



All eyes on Martinique !



Diamond Rock – Le Diamant, Martinique

Montreal, Feb 19th, 2021 - The island of Martinique, also known as the Isle of flowers and one of the most precious Caribbean gems very popular with Quebecois, ranks among the world's top destinations for 2021. Despite the pandemic and the hold on international travels, Martinique and its tourism professionals keep close contact with its visitors while standing out in the eyes of both the public and prestigious institutions.

Martinique listed as one of the best destinations in 2021 for Tripadvisor

The giant online travel company reveals several weeks ago the winners of its annual Travelers' Choice® Best of the Best awards for destinations and Martinique won 1st place in the prestigious "Emerging destinations" category.

Followed by Panama City Beach (FL), Holbrox (Mexico) and Tobermory (ON) among others; Martinique is the only Caribbean island listed among the Top 25.

This distinction is a real recognition for the island since the Emerging Destinations list is based on spots around the world that millions of travellers are saving on TripAdvisor.

Due to the global pandemic which has heavily impacted the travel industry in 2020, traveling to the Island of Flowers has been—same as mainland France—closed to non-EU visitors. But the best-kept secret French Island is more than ever on the radar of the travellers from throughout the world, as their next choice of destination. Martinique and its hidden treasures will be even more exposed with their recent entry to the world Hall of fame of cultural and natural goods.

UNESCO includes Martinique's Yole traditional sail boat to the World Cultural Heritage

The announcement was made later in December when the intergovernmental Committee of UNESCO officially included the traditional Yole sailboat of Martinique in UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage List, a candidacy that was fully supported by the Presidency of the French Republic and the French Ministry of Culture.

Yole boats are constructed with painstaking detail in the grand tradition of Martinican fishing vessels initially developed by local craftsmen in the 40's. Each vessel flies brightly colored rectangular sails over rounded canoe-like wooden hulls made from local pear trees. As distinctive in style as they are challenging to sail, quick and agile yawl boats test the mettle of even the most experienced sailors; their rounded hulls ensuring an instant capsize if ever the vessels should come to a stop at sea.

The boats are the centerpiece of the Tour des Yoles Rondes, the race that is a highlight of the annual Martinican social calendar each summer for 35 years and counting. Teams representing various towns across Martinique compete alongside international competitors from neighboring islands on the route that literally circles the Island of Flowers. Akin to Carnival, supporters on land cheer on their teams with boisterous enthusiasm and bountiful parties. Similarly, the party extends to the high seas where hundreds of yachts, catamarans and other private vessels trail the racers partying along the way.

News Release – Destination France 2021 – La Martinique

It is the island first UNESCO recognition, but hopefully not the last. In view of Martinique's successful application made by its steering committee, Martinicans are confident about the two subsequent candidacies. The island is indeed a candidate for the UNESCO's Biosphere Reserves list and its volcanoes and forests of Mount Pelée and the Pitons of Northern Martinique are candidates for inclusion on UNESCO'S Natural sites lists on behalf of France.

The latter has recently been approved by French President Emmanuel Macron and the final word by the UNESCO's natural sites board is expected around July 2022.

"These new international recognitions reflect the many wonders of our island along with the richness of its culture and the warmth of its people, said **François Baltus-Languedoc, CEO of the Martinique Tourism Authority (MTA)**. Along with all the stakeholders, we are strongly committed to pursuing our strategic efforts in Canada".

To do so, MTA will go virtual with the launch of its **Martinique Travel Show**, very first online travel exhibition about Martinique and addressed to the travel industry from all around the world from May 18th to May 20th. The program includes networking, business opportunities, conferences by tourism experts about Martinique and its precious jewels, now sought-after by many travelers!

More details coming soon!

Source : Martinique Tourism Authority

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