



## DISCOVER DOMINICA AUTHORITY

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*For Immediate Release*

### **Community-based tours take visitors to the heart of Dominica**

**Roseau, Dominica – (June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2008)** Today's travellers are becoming less content with spending their holidays lying on the beach, preferring instead to get involved in activities that really allow them to explore or make a difference to a destination's community and *Dominica* is one such place that offers this opportunity.

The island of *Dominica* has for decades been a unique authentic Caribbean destination, leading ahead of the now popular trends in responsible tourism. The choice of community-based tourism activities through which visitors can get involved in local projects and learn more about the island's culture continues to improve and increase. The tours below are just three of the activities available this year.

#### **Turtle watching and conservation in Dominica**

Of the seven species of sea-turtles that exist worldwide, four can be seen nesting on the beaches in *Dominica*. The *Leatherback*, weighing between 1500 – 2000 lbs, the *Green Sea Turtle*, and the *Hawksbill* are most common. The *Hawksbill* lays up to 200 eggs at a time, and visitors get the opportunity to touch, photograph, measure and inspect these amazing endangered animals without causing them any harm, while they are in a deep trance during their nesting ritual.

The Dominica Sea Turtle Conservation project (DomSeTCO) gathers and provides data regarding endangered sea turtles that nest on *Dominica*, and supports local community-based research and conservation projects. DomSeTCO is continuing the work of the Rosalie Sea Turtle Initiative (RoSTI) in training a number of village residents as turtle tour guides, beach patrollers and research assistants, enlisting the assistance and support of local communities and tourists. It also runs an education programme for villagers, school children and the Dominican community to prevent poaching.

Community-run turtle-watching tours are available from March until August each year along the eastern Atlantic coast of *Dominica* – on beaches in La Plaine, Rosalie and Riviere Cyrique on the southeast and in the northeast around Marigot, Wesley and Calibishie.

[www.discoverdominica.com/site/seaturtles.cfm](http://www.discoverdominica.com/site/seaturtles.cfm) for more information

## **Touna Village Tour**

*Dominica* is home to the Caribbean's only indigenous population of Carib Indians, known as the Kalinago, many of whom live in 3,700 acres of reserved community land on the eastern side of the island. Local company Jungle Trekking Adventures and Safaris (JTAS) allows visitors to experience the traditional Kalinago way of life with a tour of the Touna Heritage Village – a small community situated in the Carib Territory. Here you will see how the Kalinago live, learn their history, try traditional bamboo basket weaving, sugar-cane juice squeezing, and discover the secrets of natural healing with a tour of the herb garden. Activities also include riding down the fresh meandering river in an inflated tyre tube, in true local tradition!

JTAS is a family-run business specialising in cultural tours of *Dominica*. Its other tours include an evening bonfire BBQ serving local food with traditional Dominican entertainment and story telling; and 'Trailing the Caribbean Pirates – The Series', its most popular outing, which visits the actual Kalinago huts used in the *Pirates of the Caribbean II* movie.

[www.experiencescaribbean.com](http://www.experiencescaribbean.com)

## **Community Garden and Creole cooking tour**

Whilst in *Dominica*, experience a community garden and Creole cooking tour with Whitchurch Tours. This tour will take you to two communities in *Dominica* – Eggleston and Giraudel, which border the "Morne Trois Pitons National Park", the Eastern Caribbean's first UNESCO World Heritage Site. Starting in the Botanical Gardens, visitors will learn about the island's tallest and most exotic trees before moving onto Eggleston to learn about the history of gardening in the community and experience traditional flower gardening. Visitors will also have opportunities to buy locally made crafts and cut flowers. The final stop on the tour is Exotica Guesthouse, where a session on Caribbean Creole cooking will take place, using freshly picked organic vegetables and fruits.

<http://www.whitchurch.com/tours.htm#tours>

For more information about these and other community-based tourism activities in *Dominica* visit [www.discoverdominica.com](http://www.discoverdominica.com)

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