

ARUBA

Holiday isle spreads its wings wider

Aruba is one of the Caribbean's most stable, attractive and modern destinations.

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Nelson Oduber, the shimmering island of Aruba enjoys a stable economy that is now reaching out to new horizons. The Prime Minister proudly notes, "We have managed to keep inflation under control and we have got a virtually non-existent unemployment rate."

As Edison Briesen, Minister of Tourism and Transportation explains, tourism has played a pivotal role in this achievement. "Aruba still remains within the top ten Caribbean destinations and, according to the latest UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, 2007 was the fourth consecutive year of growth," he says.

Nevertheless, on the back of this success, Aruba is now seeking to significantly diversify its economy. "Our three priorities are to actively promote the telecommunications sector, to develop the financial services industry, and to increase Aruba Free Zone activities," the Prime Minister says.



"Our three priorities are to actively promote telecommunications, develop financial services and increase the Free Zone activities."

Nelson Oduber
Prime Minister

At the forefront of this strategy is the Aruba Financial Center (AFC), which endeavors to develop quality financial industries on the island. Ellen Kuster, the acting High Commissioner of the AFC, explains, "Established in 1996, the Aruba Financial Center is the regulatory authority of the Aruban non-bank financial sector. The Center is a government entity that incorporates all limited liability companies and issues permits for these companies."

The AFC has two principle functions according to acting High Commissioner Kuster: "On the one hand, it fosters the development of financial services on the island and on the other, it controls their growth so that only quality businesses are retained in the country."

The key to its success has been implementing tougher regulations on the types of services that can be carried out on the island. "A big part has been giving greater credence to the legitimacy of the financial services established on the island," Kuster adds. "Much emphasis



"Aruba is still within the top ten Caribbean destinations and 2007 was the fourth consecutive year of growth."

Edison Briesen
Minister of Tourism & Transportation

is placed on efforts undertaken by trust and management companies to establish the 'know-your-customer2policy' based on a set of guidelines. Permits to these companies are to be issued on a yearly basis and extended only when these guidelines are met."

As a result of these initiatives, the AFC has established the New Fiscal Regime which removed Aruba from the OECD offshore 'blacklist' and positioned the island as an important financial hub. Kuster continues, "Simultaneously with the New Fiscal Regime, an Imputation Regime has been introduced which is open to entities that are engaged in listed activities, such as hoteliers, holding, finance, insurance, leasing, licensing, media, aviation, and so forth. In order to obtain neutrality between the onshore and offshore shareholders of these so-called Imputation Payment Companies (IPCs), Aruba has opted for paying out the imputation credit directly to the shareholders."



"The minimum broadband speed throughout the Caribbean is 2MB, but we will be reaching 20MB soon."

Roland Croes
Managing Director, SETAR

One company that has taken advantage of this new financial climate and Aruba's growing property potential is Remax ITR Realty. Owner and MD Kenneth Faustin explains Aruba's growing attractiveness: "Over the past five to seven years, we have seen a steady growth in the Aruban real estate market. One of the main factors triggering the boom is the increasing amount of time-share owners that are now stepping-up to becoming condominium owners."

Backing this boom is a rapidly modernizing telecommunications infrastructure spearheaded by SETAR N.V. Roland Croes, managing director, says, "Throughout the Caribbean, the minimum broadband speed is 2MB but in Aruba we will reach 20MB very soon. We are already one of the first countries in the region to provide a 3G system that supports video on phones and conference calls." With a solid tourist base to build on, Aruba seems more than ready for the next stage of expansion. **P**

Your Complete Source To Owning Real Estate On Aruba



- Residential Properties
- Commercial Properties
- Timeshare Resales
- Resort Rentals
- House Rentals
- Investment Opportunities

RE/MAX-ITR Realty

Palm Beach #186-T (297) 586-1700 - F (297) 586-1800
E-mail: info@remax-itrrealty.com
www.remax-itrrealty.com

Developing Aruba's non-banking financial landscape

As the government-owned regulatory authority of the non-banking financial sector, Aruba Financial Center works with the private sector to develop new financial services and legal entities to further diversify this sector, providing:

- Research and development of financial services
- Issuance of business and director licenses
- Incorporation of management companies
- Information on financial services



Aruba Financial Center

Schotlandstraat 49, Oranjestad, ARUBA. Tel: +297 583 4611 Fax: +297 583 4665 www.arubafinancialcenter.aw

