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## **The Cayman Islands Promises “Worry Free Hurricane Guarantee” for Caribbean Getaways this Season**

*Reflecting on the 2017 Hurricane Season, the Cayman Islands Department of Tourism  
Prepares Travellers for a Safe Summer*

**Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands, June 1, 2018** – The Cayman Islands prides itself in providing travellers with unrivalled vacation experiences and allowing guests to be unburdened by the stresses of everyday life. With an unpredictable hurricane season around the corner, the Cayman Islands Department of Tourism continues to give its visitors peace of mind with the destination’s “Worry Free Hurricane Guarantee,” a specialty promise made by on-island partners to cover any cancellations made prior to arrival and compensation if vacation time is cut short due to inclement weather during a Cayman Islands getaway.

In anticipation of an active hurricane season, the destination launched its annual Worry Free Hurricane Guarantee to put travellers’ minds at ease, knowing they can book a getaway to the Cayman Islands and receive cancellation coverage in the event of a storm.

The Worry Free Guarantee includes a full refund of accommodation fees at participating hotels, condos and villas island-wide, with a maximum one-night penalty at most for cancellations made up to 48 hours prior to check-in as soon as a hurricane watch is issued by authorities. Additionally, many properties on-island are offering a free replacement stay throughout the summer months, allowing guests to rebook for the same duration as the initially-booked stay, regardless of how many days were affected by a hurricane or storm.

“In the Cayman Islands, we strive to not only provide unforgettable and relaxing vacations, but most importantly through this generous programme, we offer our guests a seamless solution for when travel disruptions occur,” said Mrs. Rosa Harris, Director of Tourism for the Cayman Islands. “It’s Caymankind to give peace of mind, and with our Hurricane Guarantee, I am pleased we can provide travellers relief knowing they can plan a vacation to our beautiful islands despite seasonal considerations and inclement weather.”

An array of hotels, condominiums and villas across Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman are participating in the Worry Free Hurricane Guarantee. This program is available only through participating hotels and resorts. For a list of properties and their respective policies, go to <https://www.visitcaymanislands.com/en-us/about-cayman/weather/hurricane-guarantee>. For detailed property guarantees, please visit the individual property web sites or contact them directly.

**About the Cayman Islands**

Located 480 miles south of Miami in the vibrant tranquility of western Caribbean, this trio of tiny islands is a premier destination for discriminating travellers, divers, honeymooners and families. World-renowned for its idyllic beaches and recognised as a sophisticated, diverse and memorable tourist destination, the Cayman Islands offers spectacular recreational opportunities along with warm, impeccable service. To learn more about the Cayman Islands, please go to [visitcaymanislands.com](http://visitcaymanislands.com) or [www.divecayman.ky](http://www.divecayman.ky) or call your local travel agent.

From large-group trips and business-focused getaways to ultra-luxurious escapes and multi-generational family vacations, the Cayman Islands provides every element needed to keep guests coming back for more. With an abundance of world-class dining options, a host of adventure activities - including snorkelling, diving, jet skiing, caving, and nature trails - and a variety of meeting spaces for groups large and small, the Cayman Islands is well-poised to host any type of traveller or special occasion.

*This material is distributed by Coyne on behalf of the Cayman Islands Department of Tourism.  
Additional information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.*

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**Statement from the Board of Directors of the International Scuba Diving Hall of Fame on Lee Selisky – a Class of 2019 Inductee.**

In an extraordinary announcement, the Board of Directors for the International Scuba Diving Hall of Fame (ISDHF) has announced the first member of the 2019 induction class as Mr. Lee Selisky.

Chairman of the Board of Directors, and Cayman Islands Deputy Premier and Minister of Tourism, The Hon Moses Kirkconnell, said, "Lee is the founder of the Sea Pearls Company, a former President of the Dive Equipment Manufacturing Association (DEMA) and a founding Director of the ISDHF. Lee has embodied his motto of leading by example with everything in his life work, career and truly exemplifies the passion of "giving back". I can't think of no greater honor than to enshrine Lee into one of the institutions he helped to create - the International Scuba Diving Hall of Fame."

The rest of the 2019 class of inductees will be announced at the DEMA show in Las Vegas, Nevada later this year. The 2018 induction ceremony for Stephen Frink, Dick Rutkowski, Dr. H.S. Batuna, Wulf H. Koehler, and Boris Porotov, along with Early Pioneer Award honouree, Captain Philippe Tailliez, will take place 14 September in Grand Cayman.

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MINISTRY OF  
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION,  
TOURISM & TRANSPORT  
CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT



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**For Immediate Release**

**2017: Record-Breaking Year for Arrivals into the Cayman Islands**

**Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands (11 Jan 2018)** Record-breaking arrivals for 2017 in both air and cruise visitation represent the best year of recorded statistical data for the Cayman Islands. A total of 418,403 stayover visitors, an increase of 8.55 percent over 2016 and 1,728,444 cruisers visited the islands.

For the seventh consecutive month (June through December), air arrivals surpassed all previously recorded statistics. A total of 49,003 stayover visitors arrived in December, an increase of 21.61 percent over December 2016; and an increase of 20.8 percent over December 2014, which was standing as the best ranked December in recorded history.

December increases were fuelled by growth predominantly in North America. Key markets such as the United States and Canada, which saw increases of 27.43 percent and 22.71 percent respectively over 2016; represented the highest standout growth. The USA Northeast region delivered an additional 2,997 visitors, or 28.89 percent increase year over year, making it the top performing region of 2017. The Midwest region anchored solid volume levels with 2,325 additional visitors, or a 37.81 percent increase over 2016.

Commenting on this achievement, Deputy Premier and Minister of Tourism, the Hon. Moses Kirkconnell said, "The performance of the country's tourism sector and all who played a role in attracting more

visitors to the destination should be extraordinarily proud of their efforts. It is the mandate of the Ministry of Tourism to facilitate annual growth in visitation; however, it is a collective effort that makes it a success. I encourage all of us in the tourism industry and its auxiliary partners to use this accomplishment as a springboard for even greater success in 2018."

Overall annual performance in 2017, marked visitation from the United States and Canada with growth rates of 13.44 percent and 6.37 percent respectively. The Northeast region of the United States saw the largest increase in visitation for the year with 15,042 more visitors, or 15.71 percent increase over 2016. The Midwest grew by 16.91 percent in 2017, presenting the second largest increase in 2017 by any region; while the Southeast region increased by 13,036 visitors, or 26.94 percent increase over 2016, surpassing the Southwest as the region producing the third highest number of stayover visitors. Growth in this region was driven by Miami-Ft. Lauderdale which saw 4,057 additional visitors, as well as Tampa-St. Pete, Orlando, Daytona Beach and Melbourne areas. The Southwest region grew by 12.75 percent in 2017 with Dallas-Ft. Worth posting 2,060 additional visitors and Austin and Denver posting 1,181 and 1,179 additional visitors respectively.

The statistics for 2017 reflect incremental growth in not just key markets, but also burgeoning markets such as Latin America, which saw a total increase of 22.61 percent. Specifically, South America increased by 8.92 percent, whilst Central America increased by 5.64 percent

Reflecting on a successful year in 2017, the Department of Tourism (DOT) executed a visually arresting and diversified marketing plan to increase brand awareness globally. The year saw the implementation of key initiatives such as the "Worry Free Hurricane Guarantee." Launched on 1 June, the guarantee gave travelers peace of mind during one of the most active hurricane seasons for the Caribbean region to date. In addition, on 4 June the DOT proudly celebrated the start of Southwest Airlines' daily nonstop service from Fort Lauderdale to Grand Cayman.

Through a partnership with Chef'd, the only non-subscription, fresh ingredient meal kit delivery service based in the United States, the DOT in June launched the first-ever destination inspired meal kits, curated by some of the most talented Cayman Islands' chefs. Foodies had the opportunity to bring a taste of the Culinary Capital of the Caribbean into their homes with the touch of a button.

In July, the DOT launched Cayman Vows magazine – the first-ever definitive resource for couples and wedding planners looking for inspiration and guidance on world-class destination weddings in the Cayman Islands. Available online and across newsstands in the United States and Canada, the publication featured Grace and Trai Byers on the cover, who later became the face of the Cayman Islands' destination ad campaign launched in October.

"Through strategic marketing initiatives from the Department of Tourism and strong, cohesive relationships with our tourism partners, together we have been able to achieve unprecedented growth in arrivals to the Cayman Islands in 2017," said Director of Tourism, Mrs. Rosa Harris. "I am pleased to see that our efforts to diversify the Cayman Islands source markets such as Latin America coupled with

our global teams' drive to be fearless innovators in destination marketing have taken visitation volume to its highest levels the destination has experienced. I look forward to working with my team and our tourism community to continue to attract quality visitors and offer an enriched experience with the goal of providing value through annual growth in 2018."

Looking ahead to 2018, the Cayman Islands will also be celebrating a major aviation milestone as the national flag carrier, Cayman Airways celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. In addition to the recent announcement of Southwest Airlines service from Houston, Texas, the destination will see further air service commence this fall with the launch of Jetblue service from Fort Lauderdale, Florida to Grand Cayman.

"Aviation is the catalyst to driving visitation. With increased seats available, travellers have more opportunities to select their preferred airline itinerary. The Cayman Islands will offer over 10 non-stop flight options, this is an excellent opening to 2018 for all stakeholders in the Cayman Islands tourism industry."

For more information and detailed arrival statistics, please visit the website:  
[www.caymanislands.ky/statistics](http://www.caymanislands.ky/statistics).

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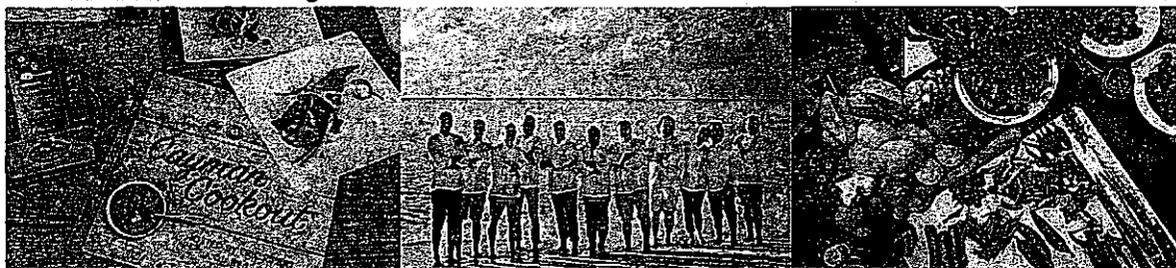
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**For Immediate Release:**

**World Class Chefs to Headline the Cayman Islands' Ultimate Epicurean Extravaganza at 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Cayman Cookout**

*Foodies Invited to Experience the 'Culinary Capital of the Caribbean' by way of World-Class Gastronomic Events Hosted by Chefs Eric Ripert, Anthony Bourdain, José Andrés, Emeril Lagasse and More*



**Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands, January 3, 2018** – This winter, head down to the tropical paradise of the Cayman Islands to experience one of the destination's most sought after epicurean events of the year, Cayman Cookout, taking place throughout the weekend of **January 10-14, 2018**. Established by world-renown chef, Eric Ripert and presented by the Cayman Islands Department of Tourism (CIDOT), The Ritz-Carlton, Grand Cayman and Food & Wine Magazine, the event features esteemed chefs serving up bold, mouth-watering flavours through a wide variety of events that pay homage to the destination's thriving culinary scene and authentic Caribbean fare.

Celebrating its 10th anniversary, Cayman Cookout welcomes an elite roster line-up of the world's most creative culinary minds including **Chef Eric Ripert, Anthony Bourdain, José Andrés, Emeril Lagasse, Alfred Portale, Daniel Boulud, Dominique Crenn, Michael Mina, Rick Bayless, Robert Irvine** and **Sean Brock**, to host various gastronomic events throughout the weekend, while guests mingle with their favourite celebrity chefs on the worldfamous Seven Mile Beach in Grand Cayman. With numerous interactive cooking demonstrations and one-of-a-kind tasting sessions that showcase the destination's fresh seafood, locally sourced ingredients and vibrant flavours bursting in sweet and savoury notes, the four-day festival provides gourmands with a chance to experience the international appeal of Caymanian cuisine like no other.

### **About the Cayman Islands**

Located 480 miles south of Miami in the vibrant tranquillity of western Caribbean, this trio of tiny islands is a premier destination for discriminating travellers, divers, honeymooners and families. World-renowned for its idyllic beaches and recognised as a sophisticated, diverse and memorable tourist destination, the Cayman Islands offers spectacular recreational opportunities along with warm, impeccable service. To learn more about the Cayman Islands, please go to [visitcaymanislands.com](http://visitcaymanislands.com) or [www.divecayman.ky](http://www.divecayman.ky) or call your local travel agent.

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### **About FOOD & WINE**

FOOD & WINE is the ultimate authority on the best of what's new in food, drink, travel, design and entertaining. FOOD & WINE has an extensive social media following on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Tumblr and Foursquare. FOOD & WINE includes a monthly magazine; digital editions on the iPad, Kindle Fire and Nook Color; a website, [foodandwine.com](http://foodandwine.com); a books division; FWx, a digital brand and website for millennials; plus newsletters, clubs, events around the globe and a restaurant partnership, Chefs Club by FOOD & WINE.

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**For Immediate Release**

**THE CAYMAN ISLANDS INVITES CHILDREN TO SHARPEN THEIR COOKING SKILLS  
THIS SUMMER IN THE CULINARY CAPITAL OF THE CARIBBEAN**

*Limited-Time "Kids Culinary Capital of the Caribbean" Summer Promotion Features Hands-On Activities,  
Plus Incredible Savings and Family-Friendly Attractions Island-Wide*

**Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands, May 8, 2018** – The Cayman Islands is welcoming its youngest visitors to feast in the Culinary Capital of the Caribbean and make their foodie family vacation a reality with the Department of Tourism's first-ever food-focused summer promotion: "**Kids Culinary Capital of the Caribbean**," featuring hands-on culinary activities for children and exceptional offers on luxury resorts, restaurants and more. As part of the limited-time Kids Culinary promotion, children travelling to the destination this summer will participate in a number of interactive cooking classes and educational activities at participating properties, providing the perfect opportunity for up-and-coming junior chefs to brush up on their culinary skills while embracing the Cayman Islands' local flavours and thriving food scene.

Boasting a one-of-a-kind epicurean scene filled with more than 200 unique restaurants and eclectic local eateries, from five-star establishments to freshly-caught fish prepared straight off the boat, it's no surprise Cayman Islands is globally recognised as the Culinary Capital of the Caribbean. This summer, visitors can take advantage of customised kid-friendly culinary offerings as part of the "Kids Culinary Capital of the Caribbean" program, along with incredible savings island-wide by booking a vacation **now through June 30, 2018**, for travel between **May and August 31, 2018**.

**"Kids Culinary Capital of the Caribbean" Highlights**

- **Bon Vivant in Camana Bay** anchors the Cayman Islands' summer activation featuring kid-friendly, hands-on cooking classes for children 12-years-old and

"Boasting the title of 'Culinary Capital of the Caribbean', we have not only set the standard for culinary events throughout the region, but are continuously curating and elevating our culinary works to impress avid foodies and passionate travellers alike," said Mrs. Rosa Harris, Director of Tourism for the Cayman Islands. "As this year marks our 10th annual Cayman Cookout, we extend our gratitude to the wayfarers from across the globe who travel to the destination in search of superb cuisine, as they are the reason we continuously strive to better the destination as an ever-expanding epicurean haven."

As part of the unique and immersive gastronomic festival, guests can look forward to attending more than 40 events and activities led by some of the most influential culinary experts, including top highlights such as **The Adventures of Eric & Tony**, a Cookout tradition which takes guests on a globe-spinning dining journey with Chef Eric Ripert and Anthony Bourdain; a **Barefoot Barbecue** under the stars with Chef Eric Ripert, Anthony Bourdain, José Andrés and others who entertain with sizzling grilled foods and hand-crafted cocktails; and a catamaran sail to Stingray City followed by **The Beach Bash** at Rum Point showcasing freshly made bites served by talented chefs. Finally, to cap off the memorable festivities, guests can enjoy the "**10 Stars**" **Grand Finale** evening hosted by Chef Eric Ripert and featuring the famed Chefs of Cayman Cookout with an elegant and unmatched 10 course dinner accompanied by wine pairings from some of the world's best producers. For more information and to purchase tickets or select packages, please visit the Cayman Cookout event [website](#).

#### ***Feast Your Eyes on the 'Culinary Capital of the Caribbean'***

As 2018 is shaping up to become the year of foodie travel, wanderlusts from around the globe can plan their visit to the Cayman Islands to discover some of the world's best culinary feats as they eat their way through the dynamic food scene. Capitalizing on the locavore trend, the destination provides visitors and locals alike with an impressive roster of passionate local chefs, acclaimed sommeliers and creative mixologists who constantly serve up a complete immersion of the Cayman Islands' unmatched homegrown culinary empire, offering dishes that satisfy the most complex of cravings. With an endless array of dining options at more than 200 unique restaurants – from five-star establishments to freshly-caught fish prepared straight off the boat – it's easy to see why the Cayman Islands is heralded as the 'Culinary Capital of the Caribbean' and a foodie destination worth travelling for.

Following the coveted 10th Annual Cayman Cookout, hungry travellers are encouraged to consider the 30<sup>th</sup> annual [Taste of Cayman Food and Drink Festival](#), held on **Saturday, January 27, 2018**, where foodies and wine lovers celebrate the greatest Cayman traditions and rich culinary heritage through Heavy Cake and Mixology competitions. As the destination's largest and longest running annual event, Taste of Cayman festival is held along the water in the lively area of Camana Bay and features tasty tapas and refreshing beverages, with remarkable chef demonstrations and live music, guaranteeing an evening of fun, food, culture and tradition for all who attend.

To purchase tickets for one of the Cayman Islands can't-miss culinary events or book a food-driven vacation to the 'Culinary Capital of the Caribbean,' visit us at [www.caymanislands.ky](http://www.caymanislands.ky). Fans and food lovers are also encouraged to join in on the Cayman Cookout conversation on Twitter at [@CaymanCookout](#) and [@Cayman\\_Islands](#) or by using the hashtag [#CaymanCookout](#).

under. Classes accommodate between 1014 children and include lunch, takeaways, recipe cards and a tour of a select Camana Bay restaurant kitchen for \$42 (\$35 CI). During the interactive class, children will learn how to cook alongside a Caymanian chef using local ingredients and recipes. Additionally, parents will receive a \$10 Camana Bay gift card to use while their kids are participating in class.

- **The Ritz-Carlton, Grand Cayman** presents young chefs (ages 4-9) with its "Ambassadors in the Kitchen" program, inviting children to experience a day behind the scenes as a culinary master.

Open to both resort and non-resort guests for \$85, kids will kick-off the class by learning how to make their own chef's hat and apron before visiting the kitchen at Andiamo for a hands-on learning experience and epicurean adventure. Young Ambassadors are also invited to visit the Ritz's organic garden to source ingredients to prepare with their local cuisine.

- **The Kimpton Seafire Resort + Spa** offers children ages 4-12 a backstage pass into the resorts' largest kitchen for an exclusive meet-and-greet experience with the Executive Chef. Available to all diners at Ave, the resorts' primary restaurant, young foodies can experience the culinary buzz firsthand while observing all that goes into a world-class gastronomic preparation at the luxury resort. For children to continue their Cayman culinary experience at home, participants will receive a recipe book at the end of the activity and will be awarded the title of honorary Seafire Chef.

- **Margaritaville Beach Resort Grand Cayman** allows children ages 6-10 to embark on an epicurean adventure as international chefs guide them step-by-step through the art of cooking and baking in an interactive format. Up-and-coming young foodies will learn how to fold napkins intricately, set tables and various other kitchen and restaurant procedures, while also receiving an apron, hat and certification of completion.

- **The Chef de Cuisine and Head Gardner at The Brasserie** is offering free farm tours this summer for children to visit the restaurant's organic vegetable garden, witness first-hand how the catch of the day makes it to their plates, and help collect eggs from the on-site chicken coops.

- **Wyndham Reef Resort Grand Cayman** provides the perfect tropical escape for families and offers a weekly Kids Cooking Class for guests ages 4-11, where children can sign-up to prepare treats alongside one of the property's Chefs for \$19 (\$15 CI). Additionally, parents will save up to 30 percent on their stay.

- **VIVO Alternative Restaurant** debuts its new kid's menu this starting June 1<sup>st</sup> as part of the "Kids Culinary Capital of the Caribbean" program. Available on Tuesday afternoons in August, Vivo will host free cooking classes for young chefs to learn how to cook using sustainable, vegan and vegetarian cuisine.

"We couldn't be more excited to introduce some of our youngest travellers to the mouth-watering flavours of the Culinary Capital of the Caribbean, just in time for the summer vacation season," said Mrs. Rosa Harris, Director of Tourism. "With several hands-on culinary activities for foodie families to choose from that showcase our flourishing epicurean scene and world-class accommodations – not to mention, the many opportunities for children to experience our destination for free – there's never been a better time to book a gastronomic getaway to the Cayman Islands. From our unmatched Caymankind service to luxurious venues underscored by breathtaking outdoor settings and exceptional farm-to-table island fare, our Caribbean paradise provides unforgettable experiences for a lifetime of vacation memories."

#### ***Family-Friendly Summer Vacation Deals***

In addition to the "Kids Culinary Capital" offerings, visitors can save on the Cayman Islands world-class accommodations, including kid-friendly resorts and hotels fit for the whole family, along with cosy condos and upscale villas perfect for couples. Featured partners in Grand Cayman include Grand Cayman Marriott Beach Resort, offering 10 percent off summer vacation stays plus a \$50 daily food and beverage credit; the Westin Grand Cayman Seven Mile Beach Resort and Spa, offering the fifth night free and a \$100 resort credit, and the newly-renovated Margaritaville Beach Resort Grand Cayman, offering the fourth night free or 25 percent off stays for more than four nights. At the luxurious Ritz-Carlton, Grand Cayman, guests are encouraged to indulge in a longer stay enjoying the fourth night free when booking Garden View, Resort View, Club Level, Harbour Suites and Ocean Front rooms. Additionally, visitors staying at Luxury Cayman Villas can soak up the best experiences Grand Cayman has to offer and choose from a number of summer activities including a half-day boat excursion to the destination's world-famous Stingray City for up to eight people, a private family cooking class and Chef-lead dinner, or the opportunity to simply relax and unwind with a \$750 in-villa spa credit.

#### **Additional Accommodation Highlights**

- The Heritage Club is extending the fifth night free for any four-night stay
- Sunset Cove Treasure Island Condos is giving every fifth night free, plus children age 17 and under stay for free with a paying adult. Extra guests receive half price at only \$15 per person, per night
- Cayman Villas are offering the fifth night free for every four-night stay; pay for four and stay for five or pay for eight and stay for 10! Offer available starting May 1
- Sunshine Suites Resort offering fifth night free for every four-night stay
- The Avalon Condominiums offering an endless summer special with 33 percent off and reduced summer rates ranging from \$330 to \$460 per night

As part of the kid-friendly culinary offerings and affordable stays island-wide, guests can also save on some of the Cayman Islands' premier attractions and water sport activities. Families visiting renowned cultural hotspots like the Cayman Islands National Museum will enjoy a 10 percent discount off Gift Shop items. Adventure-seeking travellers can discover the destination's famous marine life with Captain Marvin's Watersports, offering tour discounts of buy-one tour, get-one half-off prices for two-stop and three-stop stingray and snorkel excursions all summer. Additionally, adults looking to visit Cayman Spirits Co. can take advantage of two-for-one tour tickets all summer, along with can't-miss savings on the Cayman Sea Life Collection and island-inspired diamond necklaces at Rocky's Diamond Gallery.

For full details on the Cayman Islands' "Kids Culinary Capital of the Caribbean" offerings and partners and to book a vacation, visit [www.KidsCulinaryCapital.com](http://www.KidsCulinaryCapital.com) and [VisitCaymanIslands.com](http://VisitCaymanIslands.com).

#### About the Cayman Islands

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**For Immediate Release:**

**Ensor Yusseff Awarded Title of "Mixologist of the Year" During 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Taste of Cayman Food & Drink Festival**

*Culinary Extravaganza Marked 30 Years of Outstanding Foodie Presence with Live Bartending Competition*



*Pictured Above: Taste of Cayman: Seven Fathoms Rum Challenge Miami Winner, Oscar Lopez (left) | Taste of Cayman: Seven Fathoms Rum (centre) | Taste of Cayman: Seven Fathoms Rum Challenge 2018 Winner, Ensor Yusseff (right)*

*\*For additional images from this year's Taste of Cayman: Seven Fathoms Rum Challenge, [Click Here](#)\**

**Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands, February X, 2017** – The Cayman Islands announces **Ensor Yusseff**, local bartender from **The Westin Grand Cayman Seven Mile Beach Resort & Spa**, as "Mixologist of the Year" as part of the global "Taste of Cayman: Seven Fathoms Rum Challenge." Yusseff wowed the judges during the final mixology showdown at the 30<sup>th</sup> annual Taste of Cayman Food & Drink Festival on Saturday, Jan. 27, 2018, winning a complimentary 20-litre barrel of Seven Fathoms Rum and two round-trip tickets on Cayman Airways.

Hosted by the Cayman Islands Department of Tourism in partnership with the Cayman Islands Tourism Association, Cayman Spirits Co., Cayman Airways and Kimpton Seafire Resort + Spa, the "**Taste of Cayman: Seven Fathoms Rum Challenge**" was one of the most anticipated events during the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary Taste of Cayman festival. The event brought together some of the world's most talented bartenders to showcase the diverse flavours of the "Culinary Capital of the Caribbean" during a day-long gastronomic festival.

During the Seven Fathoms Rum mixology challenge, winners from the intense qualifying competitions held in the U.S., U.K., and the Caribbean were tasked with creating a signature cocktail featuring the destination's preferred locally distilled, ocean-aged rum, and a secret

ingredient. Competing three at a time, Yusseff went head-to-head with seven competitors from the Cayman Islands as well as four bartenders from around the world including, **Steve Georgio** of London, **Oscar Lopez** of Miami, Fla., **Angela Galecki**, of St. Petersburg, Fla., and **Dani DeLuna** of New York, all vying for a 20-litre barrel of Seven Fathoms Rum, two round-trip Cayman Airways tickets and the prestigious title of "Mixologist of the Year."

With a high level of creativity and accuracy throughout the event, the Westin's own bartender, Yusseff, dazzled an esteemed panel of culinary and mixology masterminds with his winning cocktail, "**Seven Fathoms Flower**," featuring the smooth flavours of Seven Fathoms Rum mixed with pumpkin cordial, apricot liqueur and ginger, the final round's secret ingredient. After a lively competition filled with plenty of mixing, shaking and pouring, the judges selected Yusseff's cocktail as the winning recipe with its perfect combination of hot, tart, sweet and floral essences, plus a beautiful "Instagram-worthy" presentation overall.

"Each year, the Cayman Islands invites top bartenders from around the world to face-off in the celebrated 'Culinary Capital of the Caribbean' as part of the Taste of Cayman festival, and we are thrilled to announce Ensor Yusseff as 2018 Mixologist of the Year," said Mrs. Rosa Harris, Director of Tourism. "Our islands are a thriving culinary and mixology haven for locals and visitors alike, we encourage cocktail aficionados and passionate foodies to mark their calendars for next year's big epicurean event."

Renowned as the Cayman Islands' largest culinary celebration, Taste of Cayman Food & Drink Festival offers wine, spirits and food lovers the opportunity to sample some of the destination's traditional recipes such as heavy cake, which features grated cassava mixed with coconut milk and brown sugar for the ultimate slice of comfort food. Established in the late 80's when a group of chefs from the Cayman Islands Restaurant Association met to compete in a classic Chili Cook-Off, the annual festival has since attracted thousands of guests hailing from across the globe to experience the best culinary and beverage offerings found throughout the "Culinary Capital of the Caribbean."

For more information about the can't-miss Taste of Cayman Food & Drink Festival, visit [www.tasteofcayman.org](http://www.tasteofcayman.org), or go to the festival's [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) pages. Additionally, don't forget to check out Cayman Spirits Co. on its [website](#) and on [social media](#).

#### **About the Cayman Islands**

Located 480 miles south of Miami in the vibrant tranquillity of western Caribbean, this trio of tiny islands is a premier destination for discriminating travellers, divers, honeymooners and families. World-renowned for its idyllic beaches and recognised as a sophisticated, diverse and memorable tourist destination, the Cayman Islands offers spectacular recreational opportunities along with warm, impeccable service. To learn more about the Cayman Islands, please go to [visitcaymanislands.com](http://visitcaymanislands.com) or [www.divecayman.ky](http://www.divecayman.ky) or call your local travel professional.

From large-group trips and business-focused getaways to ultra-luxurious escapes and multi-generational family vacations, the Cayman Islands provides every element needed to keep clients coming back for more. With an abundance of world-class dining options, a host of adventure activities - including snorkelling, diving, jet skiing, caving, and nature trails - and a variety of meeting spaces for groups large and small, the Cayman Islands is well-poised to host any type of traveller or special occasion.

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