

DIVING, ADVENTURE, LEARNING AND FUN: DIVE INTO ADVENTURE

BONAIRE 2006 WAS A WEEK TO REMEMBER

Kralendijk, Bonaire – (June 30, 2006) – June 17 to 24, 2006 divers, adventurers and nature lovers from North America, South America and Europe came to Bonaire to learn from and dive and rub elbows with some of Bonaire's and the world's most influential proponents of the marine environment at the first Dive Into Adventure Bonaire.

The week-long program for Dive Into Adventure Bonaire 2006 was adventure-filled with each day offering event participants the flexibility to create the Bonaire experience they want. With the primary focus on diving, attendees had the opportunity to participate in activities with international "stars" like Dos Winkel, Charles Mazel and Philippe Cousteau each of which offered informative sessions followed by guided dives. Interesting daytime presentations were also given by local "stars" like Dee Scarr who spoke about reef caretaking, Elsmarie Beukenboom, Fernando Simal and Ramon de Leon Barrios from STINAPA who spoke about the organization's work protecting the island's natural resources, and Mabel Nava from Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire (STCB). Participants also had the option each day to sample the many other adventure activities available on island including snorkeling, mangrove kayaking, windsurfing, kiteboarding, horseback riding and sailing, as well as some of the island's dive-related adventure activities including diving on the east coast of the island with Larry's Wildside Diving.

One of the best attended events was the kick off party, A Taste of Bonaire, which took place on Sunday June 18th in Wilhelmina Park in Kralendijk. The evening event featured live music, local food provided by some of the island's restaurants, as well as speeches by Captain Don Stewart; Ronella Croes, Director of the Tourism Corporation Bonaire; Harlton "Onnie" Emerenciana, Commissioner of Tourism; and Lt. Governor Herbert Domacasse, who officially opened the event.

On Wednesday June 21st locals and visitors alike descended upon Bonaire's National Stadium for the first Its a Knockout. A great success, this entertaining evening had teams of event participants and local people competing against each other in fun games that focused on Bonaire's culture and traditions.

Another highlight of Dive Into Adventure Bonaire was the Digital Photo Contest. Over eighty entries were made and the winners, which were announced on Friday June 23rd during the Dive Into Adventure Bonaire closing ceremony, took home great prizes totaling more than \$2,000 and ranging from a stay at the Golden Reef Inn to gift certificates for equipment. A memorable presentation by Caren Eckrich about fishes mating habits preceded the announcement of the photo contest winners and Philippe Cousteau gave the keynote presentation this evening discussing not only what his organization, **EARTHECHO** International does but also what everyone can do to protect the world's natural resources.

It has been announced that the second annual Dive Into Adventure Bonaire will take place June 16-23, 2007 so mark your calendars. For more information on next year's event visit www.DiveIntoAdventureBonaire.com in the coming months.

Open to divers, snorkelers, nature lovers and adventurers around the world Dive Into Adventure Bonaire is an event where divers and snorkelers can experience Bonaire's natural treasures and find out what they could do to help protect them while taking part in diving and dive-related adventure and land- and water-based eco-adventure activities all led by local and international experts.

Located eighty-six miles east of Aruba, the Dutch Caribbean island of Bonaire offers year-round sunshine, pristine coral formations and the most thriving fish population in the Caribbean. Ideal for adventurers, explorers and sun-worshippers alike, Bonaire offers myriad eco-adventure activities including world renowned scuba diving and snorkeling, windsurfing, kiteboarding, mountain biking, kayaking, nature tours, hiking, bird watching, sailing and fishing.

The U.S. State Department and the Department Homeland Security recently announced the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative, which will take effect on December 31, 2006, will require all U.S. citizens and foreign nationals, to carry a passport or other accepted secure documents to enter or re-enter the U.S. from vacations or business travel anywhere in the Caribbean, including Bonaire. This requirement will apply to all air and sea travel.

For more information on Bonaire, contact the Tourism Corporation Bonaire in the U.S. at 1-800-BONAIRE or visit Bonaire's official website at www.InfoBonaire.com.

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