

## Anguilla Gets Ready for Busiest Winter Season Ever



Donna Banks, Chairperson Anguilla Tourism Board and Stacey Liburd, Sales & Marketing MGR Quintessence Hotels.

Long known as the culinary capital of the Caribbean, Donna Banks, Chairperson of the Anguilla Tourism Board, says "it has been said that you cannot have a bad meal in Anguilla or take a bad photo."

She was in Toronto on Wednesday as part of a mission to increase awareness and encourage more visitors to the eastern Caribbean Island.

According to Banks, "2019 is set to be a record year of tourist arrivals. This year has seen a 10% increase in visitors from Canada since 2014, our highest performance year on record".

In anticipation of a record number of visitors, Anguilla has declared October to be "Excel Tourism Month," with a focus on training throughout the tourism sector to enhance service and skills across the Island.

Banks attributed the increase in tourism visitors to three factors. First, an increased public relations presence in the Canadian Market generating media awareness and some advertising campaigns where none existed before.

Secondly, Anguilla has added new content to its website and increased activity on their Twitter, Facebook and Instagram accounts. Their focus is on promoting the diversity and authenticity of the Anguilla experience, featuring cave exploration, hiking and a variety of other tour activities throughout the Island.

Thirdly, visitation has increased thanks to increased flights departing from Toronto and Montreal direct to Saint Martin (SXM). Starting Dec 12th Air Canada will begin daily flights from Toronto to Saint Martin until the spring. Westjet will be operating three flights a week out of Toronto with daily flights out of Montreal except Fridays. Sunwing and Air Transit will each operate one flight per week from Montreal and Toronto with Sunwing adding an additional weekly flight out of Toronto.

Banks was keen to remind everyone that while Anguilla offers some of the best luxury accommodations available in the Caribbean that there is a wide variety of hotel choices available to visitors, that range from the intimate and authentic all the way up to 5 star luxury hotels such as the Quintessence Hotel on Long Bay.

Before 2019 ends, Anguilla will see the opening or renovation completed on three hotel properties including the first LXR Hotels & Resorts in the Americas and Hilton's first hotel property in Anguilla. The Zemi Beach House Hotel & Spa, a 65-key beachfront hotel, opens December 2019.

Also scheduled to reopen on November 1st after extensive renovations is the Malliouhana, Auberge Resort Collection. This glamorous beachside hideaway overlooking the sugar-white sands of Meads Bay and Turtle Cove re-opens its iconic doors for the season unveiling a brand new resort that has been lovingly restored to reflect the glamour and relaxed sophistication guests have come to expect from the Auberge Resorts Collection brand.

Tranquillity Beach Anguilla on Meads Bay Beach is scheduled to open on Dec 21st and will offer guests the choice of 1 to 3 bedroom luxury resort condominiums. High end amenities will include open-plan living areas, central air-conditioning, en-suite bedrooms with elegant baths, a full kitchen, in suite washer & dryer, daily housekeeping, a private terrace with hot/cold tub, and an on-site gym. Condos are available for rent or to purchase as the resort offers a turnkey ownership and rental management program.

The Frangipani Beach Resort on Meads Bay also revealed that they have recently completed their solar panel field which allows 70 percent of the resort to be powered by solar energy, and represents the largest sustainable project in Anguilla for a boutique resort. It's just one of the many green' initiatives taken by the resort to ensure a more sustainable future for generations to come and a greener environment.

While Anguilla was focusing on a diversity of tourism offering for its visitors it is important to remember that the island nation has 33 beaches of which all are public although many are secluded and only accessible by boat or through hotel properties.