

InterCaribbean to start T&T route by November





InterCaribbean Airways CEO Trevor Sadler PHOTO BY ANDREA PEREZ-SOBERS

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InterCaribbean Airways CEO Trevor Sadler has confirmed the airline will finally begin service to T&T between October and November.

Speaking to Guardian Media at the Caribbean Travel Marketplace forum here yesterday, Sadler said the airline had been holding off on entry into Trinidad because it had to close off a couple of administrative things on their side.

“We’ll be launching additional aircraft and in turn, be part of the new route structure that’s coming this year,” Sadler said.

Asked if there was any challenge regarding entry into the T&T market, Sadler said the civil aviation authority in T&T has no concerns.

“We’ve shared in principle what we would like to do. It falls within the framework of all regulatory approvals. So it’s just a matter of now selecting the time to advance this forward,” he outlined. InterCaribbean flies to several major Caribbean destinations, including Barbados, Jamaica, Cuba, Guyana, Haiti, St Vincent, Grenada and Puerto Rico.

It has been planning to add T&T to its list of destinations since last June.

Meanwhile, Sadler said for regional travel to grow, there must be a bigger buy-in from regional governments who will not charge a regional traveller at the same tax rate as an international traveller.

“After all, the Caribbean is the home for forty-something million people, and as much as we are islands apart here, financially getting from one to the other is quite a burden. ... I would honestly believe regional travel would see maybe two and a half times the volume we see today even if we cut the taxes by 50 per cent and create regional travel tax.”

However, Sadler added that it’s going to be a bold government that takes the step to reduce taxation.

“Every country has the chance to improve. A lot of the regional travel is going to visit friends and family, (travellers) may stay in family homes, but they’re going to go out to dinner, they’re still going to be part of the spend, that spend is not going to be lost.”

In an interview with Guardian Media last year, Sadler said the airline, which was founded in the Turks and Caicos in 1991, pays over US\$300 per person in taxes in each of the countries it flies to.