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BARBADOS FOCUSED ON CARIBBEAN TOURISM BUSINESS

- The destination woos regional travellers to experience its newest attractions -

Barbados is the place to be for Caribbean travellers seeking a safe, easy, nearby getaway that packs a big punch. Speaking during a recent media briefing hosted by the Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc. (BTMI), Corey Garrett, Director, Caribbean and Latin America, BTMI, cited new attractions, updated entry protocols and an abundance airlift, as the key drivers in reconnecting Barbados to its Caribbean neighbours.

“This is an encouraging time for us to be able to bring together all of the critical areas to satisfy Caribbean travellers. Our Isle Away marketing campaign speaks directly to the unique needs and wants of regional visitors, who we welcome with open arms,” Garrett said. “It reminds them of both our physical and cultural proximity, and why Barbados remains that destination that feels like home, but with a fun twist.”

A strong Caribbean connection

And getting to Barbados just got a whole lot easier with an impressive five airlines connecting the island to more than 10 countries in the Caribbean, including:

- Caribbean Airlines offering flights from Trinidad, Guyana, Jamaica and some Eastern Caribbean islands;

- LIAT still contending in the skies flying out of Dominica, Antigua, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent;
- Air Antilles servicing the French West Indies with routes from Martinique, Guadeloupe, and more recently Dominica and St. Lucia;
- interCaribbean operating out of Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and Guyana from December 17th;
- and in the new year, the launch of a new service out of Suriname with Fly Allways airlines.

Barbados has also become a viable Caribbean hub, with direct connections into major cities in the US, Canada, UK and Ireland; and more recently, Europe. Most recently, Barbados introduced KLM airlines, flying direct to Amsterdam; and Aer Lingus, which takes travellers to Ireland, passing through Manchester. Caribbean travellers are invited to make the most of their holidays by spending a few days in Barbados before heading to any of the numerous destinations accessible through the Grantley Adams International Airport.

“All in all, it is quite easy and accessible to get to destination Barbados from practically anywhere in Barbados,” Garrett said. “Barbados is a well-connected hub and this has served our Caribbean travellers quite well.”

Garrett expressed his gratitude to the airlines for their continued partnerships, launching new routes and maintaining services, as it showed their confidence in destination Barbados throughout this challenging time.

Safe weekend getaways to Barbados are back

Garrett disclosed that since October 24, 2021, the Government of Barbados made it easier for fully vaccinated travellers to enjoy Barbados faster through the removal of the 2nd COVID-19 PCR test and previously required quarantine for fully vaccinated travellers.

Now, fully vaccinated travellers to Barbados only need a negative COVID-19 PCR test result taken no more than 3 days prior to arrival, which means that Caribbean travellers coming for a weekend can now immediately enjoy the island without delay.

Travellers to Barbados can also take comfort in the fact that the Government of Barbados remains committed to prioritising the safety of visitors and locals through their management of the COVID-19 pandemic, and offers high-quality, accessible healthcare for all. The country's aggressive inoculation programme has already seen more than 60 per cent of the eligible population fully vaccinated.

Come for the rum, stay for the fun

Even though Barbados may have missed the celebration of the annual national Food and Rum Festival, Garrett revealed that local chefs and mixologists remained busy through the creation of many new restaurants that create the ultimate eating and culinary experiences in Barbados.

“We know that our West Indian brothers and sisters love food and a lime. That's why we are so pleased to share that the food scene in Barbados is at an all-time high with a range of experiences to completely immerse visitors in Barbados' cuisine and culture,” Garrett said. “It's everything you want – food, drinks, music, and friends.”

In the past two years, Barbados has opened several new culinary hot spots dotted across the island. Foodies can enjoy a meal and a lime on the beach at the Sea Shed, One Eleven East, La Cabane, Copacana Beach Club. Those interested in a mashup of culinary action can head to the new Worthing Food Square which boasts several food trucks offering diverse gastronomic experiences in a lively outdoor environment. Other favourites for Caribbean travellers are also set to welcome them back including Cocktail Kitchen, Champers and The Tides. And for a full farm-to-table experience that takes you on a journey to see how Barbados is repositioning towards more sustainable practices, a trip to Peg Farm or Local & Co. is a must.

For more adventurous visitors, Garrett expressed that Barbados was a destination that offered them the opportunity to experience Barbados in a very different way. Visitors can get their adrenaline rush going with Off Road Fury Barbados, Eco Bike Tours, Rascals Waterpark and other water-based activities such as the new Sea Bob. Plus, unique to Barbados adventures like Mount Gay Rum Tours, the St. Nicholas Abbey Heritage Train Ride, and Atlantis Submarine are still a hit.

Cricket, lovely cricket

While Barbados is not yet ready to welcome the return of all types of events such as the Reggae Festival, Crop Over and the Sandy Lane Gold Cup, Garrett announced that come next January 2022, the island will be hosting its first major international event since the pandemic – the West Indies vs England T20 series and in March 2022, the West Indies Vs England Test Series.

The England team will play the first ever five match T20 series between the two teams across a nine-day period from January 22nd to 30th 2022, including two consecutive weekends of back to back T20 cricket.

The Test Series will start in Antigua at the Sir Vivian Richards Cricket Ground (SVRCG) on March 8th 2022 before moving to Kensington Oval in Barbados for the 2nd Test on March 16th and finally, move to Grenada on March 24th for the 3rd Test match at the National Cricket Stadium.

“We are excited that the future holds Barbados and our Caribbean neighbors very closely together. We’ve really missed you all and we really want to invite you back,” Garrett said. “Revised travel protocols plus increased accessibility thanks to our airline partners means that we are now closer than ever to reconnect with you.”

- ENDS -

About Barbados

The island of Barbados offers a unique Caribbean experience steeped in rich history and colourful culture, and rooted in remarkable landscapes. Barbados is the home of two of the three remaining Jacobean Mansions left in the Western hemisphere, as well as fully functional rum distilleries. In fact, this island is known as the birthplace of rum, commercially producing and bottling the spirit since the 1700s. Each year, Barbados hosts several world-class events including the annual Barbados Food and Rum Festival; the annual Barbados Reggae Festival; and the annual Crop Over Festival, where celebrities such as Lewis Hamilton and its very own Rihanna are often spotted. Accommodations are wide and varied, ranging from picturesque plantation houses and villas to quaint bed and breakfast gems; prestigious international chains; and award-winning five-diamond resorts. In 2018, Barbados’ accommodation sector captured 13 awards in the Top Hotels Overall, Luxury, All-Inclusive, Small, Best Service, Bargain, and Romance

categories of the 'Traveler's Choice Awards'. And getting to paradise is a breeze: the Grantley Adams International Airport offers plenty non-stop and direct services from a growing number of U.S., U.K., Canadian, Caribbean, European, and Latin American gateways, making Barbados the true gateway to the Eastern Caribbean. Visit Barbados and experience why for two years in a row it won the prestigious *Star Winter Sun Destination Award* at the 'Travel Bulletin Star Awards' in 2017 and 2018. For more information on travel to Barbados, visit www.visitbarbados.org/isleaway and follow on Instagram [@isleaway.bb](https://www.instagram.com/isleaway.bb).