

ST LUCIA TO HOST FIRST RUM & FOOD FESTIVAL TO KICK OFF WINTER

Caribbean Life in New
York City on Aug. 22nd

Rodney Bay Village, St Lucia St Lucia will be host to the first Rum & Food Festival to take place in Rodney Bay Village 26-29 October as announced by Rodney Bay Village Chairman, and St Lucian hotelier, Allen Chastanet. The festival aims to highlight the cuisine and rums of the region.

"St. Lucia will have 3,200 new rooms and two designer golf courses under construction by the end of the year," said Chastanet, President of the St Lucia Hotel Association. "The destination really is on the move and we wanted a gastronomic event with St. Lucia as the venue that would focus on and promote the Caribbean rums, restaurants, chefs, food and drink products."

St. Lucia has the Pitons, "but I think we have fallen short in terms of highlighting some of the island's other attributes, which certainly include food," he said.

The festival will take place in Rodney Bay Village and will include food demonstrations by several international and local chefs; rum tastings in then Rum Pavilion in town, demonstration kitchens; a cookbook shop; a cigar rolling station; rum boat cruises to the Pitons; and live musical performances from Third World, Monty Alexander and Arrow, among others.

The festival price of \$500 per person will include three five-course dinners at a choice of five restaurants and VIP passes to the concerts.

A number of properties are expected to offer packages with special accommodations rates that can be tied into the \$500 price for the event itself, according to Chastanet. For example, the four-night rate at his Coco Palm Resort will be US\$350 per person, double occupancy.

"We hope to make this an annual event, much in the way of the St. Lucia Jazz Festival held each May," he said. "It takes a while for an event to get off the ground, so we're forecasting approximately 200 participants from overseas for the first one." More than 24 rum companies from across the Caribbean are scheduled to participate in the event. Chastanet, under whose initiative both the St. Lucia Jazz and the Air Jamaica Jazz and Blues Festivals were started, said the new event would also highlight village tourism and would feature a number of leading Caribbean dance and Jazz bands.

RODNEY BAY VILLAGE

Rodney Bay Village, the liveliest spot on the northern western part of the island offers over 20 different restaurants, shops, galleries, and a renowned golf course near by. It is a

two-minute walk to Reduit Beach, rated the most beautiful beach on the island. St. Lucia is an activity-lovers paradise with everything from horseback riding and hiking the rain forest to snorkelling the crystal blue waters or taking a helicopter ride over the Pitons. At Coco Palm guests are encouraged to immerse themselves in St. Lucia's vibrant culture, adventures, and cuisine.