



SAINT LUCIA ANNOUNCES PLAN FOR REOPENING OF TOURISM SECTOR ON JUNE 4

Destination Announces Phased Approach, Planned Protocols and COVID-19 Certification for Hotels

CASTRIES, SAINT LUCIA (May 18, 2020) – The Government of Saint Lucia has announced a phased approach to reopening the island’s tourism sector in a responsible manner, beginning June 4, 2020.

The strategy, which was unveiled by Minister of Tourism Dominic Fedee, protects nationals and visitors from the threat of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) through advance testing; daily screening and monitoring of staff and visitors; sanitisation at various points throughout the travellers’ journey; and new social distancing protocols.

Phase One of the reopening includes welcoming international flights at Hewanorra International Airport (UVF) from the United States only. Travellers are advised to check with airlines regarding flight schedules and rules prior to booking. In anticipation of these first visitors, some 1,500 hotel rooms in Saint Lucia are being prepared to open in early June, pending completion of a new COVID-19 certification process.

To protect residents and mitigate the spread of the novel coronavirus, Saint Lucia closed its borders to international markets on March 23, 2020. Since then, the island has followed safety protocols recommended by the World Health Organisation and the Caribbean Public Health Agency, collaborated with the local Department of Health and Wellness, observed shelter-in-place guidelines, and created a COVID-19 Task Force to plan for a responsible reopening. To date, Saint Lucia has recorded 18 cases of COVID-19, and all individuals have fully recovered. No active cases are currently being investigated.

Minister Fedee said the phased approach to reopening, which continues through July 31, 2020, resulted from national COVID-19 Task Force consultations with on-island industry stakeholders.

New procedures span from the hotel booking process to the airport arrival and hotel experience in Saint Lucia. Protocols include:

- Visitors are required to present certified proof of a negative COVID-19 test, taken within 48 hours of boarding their flight.
- Upon arrival in Saint Lucia, all travellers must continue the use of face masks and physical distancing.

- Travellers will be subject to screening and temperature checks by port health authorities.
- Protocols are being established for taxis, to provide safety precautions and separate the driver from guests as an added security measure.
- Health and safety protocols will be reinforced through the use of signage that includes QR codes which take travellers to a landing page for more information.

To further ensure that Saint Lucia remains a safe and responsible destination, the government is developing a COVID-19 Certificate for hotels. Hotels must meet a dozen or more specific criteria for sanitisation, social distancing and other COVID-19 protocols before they will be permitted to open to guests. These measures will enhance protection of visitors, staff and Saint Lucian nationals.

In Phase One, the traditional experiences that Saint Lucia is known for will be available in a limited capacity. Registered hotels and travel providers will work with visitors directly to arrange safe experiences.

“Our new protocols have been carefully crafted and will build confidence among travellers and our citizens,” stated the Honourable Dominic Fedee. He noted, “The Government of Saint Lucia remains resolved to protect both lives and livelihoods as it jumpstarts its economy.”

Phase Two of the island’s new responsible approach to tourism will commence on August 1, 2020, with details to be revealed in the weeks ahead.

More information about Saint Lucia’s COVID-19 response can be found at www.stlucia.org/covid-19.

ABOUT SAINT LUCIA: One of the Windward Islands of the West Indies’ Lesser Antilles, Saint Lucia is nestled halfway down the Eastern Caribbean archipelago. Saint Lucia is known for its natural beauty and diverse attractions, including the signature Piton Mountains (a UNESCO World Heritage Site), a tropical rainforest, the highly-Instagrammed mud baths at Sulphur Springs Park and one of the world’s few drive-in volcanoes. Culturally rich offerings include the bustling marketplace in the capital of Castries, quaint coastline fishing villages and a robust calendar of annual events that attract visitors from around the globe. Saint Lucia's wide range of accommodations includes five-star hotels, all-inclusive resorts, intimate inns and value-oriented properties. The destination also offers world-class cruise and yachting facilities. The island is continually recognized as one of the leading wedding and honeymoon destinations worldwide. The Saint Lucia Tourism Authority is the official destination marketing and promotion organization for Saint Lucia. Learn more at www.stlucia.org