



A Caribbean Treasure - Spectacular by Nature

www.visitMontserrat.com

Press Kit



cherylandrews

MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

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MONTSERRAT

FACT SHEET

Official Name:	Montserrat
Website:	www.visitmontserrat.com
Location:	Montserrat is located in the Eastern Caribbean approximately 25 miles southwest of Antigua.
Size:	Montserrat, 12 miles long and 7 miles wide, is about 40 square miles (105 square km).
Population:	Approximately 4,700
Language:	English is the official language of Montserrat. It is often spoken with an Irish brogue, a heritage left by early Irish settlers.
Government:	Parliamentary democracy, British overseas territory.
Capital:	Plymouth (abandoned in 1997 due to volcanic activity.) Interim government buildings have been built at Brades Estate, in the Carr's Bay/Little Bay vicinity at the northwest end of Montserrat.
Climate:	Winter and summer temperatures average between 76° and 88° (F) with constant breezes from the sea and mountains.
Money:	The national currency is the East Caribbean Dollar but US dollars are widely accepted. The rate of exchange is approximately EC\$2.70 = US\$1.00. Very few businesses accept credit cards. Cash is a must here.
Departure Tax:	\$17 US (EC\$45) International Visitors \$10 US (EC\$25) CARICOM Nationals
Communications:	Area code: 664

Internet:	Access is available
Religion:	Most religious denominations are represented on Montserrat. Anglican, Methodist, Roman Catholic, Baptist, Pentecostal, and Seventh-day Adventist.
Time Zone:	Montserrat is on Atlantic Standard Time, which is one hour ahead of US Eastern Standard Time. (During Eastern Daylight Savings Time there is no time difference between the East Coast and Montserrat).
Airport:	John A. Osborne Airport
Getting Here:	Several direct daily return flights from Antigua on the carrier WinAir connect Montserrat with the rest of the Caribbean, North America and Europe. Charters from Fly Montserrat, Carib Aviation and Caribbean Helicopters are also available. If you are coming from North America - Air Canada, American Airlines (via San Juan), BWIA, Continental Airlines, Delta and US Airways offer direct flights to Antigua and St. Maarten. Ferry service from Antigua is also available
Entry Requirements:	US and Canadian citizens need a valid passport.

MONTSERRAT HISTORY

Yesterday....

The first known inhabitants were Amerindians, who called the island ‘Alligouana’ (land of the prickly bush). Christopher Columbus sailed by in 1493 and named the island Montserrat supposedly because it reminded him of the hills and valleys surrounding a Catholic abbey near Barcelona, Santa Maria de Montserrat. *It is the only island in the entire Caribbean chain that is of noticeable Irish heritage.* There's a touch of Ireland in its looks, sounds and even tastes. The harp and the female figure on the island's flag and official seal are derived from the Irish heraldry. The local speech is softly laced with Irish brogue and Saint Patrick's Day is a national holiday. Even the delicious national dish, Goat Water, a stew made of kid or mutton and spiced with cloves and rum, is of Irish origin.

Located among the small series of volcanic cones that make up the Leeward Islands, Montserrat became an English colony around 1633 when her governor, Anthony Brisket, a Wexford man, opened it as a haven for Irish Catholics who had served out their time as indentured servants in the British West Indian islands but discovered that while the English welcomed them as laborers they were unwanted as neighbors. The Irish flocked to Montserrat and by 1680 outnumbered the English by two to one.

Irish dominance in Montserrat began to decline, in the middle of the seventeenth century when sugar replaced tobacco as the island's cash crop. Sugar plantations belonged to Englishmen and most of the Irish tobacco farmers were banished to the steep, jungle-covered slopes. The sugar boom meant slaves. Africans began to arrive in large numbers through the next century and by 1800, slaves were the majority.

By the eighteenth century, Montserrat had two oppressed races: the Irish, who were reduced to poverty, suffered political disenfranchisement and religious persecution, and the African Slaves, who were placed on the bottom of the social structure. It was at this time that an Afro-Irish population came into existence. In the eighteenth century, the sugar boom ended and imports of Africans ceased to arrive in Montserrat yet Afro-Irish mixing continued and each generation was more racially mixed than the one-before. In the 1830's, slavery was abolished and the laws against Catholics repealed but Montserrat's racial harmony continued. While the people of Montserrat are dressed in a darker skin than their cousins in the old country, they are still Irish.

Today...

With its diverse cultural heritage and unique activities, Montserrat has become known as a place that exudes a “home away from home” atmosphere. In the early 1960's tourism emerged as a viable alternative to agriculture but unlike its neighboring islands, traditional tourism was not the focus. Residential tourism was the goal and the island adopted the development by invitation model for real estate development. Montserrat's welcoming environment of peace, natural

beauty and warm hospitality attracted many North Americans and Europeans who bought land and built vacation and winter homes.

The model seemed to be a success and the island was well known for its seclusion and luxury homes, yet in 1995 disaster struck the island when the Soufriere Hills Volcano erupted and caused the destruction, evacuation and relocation of the southern part of the island.

Many of the 12,000 residents fled the island and tourism came to a standstill with the destruction of the airport and several hotels. Since the eruption, the island has been in the re-building process that includes a focus on tourism. Approximately 4,700 residents have returned to the island and visitors can find their way over via a 15-minute flight from Antigua. Montserrat has two hotels and many inns and guesthouses as well as restaurants and shops available to visitors.

Tomorrow...

Over ten years have passed since the initial eruption and subsequently a flurry of activity is now taking place in Montserrat. While Great Alp Falls is gone, the one at Runaway Ghaut has increased 10-fold and nurtured a Garden of Eden. The north part of the island, once the dryer, more barren land is now a bloom with flowers, alive with butterflies, green with homegrown produce and increasingly more alive with commerce. The island's reefs are undisturbed and caves have been discovered under the island for divers to explore. The private villas once the secret hideaways of the rich and famous, are hanging up their hammocks for business.

Government buildings have been relocated to Brades, near little Bay and a new capital city is in the planning stages. And, in July 2005, scheduled flights in and out of Montserrat began from the beautiful new airport terminal. A new cultural centre opened its doors in May 2007. Montserrat still exudes the natural beauty, tranquility and exclusivity that once drew such celebrities as Elton John, Paul McCartney and Jimmy Buffet to the island. Family-owned hotels, charming guesthouses and bed & breakfasts are available. A wide range of guided walks and hiking tours are offered in the northern part of the island including Cot trail, which runs through an oki banana plantation to a historic family house, Runaway Ghaut, the Centre Hills trail, and the Silver Hills trail, a trail that passes through one of the island's oldest volcanic centers are led by the Montserrat forest rangers. Visitors who want to experience Montserrat's beauty beyond the shoreline may partake in scuba diving, snorkeling, kayaking, diving and sea fishing. Mountain bikers can see and enjoy the charm of the island on two wheels.

Animal enthusiasts may discover over 33 species of birds in and around the lush hilly forests or search out the atypical "mountain chicken," an amphibious frog that ironically is also a much sought-after delicacy. Montserrat's dark sand beaches attract three of the world's seven endangered species of sea turtles, the Green Turtle, the Loggerhead and the Hawksbill, all who chose to nest and lay their eggs there.

MONTSERRAT

ACTIVITIES

Hiking

Trek...

Mountainous vistas, curvy slopes, deep valleys and fertile fields make hiking a natural interest and popular activity. Montserrat hosts several trails that allow visitors to explore the dramatic diversification of the landscape. “The Blackwood Allen Trail” allows for panoramic views of the northern villages and coastline while the “Centre Hills Trail” is renowned for its biological diversity, rich habitats and vegetation. “The Oriole Walkway” is where hikers are most likely to get a glimpse of the Oriole, the island’s national bird, and legend has it if a visitor drinks from the cool spring water at “Runaway Ghaut,” he or she is guaranteed to be drawn to Montserrat repeatedly in their lifetime.

Beaches

Relax...

Glistening black sand covers all but one of the beautiful beaches in Montserrat as a result of the island’s volcanic nature. Whether visitors want to take a cool swim, bask in the Caribbean sun or simply read a page-turning novel, this island has a beach for sun worshippers. Rendezvous Bay, Woodlands Beach, Lime Kiln Bay, Little Bay and Bunkum Bay are among the island’s notable beaches; each with their own distinct features, they all provide a calming experience without the hassle of commercial activities and over-crowded resorts.

Water Sports

Compete...

The adventurer at heart need not worry about a lack of excitement because kayaking and sports fishing are common pastimes on the island. Visitors might also enjoy an unhurried boat ride to view the coastal areas of the island, including the devastated Plymouth and surrounding villages.

Diving

Go Deep...

What better way to spend an afternoon than submerged in paradise? Montserrat’s volcano eruption had an unexpected effect on the underwater landscape of the island. An accidental natural park was created due to sea life having the chance to recover from the stresses of human interference. Visitors to Montserrat can dive under the volcano, with explorable areas covering more than 13 miles of coastline, and witness everything from colorful reef fish and sea plumes to stony ledges, spiny lobsters and copper sweepers.

Volcano Viewing

Brave it...

Few visitors to Montserrat resist the curiosity of wanting to view the Soufriere Hills Volcano. Jack Boy Hill is one of the few areas on the island that provides first-rate views of the volcano and houses a viewing platform, concession area, telescope, barbeque grill and facilities. The location allows visitors to view the awesome incandescence of the dome, day or night, at a safe and comfortable distance.

Bird Watching

Discover...

Another favorite way of enjoying the local wildlife, and there are 33 species of birds that can be spotted in and around the hilly forests of Montserrat, including the forest thrush, brown trembler and bridled quail-dove. An unusual species that visitors may want to see is the atypical - and very shy - 'mountain chicken', an amphibious type of frog that bares no resemblance to the feathered fowl, but whose legs are a much sought-after delicacy on the island.

Turtle Watching

Experience...

The great thing about Montserrat is that no matter where visitors are, they're never far from nature. Turtle watching is a fascinating thrill for nature lovers, and several of the black sandy beaches around the island are also nesting sites for three of the world's seven species of sea turtle: the Green Turtle, the Hawksbill and the Loggerhead. Turtle nesting season runs from August - September, so if visitors happen to be here at that time, they should get in touch with the Montserrat National Trust (664-491-3086 or www.montserratnationaltrust.com) and ask about turtle watching treks.

MONTSERRAT

2010 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January

New Years Day: 1

On Shore Fishing Competition: TBD

March

St. Patrick's Week Celebrations: 13-20

St. Patrick's Day: 17

April

Good Friday (Public Holiday): 2

Easter Monday (Public Holiday): 5

May

Labor Day: 3

June

Whit Monday: 1

July

Calabash Festival: July 18 – 25

Look Out Day: TBD

August

Cudjoe Head Day: 1

Emancipation Day (Public Holiday): 2

St. Peter's Parish Bazaar: 2

October

Credit Union Week: TBD

15th Annual Montserrat Fishing Tournament: 30

December

Christmas Festival Celebrations: December 6 – January 1

Christmas Day: 25

Boxing Day: 26

St. John's Day: 27

Festival Day: 31

TOP 10 REASONS TO VISIT MONTSERRAT

Montserrat, West Indies – Montserrat, the Emerald Isle of the Caribbean, home to approximately 4,700 residents and a plethora of wildlife and deep-water reef communities is possibly one of the world’s best kept secrets.

If your dream vacation involves sunbathing on dark sand beaches, swimming in turquoise waters with spectacular views of lush, green mountains and tranquility from the hustle and bustle of modern life, then a trip to Montserrat equals ten times the value.

1. ***Everyone’s a volcanologist*** – Montserrat has the highest number of volcanologists per capita in the world. Start a conversation with any resident and easily, terms like *pyroclastic flows, lahars, deformation, hybrid earthquakes, conduit, lava chute* and *Teutonic plates* become integrated into the conversation. Be patient and take in the geography lesson, as you might be told to “kiss my ash.”
2. ***Montserrat is a time capsule*** – Montserrat is probably one of the only islands that represent what a true Caribbean holiday used to be like (before massive cruise ships, casinos and hotels took over). Its people are warm and humble and crime is virtually non-existent.
3. ***Luxury villa vacations at bed & breakfast prices***– Montserrat boasts a number of luxurious villas at rental rates that won’t burn a hole in your pocket. Weekly rates for a fully furnished villa with a pool, full kitchen, garden and all amenities start around \$700 per week. The villas offer ample room and lots of privacy.
4. ***Fast food chains and traffic jams – we don’t think so!*** Montserrat has no fast food chain restaurants. Among local delicacies are sumptuous lobster burgers, fried mountain chicken (frog legs) or goat water (like an Irish Stew but with goat meat chunks). You will also find no traffic jams. Traffic jams involve about five cars and the occasional goat or donkey.
5. ***Grey snow and multiple Ash Wednesdays*** – Safely marvel at the magnificent Soufriere Hills Volcano from several vantage points around the island, including St. George’s Hill, Richmond Hill and Jack Boy Hill. If lucky, you might get a light dusting of ash, or as the locals call it, “grey snow.”
6. ***Montserrat’s free pouring rum shops*** – Lime the night away in one of the island’s many rum shops (*bars*). Don’t be surprised when you order a mixed drink to be given the entire bottle for you to pour it for yourself – at no additional cost. Talk to the locals in the bars where stories are told about Sting, Eric Clapton, Paul McCartney, Elton John (a huge cricket and soccer fan – who knew!) and other celebrities who frequented Montserrat often in the 1980s to use the famed Air Recording Studio. Make sure and to try some bush rum (various local herbs steeped in strong, white rum), which locals say will cure any cold and is also very popular with honeymooners.

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7. ***A modern-day Pompeii*** – You don't have to travel to Italy to see Pompeii; Montserrat's buried capital city, Plymouth, has been compared to a modern-day Pompeii (minus the fossilized bodies). Many buildings have been totally buried by ash and mudflows, but you can still see the rooftops of some buildings, including the courthouse and the steeple of St. Patrick's Church. The deep-water port and pier in Plymouth now boasts a beach.
8. ***Dive with bats*** – Be blown away with Montserrat's diving, as the island's reefs are teeming with underwater life – partly as a result of volcanic activity and Montserrat's small population of 4,700 people. Make sure to go to the bat cave at Rendezvous Bluff, where you won't see Batman or Robin but hundreds of protected fruit bats. With only two dive shops, you will be guaranteed personalized service.
9. ***Irish heritage*** – Originally settled by the Irish, Montserrat boasts a strong Irish Heritage. St. Patrick's Day is a national holiday with a week of celebrations, Montserrat style. As soon as you arrive and the Immigration Officer puts a green shamrock stamp in your passport, you will realize that you are in an extraordinary place. Read the chapter on Montserrat in Pete McCarthy's book, "The Road to McCarthy" (one very funny travel book) and you will definitely want to pay the island a visit.
10. ***Montserrat still growing in size*** – Montserrat is the only part of the British Empire that is still growing (the island is a British territory). Pyroclastic and other flows in the Exclusion Zone areas as a result of volcanic activity continue to increase the physical size of the island. Officially, Montserrat is 39 square-miles but in reality, it's more like 41 square-miles. Therefore, the island does not need artificial reclamation schemes like other destinations to increase tourism real estate an offer – Montserrat's is done naturally.

Montserrat, a lush green and mountainous island of approximately 39 square miles, lies in the Eastern Caribbean chain of islands. Known fondly as the "Emerald Isle" of the Caribbean, this pear-shaped island is a traveler's paradise for nature lovers, divers, adventurers, family and villa vacationers, and honeymooners. The former capital city, Plymouth, lies buried in volcanic ash, a transformation that likens this British overseas territory to a modern day Pompeii, while in contrast, the rest of the island flourishes, boasting green mountains, world-class nature trails, deserted dark sand beaches, untouched reefs and a quiet, friendly charm reminiscent of the way the Caribbean used to be. For more information on Montserrat and its breathtaking scenery and unspoiled, unpolluted coral and volcanic vistas, visit www.visitmontserrat.com.

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KISS ME I'M MONTSERRATIAN

The Island of Montserrat Celebrates St. Patrick's Day

Montserrat, West Indies – Attending parades, wearing the color green and drinking beer at the neighborhood pub are all customs associated with the typical celebration of St. Patrick's Day. However, the island of Montserrat has different festivities in mind. The only nation in the world outside of Ireland to recognize St. Patrick's Day as a national holiday, Montserratians shake up St. Patty's Day Caribbean style by infusing their African and Irish heritage into the yearly celebrations.

Residents and visitors alike take part in a week of feasts, parades, concerts, cultural exhibitions and outdoor theater productions to commemorate the planned slave uprising that occurred on the island during St. Patrick's Day in 1768. Activities include national exhibitions showcasing history, art and literature, a kite festival, Junior Calypso Monarch Competition, Freedom Walk and Run, Heritage Day & Feast and annual St. Patrick's Day church service and dinner. There is also a slave village constructed in Little Bay that features individually decorated slave huts and a slave feast offering samples of local traditional foods, such as goat water, stewed yard fowl and bush tea. Local bars and restaurants also celebrate in the more traditional Irish way by serving Guinness and decorating with shamrocks and plenty of green.

Of all the Caribbean islands, Montserrat is the only one to boast a noticeable Irish heritage. The island was a haven for Irish Catholics who had once served as indentured servants in the British West Indies and the influence of their culture is still felt today.

The harp and female figure on the flag and official seal of Montserrat are derived from the Irish heraldry and in the southern region of the island, there is even a village named St. Patrick's (located in the exclusion zone). Goat water, the national dish made of kid or mutton and spiced with cloves and rum, is believed to hail from the original Emerald Isle. The Irish legacy is present in the folklore, surnames and even the local speech, which is laced with Irish brogue.

This British overseas territory boasts the spectacular Soufrière Hills Volcano, a modern day Pompeii in the form of its buried former capital city Plymouth, alongside lush, green mountains, world-class nature trails, secluded dark sand beaches, untouched reefs and a quiet friendly charm reminiscent of the way the Caribbean used to be. For more information on Montserrat and its breathtaking scenery and unspoiled, unpolluted coral and volcanic vistas, visit www.visitmontserrat.com.

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Montserrat: A Home Away From Home Caribbean Accommodations to Suit All Tastes and Budgets

Montserrat, West Indies – Free of commercialism and the hustle and bustle of major tourist activity found on most islands in the Caribbean, Montserrat offers the setting for that quiet and traditional Caribbean vacation. The island, known fondly as the Emerald Isle of the Caribbean, offers a “home away from home” atmosphere with range of accommodations that vary from hotels to inns and guesthouses to villas.

It is not uncommon for guests who visit Montserrat to return over and over again and often lease or rent private homes and villas. Since the 1960’s the island has been offering a unique niche of “residential tourism” where the islands villas provide a serene lifestyle with all the conveniences and amenities such as spacious bedrooms, well-furnished living areas, fully appointed kitchens, satellite television with VCR and stereo system with CD player. Most rental villas come with swimming pool or plunge pools.

Between the island’s two hotels, seven guesthouses/bed & breakfasts, numerous villas and various apartments, Montserrat has a total of 252 rooms available to vacationers. For a unique vacation experience, all accommodations are located in the safe zone (a 13.3 square mile area) and provide spectacular views of either lush green mountains, turquoise sea, the Soufrière Hills Volcano or dramatic black sand beaches.

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MONTSERRAT OFFERS UPSCALE VILLA VACATIONS AT BUDGET PRICES

Rental Villas Offer Comforts of Home and Wonderful Vistas of the Caribbean

Montserrat, West Indies – Travelers looking to get away from big, bustling resorts can look to the ideal alternative relaxing in the comfort and tranquil surroundings of their own private Montserrat villa. Known as the “Emerald Isle of the Caribbean,” Montserrat offers travelers a “home-away-from-home” atmosphere with a range of affordable villa accommodations and warm Caribbean hospitality.

Surrounded by mountains and blue sea vistas, curvy slopes, deep valleys and fertile fields, Montserrat’s villas provide guests with all the conveniences, amenities and comforts of home such as spacious bedrooms, well-furnished areas, fully appointed kitchens, satellite television, DVD player and, if needed, cooking and baby-sitting. Villa pool decks, patios and/or terraces, offer guests breathtaking views of dark sand beaches, lush green mountains or the Soufrière Hills Volcano.

“Whether looking for a cozy family setting or a luxurious five to six bedroom rental property, Montserrat’s villas offer prime accommodations for couples and families looking for a serene Caribbean vacation with all the amenities from home without having to spend a lot of money,” said Ernestine Cassell, Director of Tourism, Montserrat Tourist Board.

Affordable Montserrat villa vacations range from US\$1,500 to \$2,000 per week during high season (mid-November through mid-April) and US\$750 to US\$1,500 per week during low season (mid-April through mid-November) for a four-bedroom, four-bathroom villa with a housekeeper, swimming pool, wet bar, cable TV, CD player and washer and dryer. For available villa rentals, rates and more information, please contact one of the following real estate agents on the island:

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<p>Jackie Ryan Enterprises Tel. 664-491-2055 united@candw.ms</p>	<p>Montserrat Villas Tel. 664-491-7060 www.montserratvillas.com</p>
<p>Montserrat Enterprises, Ltd Tel. 664-491-2431/2 melenter@candw.ms</p>	<p>Neville Bradshaw Villa Holidays Tel. 664-491-5270/5235 nbvillas@candw.ms</p>
<p>Tradewinds Real Estate Tel. 664-491-2004/7499 tradewinds@candw.ms www.tradewindsmontserrat.com</p>	<p>Tropical Island Real Estate, Ltd. Tel. 786-319-9672 tirel@candw.ms www.sunislandrealestate.com</p>
<p>Villas in Montserrat Tel. 664-491-5513 johnsonwp@candw.ms</p>	<p>West Indies Real Estate Tel. 664-491-8866 wirealest@candw.ms www.wirealest.com</p>

Montserrat, a lush green and mountainous island of approximately 39 square miles, lies in the Eastern Caribbean chain of islands. Known fondly as the “Emerald Isle” of the Caribbean, this pear-shaped island is a traveler’s paradise for nature lovers, divers, adventurers, family and villa vacationers, and honeymooners. This British overseas territory boasts the spectacular Soufrière Hills Volcano, a modern day Pompeii in the form of its buried former capital city Plymouth, alongside lush, green mountains, world-class nature trails, deserted dark sand beaches, untouched reefs and a quiet friendly charm reminiscent of the way the Caribbean used to be. For more information on Montserrat and its breathtaking scenery and unspoiled, unpolluted coral and volcanic vistas, visit www.visitmontserrat.com.

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All Trails Lead to Montserrat

Emerald Isle of the Caribbean offers high energy hiking adventure

Montserrat, West Indies – Travelers looking for a high energy eco-adventure should look no further than the pristine hills of Montserrat. Maintained by the Montserrat National Trust (MNT) in collaboration with the Government’s Forestry Division and the Montserrat Tourist Board, the destination plays host to six trails that allow visitors to explore the dramatic diversification of the island’s landscape, exotic wildlife, rich habitat and lush vegetation.

Centre Hills Trail

Renowned for its biological diversity and rich habitat, it is also considered a tropical bird watcher’s paradise. With a chance to spot the shy Oriole, Montserrat’s national bird, the moist forestation is home to most of the 33 species of resident land birds and migrant songbirds such as the rare Forest Thrush, and shy Bridled-Quail Dove, as well as unusual amphibians and reptiles including tree frogs, anoles and ground lizards. Other endemic species like the mountain chicken which is actually a type of frog, or the rare galliwasp, which is half-snake, half-lizard can be spotted.

Trail to “The Cot”

This trail allows hikers to explore some of Montserrat’s heritage while at the same time view breathtaking scenery and lush vegetation. With stops at the site of an “oki” banana plantation, villages surrounding the exclusion zone and the dirt track that ascends to the ruins of “The Cot”, the one-time summer cottage of the influential Sturge Family, the track continues to a height of 1,000 ft. above sea level and walkers are rewarded with an outstanding view of the coast.

Blackwood Allen Trail

Strategically placed panoramic views of the coastline and northern villages are just a few of the attractions that draw hikers to this trail. Offering not only some challenging steep climbs through deep valleys, the route crosses over the Blackwood Allen stream where a variety of fresh water fish species can be found. The vegetation along the route includes an abundance of Montserrat’s national flower, the heliconia, amongst other attractive plants. One may also get a glimpse of the Oriole, the island’s national bird.

Runaway Ghaut

This mini trail provides a remarkable setting for a relaxing afternoon stroll or a family picnic. Montserrat’s Ghauts (pronounced guts) are deep ravines that carry rainwater down from the mountains to the sea. Legend has it that visitors that drink from the cool spring water of the fountain at Runaway Ghaut will be drawn to return to the island again and again.

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Silver Hills Trail

Situated at the northern tip of the island, this trail is one of Montserrat's oldest volcanic centers. The hike takes a circular route, winding its way through dry forest, across open fields and over the hills, providing stunning views of the land, sea and coastline. It's home to many land and shore birds including the Red-Billed Tropicbird, the Mangrove Cuckoo and the Pearly eyed Thrasher.

Trail from Little Bay to Rendezvous Bay

Rendezvous Bay holds the unique distinction of being Montserrat's sole white sand beach and offers excellent swimming, snorkeling and diving in the most pristine underwater areas of the island. This route follows a steep mountain trail over a bluff, with the option to make the return trip by boat with any of the boat ride operators on the island. Considered one of the more difficult trails to negotiate, it is advisable to consult a Forest Ranger before setting off on the journey.

Montserrat, a lush green and mountainous island of approximately 39 square miles, lies in the Eastern Caribbean chain of islands. Known fondly as the "Emerald Isle" of the Caribbean, this pear-shaped island is a traveler's paradise for nature lovers, divers, and adventurers. The former capital city, Plymouth, lies buried in volcanic ash, a transformation that likens this British overseas territory to a modern day Pompeii, while in contrast, the rest of the island flourishes, boasting green mountains, world-class nature trails, deserted dark sand beaches, untouched reefs and a quiet, friendly charm reminiscent of the way the Caribbean used to be. For more information on Montserrat and its breathtaking scenery and unspoiled, unpolluted coral and volcanic vistas, visit www.visitmontserrat.com.

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UNDERWATER PARADISE FLOURISHES BEYOND THE SHORELINE *Montserrat hosts myriad of sea life and unspoiled reefs as a result of volcanic eruption*

Montserrat, West Indies – Montserrat’s beauty extends beyond the shoreline and beneath the clear blue waters of the Caribbean Sea. Visitors to the “Emerald Isle of the Caribbean” can spend an afternoon submerging themselves in an underwater paradise. The island’s volcanic eruption has had an unexpected effect on the underwater landscape of the island. An accidental nature park was created as a result of sea life having the chance to recover from the stresses of human interference and the island has become ideally suited to sustain dense and diverse marine life.

With more than 13 miles of coastline, divers can venture and witness everything from colorful reef fish and sea plumes to stony ledges, spiny lobsters and copper sweepers. In addition, the waters surrounding Montserrat are home to playful dolphins, pipefish, eagle rays, green turtles and nurse sharks.

The tiny island of Montserrat makes for unique dive experiences, as it is surrounded by a shelf that softly slopes from the coast to about 60 feet, then following the sea floor, drops into the gulf of the sea. The shelf is covered with sand and volcanic rocks, providing habitats for deep-water reef communities.

The Green Monkey Dive Shop

Located on the southern shore of Little Bay, The Green Monkey Dive Shop is a full-service dive shop and water sport rental company offering scuba diving packages, guided snorkeling tours, boat tours, dive trips to Redonda and under (and over) water adventure equipment rental. The Green Monkey Dive Shop is operated by the expert guidance of Master Scuba Diver Trainer Troy Deppermann. With twenty-plus years of dive experience, Troy is abundantly qualified to lead experienced divers as well as instructing the novice diver. For more information on The Green Monkey Dive Shop, visit www.divemontserrat.com or call 664.491.2960.

Scuba Montserrat

Located in Little Bay, Scuba Montserrat is Montserrat's newest dive shop. It is run Andrew Myers and Emmy Aston who bring to the island over 17 years of diving experience. Available courses include discover scuba, open water certification, open water referral, advanced open water, dive master, digital photography, night dives. Snorkel trips and private beach parties are also available. For pricing and more information on Scuba Montserrat, visit www.divedestinationmontserrat.com or call 664.496.7807.

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Get Hitched & Honeymoon in Montserrat

Emerald Isle Offers Couples an Unforgettable Wedding and Honeymoon Experience

Montserrat, West Indies – Couples looking to ditch the traditional and get hitched island-style need look no further than the picturesque tropical island paradise of Montserrat. Soft pearl-grey volcanic sand under the bride and grooms toes, crystal blue waters beating against the shore and the Caribbean sun's glow gives way to the perfect ambiance for nuptial bliss. Couples can tie the knot in a sunlit garden wedding with the enticing Soufriere Hills Volcano as a scenic backdrop, or pledge their devotion at the edge of the deep blue sea. Any one of Montserrat's many breathtaking natural locations make for an unforgettable wedding venue or honeymoon escape.

After vows have been exchanged and the ceremony is over, Montserrat's unspoiled island getaway offers couples an idyllic setting for a memorable honeymoon. Intimate villas, cozy bed & breakfasts', charming hotels and quaint inns provide a romantic stay for newlyweds. For the adventure seeking honeymooners, Montserrat offers the ideal eco adventure getaway. Enjoy volcano viewing from Jack Boy Hill, which is one of the few areas on the island that provides first-rate views of the Soufriere Hills Volcano or, erupt with excitement at the Montserrat Volcano Observatory where visitors learn about the history and science behind this natural wonder and view the waking mountain through telescopes on the observatory patio.

Newlyweds can also dive into the deep on scuba/snorkel excursions and venture under the sea in explorable areas covering more than 13 miles of coastline, witnessing everything from colorful reef fish and sea plumes to stony ledges, spiny lobsters and copper sweepers. Honeymooners can step into the unknown in a variety of hiking adventures. "The Blackwood Allen Trail" offers panoramic views of the northern villages and coastline while the "The Oriole Walkway" is where hikers are most likely to get a glimpse of the Oriole, Montserrat's national bird.

For those wishing to marry in Montserrat, there are three certificates, which must be obtained before the marriage can be performed:

- a) Governor's License (approximately \$75 USD)
- b) certificates of due publication of banns
- c) Registrar General's certificate

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A minimum stay of three working days in Montserrat is required before application can be made to obtain a Governor's Marriage License. Applicants must also have the following original documents:

- (a) Marriage Application Form (issued by the Department of Administration)
- (b) Passports of both parties, Original Absolute Divorce Decree (if divorced)
- (c) Original Death Certificate of deceased spouse (if widowed)
- (d) Non-Marriage Certificate (if applicable)

For more information on Montserrat's marriage requirements contact the Department of Administration, Government Headquarters at 664-491-2365/2444 or via email at admin@gov.ms.

This British overseas territory boasts the spectacular Soufrière Hills Volcano, a modern day Pompeii in the form of its buried former capital city Plymouth, alongside lush, green mountains, world-class nature trails, secluded dark sand beaches, untouched reefs and a quiet friendly charm reminiscent of the way the Caribbean used to be. For more information on Montserrat and its breathtaking scenery and unspoiled, unpolluted coral and volcanic vistas, visit www.visitmontserrat.com.

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A New Chapter on the Rebirth of Montserrat **With the Help of Sir George Martin, the Montserrat Cultural Centre Opened its Doors**

Little Bay, Montserrat—The people of Montserrat, a country rich in tradition and fine arts, have celebrated another milestone on the road to the rebirth of their cultural core. The long awaited Montserrat Cultural Centre opened its doors on May 12, 2007. The centre, made possible by the fundraising efforts of former Beatles producer Sir George Martin, is part of the country's long-term strategy to develop Little Bay as a new urban area. The facility is a venue for concerts, conferences, exhibitions, ceremonies, and other special events.

Years in the making, the Montserrat Cultural Centre was built at a cost of over US\$2 million. Most of the funds were a direct result of the efforts of Sir George Martin who fell in love with the island in the 1970s. During that time, Martin bought a house and created Air Studios, a state-of-the-art recording facility that quickly became popular within the music industry until it closed its doors in 1989 when Hurricane Hugo struck the island.

After the volcanic destruction of the 1990s, Martin led the way in raising funds for the new cultural centre by spearheading a major fundraising concert event. Dubbed Music for Montserrat, the concert was held at London's Royal Albert Hall in 1997 and featured many of the former Air Studios recording artists such as Paul McCartney, Sting, Elton John, and Eric Clapton. Martin also sold 500 autographed limited edition lithographs of the score he produced for the Beatles' song "Yesterday."

The Montserrat Cultural Centre features the 700 seat Sir George Martin Auditorium, conference rooms, a bar and restaurant area, changing rooms, rehearsal areas, offices, and a large outside area for open air performances. For more information on the Montserrat Cultural Centre, visit www.montserratculturalcenter.com.

Montserrat, a lush green and mountainous island of approximately 39 square miles, lies in the Eastern Caribbean chain of islands. Known fondly as the Emerald Isle of the Caribbean, this pear shaped island is a traveler's paradise for nature lovers, divers, adventurers, family and villa vacationers, and honeymooners. This British overseas territory boasts the spectacular Soufrière Hills Volcano, a modern day Pompeii in the form of its buried former capital city Plymouth, alongside flourishing, green mountains, world class nature trails, deserted dark sand beaches, untouched reefs and a quiet friendly charm reminiscent of the way the Caribbean used to be. For more information on Montserrat and its breathtaking scenery and unspoiled, unpolluted coral and volcanic vistas, visit www.visitmontserrat.com.

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Made in Montserrat: Emerald Spa Volcano Soap

New Beauty Product Made from the Soufriere Hills Volcano

Montserrat, West Indies – With the recent focus towards all things natural, Montserrat is focusing on the right source – the bounty of the island itself. Volcanic Soap, a new, natural, handmade beauty product created in Montserrat, is composed of ingredients indigenous to the island and captures the cleansing, therapeutic qualities of the Soufriere Hills Volcano.

Montserrat has long been recognized in the Caribbean for its culture, resilience and sense of community spirit. This spirit was dented with the onset of natural disaster, which in turn, resulted in a steep reduction in locally made products. By launching the soap initiative, the founders' hope is to recapture the creative instinct and hardiness of the Montserratian spirit.

Volcano Soap embodies a fusion of natural volcanic ash, clay and fine sand, fresh local aloe, rosemary, honey, coconut and other natural oil and mineral blends. The soap is delicately scented with bay leaf, lemongrass essential oils and mango. Complemented by slices of pumice stone from the Soufriere Hills Volcano, the soap is naturally textured for gentle cleansing abrasion, which enhances the radiance of the skin.

This unique soap is the brainchild of Montserrat resident, Anne Cassell. Cassell has extensive experience and training in chemistry and other natural sciences at the Master's Degree level from Cambridge University in the United Kingdom and has taught science-related subjects for the past thirty years throughout Montserrat, Barbados and the UK. This expertise, combined with Anne's passion for experimenting with the creation of new products, allowed for the development of a well-balanced, high-quality soap.

Gift sets of Volcanic Soap are available at shops on the island including, Montserrat Stationery Centre, Montserrat Arts & Crafts, Tropical Mansion Suites, Last Chance, Jus Looking and the Montserrat National Trust.

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