



CARIBBEAN
HOTEL & TOURISM
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For Immediate Release

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CARIBBEAN HOTELIERS INVEST IN DOWNTIME TO MANAGE CRISIS AND PREPARE FOR FUTURE

MIAMI (April 9, 2020) – The Caribbean tourism industry has a proven track record of bouncing back from crisis, often better and stronger, a message which resonated throughout the first in a series of online training programs being conducted by the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) aimed at equipping the industry to cope with its immediate challenges while preparing for the eventual return of tourists to the world’s leading tropical playground.

The first phase of the program, dubbed “CHTA Live: The Resilience Series”, was held on Friday, April 3, providing historical facts and measured forecasts to assist tourism stakeholders as they develop endurance strategies in response to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

Representatives from the World Travel and Tourism Council, STR, ADARA and Tourism Analytics shared data and experiences, all pointing to a slow but steady recovery and providing a glimpse into the future. The session attracted nearly 500 attendees and was later uploaded to CHTA’s COVID-19 Resource Center at www.caribbeanhotelandtourism.com/covid-19.

The first edition of CHTA Live: The Resilience Series featured a wealth of data to assist tourism stakeholders.

“History points to the incredible resiliency of the industry. We’ve seen this from SARS, tsunamis, hurricanes, zika and other short-lived major challenges. While the COVID-19 pandemic is on a scale never before experienced, we are confident that the appetite for travel will return and as consumer confidence builds, the Caribbean will be poised and ready to welcome visitors back,” stated CHTA CEO and Director General Frank Comito, who moderated the first program.

This week, the series session focused on debt restructuring, a topic of great interest to hotels and tourism-related businesses. It is estimated that over 70 percent of Caribbean hotels are carrying some form of debt. Attendees were guided on how to effectively plan and manage the restructuring of debt to bridge both short- and long-term operational challenges.



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Next week's topics for the Phase One month-long training series covers a number of labor-related matters and is entitled "HR Strategies and Solutions to Support Business Continuity". Later, the training focus shifts to "CHTA Live: A Taste of CHIEF", a series of sessions which will highlight the virtual exchange of best practices, money-saving tools and resources, and Caribbean culinary excellence.

The Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association Education Foundation (CHTAEF) will provide short-course professional development and skills training, allowing participants to sharpen their skills in the online environment.

The "CHTA Live" training sessions help to fill the void created by the postponement of the highly anticipated Caribbean Hospitality Industry Exchange Forum (CHIEF), which was originally slated for June 26-28, 2020, in Miami. Similarly, CHTAEF had planned to continue its robust series of in-destination hospitality industry training this year.

Comito indicated that the triangular series helps to address immediate training needs of the region, while expanding the association's digital presence. "These sessions offer indispensable toolkits for the Caribbean hospitality industry as we prepare for the post-pandemic recovery," said Comito.

CHTA President and Barbados hotelier Patricia Affonso-Dass noted that the program is an extension of the monitoring, education and awareness initiatives the association has provided in the past, but comes at a critical time. "As the region grapples with COVID-19 we need to ensure that we leverage opportunities to sharpen our skills, while we allow our public health experts to help us contain the spread of coronavirus and prepare the business community to restart the economic engine of the region," she said.

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 55 years, CHTA has been the backbone of the Caribbean hospitality industry. Working with some 1,000 hotel and allied members, and 33 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.

For further information, visit www.caribbeanhotelandtourism.com.

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