

## PRACTICAL SHEET STOPOVER 2

### CULTURE AND HERITAGE

---



### HISTORY

In the 1st century BC, the first inhabitants of Martinique were the Amerindian, Arawak and Caribbean peoples.

1. June 15, 1502: Christopher Columbus spots the island.
2. In 1635, the buccaneer Pierre Belain d'Esnameux landed in Martinique and founded the city of Saint-Pierre, then capital of Martinique. This is the beginning of French colonization and tensions with the Caribbean that are gradually decimated or driven out.
3. Around 1642, it is the beginning of the slave trade and the triangular trade.
4. Between 1762 and 1814, Martinique became a British possession three times. After 1814, it remained definitively French.
5. May 22, 1848: Official proclamation of the abolition of slavery after a slave revolt in Saint-Pierre.
6. From 1853 to 1885, recruitment of workers from India to compensate for the lack of manpower in the sugar industry.
7. May 8, 1902: destruction of Saint-Pierre, capital of Martinique by the eruption of Mount Pelee.
8. French Overseas Department since 1946, our island also became a Region in 1982 and, after merger in 2015, Territorial Collectivity of Martinique.



<https://www.martinique.org/experience/un-peu-dhistoire>



## AN HISTORICAL HERITAGE

### SAINT-PIERRE CITY OF ART AND HISTORY

The fiery cloud caused by the terrible eruption of May 8, 1902 killed the 30,000 inhabitants of Saint-Pierre with the exception of Louis-Auguste Cyparis, a prisoner saved by the thickness of the walls of his dungeon.

Today, Saint-Pierre is labeled a city of art and history, dotted with the many ruins of public or private buildings.

The Memorial of the Catastrophe of 1902 (Frank Perret Museum) is an essential passage to understand the Saint-Pierre before and after the volcanic eruption.

### ARCHITECTURAL LEGACIES

From huts of Amerindian origin to modernist villas, including houses, Creole houses and metal architecture, Martinique has a very specific architecture: the "Creole style".

### HISTORICAL VISITS

Ancient buildings, ruins that bear witness to a rich and complex past, cities imbued with memory, Martinique is full of places of history.

<https://www.martinique.org/patrimoine-culturel>



## A CULTURE WITH A THOUSAND INFLUENCES

### A MIXED POPULATION

The population of Martinique is "plural", resulting from the mixing of successive occupants: Amerindians, Europeans, Africans, Indians, Levantines and Asians.

### THE CREOLE LANGUAGE

French is practiced by all. All Martiniquans also speak Creole, a symbiosis of Old French, English, Spanish, African dialects and Amerindian terms.

### MARTINIQUE LITERATURE

The literary heritage of Martinique is very rich in the quality works of many writers such as Joseph Zobel, Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon... or more recently, Suzanne Dracius, Édouard Glissant, Raphaël Confiant, Jean Bernabé, Patrick Chamoiseau...

### CREOLE CUISINE

Colorful, authentic, fresh, spicy, plural and sparkling, martinique's cuisine reflects the generous and playful character of its inhabitants.

Martinique also has many great chefs, awarded and honored: Marcel Ravin, Louis Philippe Vigilant, Jean-Charles Brédas.

## MUSIC AND DANCES

Martinican music and dances born from different cultures retrace the stages and significant periods of Martinique's history: biguine, checkerboard, mazurka, tall waist, quadrille, laghia, kalenda, bèlè.

In Sainte-Marie, the Maison du Bèlè traces the musical tradition and cultural heritage of Martinique.

**CULTURAL EVENTS** punctuate the year bring its history to life with all the atmospheres:

### 1. Carnival in February or March

A moment of popular traditional jubilation much appreciated, the carnival starts on the last Sunday before Lent. In addition to queen elections in all the communes, Martinique vibrates to the rhythm of parades, themed dance evenings, until the final apotheosis of the festivities, the "fat days".

### 1. Yole and gum races

Gum competitions - traditional canoe of the Caribbean Indians, originally without sail or rudder - give rise to large popular and festive gatherings.

### 2. The Tour of Martinique of round yoles at the end of July at the beginning of August

The highlight of the year! The whole of Martinique meets for this exceptional and unique week-long event that leads the crews to bypass the island in conditions of currents, reefs and extreme winds.

### 3. The Trempage Show at Trinity in July

Unique culinary specificity in the world, soaking illustrates the mixing of African, Indian and Western cultures. Traditional dish based on bread dipped in a seafood sauce, served on large banana leaves, it can be eaten with your fingers, in a friendly atmosphere...

### 4. The Fort-de-France Cultural Festival in July

Music, dance, theatre, exhibitions, shows, parades, concerts, artistic and musical activities focused on Black and Métis cultures.

### 5. The rum festival in December

The Saint-James distillery in Sainte-Marie, celebrates the end of the sugar cane harvest: demonstration of bèlè, train rides, chouval bwa, musical entertainment...

### 1. Sung nwel in November and December

A festive and musical tradition from Toussaint to Christmas, the Chanté Nwel mix classical hymns and more secular Creole songs, sung vigorously by all the participants... sharing typical dishes and liqueurs... to the rhythm of the drum!



## LIVING LEGACIES, RECOGNIZED WORLDWIDE

### LA YOLE DE MARTINIQUE, WORLD HERITAGE SITE

Narrow boat inspired by the gum tree, light and fast, without keel, without ballast, without drift or rudder, with a shallow draft, the "round yole" can sail with one or two sails.

In December 2020, it was inscribed by UNESCO as a World Intangible Cultural Heritage Site of Humanity.

### SEINE FISHING

Inherited from the Caribbean Indians, this ancestral method of fishing, artisanal, collective and participatory is practiced in part from the beach. This involves deploying a net from an offshore boat, in an arc, and then bringing the net back to the beach by pulling it on both sides, holding the fish in the center.

### THE LASOTÈ

Instead of unusable ploughs on the mountainside, the peasants of the north carried out the ploughing work with a kind of hoe-pickaxe, the lasotè ("to the assault of the earth"). Lasotè is also a lesson in mutual aid and solidarity.

### COCOA

Inherited directly from the Caribbean Indians, the cocoa heritage still counts today rustic grape varieties worked naturally by two local companies. It is possible to learn how to prepare pain au beurre chocolat.

<https://youtu.be/eBjbmndxROk>

### MARTINIQUE, LAND OF RUM

Martinique's agricultural rum, the only one in the world to hold the precious AOC appellation, is part of the identity and has its roots in the first sugar cane plantations.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YvU1icezcMY>