

MARTINIQUE



DON'T MISS

A friendly reception awaits guests arriving in Martinique: local musicians play lively Zouk tunes, island music that mixes calypso, reggae, and electronic.

MOUNT PELÉE

The active volcanic mountain is located on Martinique's northern end, about fifteen miles from Fort-de-France.



BALATA CHURCH

Though much smaller than the Sacré-Coeur Basilica, this is an exact replica of the Parisian masterpiece.



Martinique is a *trés magnifique* bit of France located on the southeastern edge of the Caribbean archipelago. The French language, culture, and cuisine have been adapted to the tropical surroundings, and there is something for every taste within the island's shores: sensational beaches, cultural attractions, colonial ruins, quaint seaside villages, rainforest hikes, and rum tastings. The climate is mild, the people are cool, the scenery is captivating, and the temperature is always just right. Thanks to the refreshing, steady trade winds, Martinique is a fascinating land of eternal summer.

The charming French-colonial town of Fort-de-France is easy to explore by foot. Narrow streets lined with specialty shops and restaurants lead to a wealth of discoveries like French perfumes and fashions, Creole jewelry, spices, dolls, patchwork tapestries, and rum.

Fort-de-France is also packed with cultural sightseeing attractions. The Schoelcher Library is its architectural *pièce de résistance*: a mosaic, multi-styled masterpiece built for the Paris Exposition of 1889. It was later dismantled and shipped to Martinique, where it was reassembled at its current location.

The building sits just off La Savane, the city's central park, where photo-worthy gardens double as a pleasant place to stretch the legs. For additional photo ops, check out the island's two significant statues. The first depicts



Get Ready for the Adventure

1. BEACH & SNORKELING

Discover the aquatic wonders off Martinique's coast at two distinct snorkeling sites. Paddle around the sheltered cove of Anse Dufour, spot colorful fish at Bat Cave, and relax on board with refreshments.

2. 4X4 ADVENTURE

Get off the beaten track to explore Martinique's lesser-known interior via jeep. Cross rivers, banana plantations, and the heart of the rainforest.

3. BOTANICAL GARDEN WITH SUSPENSION BRIDGE

Delight in Fort-de-France's natural splendors on a guided tour of its lush botanical gardens, complete with an elevated suspension bridge.

SHORE EXCURSIONS
DELIVERING THE DESTINATION™

Empress Josephine, the wife of Napoléon Bonaparte; the other memorializes the French nobleman Pierre Bélain, Sieur d'Esnameuc, who claimed Martinique for France in 1635.

Venture a few miles north of the capital to Balata Church. It is an exact replica of the Sacré-Coeur Basilica, albeit one-fifth the size of Parisian original. The wedding-cake-like structure sits atop a cliff, affording spectacular views of Fort-de-France and the bay.

Martinique's 425 square miles offer diverse terrain and profuse vegetation to satisfy all sorts of nature enthusiasts. The northern tip of the island is characterized by verdant mountains, dense forests, and black-sand beaches, which combine for an explosion of color. At 4,583 feet tall, Mount Pelée, an active volcano that last erupted in 1932, is the island's highest peak.

At the foot of the mountain, the Depaz Estate distills fresh-cut sugarcane juice into *rum agricole*, the distinctive local style of rum. Reward your palate with a tasting.

From the island's center, a gentle landscape of rolling hills leads to the southern coastline dotted with calm turquoise bays and coves. Swimmers and snorkelers alike appreciate the secluded, lagoon-like atmosphere created by the warm, calm, and translucent waters lapping at the shore. ■

The fishing village of Grand Riviere is hugged by coastal cliffs.

