



## Trinidad hotel worth checking out

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CARIBBEAT

**T**O SAY the new Hyatt Regency Trinidad hotel – the island’s first new full-service hotel in 48 years – has hit the ground running is a gross understatement.

The staff and management at the English-speaking Caribbean’s newest and largest hotel-convention center are off to a stellar start.

Based in a major manufacturing nation and the region’s biggest producer of oil and gas, catering to business clientele is a priority for the new 428-room hotel. But satisfying year-round pleasure-seeking tourists and the annual mega-invasion of visitors for the world famous Trinidad Carnival are also high on the agenda.

Among events the hotel has hosted since opening in early 2008 were last year’s Summit of the Americas conference and the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting that included guests such as President Obama, Britain’s Queen Elizabeth and United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, said Russell George, hotel general manager, with pride.

But he especially recalled the Trinidad Carnival and its participants, who are also special hotel guests.

George remembered the hordes of tired, sweat-, oil- and grease-drenched J’Ouvert masqueraders walking on carpets, sitting on lobby furniture and flopping on hotel room bedding after days of enjoying the non-stop revelry.

“You learn real quick,” said George, noting the hotel regrouped the following year.

So, starting with the 2009 Trinidad Carnival, the Hyatt installed outdoor, courtesy showers in front of the hotel and pampered the guests with plush towels, T-shirts, warm robes and comfy slippers. It was a win-win – the guests were thrilled and the hotel interior and guest rooms remained mostly stain-free, said George, a 22-year Hyatt veteran whose parents hail from the British Virgin Islands and U.S. Virgin Islands.

The new hotel is part of Trinidad and Tobago’s Vision 2020 Project aimed at bringing the country to “developed” nation status within 10 years. It is located in project’s International Waterfront Development complex in Port-of-Spain.

More than 43,000 square feet and loads

of business services at the Hyatt Regency are devoted to conventions and banquets. Rooms feature contemporary décor and amenities. Hotel grounds include restaurants, a sushi bar, a chic infinity pool bar and the many services of the Spa Esencia, its pool and a 24-hour fitness center.

“We have a team out there all the time trying to bring in business, said George, noting that the hotel is operating at an “above-average” 60% to 70% occupancy in tough economic times.

For information or reservations, visit [trinidad.hyatt.com](http://trinidad.hyatt.com) or call (800)233-1234.

### Haiti benefit gala in Brooklyn

A gala presented by the SIMACT Foundation on June 19 will have a dual purpose – to recognize people who’ve helped improve the lives of Haitian people and to raise funds for foundation projects in the cities of Jacmel and Leogane, the epicenter of the Jan. 12 earthquake.

The affair at Grand Prospect Hall, 263 Prospect Ave. (between Fifth and Sixth Aves.), features dinner and the popular Tabou Combo as musical entertainment. Tickets are \$250. For tickets and information, call (347) 985-2167 or (646) 489-4120.

### Boat ride for Father’s Day

The Piton’s Netball Club is hosting “The Ultimate Father’s Day Boat Ride” Saturday aboard the Golden Sunshine leaving from in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn.

There will be food, a raffle and two deejays. Boarding time is 11 p.m. from Pier 2, Bedford and Emmons Aves. Tickets are \$40 in advance and more at the pier. Call (718) 604-2465, (347) 849-7182 or (845) 664-5668.

### Top merchants recognized

Standouts in the city’s Caribbean business community will be among the community and business leaders recognized for their accomplishments at the Caribbean-American Chamber of Commerce and Industry’s Annual Entrepreneur of the Year

Corporate and Partnership Recognition Awards Luncheon on Friday in Brooklyn

The chamber’s Entrepreneurs of the Year recipients will be featured at the event, which will be held at Steiner Movie Studios’ Stage 6, on the Brooklyn Navy Yard complex at Washington and Flushing Aves., at 11:30 a.m.

For information, call (718) 834-4544, send e-mail to [info@caccitradedecenter.com](mailto:info@caccitradedecenter.com) or visit [caribbeanradecenter.com](http://caribbeanradecenter.com).

### Culture conference at college

The free Caribbean Cultural Confer-

