



Barbados Sponsors Virtuoso Forum Latin America & Caribbean in Cartagena, Colombia

Cartagena, Colombia (May 10, 2022) - [Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc. \(BTMI\)](#) presented at the Virtuoso Forum Latin America & Caribbean in Cartagena, Colombia to showcase its latest offerings as Barbados welcomes back direct flights from Panama via Copa Airlines beginning June 15.

With borders reopened and travel continuing to thrive worldwide, BTMI promoted the island with destination product updates for travel advisors, including the Sweet Summer Savings campaign and the return of the iconic annual Crop Over Festival after a two-year hiatus. Crop Over attracts thousands of visitors from across the globe who come to enjoy Barbadian heritage, culture, music, food and dance, every May through August. One of the Caribbean's most culturally significant festivals, the 300-year-old tradition of Crop Over marks the end of the sugar cane growing season. On June 15, twice weekly flights arrive to the Bajan capital of Bridgetown from Panama City via Copa Airlines, fostering a key gateway between Barbados and Latin America.

"Colombia is one of our target markets and one of the most exciting traveler bases worldwide. From our status as the Caribbean's culinary capital, to our incredible beaches, sports culture and history, we're confident that our unique offerings will attract this market. Bringing our exciting events and updates to the attendees of Virtuoso Forum LAC was an important next step for this market," said Corey Garrett, director of Latin America and the Caribbean for Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc.

Barbados offers over 50 brilliant white-sand beaches, with any beach just a few minutes away. Known as the culinary capital of the Caribbean, Barbados boasts over 70 world-class dining options. The island has a strong infrastructure, ample hotel offering, historical sites, and a range of sports and activities including polo, cricket, golf, snorkeling, plus shopping, music and annual events. During the forum, BTMI sponsored a dinner where guests enjoyed the smooth Bajan rhythms of the island's own Dwayne Jones on the steelpan.

Colombia and Latin America represent excellent business opportunities and access to relevant and qualified travel and tourism industry buyers, influencers, and professionals for Barbados. The island aims to create business and investment opportunities in sports, production, and more as the destination continues diversifying its markets. Barbados is active in the market to support the new airlift and ensure a strong presence in Latin America, with hope that by 2030, such entrenched relationships can foster daily flights from the region.



Virtuoso is the industry's leading Leisure Travel Network. Comprised of approximately 20,000 elite travel advisors in 22 countries and over 1,800 of the world's best travel providers, including hotels, cruise lines, tour operators, and premier destinations, Virtuoso is an invitation-only organization. Membership in the grouping is limited to the top 1% of travel advisors, vendors, and properties and members combine for \$30 billion in annual travel sales.

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, follow on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/VisitBarbados>, and via Twitter [@Barbados](https://twitter.com/Barbados).

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