



Government of Trinidad and Tobago



TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO'S YACHTING INDUSTRY


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REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
MINISTRY OF TRADE
AND INDUSTRY



A stylized map of the Caribbean region. The landmasses are colored in shades of green, and the water is light blue. A dark grey curved line, possibly representing a flight path or a specific geographic feature, arcs across the upper portion of the map. The labels 'NORTH AMERICA', 'SOUTH AMERICA', and 'TRINIDAD & TOBAGO' are placed in bold black text. The Caribbean islands are shown as a chain of green shapes, with Trinidad and Tobago highlighted in orange.

NORTH AMERICA

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

SOUTH AMERICA

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO'S YACHTING INDUSTRY

Trinidad and Tobago

The most southerly islands of the Caribbean chain, Trinidad and Tobago (T&T) is one of the most prosperous, highly diversified and industrialized countries in the Caribbean and has emerged as a dominant player in

to free market principles and strong democratic principles.

Dubbed the "Caribbean Tiger" by international business publications, Trinidad and Tobago derives most of its revenue from its well established, world class energy sector. To maxi-



CARICOM. The twin-island nation's economy is primarily energy based, with large exports of oil, gas and downstream energy products providing the bulk of the country's revenues. Along with its highly developed industrial base, the country also has a deeply entrenched manufacturing sector and a strong services sector, especially financial services.

With an ethnically diverse population of 1.3 million, T&T has a wide range of competitive advantages such as strategic geographic location, a highly educated, diverse work force; low energy and fuel rates, a highly developed industrial sector; a commitment

to free market principles and strong democratic principles. Dubbed the "Caribbean Tiger" by international business publications, Trinidad and Tobago derives most of its revenue from its well established, world class energy sector. To maximize its revenue base, the T&T Government is aggressively pursuing economic diversification, particularly in non-energy manufacturing and services, and has targeted for strategic development Seven Sectors in which the country already has a traditional resource base, established linkages and competitive advantages. These are:-

- [Food and Beverages](#)
- [Film](#)
- [Seafood](#)
- [Music and Entertainment](#)
- [Merchant Marine](#)
- [Yachting](#)
- [Printing and Packaging](#)



when boating enthusiasts discovered the benefits of the country's Chaguaramas peninsula (located in the north-west), particularly when the traditional north and eastern Caribbean yacht destinations experienced the effects of strong hurricanes.

With the onset of difficulties in terms of marine environment issues, the industry experienced a decline, which has leveled off in recent times, and the local yachting industry is once again moving into high gear.

Sector Profile

Strategic plans have been created for the development of each sector and these provide the prospective investor with a comprehensive overview of the specific industry, mechanisms for driving growth and investment, incentives for investors and strategic opportunities for business development. With this in mind, the Ministry of Trade and Industry invites investors to explore business opportunities in the yachting industry, enhance their earnings and to participate in one of the fastest growing and most diverse economies in the Caribbean.

Background

Locally, Trinidad and Tobago has always had a substantial number of small boat and pleasure craft owners, along with a few small marinas to service their needs. However, the internationally based yachting or leisure marine industry first prospered in the early-to mid-nineties

The yachting product in Trinidad differs greatly from that in Tobago. Trinidad's current industry is based primarily on two activities – repairs and hurricane storage, and over the years this island has emerged as the largest yacht repair centre in the Southern Caribbean. The northwest-



ern peninsula, made up of Chaguaramas and the outlying islands, has evolved into the center of yachting activity for Trinidad. In fact, there are several popular outlying bays and an anchorage zone in Chaguaramas Bay specifically marked for the mooring and anchoring of yachts.

In Tobago, the yachting product is primarily leisure and tourism based, with pleasure craft docking to experience the ambience of the island for a few days or a few hours, then continuing on their voyage.

At present, there are twelve marine/boatyard facilities and the country has the capacity for some 885 visiting yachts. Direct employment of some 1,100 – 1,400 persons and revenues of US\$23.3 million were recorded in the year 2001.

The following major players make up the industry:

- **Yachting tourists** – visitors who stay for more than 24 hours in the particular country and whose home base is a vessel.
- **Crewed charter boats** operated as a resident or non-resident business, e.g. sport fishing, diving, glass bottom boats, etc.
- **Yachting commercial enterprises** accommodation and amenities primarily focused on the visiting yachting tourists, including marinas, boatyards, moorings, marine equipment supply shops and chandlers.



- **Ancillary commercial enterprises**— including, taxi drivers, car rentals, travel agents, banks, restaurants, supermarkets, tour operators, ICT service providers, etc.
- **Skilled workers and repair services** includes shipwrights, chandlers, mechanics, electricians, plumbers, painters, riggers, carpenters, and sail makers.
- **Special Yachting events** – for example regattas.

Trinidad and Tobago boasts the widest array of skilled labour for the yacht services industry in the Caribbean. International yachts-men visit Chaguaramas regularly for a complete overhaul of their vessels. It is estimated that there are approximately 150 repair contractors ranging in size from single-person operations to businesses with twenty or more employees. Labour is available at regionally competitive prices in the following areas:

Boat building
Chandlers
Engine repair and refit

- Fiberglass work
- Gelcoat
- General yacht maintenance
- Marine carpentry
- Marine electronics
- Marine refrigeration and air conditioning
- Osmosis treatment
- Painting and varnishing
- Project management services
- Propeller maintenance and repairs
- Power washing
- Sail making, repairs and rigging
- Upholstering
- Welding and fabricating
- Water blasting
- Woodworking
- Yacht delivery services

The yachting industry is in a state of growth internationally. With an increasing number of persons retiring early, and higher average incomes, more and more people are opting for yachting as an ideal leisure activity. With increases in the production of

pleasure craft, and mega-yachts in particular, additional strain is being placed on the existing infrastructure worldwide, and the demand for marina space is increasing.

The Yachting Steering Committee (YSC) is a Cabinet Appointed committee established in 2005 to oversee the implementation of the recommendations outlined in the “Strategic Plan for the Yachting Industry of Trinidad and Tobago”. The committee comprises representatives from the main Governmental agencies responsible for creating a facilitative environment for the yachting industry. The committee’s vision for the yachting industry is that “Trinidad and Tobago must become the premier destination for yacht repair services in the Caribbean and to be a must-see destination on a yachting tourist’s Southern Caribbean cruising schedule”.

Investment Opportunities

- Tobago’s potential as a premier yachting destination still has not been realized and the local industry still has significant opportunities for sophisticated, environmentally-friendly, sustainable developments which attract the high-end pleasure craft market; currently there are no marina facilities in this traditional tourism destination;
- Chacachacare – this island off Trinidad’s North-western coast has sheltered bays, which make it an ideal location for an environ-





mentally-sensitive yacht facility development; and

- The Port of Spain and San Fernando city waterfront development projects have included marina facilities in their designs, thus providing opportunities for prospective investors.

Investment Incentives

Some major industry development incentives include:

- Under the **Corporate Tax Act**, any company which promotes or sponsors yachting will be granted a tax allowance of 150 percent of the total expenditure incurred, up to a maximum amount of TT\$1,000,000.00;
- Under the **Income Tax Act**, individuals are allowed a tax deduction of up to 25% on investment in the equity capital of an approved tourism project including yachting;
- The **Tourism Development Act** allows for a tax exemption for a maximum of seven years on the profits from an approved tourism project including marinas, boat-yards, dive operations, water

sports, charter boats, cruise activities and tour operations by sea;

- Yachting repair and other services including port and harbour services, docking, mooring and conservancy are **VAT exempt**, provided that the yachts and pleasure crafts are owned by persons who are neither citizens nor residents of Trinidad and Tobago at the time when the repairs and services are performed;
- The **Customs & Excise Act** provides investors full exemption from Customs Duties on imports of machinery and raw materials in the tourism sector.
- The **Foreign investment Act** allows a foreign investor to purchase land up to one acre for residential purposes and five acres for commercial use. In addition foreign investors are allowed to purchase up to 30 percent of the cumulative shareholding in a public company.

Trinidad and Tobago Investment Advantages

Steady Economic Growth

Trinidad and Tobago is one of the fastest growing nations and is developing into the business, commercial and investment hub of the region. The country has experienced 15 consecutive years of economic growth, with a GDP growth rate of 12 per cent in 2006.

Strong Economic Base and Diverse Economy

Trinidad and Tobago's economy is energy based and also diversified enough into business and services to support any range of financial interests and industrial requirements.



Highly Developed Air and Sea Transport

Trinidad and Tobago has two of the largest and most well-developed ports in the Caribbean, at Port of Spain and Point Lisas, handling dry and general cargo, industrial bulk and containers. The two airports, Piarco and Crown Point International, service some of the largest airlines in the world, e.g. American Airlines, British Airways, Virgin Atlantic, Continental Airlines, Delta Airlines, etc.

Enhanced Market Access

Trinidad and Tobago, as members of CARICOM, has embarked on a drive to secure gain greater market access for manufacturers and service providers located here through bilateral trade agreements with its Latin

neighbors. So far we have arrangements in pace with Colombia, Cuba, Costa Rica, Venezuela and the Dominican Republic.

Government Commitment to Development of the Industry

With the establishment of the Maritime Development committee, the Government has indicated its intention to make the Maritime sector a sustainable long term, revenue generating option.

Educated Workforce

Trinidad and Tobago has one of the highest literacy rates in the English speaking Caribbean, and the Government provides a range of educational benefits, in particular for tertiary level and technical education. The local yachting industry contains a pool of experienced technicians and skilled laborers directly within the yachting industry itself.

Commitment to Free Market Policies

Trinidad and Tobago has a long standing democratic tradition, epitomized by its Westminster model Parliament and continued Government support for business and investment and adherence to democratic principles.

Lower Cost of Living

Due to currency value and economies of scale, the cost of living in Trinidad and Tobago compares favorably with other Eastern Caribbean territories.

Diverse Range of Social Activities

Trinidad and Tobago has more to offer than most other Caribbean islands in



gram to implement Spanish as the First Foreign Language.

Highest Concentration of Foreign Missions in the Caribbean

Along with the United States, the UK and Canada, the presence here of representatives from several major European and Commonwealth countries is testament to the long-standing, positive relationships which the international community has enjoyed with Trinidad and Tobago. In addition, visitors will have immediate contact to their home territories whenever necessary.

terms of social activities, nightlife, restaurants, cultural events, festivals, etc., all of which enhance the overall quality of life for the country's citizens.

Ethnically and Culturally Diverse

Due to its history, Trinidad and Tobago has become famous for its ethnic mix and tolerance of diversity, which ensure that all people are welcomed to live and work here. In fact, as part of the drive to integrate our economy into Latin America, Government has embarked on a pro-



Contact Information

YACHT SERVICES ASSOCIATION OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO (YSATT)

YSATT is a private non-profit industry organization established in 1994 by the boat yards and marinas located on Trinidad's Western peninsula. YSATT is the liaison between Government and the yacht services industry. The organization provides a range of services for its 90 odd members including marketing and promotion and industry research. Since 2004, YSATT has also provided a water taxi service to transport people and goods across the various marinas.

MS. GINA CARVALHO President, YSATT

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General Info

COUNTRY NAME:

Trinidad and Tobago, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

CAPITAL CITY:

Port of Spain (Trinidad), Scarborough (Tobago).

POPULATION:

1.3 Million: 40% East Indian descent; 40% African descent; 20% Mixed descent plus European, Mediterranean and Chinese. The country has become famous for its cosmopolitan, friendly society.

RELIGION:

Roman Catholic 29%; Hindu 24%, Anglican 11%, Muslim 6%, Other 30%.

AREA:

5,128 km² (Trinidad 4,828 km², Tobago 300 km²)

LANGUAGE:

English

POLITICAL SYSTEM:

Trinidad and Tobago is a democratic republic within the Commonwealth, holding regular, free elections. Parliament consists of an elected House of Representatives (41 members) and a Senate (31 members). The Prime Minister is the Head of Government. The President is the Head of State.

TIME ZONE:

Eastern Standard Time = 1 (no time difference when North America is on daylight saving time during the summer), GMT-4 (during British Summer time - 5).

TRAVEL:

Caribbean Airlines, Trinidad and Tobago's national carrier flies to Port of Spain from North America, the UK and the Caribbean. Piarco, the international airport, is about 25 kilometers from Port of Spain. Other scheduled carriers include: American Airlines, Virgin Atlantic, Delta Airlines, Air Canada, Continental Airlines, British Airways, COPA Airlines, Suriname Airways, Bahamas Air and Liat. Tobago is serviced by Crowne Point International Airport, about 2 km from Scarborough.

CLIMATE:

The islands are warm all year round, with a mean temperature ranging from 32°C (90°F) to 20°C (73°F).

CURRENCY:

The current exchange rate for the TT dollar is as follows:

US \$1.00	-	TT \$ 6.30
Euro €1.00	-	TT \$10.00



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