



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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***THE TOURISM INDUSTRY USES THE POWER OF ITS BUSINESS AND CONTRIBUTIONS
TO SUPPORT DISASTER RECOVERY IN FIJI
The Tourism Cares community supports Fiji following Tropical Cyclone Winston***

CANTON, MA—March 3, 2016 -- The tourism community is leveraging the influence of their businesses to support Fiji after last week's devastating storm.

"Fiji is a resilient nation and while they seek immediate financial help, what they also need is for tourists to continue to travel," said Anna Vo, vice president of Tahiti Legends. "The Fijians are heavily dependent on tourism; it is the leading economic activity for the islands. The best way we can help rebuild is to spend tourism dollars there and to help promote travel to Fiji."

While Royal Caribbean and Carnival Cruise Lines have reported they are temporarily bypassing Fiji ports due to the storm, both have promised to maintain their scheduled port calls in the coming weeks and months ahead.

"We'll continue to support Fiji as they rebuild and recover, making every effort to maintain our scheduled port calls in the weeks and months ahead, if it is appropriate to do so," Royal Caribbean said in a statement on its website.

These pledges and calls-to-action by the travel and tourism community are a reminder of the collective power the industry has in rallying support for destinations in need, according to Mike Rea, CEO of Tourism Cares. While it is vital to assist with relief aid, it is imperative to encourage visitors to return to places who rely on them to fuel their economy.

"This is the strongest storm in Fiji's recorded history and our hearts and prayers are with the people of Fiji as they rebuild," said Rea. "We are honored that the tourism industry is in a position to help, both through the power of our very business and through charitable contributions. Every travel company in a position to help boost tourism to Fiji can give back that way. And for those making donations, please consider supporting local organizations as well as multinational ones, and supporting recovery as well as relief."

This is not the first time the tourism industry has rallied around a distressed destination. After earthquakes destroyed much of Nepal last year, more than 220 companies and individuals in the community contributed to the Tourism Cares Nepal Recovery Fund, which specialized in leveraging the donations and influence of the travel industry to make targeted investments to help the recovery and renewal of Nepali tourism.

Community-based organizations and funds that are worth considering when making charitable donations include:

- **Ocean Futures Society:** 100% of funds go directly to areas of the Jean-Michel Cousteau Fiji Resort, JMC Dive Center and villages of Nukubalavu and Nacekoro. <http://www.oceanfutures.org/fiji-emergency-fund>
- **Sea Mercy & Yacht Aid:** Sea Mercy and Yacht Aid have partnered to provide a fleet of volunteer vessels to deliver emergency aid and trained medical disaster response teams to the most remote islands of Fiji. <http://www.seamercy.org/FijiRelief> and www.yachtaidglobal.org
- **Rosie Holidays and Ahura Resorts:** A local destination management company and a resort have created a fund to help families in remote island villages source urgent materials that will be delivered by Sea Mercy vessels. <https://www.facebook.com/RosieDMCFiji/posts/1074416819267567>

About Tourism Cares

Tourism Cares, Inc., a US 501(c)(3) public charity, preserves and enriches the travel experience for future generations. Founded and supported by leading associations and companies in the travel industry, the Tourism Cares community invests its resources, talent and influence in three areas: we support underappreciated and at-risk destinations and communities; we invest in those entering the industry and professional development for emerging leaders; and we share travel corporate social responsibility knowledge and best practices so that individual businesses can best support their own causes. Learn more at www.TourismCares.org and [@TourismCares](https://www.instagram.com/TourismCares).

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