Beat: Travel

THE BAHAMAS - Pop Up Store in PARIS to Promote the Destination

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USPA NEWS - THE BAHAMAS is comprised of 700 Islands sprinkled over 100,000 square miles of Ocean starting just 50 miles off the Coast of Florida. The Archipelago is an Ecological Oasis featuring 2,000 breathtaking Islands and Cays and boasts the clearest water on the planet, with a visibility of over 200 feet.

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The Bahamas is the site of Columbus' first landfall in the New World in 1492. At that time, the Islands were inhabited by the Lucayan, a branch of the Arawakan-speaking Taino people. Although the Spanish never colonised the Bahamas, they shipped the native Lucayans to slavery in Hispaniola. The islands were mostly deserted from 1513 until 1648, when English Colonists from Bermuda settled on the Island of Eleuthera. The Bahamas became a British Crown colony in 1718, when the British clamped down on piracy. After the American War of Independence, the Crown resettled thousands of American Loyalists in the Bahamas; they brought their slaves with them and established plantations on land grants.

Africans constituted the majority of the population from this period. The Bahamas became a Haven for freed African slaves. Slavery in the Bahamas was abolished in 1834. Today the descendants of slaves and free Africans make up nearly 90% of the population; issues related to the slavery years are part of Society. The Bahamas became an independent Commonwealth Realm in 1973, retaining Queen Elizabeth II as its Monarch. In terms of Gross Domestic Product per capita, the Bahamas is one of the richest countries in the Americas (following the United States and Canada), with an Economy based on Tourism and Finance.

The Bahamas relies on Tourism to generate most of its economic activity. Tourism as an Industry not only accounts for over 60% of the Bahamian GDP, but provides jobs for more than half the country's workforce. After tourism, the next most important economic sector is banking and international financial services. Agriculture is the third largest sector of the Bahamian Economy, major crops including onions, okra, tomatoes, oranges, grapefruit, cucumbers, sugar cane, lemons, limes, and sweet potatoes.

The official language of the Bahamas is English. Many Bahamians also speak a English-based creole language commonly referred to as Bahamian dialect or as 'Bahamianese'. In the less developed outer islands (or Family Islands), handicrafts include basketry made from palm fronds. This material, commonly called 'straw', is plaited into hats and bags that are popular tourist items. J'unkanoo' is a traditional Afro-Bahamian street parade of 'rushing', music, dance and art held in Nassau (and a few other settlements) every Boxing Day and New Year's Day. Junkanoo is also used to celebrate other holidays and events such as Emancipation Day....

Many dishes are associated with Bahamian cuisine, which reflects Caribbean, African and European influences. Some settlements have festivals associated with the traditional crop or food of that area... Bahamians have created a rich literature of poetry, short stories, plays and short fictional works. Common themes in these works are : an awareness of change, a striving for sophistication, a search for identity, nostalgia for the old ways and an appreciation of beauty.... Bahamas culture is rich with beliefs, traditions, folklore and legend.

Source : Inauguration of Pop Up Store on april 18, 2017

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