



## **Barbados to Host the 12<sup>th</sup> World Flower Show**

Barbados will welcome some of the world's most talented floral artists when it hosts the World Association of Floral Artists (WAFA) 12<sup>th</sup> World Flower Show from June 22 to 25 this year. The triennial event has been referred to as the "Olympics of flower arranging".

At a media launch for the show, Maurice Webster, President of WAFA Barbados, explained that the local fraternity was motivated to bid on the event because of the island's many successes at both the renowned Chelsea Flower Show and at previous World Flower Shows. Describing the bidding process as "formidable", Webster revealed that Barbados had beat out Russia in the final ballot.

Central Bank of Barbados Governor, Dr. DeLisle Worrell, who along with his wife Monica Drayton Worrell will be the patron of the show, spoke of its broader implications for the island. "To host an event of this stature enhances the Barbados brand," he said, adding that it was that Barbados brand that has made the island as successful as it has been. Worrell also revealed a personal connection to the world of floral design: his mother, Edna Worrell, is a stalwart of the local flower arranging community.

During the launch, WAFA Barbados officials said that an event of this magnitude – there are already almost 400 registrants – would give Barbados exposure in non-traditional markets, noting that local hotels had already received more than 30 bookings from people in Japan as well as a similar number from Russia and Zimbabwe. The average exhibitor will spend 10 days on the island.

WAFA was founded in 1981 and currently has 31 member countries including Italy, Peru, South Africa and the USA. The most recent World Flower Show, which took place in 2014, was held in Ireland. This year's event will be staged at the Lloyd Erskine Sandiford Centre (LESC). Sponsors include the Barbados Investment and Development Corporation (BIDC), Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc. (BTMI), Barbados Tourism Product Authority (BTPA), the Tourism Development Corporation, Productive Business Solutions and LESC.

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