EDITORIAL

The team of the ACS Directorate of Sustainable Tourism (DST) is pleased to present, our fifth edition of In the ZONE, a newsletter focusing on Sustainable Tourism in the Greater Caribbean.

In this edition, we are exploring the arts and craft of the Greater Caribbean, namely Haiti, Grenada, Venezuela, Panama, Costa Rica, Mexico and Dominica. Each of which has its own unique aesthetic expression, from the hand woven craft products made in Dominica to the wood carved commercial products made in Haiti.

Furthermore, we would like to thank the members of the various Ministries of Tourism, Embassies and Caribbean Organizations who contributed to this publication and we look forward to receiving further submissions of articles and pictures for our future editions as we continue to showcase the beautiful people, remarkable heritage and diverse culture of our region.

We wish you health, peace and joy for the year 2013.

Gloria de Mees
Director of Sustainable Tourism of the ACS

HAITI, CRAFT IN ITS UNIVERSALITY

From Pre-Columbian times to the present day, the use of craft has been considered a way of life of the inhabitants of the island of Haiti, showcasing a wide range of utilitarian or decorative needs of society. However, Haiti’s specificity in the expression of Caribbean popular art finds its originality in the typical choice of media such as: Wood (Mahogany), cut metal, papier-mâché, glass, pottery, stone, paint, recycled objects, sisal, Latania palm, canvas, chairs, embroidery, leather, plastic, fashion design, etc.

Haitian craft, a pillar of ancient tradition, which fosters cultural enrichment in keeping with the tastes and customs of the population, arouses the curiosity of the public with respect to Haitian ethnographic elements, namely:
alfor\(^1\) or djakout\(^2\), makout\(^3\) or kapay en latanier\(^4\),
dolls, cords, madjoe\(^5\) necklaces, kwi du calebas\(^6\),
layé (van)\(^7\), straw hats and braids, enamel plates and
goblets, basins and washing boards, pestles and
wooden spoons, food storage, pitchers and
earthenware jars to keep water cool, lampe tètigrap\(^8\),
etc.
Given these specificities, coupled with the folk
costumes, traditional instruments such as the banjo,
drum and bongo, bamboo trumpets and flutes,
fwékach\(^9\), tambour-maringwen\(^10\), manouba\(^11\),
tchatcha\(^12\), batons and multi-coloured scarves of the
Rara dancers, etc., one must admit that a single visit
to Haiti by our Caribbean brothers can truly enhance
their knowledge of the various items of Haitian craft.
In Haiti, a country of unbridled artists and designers,
where knowledge is passed on from father to son,
tourists are always amazed by the open air exhibition
halls through the streets, where they can find an
abundant supply, not only of the multi-coloured
paintings but particularly Mahogany, the expression of wood sculptures, and the numerous cut metal
designs that ultimately characterise the specificity of
the rich Haitian craft.

Translator’s Note:
Research conducted on the terms in Haitian Creole in the text yielded the following results. However, in some instances there were slight
variations in terminology.
1. Neck bags/hunting bags used by peasants
2. Matted straw bags
3. Woven grass baskets
4. Straw bags made from the Latania palm
5. Possibly a “maldioe” necklace, which protects against evil spirits
6. Calabash bowls
7. Winnowing baskets
GRENADIAN CRAFT – DECORATIVE, FUNCTIONAL TRADITION.

Grenada’s unique crafts embrace folkart showcasing our agricultural and fishing traditions, baskets and bowls, handmade aproned mama dolls and Carriacou mermaids, to delicate crochets, hand dyed, painted and printed fabrics, as well as striking masks and plaques, functional drums, steelpans and shak-shaks. Close to 300 individuals hand produce decorative art and ornamental ware, toys, jewellery, clothing, accessories and more from straw, calabash, coconut, bamboo, local clay, rock spewed from our volcanic past, woods taken from felled trees, seeds, pods and found objects including discarded materials, animal bone, beach glass and marine detritus.

The majority of these items satisfy the tourism souvenir market. However, there are many fine craft works created as high value one-off items for the discerning collector of Grenadian craft. The OECS/ECCU Exhibition Centre at the Saint Kitts headquarters of the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB), houses a collection of handcrafted items from Grenada.

Article and photos presented by:
May 2012, JPL, Ministry of Tourism of Haiti
Popular Venezuelan handicraft is notably influenced by the indigenous culture, evident in its basketwork and woven and ceramic items. Creole basketwork is set apart from the rest since it is practical in nature. One of the most well-known baskets is the “cesta de carga”, which is used in the making of “casabe” or cassava bread (Tortilla made from grated cassava and dried in the sun). As for textiles, each Venezuelan region has its own peculiar style, raw material and product obtained from the weaving of fibre, among others: hammocks and those from the Eastern region of the country and Margarita Island, shawls and blankets from the Andes, sandals from Falcón and the plain states, fishing nets and peasant tapestries.

Ceramics or pottery stand out since they model earthenware jars or other objects using materials such as: clay, mud, barbotine, kaolin, which are manipulated to produce the desired shape and then subjected to a firing process to solidify them. These items include pitchers, jars, jugs, pots, plates, griddles, flowerpots, among others. Samples of these are found in almost all states in Venezuela: Quíbor, Lara State; Capacho, Táchira State and Los Guáímaros in the State of Mérida.

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**PANAMA, ITS PROVINCES AND HANDICRAFT**

The Panamanian Isthmus has been on an interesting historical and social course, from its pre-Colombian past, a course on which the peoples have demonstrated creativity, excellent technique and ingenuity through their expression and handcrafted items. The artisan uses work instruments to produce something, generally an object, a consumer article and one that has related to others, also in a distinctive way in terms of the production and marketing of these goods. From time immemorial, handicraft has played a pivotal role in the idiosyncrasy and culture of our peoples and is therefore considered to be a crucial economic activity, which enhances the standard of living of the artisans, most of whom are country folk and indigenous people.

Type of Handcrafted Items that you’ll find in the provinces of Panama:
Noso Teribe Boca del Toro Handicraft: • Petticoats or Dresses • Chaquiras necklaces • Ngobe Bugle • Ceramic Figures • Carved Wood Figures

Coclé Handicraft: • Dried arrangements • Figures made from Coconut Fibres • Dressed Candles • Wooden Carvings • Figures made from Shells • Congo Devil Masks

Colón Handicraft: • Petticoats or Dresses • Chaquiras necklaces • Ngobe Bugle • Ceramic Figures • Carved Wood Figures

Chiriquí Handicraft: • Wooden Items • Musical instruments made from gourds • Dried arrangements • Chaquiras • Petticoats or Dresses • Shells and Flowers • Ceramics

Darién Handicraft: • Wooden Carvings • Rosewood • Fibre Woven Baskets (Chunga) • Tagua Nut Figures • Bamboo and Gourd Pieces

Herrera Handicraft: • Pottery Figures • Glazed Ceramics • Devil Masks • Montunos Ocueños (traditional clothing) • Sandals and Leather Items • Wooden Carvings

Panamanian Handicraft: • Craft items • Plastic Arts • Floral Arrangements • Jar Decorations • Stained glass • Kitchen Items • Textiles • Sweater Painting

Veraguas Handicraft: • Costume Jewellery and Jewellery • Fibres in General • Pottery and Ceramics • Dolls with Traditional Clothing • Craft items

Los Santos Handicraft: • Fabric Handicraft • Wooden Items • Precious metals • Saddlery • Masks

At the Handicraft Market in Panamá Viejo, in Panama City, Vía Cincuentenario on one side of the Centro de Visitantes, you will find all of these handmade items.

Article and photos presented by: National Craft Department, Panama
www.artesanias.gob.pa

COSTA RICAN HANDICRAFT

Each country’s identity is forged from its customs, traditions, cultural expressions and natural spaces, which are peculiar to it and worthy of mention without any complication or restriction. Thus, each nation’s own art is essential in order to strengthen the characteristic features that constitute the National Identity.

The strengthening of the National Identity is an act of objective and complete maturity of the entire society. It allows for a more objective vision of the course that should be plotted for a
nation, based on the likes and preferences of the society.

Included among the national characteristics are handicraft items; allegorical expressions, the product of the art of each trade, which represent traditions. Their origin lies in the manual arts and their creation requires little or no machine intervention.

Costa Rican handicraft is characterised by the diversity of products, materials, the creation process and talent of the artisans who, over the course of time, have developed techniques that guarantee excellence.

Each of the seven provinces of Costa Rica has different techniques and each zone has its own speciality in terms of handmade articles, for example, Limón with its ethnic mixture and typical Caribbean colours, which seeks to enhance and give life to the pieces, or the case of Sarchí, well-known for the creation of bright and vibrant Traditional Carts. The common thread of Costa Rican handicraft is the enhancement of its natural assets.

**TRADITIONAL NATIONAL MEXICAN HANDICRAFT**

Mexico is a country that possesses historical, natural and cultural wealth, which gives it a tourist advantage, one that must be put to good use. Mexican handicraft items are highly valued around the world since they are samples of the colourful and folkloric aspects that make Mexico what it is. They are a reflection of the history of our country. Each handcrafted item has been created by the hands of an artist, expressing the region and elements of each city of origin and such items are considered to be objects of identity, since they bring together art and knowledge, expression and technique.

Article and photos presented by: Costa Rica
Mexican handicraft is a reflection of our country’s history, ranging from the simplest to the most complex, made from a diversity of materials such as clay, wood, ceramics, glass, pottery, etc. It is one more display of the Mexican identity.

Handcrafted articles transport us to their place of origin and are the source of work for many Mexican families. The items created by the artisan reflect his material and ideological culture and most of the elements used in the production of handicraft are taken from the same region. Behind the ingenuity with which handmade expressions are presented to us lies the artisan himself. This is the very essence that produces from handcrafted items, works of art, emerging from the extremely rich cultural value of our country.

**DOMINICA: KALINAGO CRAFTS, A TREASURE FOR GENERATIONS!**

Kalinago art & craft products unlike many other forms of art represent a rich and unique history of toil and survival of the Caribbean’s first settlers, the Kalinago People.

When the forefathers of these people migrated northward from the banks of the Orinoco River and unto the Lesser Antilles more than five hundred years ago, little did they know that their dexterity in perfecting for daily use hand made products for all occasions to suit all tastes from simple materials would endure the passage of time to the point where Kalinago crafts today is an indispensable component of the Kalinago experience.
Today, the fine array of Kalinago craft products available in the Kalinago Territory, serve as a sense of pride for all Kalinago people and is increasingly being recognized for its role in preserving this indigenous aspect of Caribbean civilization as well as ensuring the economic survival of the native people of Dominica, the Kalinago People.

Visitors to Dominica can obtain Kalinago craft products at the Kalinago Barana Aute, the indigenous community's focal point for heritage preservation which showcases a very large variety of the finest native crafts produced in Dominica. Requests are also facilitated through the facility’s website (www.kalinagoterritory.com) or through direct email at kbamanager@cwdom.dm.

Article and photos presented by: Discover Dominica Authority and Kalinago Barana Aute

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the Directorate of Sustainable Tourism
Contribute:
The DST invites you to send your pictures and articles in for the January 2013 issue of "IN THE ZONE".

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Thank you!