

PRESS KIT 2023



LA MARTINIQUE



DISCOVER *MartiniQualité!*

*Connect our strengths
to shine here and abroad!*

Bénédicte Di Géronimo
Martinique Tourism Commissioner

Grande Anse des Salines

Martinique is a hidden gem of the Caribbean, offering travelers in the know a truly unforgettable experience. The island's striking natural beauty, rich culture, arts, and traditions, wonderful food, legendary rums, and welcoming people make it unlike anywhere else on the planet—this is what we call our *MartiniQualité!*

SPECTACULAR LANDSCAPES

Martinique boasts an incredible variety of natural landscapes. There are beautiful beaches—250 miles of them, to be exact—with silky white sand in the south and silvery black volcanic sand in the north. But there are also verdant tropical forests, thriving mangroves, and towering mountains, including the iconic volcano Mount Pelée. Opportunities abound for exploring this magical island, from hiking and swimming to sailing and diving.

MARTINIQUE IS NOW MORE ACCESSIBLE THAN EVER

New in 2023: Direct flights from Toronto to Fort-de-France

Starting December 16, 2023, **Air Canada** will be operating a weekly nonstop flight from Toronto to Martinique's capital, Fort-de-France. This is the first-ever direct flight between Toronto and Martinique, making the island more accessible than ever to North American travelers. (Other nonstop flights depart from Miami and Montreal.) The five-hour flight will depart on Saturdays from Toronto Pearson Airport (YYZ) and land at Martinique Aimé Césaire International Airport (FDF). Also available, non-stop flights from Montreal with Air Canada and Air Transat.

From the United States

Up to 4 weekly non-stop flights from Miami, year-round service with **American Airlines**.

From other Caribbean islands

L'Express des îles and **Jeans for Freedom** operate regular ferries between Martinique and its neighboring islands to the north (Dominica and Guadeloupe) and to the south (Saint Lucia).





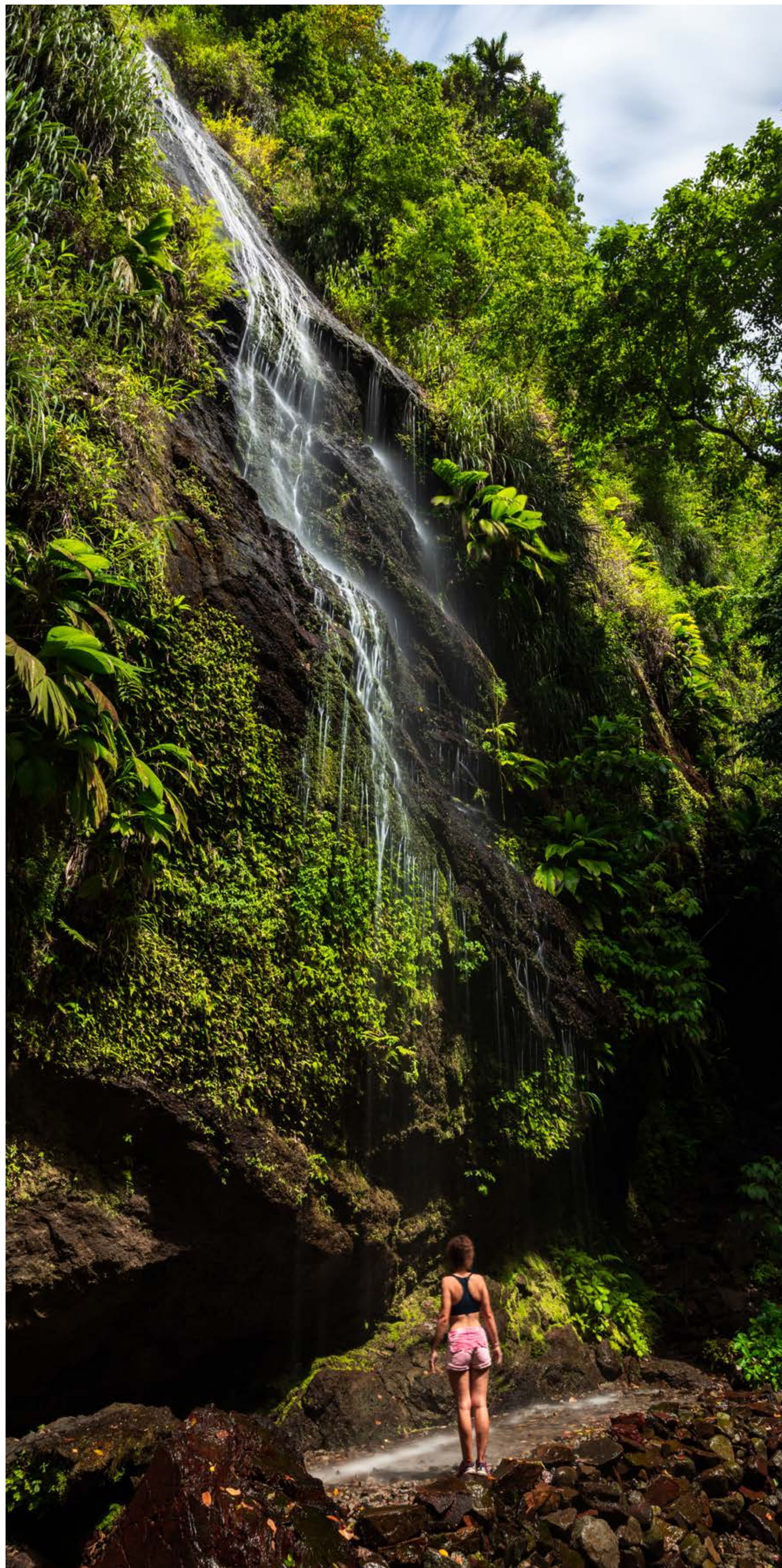
Sustainable TOURISM

Aerial photo of Martinique island

A UNESCO BIOSPHERE RESERVE

Martinique is renowned for its exceptional biodiversity. In 2021, UNESCO added the entire island to its **World Network of Biosphere Reserves**, which promotes biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. The island's remarkably varied terrain is teeming with colorful flora and fauna. In fact, the forests of Mount Pelée and the neighboring peaks of the Pitons du Carbet are home to the largest number of endemic species in the West Indies. In the sprawling botanical gardens of the Jardin de Balata and the Domaine d'Émeraude, visitors can admire countless fragrant flowers, including about a hundred species of orchids. Under the sea, divers can encounter dolphins, turtles, giant gorgonians, and shoals of vibrant tropical fish. Martinique has been proactive in safeguarding its unique natural environment, designating two-thirds of the island as **protected parkland**.





Couleuvre Waterfall



La Caravelle nature reserve

ECO-FRIENDLY ACTIVITIES

There is a wealth of environmentally friendly activities on offer in Martinique, from hiking along mountain and coastal trails to snorkeling in the warm waters of the Caribbean Sea to horseback riding and canyoning in tropical forests. To experience a variety of Martinique's landscapes over the course of a few hours, head to the Presqu'île de la Caravelle, a peninsula on the island's Atlantic side. The hiking trails here wind alongside wild coastline and mangroves and through dry forest, with gorgeous panoramic views along the way. Kayaking is another popular eco-friendly activity; to learn about Martinique's marine environment, consider a tour in a transparent kayak with [Fleurdo Eco-Excursion](#), based in Le Vauclin.



Cœur Bouliki nature spa in Saint-Joseph

FASCINATING CULTURE

The population of Martinique is very diverse due to a long history of migration from Africa, Asia, Europe, and elsewhere in the Caribbean. This diversity is reflected in the island's artistic and cultural traditions, which encompass musical genres like *chouval bwa*, *biguine*, and *zouk*, as well as *bèlè* dance and the ancient practice of *senne* fishing. Martinique has also produced major writers such as Aimé Césaire, Édouard Glissant and Frantz Fanon, and the internationally renowned filmmaker Euzhan Palcy. All over the island, visitors will encounter local artworks, from the contemporary pieces showcased at the **Fondation Clément gallery** to the murals adorning the streets of Fort-de-France to the pottery, textiles, bakoua hats, and unique 18-karat-gold jewelry sold by craftspeople.

The northern town of Saint-Pierre offers visitors an intriguing glimpse into **Martinique's history**. It was here that the Mount Pelée volcano erupted in 1902, destroying what was then the capital city. The reconstructed Saint-Pierre, now nicknamed “the Little Pompeii of the Caribbean,” is filled with ruins that hint at its former life as a sophisticated metropolis.

WARM AND AUTHENTIC PEOPLE

No matter where you go in Martinique, you'll be welcomed with open arms—the **people** who live here are warm, friendly, and enthusiastic about showing visitors everything that makes the island such a special place.



Habitation Clément – Arts in the garden



Traditional dance at Tartane beach



Habitation Clément cellar

WORLD-RENOWNED RUMS

Martinique's rums are the only ones in the world to be awarded the prestigious AOC (*appellation d'origine contrôlée*), the same designation that recognizes certain exceptional wines of France. They're made using the unique *rhum agricole* production technique: freshly pressed juice from locally grown sugar cane is fermented and distilled before being rested or aged in oak barrels. The results range from white rum, typically used in the beloved Ti'Punch cocktail, to aged dark rum, best enjoyed neat. To get a firsthand look at the production process and sample Martinique's most celebrated rums, visit any of the island's 14 distilleries along the *Route des Grands Rhums*.

LOCAL FLAVORS

Martinique's distinctive cuisine draws on African, Indian, and French influences and the abundance of fresh local fruit and seafood. Popular Creole dishes include *blaff de poisson* (poached fish marinated in lime, garlic, and peppers), *crabes farcis* (stuffed crab), and *blanc manger coco* (cold coconut pudding with vanilla, lime zest, and cinnamon). For a quintessential Martinican snack, order a plate of crispy, tender *accras de morue* (cod fritters) and a Ti'Punch rum cocktail. Other must-try specialities include the delicious chicken Colombo curry and French classics like fish soup, filet mignon, and soufflé.



Grilled lobster



GREEN ACCOMMODATIONS

Travelers can minimize their environmental impact by staying at one of Martinique's many sustainable hotels. In addition to the four-star Sable Bleu Boutique Hotel opening in June 2023, an excellent option is the three-star **Hotel Bambou** in Les Trois-Îlets, which was awarded the Clef Verte certification for environmentally responsible practices. For those looking to immerse themselves in nature, both **Le Domaine des Bulles** and **Dom Nature Lodge** offer transparent bubble rooms surrounded by lush greenery, while Domaine de Robinson and Ti'Bakoua offer comfortable cabins perched high in the treetops.

HOTEL *Openings*



Sable Bleu Boutique Hotel

SABLE BLEU BOUTIQUE HOTEL

The four-star [Sable Bleu Boutique Hotel](#) will open its doors in June 2023. Located in Le Marin in southern Martinique, Sable Bleu faces one of the island's most beautiful bays and offers spectacular views of the bustling marina. The hotel has 16 bright and airy rooms, some with balconies and sea views. Amenities include a pool, rooftop deck, fitness room, and concierge services. A dedicated space where departing guests can freshen up is an especially nice touch. What's more, the Sable Bleu is committed to sustainability: rooms are designed with waste-sorting and energy-saving systems. On-site dining, available on the rooftop deck or via room service, consists of healthy local dishes. Surrounded by charming local shops, bars, and restaurants, the Sable Bleu is an oasis of calm nestled in one of Martinique's most lively towns.

REOPENING: HOTEL MAROUBA AND HOTEL CLUB DES TROIS ÎLETS

After being closed for several years, Hotel Marouba and Hotel Club des Trois Îlets will both be reopening as four-star hotels. Located in the northwestern town of Le Carbet and the southwestern town of Les Trois-Îlets, respectively, the two properties will be completely renovated, with work expected to end in early 2025. Hotel Marouba was recently purchased by real estate company Nexallia with the backing of Best Western, while Hotel Club des Trois Îlets was bought by the Zénitude Hôtel et Résidence group, which also owns Hotel Le Salako in Guadeloupe.

**Three new 4-star hotels
will be opening in Martinique.**

Upcoming EVENTS



Mount Pelée

LA TRANSAT JACQUES VABRE

Held every two years, [La Transat Jacques Vabre](#) is a transatlantic sailing race that departs from Le Havre, France and finishes in Fort-de-France, Martinique. The 2023 edition, which marks the event's 30th anniversary, begins in late October with 10 days of festivities in Le Havre before the boats set sail on their two-week journey to the Caribbean. This year's fleet is the largest in La Transat's history, consisting of more than 100 boats divided into four classes: Class 40s, Ocean 50s, IMOCA's, and Ultims. Each class will follow a different route and cross the finish line in Martinique around the same time, in mid-November. The race traces the historical transatlantic coffee route established in 1721 when Arabica Typica coffee plants from Louis XIV's garden were brought to Martinique and cultivated there for the first time.



La Transat Jacques Vabre

MARTINIQUE TRAIL TOUR

An excellent way to explore the island's extensive network of hiking trails, the [Martinique Trail Tour](#) is a series of 19 trail runs held at different locations over the course of the year. Those who are up for the physical challenge of trail running are rewarded with breathtaking scenery as they make their way along winding mountain paths and palm-lined beaches.

LE RAID DES ALIZÉS

One of Martinique's biggest sporting events of the year, **Le Raid des Alizés** is an annual competition for women in which dozens of teams run, cycle, and row through some of the island's most stunning natural landscapes. This year's event will take place from December 5 to 10. While the course map won't be revealed until the competition kicks off, the route is sure to include many types of terrain—sandy beaches, tropical forests, mountain trails, and the clear waters of the Caribbean Sea, to name a few. Each team chooses a charity to represent during the competition and donation amounts are determined according to the final ranking.

BIENNALE INTERNATIONALE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN

First held in 2013, the **Biennale Internationale d'Art Contemporain** (BIAC) returns this year with exhibitions taking place all over Martinique from October through December. BIAC 2023 will focus on the themes of climate change and our relationship to nature and all living things. Curated by Tumelo Mosaka, the event will showcase works by internationally renowned artists as well as emerging creators from Martinique and the Caribbean. Notable exhibitions will include a main show at Domaine de Fonds Saint-Jacques, a former plantation in Sainte-Marie; an architecture pavilion in Fort-de-France; and a show at the Domaine d'Émeraude gardens in Le Morne-Rouge.



Le Raid des Alizés

Essential INFORMATION



Size: 436 square miles (50 mi. long and 22 mi. across at the island's widest point)

Population: 354,800

Capital city: Fort-de-France

Currency: Euro

Languages: French and Creole; English and Spanish are spoken in resort areas.

Electricity: Voltage is 220 AC. Visitors travelling with hair dryers, electric razors, and other appliances made for use in North America will require power adapters.

Climate: Warm weather year-round, with an average temperature of 79°F. Trade winds (*alizés*) help keep the island cool.

Location: Nestled in the heart of the Lesser Antilles between Dominica and St. Lucia, Martinique is a five-hour flight from New York or Montreal and a three-hour flight from Miami.

Tipping: Restaurant prices include a 15% service charge.

Getting around: Local and international car rental companies (Avis, Budget, Europcar, Hertz, Alwego, etc.) operate in Martinique. Public transportation and taxi services are also available. In Fort-de-France, there are taxi stands located near tourist attractions.

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