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CELEBRATE THE 'JOIE DU JEU' IN MARTINIQUE DURING SUMMER/FALL 2007

28th Tour de la Martinique & 23rd Yawl Boat Race headline upcoming sporting events

NEW YORK, NY – June 13, 2007 – The NBA and NHL seasons are fast drawing to a close, the NFL season is still months away and Major League Baseball is mired in the “Dog Days of Summer.” For U.S. sports enthusiasts, the timing couldn’t be better to head to Martinique to celebrate the *joie du jeu* (the joy of sports). With its wonderful weather and average daily temperatures in the mid- to high 80’s, Martinique is an idyllic sporting playground year-round. During the summer and fall months, though, the action really heats up as major annual spectator events combine with the island’s wealth of sporting attractions catering to active travelers to validate Martinique’s position as a primary sporting capital of the Caribbean.

28th annual Tour de la Martinique – July 9-17, 2007

A smaller version of the famed *Tour de France*, this weeklong race is contested over eight stages that wind throughout the entire island. Time trials set the stage for the event on the first day with the actual first stage originating in the capital city of Fort de France. Residents and visitors alike line the roads to cheer on the riders as they race through picturesque seaside fishing villages, mountain towns and rainforests, skirting the island’s vast acres of banana, sugarcane and coffee plantations along the way. This is a truly international event with past winners hailing from Austria, Belgium, Colombia, Cuba, Switzerland and Venezuela.

23rd annual Yawl Boat Race – July 29-August 5, 2007

Carnival is to the Caribbean as fish are to the sea – one simply cannot exist without the other. In Martinique, the analogy is taken a step further as carnival and the sea are brought together for a celebration unlike any other, the famed Yawl Boat Race. A weeklong event held each summer; the Yawl Boat Race literally encircles Martinique with a boundless spirit and joy born of pulsating rhythms, prodigious libations and nonstop parties. The race features yawls, classic canoe-like wooden vessels with rounded keels that are the traditional sailing vessels of the island’s fishermen. Departing initially from the capital city of Fort de France, the race continues around the island in seven stages. Huge throngs of locals and visitors crowd the shores to cheer on the racers, with carnival-style celebrations punctuating each day’s victory. The carnival atmosphere surrounding the Yawl Race extends to the sea where a flotilla of yachts, catamarans, speedboats, and other private vessels trail the racers, celebrating along the way. Whether experienced on land or by sea, the Yawl Boat Race is a uniquely Martiniquan take on traditional Caribbean carnival that is not to be missed.

International Fishing Tournament – October 10-13, 2007

Widely-recognized as one of the Caribbean’s premiere ports-of-call for private and charter yachts, sailboats and sportfishing vessels, the town of Le Marin hosts this three-day competitive tournament. More than 200 fishermen from 18 countries aboard 50 boats are expected to participate in this year’s event showcasing the best in Martiniquan sportfishing.

23rd International Half Marathon – November 25, 2007

More than 3,000 competitors from around the world are expected to compete in this year’s International Half Marathon. The event takes place in the capital city, Fort de France, adding extra energy and excitement to this already lively Caribbean city that embodies the best of Paris in its art galleries, museums, theaters and shops that sell the latest goods from France.

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Travelers who prefer to take part in the action can participate in the events listed above, or satisfy their personal thirst for competition by taking part in Martinique's wide range of sporting attractions.

Boating & Sportfishing

Blessed, as it is, with several wonderful ports, a number of small satellite islands (some with restaurants open to the public) and teeming offshore fishing grounds, Martinique is a boating and sportfishing lover's paradise. Bareboat or crewed charters can be arranged on an hourly, daily or weekly basis through select resorts and hotels, as well as at marinas located in Le Marin, Le François, Pointe du Bout, Le Robert or Ste-Anne. Sportfishing enthusiasts can expect to reel in dolphin, barracuda, kingfish, bonito and tuna.

Cycling

Visitors to Martinique can enjoy their own personal Tour de la Martinique by renting a bike through Sud Loisirs (Sainte Anne) Tel. (596)596.76 81 82; Locabikes (Fort de France) Tel. (596)596.63 33 05; or Blue Monday (Diamant) Tel. (596)596.76 18 80. Guided tours can also be arranged through V.T. Tilt' (Trois-Ilets) Tel. (596)596.66 01 01 or Parc Naturel Régional (Fort de France) Tel. (596)596.64 42 59.

Golf

Located just across the Bay of Fort de France, near the seaside enclave of Trois-Ilets, lays Martinique's signature and singular golf course. Known as the Empress Josephine Course due to its close proximity to the birthplace of Martinique's famous daughter and Napoleon's wife, the 18-hole 6,640-yard par 71 course was designed by the legendary Robert Trent Jones, Sr. more than 20 years ago. Meticulous care has enabled the course to retain its original grandeur, with recent enhancements, including a David Leadbetter Golf Academy providing personalized training, adding to quality of the golf experience. For more information, please Tel. (596) 596.68 32 81.

Scuba Diving & Snorkeling

Martinique's undersea wonders rival its land-based natural attractions in terms of beauty, diversity and uniqueness. Here, ideal water temperatures, shipwrecks and historic sites combine to create sublime diving and snorkeling adventures. Among the more notable dive sites is Diamond Rock, a 570-foot basalt island located south of Fort de France that was once fortified by the British Navy and used as a man-of-war. The Gibraltar was even commissioned as the HMS Diamond Rock. A deep triangular undersea cavern extends beneath Diamond Rock, making for a memorable dive. Other prime dive spots include the shipwrecks off the coast of St. Pierre dating back to the 1902 eruption of Mt. Pelée. Dive operators abound throughout the island, and excursions can be booked through nearly all hotels and resorts.

Tennis, squash, windsurfing, kayaking, horseback riding and more are also available through hotels and ground operators throughout Martinique. A true sportsman's paradise, Martinique offers something for the competitor in everyone.

About Martinique (www.martinique.org)

A Little Bit of France in the Caribbean, The Isle of Flowers, The Rum Capital of the World – by any one of its many names Martinique remains one of the most alluring and enchanting destinations in the world; as unforgettable as a summer romance or a first kiss. Martinique is an overseas region of France, and in keeping with traditional French flair this vibrant island stirs the passions with awe-inspiring natural beauty, a rich cultural history, distinctive culinary delights, warm smiles and so much more. Napoleon's bride, Empress Josephine, was born and raised here. The Pompeii of the Caribbean, St. Pierre, is found here. The finest French products, from Chanel fashions to Limoges porcelain, are readily available here. *La Route des Rhums*, a tour of the world's finest rum distilleries based on France's famed *Route des Vins*, is offered here. A special place, to be sure, with so much to offer Martinique c'est magnifique!

For more information on Martinique, contact the Martinique Promotion Bureau /CMT USA, 444 Madison Avenue, 16th Floor, New York, NY 10022 – Tel: 212 838 6887 - Fax: 212 838 7855 – Email: info@martinique.org – Web site: www.martinique.org.