA, and Aruba Airport Authority executives and exchanged important information pertinent to the market. The Italian market continues to increase, with Aruba receiving 7,638 guests in 2015.



Trade Meetings in Colombia

On April 5, ATA Colombia met with travel agencies in the country to present new 2016 activities. Marriott, Divi Phoenix, Hyatt Regency, and Renaissance, along with De Palm Tours and LAN, Avianca, and Copa airlines, presented their products and services. At breakfast, Miriam Dabian, ATA Director of Sales for Latin America,

and María Victoria Galán, ATA Director of Sales for Colombia, presented various cultural programs. Another event focused on corporate and incentive travel, during which Jerusha Rasmijn, Director of Aruba Convention Bureau, addressed the group and emphasized such destination assets as hospitality, quality, and technology.





Awards

Caribbean Palm Village Resort

Interval International Award

Interval International, a leading global provider of vacation services, awarded the resort the Interval International Select Resort® designation for 2016. “The resort’s cooperative association executives have worked extremely hard to implement a long-term plan to enhance all aspects of the guest experience,” said Neil Kolton, Interval’s Director of Resort Sales and Service for

the Caribbean and Florida. “As part of our commitment to offering owners and guests high-quality vacations, we have allocated several million dollars over the past five years to making improvements throughout the resort,” remarked Dan Maloof, Vice President of Caribbean Palm Village Resort. “Also integral to our success is the exceptional service provided by our staff.”



The Aruba Caribbean Resort & Casino

CHRIS, the Caribbean’s most noteworthy hotel investment conference, recently held at the JW Marriott Marquis in Miami, Florida, presented two prestigious awards at a formal ceremony to conclude its important gathering of top hotel industry leaders.

The prestigious Single Asset Transaction of the Year Award went to the Aruba Growth Fund/Goldman Sachs JV for buying the former Radisson Aruba Caribbean Resort & Casino from affiliated entities of Carlson Hotels Real Estate Inc. in July 2015.

In a private conversation with Kent Schwarz on the award committee, Owners’ Representative Rene Kan shared that he came to the conference on behalf of almost 20,000 Arubans. They are members of local pension funds who invested in the Aruba Growth Fund, and when taking into consideration their spouses and children, more than half of the island’s population are represented, a total of perhaps 80,000 Arubans.



Tourism

Aruba and Cuba Sign a Memorandum of Understanding

In early May, the governments of Aruba and Cuba signed a cooperative agreement in Havana, Cuba, with a focus on tourism.

During the visit, the Aruba delegation spoke with the Vice Minister of Transportation for Cuba, Naima Alfonso Acosta, on the potential to create a route for cruise ships between the two countries. They will continue to focus on a Dual Destination Program and managing and marketing cruise facilities. Cuba is also interested in Aruba's timeshare and all-inclusive experiences. Agriculture and culture were also high on the agenda.

An official ceremony took place to endorse the groundbreaking agreement, which was signed by the Minister of Foreign Trade and Foreign Investment for Cuba, Rodrigo Malmierca, and the Minister of Tourism, Transportation, Culture, and Primary Sector for Aruba, Otmar Oduer.



Resorts

Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino

The Aruba Marriott held a Bollywood-themed celebration for the associates, managers and supervisors who excelled in 2015, complete with entertainment, Bollywood-style decoration, and ample buffet options with both Indian and local dishes.

The All Star Team of 2015 included Elieser Bello (Atardi Restaurant), Milushka Martinez-Tromp (Housekeeping), Marco Perez (Recreations), Doralba Giraldo Quintero (Engineering ASC), Frank Justina (Casino Beverage), Anaika Lacle (Human Resources), Patricia Miranda (Human Resources), and Luzdary Patterson (Front Office ASC). Milushka Martinez-Tromp (Housekeeping) was recognized as Associate of the Year 2015; Patricia Miranda (Human Resources) was recognized as Supervisor of the Year 2015; and Yazira Javois (Casino Marketing) and Luzdary Patterson (Front Office ASC) were both recognized as Manager of the Year 2015.





Divi Resorts

Executive Chef Matt Boland

Regional Executive Chef Matt Boland of Windows on Aruba and Divi Resorts recently attended the Ottawa Travel & Tourism Show in Canada as a representative for the Aruba Tourism Authority. At the event, he gave cooking demonstrations and wowed the audience with his Caribbean dishes. Chef Matt garnered attention from the Canadian media for his excellent presentation, making live appearances on Daytime, a TV show on Rogers 7 similar to Good Morning America, and on the radio show Travel Talk on 580 CFRA in Ottawa. He was also interviewed by many local Ottawa media outlets.

Special Room Rates and Offerings

For a limited time starting May 9, Divi is offering an unbeatable 30% off nightly rates (as low as \$129 per night, and all-inclusive rates as low as \$160 at Divi's premium resorts on Aruba, Barbados, Bonaire, and St. Maarten). Just in time for summer, Divi Resorts is featuring a complimentary kids program called Treasures of the Caribbean Kids' Club. The Kids Stay and Eat Free program is also available for children ages 12 and under, and for a limited time at select resorts, kids up to 17 years old can eat and stay free!



Weekly Events at Divi Village Golf & Beach Resort

Fun events were recently added to the entertainment on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays at Divi Village Golf & Beach Resort. On Mondays, learn how to cook the Aruban way at the Seabreeze Kitchen with Chef Matt Boland and his team. On Tuesdays, enjoy karaoke by the Infinity Pool, a "Cocktail Clinic" at Seabreeze Pool to learn how to mix Caribbean-inspired drinks, and the Managers' Cocktail Party at Seabreeze Terrace—a Carnival show featuring authentic Carnival dancers and a lively DJ. On Thursdays, try a salsa class at Seabreeze Restaurant and enjoy the Vacation Club Mojito Mix Hour, where you can mix mojitos and margaritas with the resort managers, win raffle prizes, and enjoy the Touch of Aruba show with live band music and dancing.



Caribbean Palm Village Resort

The quarterly award ceremony is a much enjoyed event, emceed by Interim General Manager Astrid Muller and her executive team. The atmosphere is celebratory as associates are recognized for exceptional performance within their departments and for going the extra mile, with heartwarming stories of resourcefulness and creativity. Mislady Fingal of the Activities Department was elected winner of the quarter. Among those earning Extra Mile awards were members of the Maintenance Department, Richard Webb, Cedric Tromp, and Gregory Sanchez. Emelina Figaro, Adriana Tromp, Carlos Henao, Clifford Tromp, and Evelyne Boekhoudt were also recognized.



Paradera Park

Paradera Park has teamed up with Illy, represented in Aruba by Romar Trading NV. All rooms and suites have been provided with state-of-the-art Illy Espresso Machines to offer guests freshly brewed espresso in their rooms. "We strive to offer our guests a unique experience when staying at Paradera Park. Quality products and an eye for detail can make the difference, and we therefore collaborate with the best companies for our guest amenities," states Managing Director Deborah de Weerd.





Hilton Aruba Caribbean Resort & Casino

Hosting Trade events

On May 5, during the ATCA event, some 60 guests gathered at the resort for an interactive marketplace followed by a sumptuous lunch buffet in the Grand Caribbean Ballroom. Director of Sales and Marketing Arianne Valentino, Executive Chef Gerard Coste, and General Manager Olivier Maumaire were on hand to share some of the resort's renovation and refresh plans for the summer of 2016.

The CATA marketplace took place in the ballroom. The resort's culinary team then hosted the delegates for a delectable lunch at the Sunset Grille. During the site inspection, Hilton shared its plans for renovations and showed its model room.



Bird Garden

Recently, 11 exotic birds were relocated to a special Bird Garden, a beautifully landscaped, well-protected area of the grounds, easily accessible to guests.

The birds, including macaws (one 36 years old), cockatoos, toucans, amazons, and parrots, have always been cared for by the Birdman of Palm Beach, bird whisperer Victor Hernandez, who has been an avian caretaker for more than 27 years. The garden also provides guests with an entertaining and relaxing environment, from early dawn to early evening. Victor oversees bird interaction sessions daily (except Wednesdays) at 11am.



Wedding Planners

Lisa and Lily pull it all together for destination weddings booked with the resort directly, but also work with local wedding planners and their clients, offering a plan that fits their budget and vision.

Recently, the Hilton invited local wedding planners for a unique experience including dinner on the beach to introduce ceremony and reception venues. These include the emerald-green lawn, the sugar-white beach, the tropical pool deck, and the elegant Penthouse, all suitable for small- to medium-scale events, and the Ballroom, for larger, more formal occasions.

Hilton offers special room rates and incentive points through HHonors that can be used towards a honeymoon or future stay. Wedding participants staying at the resort enjoy a \$25 spa voucher for eforea Spa.

Visit by Garth Mulroy

Professional golfer Garth Mulroy enjoyed a five-day getaway with his wife at the resort. The native of Durban, South Africa, took some time off the beach to meet with Resort General Manager Olivier Maumaire, complimenting him on comfortable accommodations, personable service, and the tropical feel of the property. Mulroy decided to squeeze in some downtime in Aruba between PGA tournaments.

La Cabana Beach Resort

Mothers Celebrated

The traditional appreciation get-together in honor of Mother's Day featured music, flowers, cake, champagne, and a buffet of finger foods. All mothers congregated in the conference room were truly pampered, especially the newly elected La Cabana Mother of the Year, Norma Lake, of the Accounting Department, who received a large flower bouquet and a weekend stay at the Holiday Inn.

The party also featured a fun raffle for over 50 valuable prizes, including useful gift certificates for food stores and gas stations, dinner and breakfast vouchers, and spa treatments. General Manager Joe Najjar was on hand to honor the resort mothers who care for their families and for the resort guests with the same passion and dedication.

Earth Day Every Day

La Cabana takes environmental protection seriously, observing sustainable practices every day. It shared some of the steps taken to minimize negative impacts on the environment and safeguard a healthy and safe environment for guests and employees. These include the use of organic paints, non-toxic cleaning chemicals, LED bulbs, green refrigerant, energy efficient appliances in hot water production, water aerators, and light sensors, and the recycling of kitchen and garden waste.

The resort regularly participates in Sponsor a Mile roadside cleanings, the annual Coastal and Reef Care cleanups, routine beach cleanups, and community projects and support programs. La Cabana educates its team members in green practices, is affiliated with EarthCheck, and has been a Green Certified Platinum EarthCheck Resort since 2000.

Recognizing Employee Excellence

Angel Santos (Bell Services) and Raul Sylla (Kitchen Department) joined Francis Geerman (Security Department) as they accepted the Employee of the Month awards for January, February, and March, respectively.

As Supervisor of the First Quarter, Helen Werleman (Executive Office) landed top honors. The entire Owners' Service team was announced Team of the First Quarter. Various employees celebrated their milestones, including Efigenio Dania, celebrating 25 years with the resort. General Manager Joe Najjar celebrated his 10th anniversary at the helm. A fun managers' outing on board a Red Sail Sports catamaran served as the Manager of the First Quarter event. John Kock (Security) and Frank Sabajo (Engineering) were both declared winners of the Manager of the First Quarter award.





Air Travel

KLM

Between July 8 and September 4, KLM will begin extra flights to Aruba, some on larger planes such as the Airbus A330-300. They will leave on Sunday, assuring that Aruba connects with Europe for a full weekend. The European market has great potential for growth, and the extra capacity will help ATA to reach its arrivals targets for Europe for 2016. This added airlift highlights the efforts of ATA, AAA, and the Ministry of Tourism with KLM to bring visitors from both inside and outside of Holland.



Cruise Travel

Disney Cruise Line

Disney Cruise Line recently announced its itineraries for 2017. For the first time, the cruise line will leave from Port Canaveral in Florida with 10-11 night itineraries for the southern Caribbean, of which Aruba is a part. Departures on the Disney Fantasy will be on June 17 and 28, 2017. The Disney Cruise Line fleet consists of four ships and attracts an affluent market, adding to Aruba's visitor base during the low season.



Casinos

Tropicana Aruba Resort & Casino

The Tropicana Casino's popular Annual Slot Star Championship is back for the fifth year in a row. The final exclusive slot tournament in Atlantic City draws players from all Tropicana properties across the globe. In conjunction with that, the Tropicana Casino is rolling out the red carpet for its top Trop Advantage players on June 10 and 11 for a weekend filled

with activities. The Tropicana Aruba Resort & Casino will hold a qualifying Slot Star Point challenge during the earning period between April 1 and May 19. The winner of the point challenge and one wild card drawing winner will be awarded an all-expense-paid trip to Tropicana Atlantic City to participate in the \$250,000 Slot Star Tournament in June.



Activities

Donkey Sanctuary

The Donkey Sanctuary has moved to a new area, in the neighborhood of Bringamosa, to house its 130 donkeys. The new facilities feature six stables, an infirmary and trauma center, a spacious location for feed, running water, and electricity. Guests will enjoy

the cozy shaded visitors center with refreshments, souvenirs, and restrooms. The new location, eight times larger than the former location in Santa Lucia, is more accessible and close to Frenchman's Pass. It is open daily 9 am – 4 pm.



Culture

Caribbean Queen Noemi Geerman

Local artist Noemi Geerman is the Caribbean Queen boutique's celebrated female artisan this month, showcasing her charming handcrafted jewelry line. Born and raised on the island, Noemi started collecting sea glass shaped by the natural grinding action of saltwater with sand, and discovered she could turn it into gorgeous jewelry. She handpicks fragments for their shape, color, texture, and natural beauty to create one-of-a-kind made-in-Aruba pieces.

Elvis Tromp

During the month of May, L'America Gallery displayed a selection of the works of Elvis Tromp. Elvis Tromp is an Aruban painter who speaks with colors. Because Elvis is a self-taught artist, he had the opportunity to discover his environment, style, and technique in his own way to become a respected and exhibited artist. Using oil and acrylic, he has painted many Aruban landscapes since he was a child, but lately has expanded into figurative and abstract art.

Those who want to see more of his collection can visit The Kitchen Table by White at Blue Residences for fine dining in an artistic atmosphere.





Grace Ashruf

From April 14-17, famous local artist Grace Ashruf held her first U.S. solo art exhibition during the ArtExpo New York 2016. Grace creates art to raise awareness of the effects of climate change. Born and raised in Suriname, Ashruf has spent her professional career traveling many coasts of the Caribbean, which is reflected in her artistry. She hopes to spark emotion and love for the environment with art as her medium. Her “Global Warming” series transcends national borders and language barriers through 20 impressive pieces.



Rosabelle Illes

Well-known local author Rosabelle Illes just presented her third book, entitled Title, to the Aruba Tourism Authority, the sponsor of her works. This delightful book is a collection of short stories, poetry, and thoughts, written in a different, inspiring, and creative way, highlighting the authentic Aruba.

ATA is pleased to support Rosabelle and other talented locals as they present their art, music, photography, theater, and literature abroad. Travelers today are interested in discovering the culture of the destination they visit. Through support of the arts, ATA can bring an added dimension to an Aruba vacation.



Events

A TECH Conference 2016

In 2015, Aruba was host to the first tech conference of its kind in the region. With close to 500 attendees, it featured over 20 international speakers, and startups competed for a \$20,000 prize.

This year, the ATECH Conference will take place in Aruba from September 15 - 17. The program consists of three days of keynotes, panel discussions, fireside chats, breakout sessions, the demo pitch

competition, one-on-one investors sessions, and productive and entertaining networking events.

The main tracks are Travel, FinTech, and IoT (Internet of Things). Leading up to the conference is the ATECH Road Trip, featuring presentations, hackathons, meetups, and workshops both on the local and international stage.



Island Heritage Festival

Now in its second year, the Island Heritage Festival is back on June 4 with a spectacular international lineup featuring Eva Simons, Gregor Salto, Fight Club, and local artists and DJs, including Michael Lampe, Datapanik, Yeimy, Nutzbeatz, John Rossilow, Oscar Booy, and Daniville, with emcee Samil as host. The open-air festival gives visitors a unique “boutique festival” experience, focusing on local art, music, products, and culture. It takes place at the Bushiri Arena, selected for accessibility and ease of parking, and as an alternative to Eagle Beach as this is the turtle nesting season. Visit www.ihfestival.com for more information.



Happiness 360 Conference

During the 60th meeting of the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) for the Americas, held in Havana, Cuba, Aruba officially announced its Happiness 360 Conference, to take place September 13-14, 2016. It is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Tourism, Aruba Tourism Authority, and UNWTO. Minister of Tourism Otmar Oduber elaborated on tourism as the pillar of Aruba's economy and its link with culture. ATA CEO Ronella Tjin Asjoe-Croes stressed that Aruba recognizes the importance of focusing on quality of life in impacting the tourism product. A video of Aruba was shown, and the vice ministers of the various nations represented all received mementos and a “save the date” reminder. Key speakers included the Secretary General of UNWTO, Taleb Rifai; the President of the Florida Caribbean Cruise Association, Michelle Paige; and Robert Waldinger “Zen Priest” of Harvard University.



Priceless Talks

For the past three years, MasterCard, in collaboration with ATA, has organized educational sessions. Aruba scores high on visitor recommendations and strives continually to maximize the tourism experience. Social media has become a key component in marketing efforts. Fritz Israel elaborated on the Aruba Certification Program, which plays an important role in stimulating those who work in the hospitality industry to get to know their island better and value its tourism product. Marco Botero, Director of Sales at Twitter, discussed social media; MasterCard VP John Munoz also spoke at the morning session. The importance of a quality product and service excellence was stressed by ATA CEO Ronella Tjin Asjoe-Croes.

To our tourism partners:
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with your updates

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Wente Tournament

The island's most popular golf tournament unfolded at Tierra del Sol and concluded with father/son duo Mike and Maurice Delisle in the lead, followed by father/son duo Frans and Matthew Brinkman in second place, and George Wong and Don Quant in third place. Organized for the 11th year as a fundraiser by Arion Wine Company NV in conjunction with Wente Vineyards from California and Papiamento Restaurant, the tournament signed up 128 players. The funds collected were earmarked for the Autism Foundation,

supporting kids and parents dealing with the complex disorder. After the tournament, participants congregated around the pool at the clubhouse at sunset for a light supper and award ceremony. All prizes were sponsored by Wente Vineyards and included some of the winery's finest wines in oversized bottles, as well as a trip to the winery in California for the first place winners. One of Erick Wente's favorite activities while on Aruba is an educational opportunity, his annual encounter with EPI students.

