



# INSIGHT

**THE ST. VINCENT AND GRENADINES ASSOCIATION OF TORONTO INC. (SVGAT)**

P. O. Box 80066 – Don Valley Village P. O., Toronto, ON, M2J 0A1 Email: [svgat@vincytoronto.com](mailto:svgat@vincytoronto.com)

**KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY INFORMED THROUGH COMMUNICATION**

**Quarterly Newsletter**

**NEW YEAR ISSUE**

**January 2023**

## GREETINGS FROM NEW PRESIDENT

With great pleasure and gratitude, I thank the members of the St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc. (SVGAT) for electing me to serve as President for 2023. I thank the outgoing Board members for bringing the organization through a challenging year. I look forward to working with the newly elected Board as we collaborate to move the organization forward. I promise to work diligently with our members to create a solid and united SVGAT. I desire to serve with purpose and dignity.

I am proud of our Corporation's successes over the years, particularly the Adopt-A-Child program, which provides financial support to elementary school children in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the Scholarship program, which provides a bursary to post-secondary students in Canada, the less fortunate families that we assist at Christmas time and most recently, our donation to a family in St. Vincent and the Grenadines to help with rebuilding their home which was damaged by the recent eruption of La Soufrière Volcano. But, of course, we could not have done any of this without the support of our members and the wider community.

We have a lot of work ahead of us as we try to recover from the past three years of limited in-person activities due to the pandemic. So, this is the time for every member to come to the table prepared to share insights and expertise on transforming the organization in the post-pandemic era.

The members of the Board of Directors and I look forward to the participation of every member and seeing all of our members in person for the first time in 3 years.

I am very inspired for the coming year, and I hope you all are too. So, let's put all hands on deck and move SVGAT forward.

*Cordell Telfer*

## Corporation News

### SVGAT 2023 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Association was held on Sunday, January 29, 2023 virtually, which had an attendance of just over 30 members and guests. Reports of activities from the previous year were presented and there were elections for a new president and eight board members.

The outgoing board reported among other things that it agreed to assist Ms. Laverne John of Owia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines with the repair of her house which was damaged by the La Soufrière Volcano eruptions with the amount of CDN\$5,000.00. The funds were donated to the Corporation as part of the relief efforts coordinated by the various groups and the Consulate in 2021. Thanks to Malcolm Garraway, Erline Granderson and Jim Lewis for their efforts on this project.

The report noted that although there were numerous changes of personnel on the board during the year including the resignation of the president and treasurer the year ended on a positive note.

Mr. Kenneth Farrell who served as president for the latter part of the year thanked all board members who supported him and did their best to served the Corporation and the community. He also thanked the members for their contribution to the events that were undertaken.

The Corporation, with the assistance of Grace Foods Canada was able to provide the customary Christmas hampers to three families at Christmas.

Following the AGM, the new board held its first meeting and officers were elected from among board members.

### **Current Board of Directors and Officers include:**

President & Director: Cordel Telfer (647-717-7390)

Vice Pres. & Director: Dennis Bucchan (416-402-1968)

Secretary & Director: Prudence Morton (416-254-3774)

Treasurer & Director: Delcina Jardine-Reckley (647-464-3355)

P.R.O & Director: Gideon Exeter (416-992-4253)

Director: Erline Granderson (416-788-5163)

Director: Kenneth Farrell (416-822-3601)

Director: Francine Burke (647-772-3683)

Director: Jim Lewis (416-459-2462)

### **CHANGES TO MEMBERS' MEETINGS**

The outgoing board of directors announced the effective in January 2023 the monthly members meetings will be discontinued and instead members meetings will be held on alternate months in March, May, July, September and November. Special programs and discussions will take place at the other months community get together.

### **TENTATIVE 2023 CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

Sunday, Feb. 26 – Presentation on Cyber Security

Sunday, Mar. 26 Monthly Members Meeting

Sunday, May 28 Monthly Members Meeting

Saturday, July 15 SVG Unity Picnic Crysler Park,

Sunday, July 30 Monthly Members Meeting

Friday, Aug. 11 Joint Toronto Harbour Boat Cruise

Sunday, Sept. 24 Monthly Members Meeting

Sunday, Oct. 22 Independence Church Service

Saturday, Oct. 28 Independence Gala

Sunday, Nov. 26 Monthly Members

December 17 to 23 Christmas Hamper Distribution

*Meetings and other presentations are being held virtually on Zoom unless otherwise indicated.*

### **INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY ACTIVITIES**

In conjunction with the SVG Consulate General in Toronto, the Bequia Social Organization, the Toronto SVG Support Group and CARI-ON SVG Disaster Preparedness, the Corporation coordinated a number of events to mark SVG's 42nd anniversary of Independence in October 2022. Special thanks to all who made these events possible and memorable.

Now that restrictions are being relaxed from the treat of COVID-19, plans are being put in place to have the usual events in 2023. Stay tuned for info.

## **SAVE THE DATE**



### **104<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebrations**

A number of special friends of Mrs. Clotilda Edwards as she celebrated her 104<sup>th</sup> birthday last December. Mrs. Edwards is the oldest known SVG national currently residing in Toronto. She has been living in Toronto since xxxx. Some members of the Corporation attended.

### **ADOPT-A-CHILD PROGRAM**

The current cycle of the Adopt-A-Child Program that began in 2019 ends in 2023. The SVGAT will be looking for persons to sponsor new students for another 5-year period.

The program began in 2008 in which less fortunate students in their second year in primary schools in St. Vincent and the Grenadines are sponsored to assist them financially in their quest for a good foundation in their early years. The cost is CDN\$600.00 per year for 5 years. To learn more about the program, please visit [St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto - Adopt A Child \(vincyt-onto.com\)](http://St.VincentandGrenadinesAssociationofToronto-AdoptAChild(vincyt-onto.com)). If you are interested in sponsoring student, please contact any member of the board of directors.

The students in this cycle of sponsorship are attending the Buccament Government School, Calliaqua Anglican School, Lauders Primary School, Lodge Village Government, Marriaqua Government School and Bequia Seventh Day Adventist School.



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**Mr. Fitzgerald Huggins**  
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## DISASTER RELIEF CONTINUES

CARI-ON SVG Disaster Preparedness along with the St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto, the Toronto SVG Support Group and the SVG Consulate continue to support the relief efforts in St. Vincent and the Grenadines as a result of the La Soufriere Volcano eruptions and COVID-19.

Assistance was recently provided to vulnerable families living in the Red Zone to help with home rebuilding and assistance with school expenses for students who are attending the SVG Community College.

An event to thank Canadians for their support and response to the disasters is being planned for April which will mark the second anniversary of the eruptions.

**Thanks to all who supported the work and activities of the SVGAT in 2022.**

# IMMIGRATION MATTERS

## FOREIGN WORKERS NEEDED TO FILL LABOUR MARKET SHORTAGES

Contributed by: Sandra Sutherland, RCIC

Reports express that Canada is facing labour shortages due to an aging population, declining birth rates, and the need for workers in some high demand sectors (i.e.: accommodation, food services, skilled trades, information technology and health care). Canada's Immigration Minister announced that bringing more working age immigrants into the country could help to solve labour shortages. This means that there will be more opportunities for foreign nationals to obtain a work permit and work in Canada.

In June 2022, Statistics Canada released an analysis on labour challenges in Canada which listed key industries that are expected to face labour shortages. Industries such as accommodation and food services, construction, manufacturing, retail trade, health care and social assistance, agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting are identified as those with the highest expected shortage of labour force. A more comprehensive list of industries can be found at [Analysis on labour challenges in Canada, second quarter of 2022 \(statcan.gc.ca\)](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/92-621-x/2022001/article/00001-eng.htm). Employers in such industries are likely to turn to recruiting foreign workers to fill labour shortages

Foreign workers come from different backgrounds with different perspectives, skill sets, experience, etc. It is a viable decision for business to hire foreign workers as they are likely to benefit from a more diverse work force. Foreign workers are likely to contribute their diverse innovative ideas in enhancing or creating products and services that could help companies to capitalize on a larger market share through broader market appeal. Through the **Temporary Foreign Workers Program**, the **Global Talent Stream** and through the **Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA)** process employers can obtain authorization to hire foreign workers to fill temporary jobs if they are unable to recruit qualified Canadians.

An occupations list for the Global Talent Stream can be found towards the bottom of the following

link <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/foreign-workers/global-talent/requirements.html#h1>. Occupations such as nurses, health care aides, long-term care aides, hospital attendants, caregivers (for children, seniors and persons with disability or medical needs), transport truck drivers, IT specialists, teacher assistants (at elementary and secondary school), heavy equipment operators and other skilled trades persons are in demand.

Foreign workers in the agriculture and agri-food occupations are also sought after. Caribbean nationals are frequently recruited through the **Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP)** (a.k.a. the Farm Workers Program).

So, how can a foreign national, especially Caribbean nationals, obtain a work permit to work in Canada? The usual practice is to seek employment opportunities, secure a job offer, then apply for a work permit. This may sound simple but the processes for each of these stages are very detailed. In most cases employers need to apply for an LMIA through Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) before they can offer

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jobs to foreign candidates. Once the LMIA is approved the employer can then provide a job offer to the qualified foreign candidate. The foreign



candidate may then use that job offer to apply for a work permit. The following is the official link to the government of Canada's website which provides information about the work permit process and eligibility criteria

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/work-canada/permit/temporary/work-permit.html>. It was recently announced that, starting in January 2023, most high skilled foreign nationals who are granted a work permit would be able to bring their immediate family members with them. Accompanying adult family members could also obtain a work permit.

Immigrating to Canada as a worker is not for anyone who is just hoping to find a job in Canada and come to stay. Being qualified in a demand occupation or one where labour shortages exist is very important. As noted, getting a job offer is a crucial first step to getting a work permit to work in Canada. Family, friends and other networking contacts in Canada can be of great assistance in connecting with potential employers who may be in a position to offer a job to a foreign candidate. Websites such as <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/home>, [Find a job - Canada.ca](#) and [Look for jobs in Canada - Canada.ca](#) are good reputable resources.

Many youths (age 18 to 35) from the Caribbean immigrate as international students and, upon completion of studies and if they qualify, they can obtain a Post Graduate Work Permit (PGWP). This is another means of obtaining a work permit and gaining Canadian experience. In many cases, 12 months of full time Canadian skilled work experience in certain occupations, could enable some foreign workers to meet the eligibility criteria to apply for permanent residence under the Express Entry category, a Provincial Nominee Program (PNP), the Atlantic Immigrant Program (AIP), the Agri-Food Pilot Program (<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/agri-food-pilot/about.html>), the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot program (<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/rural-northern-immigration-pilot.html>) or other available programs. Visit the Government of Canada website

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/operational-bulletins-manuals/permanent-residence.html> to learn more about these and other programs. **Note:** [www.Canada.ca](http://www.Canada.ca) is the government of Canada's official website. Be cognizant of companies that use Canada and/or Canadian immigration in their domain name to attract people to their website and solicit them for paid immigration services.

It is my hope that a larger volume of Caribbean nationals will be fortunate enough to obtain work permits and immigrate to Canada (even on a temporary basis) and fill our labour shortages as this could be an important step towards potentially obtaining permanent resident status.

**Sandra Sutherland is a Licensed, Authorized Immigration Representative and Counsel.** She specializes strictly in immigration and refugee matters and is licensed with the College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants (CICC) as a Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant (RCIC). She can be reached at (416) 431-2829 or via e-mail at [ssutherland@suthernimmigration.com](mailto:ssutherland@suthernimmigration.com). View her advertisement under *Suthern Immigration & Paralegal Services Inc.*



## MEMBERSHIP HAS ITS REWARDS

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Through **Arbor Foundation**, the CCAC and its affiliates receive special funding for its programs and activities. For further information, please visit any of the websites listed below or contact Gideon Exeter at 416-992-4253 or by email at [gexeter@arbormemorial.com](mailto:gexeter@arbormemorial.com)



in this publication for more information.

## Are you concerned about Fraud Prevention?

Join our presentation on Sunday, February 26 to participate in the following:

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- investment fraud prevention
- working with a financial representative

### Preparing Your Financial Umbrella

- preparing for unexpected expense
- developing an estate plan

### Fraud & ID Theft

- common frauds and scams
- warning signs, what to do if you suspect fraud and resources

The St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto invites you to join a virtual presentation on fraud prevention and how to protect yourself on **Sunday, February 26 @ 4:00 p.m.** Join by clicking on the below link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84284320907?pwd=UGlrZ3hVQWZucmtETVA2WXpsVjRWUT09>

Presented by Christine Allum, Senior Advisor, Ontario Securities Commission.

Research Scientist with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources before starting his career at Seneca. His father was a headmaster in their native St. Vincent when Larry was a youngster.

As the only Biochemist then in Seneca College's Department of Biochemistry, (the other faculty members were chemists and biologists), he co-founded the Seneca Association of Black Educators (SABE) in the late 1980s. The formation of SABE stands out among his career highlights at Seneca. He held several positions at Seneca, including Director of Academic Projects and Special Assistant to President Quinlan.

"The organization became so powerful to the point where we approached every Black faculty member to join," he said. "I remember speaking to a guy from Egypt who said he did not consider himself to be Black and he would not be part of the group. He was later fired and when he approached the union, they told him the only ones that could help him was SABE. We had access to the President and the Board of Governors."

Larry has published several articles in Biochemistry and is currently an author of two textbooks: Mathematics of business and Finance (4<sup>th</sup> edition) and Mathematics of Finance (4<sup>th</sup> Edition).

In retirement, Daisley and his wife – Marcia Daisley is a retired bankruptcy administrator – plan to travel. They have two children.

Sometimes, we do small things without realizing what impact it would have later. On his way out of Seneca, Mr. Daisley created a link between his former employer and the Council of Caribbean Associations-Canada (CCAC) which has resulted in Seneca sponsoring a fully tuition paid scholarship with the CCAC for students of Caribbean descent to study at Seneca for up to 4 years. In the 1980's Mr. Daisley was an executive member of the St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto, which is one of the affiliates of the CCAC.

The Board of Directors thanks professor Daisley for creating this opportunity and the CCAC for seizing the chance. We wish the professor well in his retirement.

## Professor Larry Daisley Retires



Professor St. Laurent 'Larry' Daisley retired from Seneca College after 37 years. It was also five decades since he left St. Vincent & the Grenadines to pursue higher education in Canada.

Encouraged by an older brother to leave his teaching job in the Caribbean and complete higher education in Canada, Daisley acquiesced and arrived in Montreal in October 1972.

Daisley studied Biochemistry at McGill and Concordia Universities before pursuing graduate studies in Biochemistry at Queen's University in Ontario. He later moved to Toronto and was a

# News From SVG

## ***SVG Assumes the Presidency of CELAC***

St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) was on January 23, 2023 elected to occupy the rotating presidency of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) in 2023.

The day saw the transfer of the pro tempore presidency CELAC from Argentine President Alberto Fernández to Ralph Gonsalves, the Prime Minister of St Vincent and the Grenadines, who assumed office for the years 2023–2024.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines is one of the smallest countries in this organization and over the years, has collaborated with CELAC. Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves attended the plenary session of the organization's VII Summit of Heads of State and Government in Buenos Aires where the election took place.

PM Gonsalves expressed his pride in his nation serving as the first president of the Caribbean Community (Caricom). He noted that he would try to “capitalize on the wonderful work done by Mexico and Argentina,” the past two nations to preside over CELAC, and added, “We are going to work very closely with all the governments.”

CELAC is a regional bloc of Latin American and Caribbean states created on December 3, 2011, in Caracas, Venezuela, with the signature of The Declaration of Caracas as a way for countries in the region to work together and become more economically stable.

It is an intergovernmental mechanism for dialogue and political agreement, which includes permanently thirty-three countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. It is a regional forum that brings together all of Latin America and the Caribbean countries. CELAC aspires to be a unique voice and structured decision-making policy decisions in the political and cooperation in support of regional integration programs.

It was created with a commitment to advance the gradual process of regional integration, unity and carefully balancing political, economic, social and cultural diversity of Latin America and the Caribbean of 650 million people.

Since its launch in December 2011, the CELAC has helped to deepen respectful dialogue among all countries in the region in areas such as social development, education, nuclear disarmament, family farming, culture, finance, energy and the environment.

Regarding the representation of Latin America and the Caribbean, CELAC takes its faculties to act as spokesman for the Community with other countries and regional blocs. This includes the CELAC dialogue with the European Union, China, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Korea, the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, Turkey and Japan.

Former Minister of Foreign Affairs and Health, Dr. Douglas Slater will head the CELAC secretariat in Kingstown, Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves has announced, reiterating that his government will approach the pro tempore presidency “in an inclusive manner” involving other CARICOM nations.

In commenting on the occasion, Leader of the Opposition Godwin Friday said that he hopes that St. Vincent and the Grenadines has a successful presidency of CELAC and that participation in these blocs should bring political or economic benefit to the country.

Dr. Friday said the country has to ensure that whatever benefits are derived from the pro tempore presidency is “for the people of St Vincent and the Grenadines; not as some badge to pin on the chest of any single person”.

*The Public Relations Committee that is responsible for producing Insight on behalf of the Corporation is inviting interested persons to submit articles and stories that they feel would be of interest to our readers. Please send by email to “pro@vincytoronto.com”*

## SVG Government To Purchase Prefab Houses From Guyana



The Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines has signed an EC\$6 million loan arrangement with Demerara Bank Ltd. (Guyana) for the purchase of 50 prefabricated houses from Guyana.

The prefabricated houses, built by Duravilla Homes, a company in Guyana, consist of one-, two- and three-bedroom models, and are engineered to withstand up to category 4 hurricanes.

The government has identified Orange Hill, Sandy Bay, Langley Park as well as Colonarie on the Windward side and Cumberland in the North Leeward constituency where these houses can be built.

The houses are expected to be delivered in March, 2023 as part of the government's efforts to rebuild and repair communities that were devastated by the eruption of the La Soufriere volcano in 2021.

Speaking at the signing ceremony on Friday in Kingstown, Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves said the agreement marks an important moment in regional integration. "We do not know of any other case in the Caribbean where a government, in financing an aspect of its public sector investment programme, borrowed money from a bank, a commercial bank, in Guyana and also an indigenous bank in Guyana."

Gonsalves along with Deputy Prime Minister Montgomery Daniel, who is area representative for North Windward where most of the houses will be built and Dr. Orlando Brewster, the Minister of Housing are satisfied that the houses are of good quality and durability and that soon personnel from Duravilla, the Guyana company producing them, will visit St. Vincent to aid in the assembling of the houses as well as train local artisans in the process.

Gonsalves noted that Guyana is a country with immense natural resources and continues to make significant contributions to the Caribbean community.

So far, the government has rebuilt and or refurbished over 900 houses.

### IMPORTANT NOTICE TO SVGAT MEMBERS

Please note that according to the by-laws of the Corporation, persons who paid their annual dues in 2022 are deemed financial up to March 31, 2023 (Grace Period) and need to renew their membership by paying the determined fee of \$20.00. For persons who did not renew their membership prior to March 31 their membership would automatically be lapsed and they would therefore need to re-apply for membership by completing the appropriate form.

### E.B. John Bursary Established in SVG



The Toronto SVG Support Group that was founded by the late Evans Bernard John, fondly named E.B. John has established a bursary program in St. Vincent and the Grenadines in honour of the group's founder who passed on August 19, 2020 while he was visiting his birthland.

E. B. John was considered as one of those who contributed significantly to the development of radio in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. He also served as St. Vincent and the Grenadines Consul General in Toronto and later as the Liaison Officer for the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Farm Workers Program in Canada.

The bursaries, each of a value of EC\$ 2000.00, were sponsored by the Lions Club South SVG in partnership with the SVG Toronto Support Group were this year awarded to Sean Frederick, Deona



Nero and Debra Scipio, three Vincentian students currently pursuing studies at the University of the West Indies (UWI) Open campus.

John, who began his broadcast journey at the National Broadcasting Corporation/Radio 705, moved through the ranks of that institution from broadcaster to General Manager before leaving his birthland to take on duties on behalf of St. Vincent and the Grenadines in Canada.

The Toronto SVG Support Group which was established in 2012 started the bursary program in 2022 when it awarded its first bursary. The bursaries are for persons pursuing studies in Media Communication and related fields.

## InterCaribbean Expands Flights to Three New Destinations

INTERCARIBBEAN AIRWAYS, a privately-owned and operated airline, headquartered in Turks and Caicos has announced the addition of two aircraft to its fleet and an expanded flight schedule to service Antigua, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Saint Lucia, and St Vincent and the Grenadines beginning March 2023.



The company operates EMB145 50-seat jets, ATR42 48-seat turbo-props, EMB

120 30-seat Turbo Prop and 19-seat Twin Otter aircraft.

With a network spanning from Georgetown Guyana in the south, Barbados to the east, Havana, Cuba to the west and Nassau, Bahamas to the north, InterCaribbean connects 28 cities across 17 countries in the Caribbean.

With this expanded fleet, InterCaribbean now offers travellers enhanced schedule options and improved intra-regional travel with greater connectivity among the islands.

Flights to and from Barbados will double, with more flights going non-stop to St Vincent and Grenada offering greater availability to these destinations, the release issued from the carrier's Turks and Caicos base states.

InterCaribbean says it is also launching new non-stop flights between St Vincent and St Lucia to give fast connections between these two destinations.

The extended schedule now links the Eastern and Western Caribbean with a twice weekly service from Georgetown and Barbados via Antigua to Providenciales, (Turks and Caicos), connecting onwards to Nassau, Bahamas, Havana, Cuba and Kingston, Jamaica.

### CORPORATION BY-LAWS

*On February 2, 2013 The St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc. enacted the Ontario Non-Profit Corporation By-Law 1 which replaced the Constitution by which the Association was governed. Please visit the Corporation's website [www.vincytoronto.com](http://www.vincytoronto.com) and click on the About Us page or click on the link [St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto - By-Laws \(vincytoronto.com\)](http://www.vincytoronto.com) to take you directly to read the by-law and acquaint yourself.*

## How Well Do You Know The Caribbean?

Just when you think you knew the Caribbean...there's something new to discover. How many of these interesting facts about the Caribbean did you already know? Here are 8 strange but totally awesome facts that will make you want to pack your bags and head to the Caribbean faster than you can say "coconuts"!

### 1. Only about 2% of Caribbean islands are actually inhabited.

There are thousands of Caribbean islands— at least 7,000 to be exact. However, most are uninhabited. There are 28 Caribbean nations— 13 sovereign countries and 12 dependent territories. As of 2019, about 44 million people live in the Caribbean region.

## **2. 75% of the Caribbean population lives on just two (2) islands.**

Most of the population of the Caribbean lives in the Dominican Republic, Cuba, and Haiti. Since Haiti and the Dominican Republic share the island of Hispaniola, that means that 75% of Caribbeans (about 30 million people) live on just 2 islands.

## **3. The first place Columbus set foot upon in the New World was a Caribbean island.**

Contrary to popular thought, Columbus didn't "discover" America. Plenty of people already lived there. In addition, he never actually went to North America. During his four voyages to the New World, he visited several Caribbean islands. The first was San Salvador, now part of the modern-day Bahamas. He also explored the coasts of Central and South America. Furthermore, Columbus mistakenly called the Caribbean the "Indies", thinking he had reached the East Indies. The region is sometimes referred to as the "West Indies" today.

## **4. The Caribbean is divided into 4 island groups.**

The Caribbean islands are divided into four groups according to their general location. These four island groups are as follows: the Greater Antilles, Leeward Islands, Leeward Antilles and the Windward Islands. Here are the Caribbean countries that belong to each group:

**The Greater Antilles:** Cayman Islands, Cuba, Haiti, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Puerto Rico and Trinidad & Tobago.

**The Leeward Islands:** Anguilla, Antigua & Barbuda, British Virgin Islands, Guadeloupe, Montserrat, Saint Martin, Saba, Saint Eustatius, Saint Barthelémy, Saint Kitts & Nevis, and U.S. Virgin Islands.

**The Leeward Antilles (also known as the ABC islands):** Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao.

**The Windward Islands:** Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Martinique, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent & The Grenadines.

## **5. Some Caribbean countries are not islands.**

For a country to be considered "Caribbean", it must have a coast on the Caribbean Sea or be associated with the Caribbean region through its cultural or political history. Because of this, Belize, Suriname,

and Guyana are technically located in South America, but consider themselves Caribbean countries. In addition, Venezuela is a member of CARICOM, a Caribbean community established in 1972 to promote cooperation between Caribbean countries. Guyana, Venezuela, and Belize are also current members of the [Caribbean Tourism Organization](#).

## **6. The most widely spoken language in the Caribbean isn't English.**

According to a 2001 census, 62% of Caribbean inhabitants speak Spanish as their first language. Only about 15% speak English. However, you'll probably hear at least basic English in areas that are popular with tourists. This is because English is the unofficial "language of tourism". In addition, the overwhelming majority of visitors that the Caribbean receives each year are from the U.S.A.

## **7. The Caribbean is home to active volcanoes.**

One of the most overlooked facts about the Caribbean is that it is home to many active volcanoes. Although many people associate volcanic activity with Pacific islands, there are plenty of volcanoes in the Caribbean, both active and dormant. In fact, Soufriere Hills in Montserrat is one of the most active volcanoes in the entire world. Most Caribbean volcanoes lie in the Lesser Antilles. There are five on Dominica, four in Grenada, and four in Saint Lucia. In total, there are 19 live volcanoes in the Caribbean. "Live" does not necessarily mean that they currently erupt with any frequency, but rather that they are likely to erupt again at some point. La Soufriere in St. Vincent and the Grenadines last erupted in April 2021.

## **8. The Caribbean boasts both pink and black sand beaches.**

Pink and black sand? How is that even possible? Pink sand comes from tiny broken pieces of coral and shells, and calcium carbonate particles left by foraminifera. Foraminifera are microscopic red and pink shelled organisms that live in surrounding coral reefs. There are several incredible [pink sand beaches](#) in various Caribbean countries. On the other hand, black sand is formed from volcanic activity. Although black sand is incredibly striking, it tends to get a bit hotter than light-colored sand. You can find [black sand beaches](#) on the Caribbean islands on which volcanoes are located.

**Non-stop Flights to/from St. Vincent and the Grenadines**

**Air Canada Schedule:**

**Twice weekly** – Tuesdays and Fridays **from Feb 14 to Mar 31.**

**Once weekly** – Tuesdays **from April 3 to 25.**

**Twice weekly** – Wednesdays and Thursdays **from May 3, 2023**

**2023 Upcoming Events In SVG**

National Heroes Day - Mar 14

Union Island Easterval - Apr 2 -10

Bequia Regatta Apr 5-10

Island Maroon, Union Island - May

Canouan Regatta May 25 - 29

Vincy Mas, June 30 - July 11

Independence Month Celebrations - October

Theatre Arts Festival, Nov 30

National Nine Mornings Festival, Dec 16 - 24

**SAVE THE DATE**

**2023 ANNUAL VINCY TORONTO  
HARBOUR BOAT CRUISE**

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 11**

**ABOARD MV. ENTERPRISE 2000**

**EARLY BIRD TICKETS AVAILABLE**

**FROM MAY 1**



*The Board of Directors and Members of the St. Vincent and Grenadines of Toronto Inc. herewith offer sincere condolences to all those members of our community who have lost their loved ones during 2022 and 2023. We wish you God's blessings during your period of grief.*

*May the souls of the departed Rest In Peace.*



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