**WHAT ATTRACTS TOURIST IN THE CARIBBEAN REGION?**

Tourism is crucial to the economic growth of the Caribbean according to Rochell (2014) 25 million visitors were welcomed in the region in 2013 contributing to $49 billion towards the GDP of the region hence considered a tourist dependent region in the world. Caribbean region is a subregion of the Americas that includes the Caribbean sea and its islands and also border the North Atlantic ocean a number of countries are in this region including the Bahamas, Jamaica, Barbados, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Cuba a number of this countries rely on tourism for their economic growth with countries such as the Antigua and Barbuda accounting for more than 60% of its GDP to tourism and travel sector being followed by Aruba with a deficit of 0.4% to attain the 60% reliance set by Barbuda (Ana M.Lopez,2023).Tourism is not only a leading economic growth determinant in the region but also the tourist themselves are attracted by the region greatly making this market receive as many as 16.46 Million tourists in 2022 according to global data (2024).This region is such a global impact to tourism due to a number of factors that favor it since the 1800’s when tourism started to be felt in the region and different people from different parts of the world deciding to take a rest on the shores of this pride lands before setting of to other parts of the world .

The main factor that favors this region is the tropical climate experienced in the Caribbean lands this is due to the area being located in the tropics, near enough to the equator to experience high temperatures year round they greatly favor primarily the populations of the United States, Brazil, Argentina and Canada these countries with the high number of populations in their region have to migrate as tourist during the winter season which is greatly experienced in the northern and southern hemispheres which are not within the tropics and go to areas with sunny climate and with recreational resources to stay busy in foreign lands. The Caribbean is highly considered by the residence due to its tropical climate and the nearness to this countries hence economically fit and natural sunny climate these two factors make the region more welcoming for the wide European and American households of both the middle class and first-class categories the region offering the standards the client needs hence favoring majority of the population (John C.Ogden,2024).The hot sunny weather gives people room to stay on the shores and enjoy the beauty of nature without having to stay indoors this factor is the most influential for were it not for the winter season many would not consider getting to an area with hotter climates to escape those harsh weather conditions that are in their home countries such as Canada which is highly frozen with daily average temperatures nearing fifteen degrees but can drop to as low as fifty degrees with severe wind chills and the snow can cover the ground for almost six months of the year with other parts the snow going all round the year. Citizens of such countries have to look for better climatic zones but still have to stay close to home and due to the nearness of the Caribbean region moving via cruise ships or through the aircrafts is always easy with very fast booking from the Caribbean to their home countries this has also been advised to European tourists by their governments to take holidays close to home to take advantages of opportunities that can come along with the climate.

The Caribbean is also blessed with many beautiful natural features which attracts visitors to the region. many territories have beautiful beaches clear calm waters, stunning coral reefs lush rain-forests and waterfalls. some territories have features that are unique, such as the pitons in St Lucia and Harrison’s cave in Barbados. The Caribbean due to its glory over the years is home to the seven Natural Wonders of the Caribbean namely the Baths, Bioluminescent Bay, Bonaire National Marine Park, El Yungue Rain Forest, The Pitons, Pitch Lake, Soufriere Hills Volcano (Robert,2019) this are some of the beautiful sceneries in the region being topped up by 2.753 square Km which very beautiful tropic birds going around the shores.

The Caribbean is also a best fit for tourist due to its’ growth over the years of the hotel industry Due to the many years of the tourism in the Caribbean the hospitality industry as grown and evolved greatly over the years and the hotels have greatly focused with the comfortability of the visitors in the region and also their safety taking an example of the top Caribbean hotel investments in recent years according to Franck, (2023) “is the four seasons resort and residences in Anguilla. It is a luxurious beachfront resort that features 166 rooms and exclusive villas with private pools, a championship style golf course, world class spa facilities and numerous dining options” and due to these structures, it has created employment for the locals and also brought taxes to the governments of this region. Investors have moved greatly to the Caribbean hence offering more facilities in the region. The Caribbean is not only home to such hotels but investors have modernized the region and come up with hotels on cruise ships e.g. the Royal Caribbeans the largest cruise ship suites which can be priced in the tens of thousands for a weeklong sailing and prices always vary with the suite one books (Jenna,2024). The diversity of choices in the hospitality industry makes the islands the best location for every kind of people and also different kind of events and holidays e.g. for multi stop trip holidays, eco holidays, cruise, wellness/medical holidays, religious holidays, wedding related holidays.

The Caribbean has also invested in marketing strategies where countries in the Caribbean have teamed up and started a campaign aimed at encouraging travelers both internationally and locally within the islands to island hop and combine visits to tw0 or three neighboring islands in the same trip hence giving the tourist to explore different parts of the Caribbean with countries such as Nevis ,Saba ,St Kitts as part of the deal the CEO of the Nevis Tourism Authority has been heard saying that ,”the common objective is to promote intraregional travel while capitalizing on our proximity to each other and the desire of travelers to discover new experiences.” use of media has strongly impacted this industry with the film industry also embarking on advertisement by showcasing different parts of the Caribbean region on their films and creating the desire of the people watching this films to decide on making trips to this region e.g. The pirates of The Caribbean, James Bond Movies giving the sweet look of blue waters, tropical drinks and sailing adventures and different kind of things that entertain the eye.

The Caribbean is also known for its diversity of cultures attracting even Europeans who feel they share some certain cultures with the people in the Caribbean. Every year the Caribbean hosts hundreds of carnivals, festivals and holiday celebrations. A number of different countries host different festivals on different times of the year for example the Trinidad carnival hosted in port of Spain and Trinidad, Reggae sum fest in Montego Bay and Jamaica, St Lucia Jazz festival, junkanoo in Nassau and Bahamas, Crop over in Barbados, Pirates week in Caymand Islands, Sailing week in Antigua this events host thousands of tourists in the region annually and touches on every race and cultures in the world bringing a feeling of oneness to people who visit this region for this events and some sources believe that this region has not been well explored with some cultures now beginning to allow tourists in their communities and majority of this communities in this region still carrying out traditions and cultures of their ancestors this welcomes tourist to see this olden way of life. Also the diversity in traditional meals is another attraction in the region with different seafoods, jerk which is the signature of Jamaica, roast pork, pepper pot, chicken with rice recipes according to Ryan(2023) that have been in the region for years.

Safety and security is also a key aspect before tourist visiting a region with countries such as Canada coming up with annual reports for their citizens on countries that are safe to viit and regions they should visit and regions they shouldn’t. The Caribbean is a region that has proven to be a secure site for the foreign citizens going as deep as making treaties with American’s about the safety of their citizens this has grown this region for tourist feel the presence of their home countries in other countries.

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