

For Immediate Release

Source: Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association

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Colin James, CEO of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority, and Vanessa Ledesma, Acting CEO and Director General of CHTA, celebrate the announcement at CTO's State of the Tourism Industry Conference (SOTIC) in the Cayman Islands this week. At left is Sandra Joseph, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Tourism, while Dona Regis-Prosper, CTO Secretary-General and CEO is pictured at right.

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## **CHTA Announces Antigua and Barbuda as Host for 43rd Annual Caribbean Travel Marketplace**

*Eastern Caribbean Nation to Host Event for the First Time in May 2025*

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (September 4, 2024) – The Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) has selected Antigua and Barbuda as the host destination for the 43rd Caribbean Travel Marketplace (CTM). Scheduled for May 18-22, 2025, the event will attract major global buyers and regional

suppliers, showcasing Antigua and Barbuda's growing status as a key player in Caribbean hospitality and tourism.

The selection of Antigua and Barbuda highlights the nation's remarkable rise in the tourism sector. "With a 16 percent increase in stay-over arrivals this year, surpassing 2019's record levels, our twin-island nation has become a focal point for international travel and investment," said Colin James, CEO of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority.

CHTA President Nicola Madden-Greig expressed her excitement about producing the next edition of its signature event in Antigua and Barbuda: "Marketplace is undisputedly the Caribbean's largest and premier marketing event, and we are delighted that Antigua and Barbuda will be the site for this important gathering of Caribbean suppliers and global buyers, where new and established stakeholders can gain access to the diverse offerings of travel products and experiences throughout the region."

"With major infrastructure and hotel developments as well as robust airlift, we are not only a premier regional destination but conveniently accessible to travelers," stated Charles "Max" Fernandez, Minister of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Transportation and Investment.

"As a natural hub for the Eastern Caribbean, Antigua and Barbuda is served by every major airline flying to the region. That makes us accessible from all primary and secondary markets in The Americas, UK/Europe and the Caribbean, by nonstop service and easy connections," he added.

"This is an incredible opportunity for our twin-island nation to be on full display to industry leaders, potential investors, and key stakeholders in the global tourism sector. Hosting such a prestigious event not only places us at the center of regional attention but also brings significant economic benefits," said Craig Marshall, Chairman of the Antigua and Barbuda Hotels & Tourism Association. "The influx of visitors, media coverage, and business engagements will provide a substantial boost to our local economy, create new opportunities for our tourism and hospitality sectors, and further solidify Antigua and Barbuda as a premier destination in the Caribbean. We look forward to

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showcasing the unique charm, culture, and hospitality that make our islands truly special,” he added.

The 2025 edition of Marketplace promises a dynamic program, featuring Responsible Tourism Day, highlighting the importance of sustainable tourism practices through community engagement activities. The Caribbean Travel Forum, another key event, will bring together public and private sector representatives to discuss critical issues in regional tourism. The forum will also recognize excellence across the sector by presenting awards for outstanding individuals and organizations.

The Caribbean MICE Exchange returns next year, and CHTA will introduce a new component to the program: a day focused on maximizing direct online bookings using the latest technology and trends in digital marketing and Artificial Intelligence.

CTM features one-on-one buyer-seller appointments as the major component of the conference. This B2B exchange provides a valuable opportunity for participants to connect directly and drive business to the region.

The main venue for the conference activities will be the American University of Antigua (AUA), a new, state-of-the-art conference facility that successfully hosted the recent United Nations’ 4th International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

For more information, visit [chtamarketplace.com](https://chtamarketplace.com).

### About the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA)

The Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) is the Caribbean’s leading association representing the interests of national hotel and tourism associations. For more than 60 years, CHTA has been the backbone of the Caribbean hospitality industry. Working with some 1,000 hotel and allied members, and 32 National Hotel Associations, CHTA is shaping the Caribbean’s future and helping members to grow their businesses. Whether helping to navigate critical issues in sales and marketing, sustainability, legislative issues, emerging technologies, climate change, data and intelligence or, looking for avenues and ideas to better market and manage businesses, CHTA is helping members on issues which matter most.

