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Barbados marks 75 Years Of Air Canada Service

The year was 1949. Newfoundland had just joined Canada. The Maple Leafs celebrated their 8th consecutive Stanley Cup. And Air Canada started flying to Barbados (BGI).

Trans Canada Airlines, as the carrier was known then, was – impressively – the first North American airline to fly to the island. And still today there is a tradition of friendship and connectivity between the two very different countries. Equally telling of AC’s close relationship with the island, it was the first airline to resume service post-pandemic.

Toronto. “This is more than air routes, this is an enduring friendship between Barbados and Canada,” the Hon. G.P. Ian Gooding-Edghill, Minister of Tourism and International Transport told the some 100 guests. “We deeply value the partnership. Barbados is not just a destination – it is an experience. You arrive as strangers and leave as friends.”

Attractions include those famous beaches; a vibrant culinary scene from the most sophisticated to unpretentious street food; year-round festivals of



Equality’s Bhaskar Sharma with Barbados Tourism Minister Ian Gooding-Edghill during the Minister’s visit to Toronto earlier this week

wind at one of the island’s famous and funky little rum shops.

Speaking of connections between the two countries, Ryan Ford of the BGI Hotel and Tourism Association reminded the audience of how many Barbadians (“Bajans”) come to Canada for their education. And he added an impressive statistic: Canadians are now the highest number of purchasers of real estate on the island, surpassing Brits and Americans. We also represent the highest number of repeat visitors.

The Minister also mentioned there will be two new hotels opening next year; and the attendees learned that BGI is now considered a top destination for groups.

“75 years is a milestone indeed,” BGI’s High Commissioner to Canada Gline Clarke told the guests, who comprised members of the Bajan diaspora, AC and ACV staffers and other members of the travel industry. “Let’s ensure continued growth for the next 75 years!”



ACV’s Shirley Lam, Diana Rodriguez, Nino Montagnese and Dina Bertolo with Travel Brands’ Sam Youssef

And to celebrate the important anniversary of that flight on 03DEC 1949, a swank and definitely Barbados-themed cocktail event was held at the sleek X Hotel near the lakefront in

every stripe; and rollicking adventure travel opportunities. Above all, visitors are encouraged to get out and connect with the locals, whether they are shopping, golfing, or getting their second



Jackie and Chris Stubbs of Ultimate Hotels and Villas



BGI Tourism Marketing Inc’s Lisa Batson with Sandals’ CJ Smith