



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

30th Edition of the Martinique Yoles Boat Race Tour from July 27 to August 3, 2014.

Festivities are to the Caribbean as fish are to the sea – one simply cannot exist without the other. In Martinique, the analogy is taken one step further when “la fête” and sea are brought together for a celebration unlike any other, the famed Yoles Boat Race (Tour des Yoles Rondes). A yearly highlight of the Martinican social calendar, the Martinique Yoles Boat Race Tour will celebrate its 30th edition between July 27 and August 3 2014, literally encircling the Isle of Flowers with the boundless spirit of carnival, replete with pulsating rhythms, prodigious libations and nonstop parties.

“This is a uniquely Martinican cultural event that gives a wonderful expression of our seafaring past and the importance that the daily catch still holds in our society today,” said Muriel Wiltord, director of the Americas for the Martinique Promotion Bureau/CMT USA. “At the same time, it’s a great party with daily celebrations across the island open to all.”

Yole boats featured in the race are constructed with painstaking detail in the grand tradition of Martinican fishing vessels initially developed by local craftsmen in the 70’s. Each vessel flies brightly colored rectangular sails over rounded canoe-like wooden hulls made from local pear trees. As distinctive in style as they are challenging to sail, quick and agile yawl boats test the mettle of even the most experienced sailors; their rounded hulls ensuring an instant capsize if ever the vessels should come to a stop at sea.

Teams representing various towns across Martinique compete alongside international competitors from neighboring islands. Visitors and locals turn out by the thousands each day of the race to offer vociferous support and enjoy the festivities.

As is the case with traditional land-based carnival celebrations, the Yole Boat Race is a spectacle of color. Each vessel is brightly festooned for the occasion with crewmembers sporting matching corporate-sponsored race-wear akin to that of a Formula One race team. Carnival-style celebrations punctuate each day’s victory with the largest spectacle reserved for the race finale and the crowning of the overall winner.

Throughout the race, the party extends to the high seas where hundreds of yachts, catamarans, speedboats, and other private vessels trail the racers, partying along the way. Charter boat operators offer affordable race packages, including meals, excursions to secluded beaches and more, enabling visitors to experience the race up-close and at sea.

About Martinique (www.martinique.org)

*The Caribbean island with French flair, The Isle of Flowers, The Rum Capital of the World, The Isle of the Famed Poet (Aimé Césaire) – by any one of its many names Martinique remains one of the most alluring and enchanting destinations in the world. It was named “Top Caribbean Island for Delectable Dining” in 2009 by *Caribbean Travel + Life*, and “Best Caribbean Destination” (2010) by About.com. The bay of Fort-de-France, the capital city, is among the most beautiful bays of the world. Martinique is an overseas region of France that stirs the passions with distinctive culinary delights, awe-inspiring natural beauty, a rich cultural history, warm smiles and so much more. Napoleon’s bride, Empress Josephine, was born and raised in Martinique. The Majestic Mt. Pelée volcano and St. Pierre, The Pompeii of the Caribbean are found here. Martinique also offers a dynamic art scene and a wide array of local products. A special place, to be sure, with so much to offer – Martinique c’est magnifique!*