

2016



REMARKS

**Tourism Development Company Limited
of Trinidad and Tobago**

**STAR Tourism Caravan
Brian Lara Promenade, Port of Spain
July 1st 2016 @ 2:00pm**

- **His Worship Keron Valentine, Mayor of Port of Spain**
- **Mr. Gregory Aboud, President of the Downtown Owners and Merchants Association (DOMA)**
- **Officials of the TDC and the Ministry of Tourism**
- **Members of Tourism Stakeholder Organisations**
- **Members of the media**
- **Ladies, gentlemen and children**

Good afternoon.

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the STAR Tourism Caravan as it rolls into our vibrant capital city of Port of Spain. The urban Trini experience does not get more authentic than this – *liming* downtown on a Friday afternoon – and we're very excited to be here.^[MV1]

The Tourism Development Company (TDC) is hosting this caravan to increase awareness of the importance of providing excellent



service and to sensitize the public on the potential economic impact of the tourism industry and the many other benefits of tourism.

Trinidad and Tobago's tourism sector, is currently responsible for the employment of approximately 27,000 persons, a figure that will continue to increase as the sector grows. In fact, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council, 1 in 11 jobs on this planet is in tourism, and the industry is predicted to grow by 4% annually.

These conditions are favourable for us in Trinidad and Tobago as we work towards expanding our tourism sector. Our dual-island destination has many unique, exciting attractions, activities and experiences to offer visitors. In fact, several of our sites, attractions and activities are found right here in Port of Spain - the business capital of the southern Caribbean. With incredible downtown bargain shopping, museums and monuments of our heritage, hotels, restaurants and nightlife and public transportation hubs, the capital city is an important feature of the tourist

experience and is a major hub for Cruise Ship passengers during the Cruise Season. For this reason, we found it fitting that Port of Spain should be one of our key Caravan stops. [MV2]

As one of the fastest growing industries globally, tourism is much more than hotels, beaches and tour guides. Customer service can make or break the visitor's overall travel experience and a negative experience can greatly impact a country's tourism industry and overall reputation.

In this regard, one area of major importance to us is customer service. There is the generally held belief that we are not customer-service oriented in Trinidad and Tobago. Through STAR, which stands for Service, Training, Attitude and Respect, the TDC is on a mission to transform customer service in Trinidad and Tobago, by undertaking organisation intervention initiatives and training within tourism-relevant businesses.



As the development of the tourism industry forms part of government's thrust towards economic diversification, the TDC is also working with our stakeholders to develop our traditional tourism products, to cultivate new and innovative tourism products and services and to ensure that they meet international standards.

Several of our stakeholders representing the different elements of tourism – accommodation providers, tour operators, and sites and attractions; are here with us this afternoon, eager to share their knowledge about tourism and their role in the sector. So I invite you to visit each one and be sure to test your knowledge on the industry by participating in our quizzes to win fun prizes at the end of the caravan.

For those of you interested in a career in tourism, we also have the Trinidad and Tobago Hotel and Tourism Institute here to offer career guidance and advice.



As I close, remember that regardless of whether or not we actually work in the industry directly, we are all tourism ambassadors for Trinidad and Tobago. We have excellent opportunities to practice our ambassadorship in our day to day interactions on the street and in our jobs, in how we treat our environment and in how we portray our country. For those that are gathered here this afternoon let's use every opportunity we have to share the best that our destination has to offer to the world at large.

Thank you.