

HABITATION LAGRANGE, 18TH-CENTURY MANSION, IS ONE OF MARTINIQUE'S FINEST COUNTRY INNS

A magnificent 18th-century Creole mansion serves as the centerpiece for one of Martinique's finest hotels, **Habitation Lagrange**, which opened several seasons ago. Set on 7.5 acres of lush tropical landscape between the villages of Marigot and Lorrain on the island's northeast coast, **Habitation Lagrange** has 12 guest rooms. Some are in the restored old mansion, a two-story affair with wraparound verandas and filigreed turrets, that was originally the great house of a sugar plantation and rum distillery. Others are in three new tiled-roof cottages designed to compliment the exotic environs.

Lagrange sits among flowering gardens, and grounds studded with relics from days gone by. Antiques and four-poster beds decorate the four guest rooms and suite in the mansion, which has a library on the ground floor, as well as a bar and dining salon. Its focal point is a lovely wall mural by François de Lucy depicting period scenes. Wicker, teak, mahogany, fine fabrics, and fascinating objets d'art are in generous supply, both in the main house and the new cottages built around the pool.

Each room at **Lagrange** is named for an island tree. From some, you can literally reach out and pluck mangoes or bananas from their stalks. All rooms are equipped with ceiling fans, air-conditioning, phones, minibars, and other 20th-century amenities. Besides pool swimming, **Lagrange** offers horse-back riding and tennis on a lighted court. The nearest beach is Anse Azérot, about a 15-minute drive.

Of special note is the cuisine, excellent dishes prepared by local chef Mme Chasseur and inspired by the fine tables of France, but composed of local products seasoned with cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves and similar island spices.

A quiet holiday in understated luxury is what **Lagrange** offers, says owner Jean-Louis de Lucy, who with wife Isabelle is also in charge of **Les Ilets de l'Impératrice**, two tiny vacation islands off Le François down the coast from **Habitation Lagrange**, whose current manager is Véronique Tarquin, ably assisted by Gaele Norbet.

High season rates (Dec. 15-Apr. 15) are \$295-380 a day, single or double, including tax and service, with full breakfast. Low season rates average about 25% less. **Lagrange** offers a 7-night "Honeymoon" stay for two, priced at \$2,400 per couple through April 14, 2000, with full American breakfast and dinner daily, fruits, flowers, half bottle of champagne on the day of arrival, taxes and service.

For reservations and brochures, contact Caribbean Inns Ltd., Tel: (800) 633-7411, Fax: 803-686-7411, or Martinique Select, Tel: (800) 823-2002, Fax: (410) 692-9579, or French Caribbean International, Tel: (800) 223-9815, Fax: (805) 967-7798, Loire Tours, Tel. (800) 755-9313, Fax. (212) 254-0654, or Wimco, Tel: (800) 932-3222, Fax: (401) 847-6290.

For information on Martinique, contact the Martinique Promotion Bureau, 444 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022, Tel: (800) 391-4909, Fax: (212) 838-7855. On the Internet: <http://www.-martinique.org>. By e-mail: Martinique@nyo.com.

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