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## UVI and V.I. Department of Tourism Partner with Pelago Trips and Dominica Stakeholders to Host Caribbean Inaugural Athlete Retreat

The V.I. Department of Tourism and the UVI partnered with Pelago Trips and Dominica stakeholders to host the Caribbean Inaugural Athlete Retreat, uniting athletes and leaders in a weekend of wellness, sport, and cultural connection.

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A collage capturing key moments from the Caribbean Inaugural Athlete Retreat in Dominica, featuring athletes and organizers participating in wellness sessions, cultural activities, and community-building events By. PELAGO.

DOMINICA — The V.I. Department of Tourism and the University of the Virgin Islands joined forces with Pelago Trips, Discover Dominica Authority, Dominica State College, and Sea Cliff Eco-Cottages to successfully host the Caribbean Inaugural Athlete Retreat in Dominica from October 3–5, under the theme “Embracing the Comeback: The Mindset of a Champion.”

The three-day retreat, held along the northern coast of Calibishie, brought together student-athletes, sports leaders, and wellness advocates from both Dominica and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Designed as a holistic experience, the event aimed to promote mental resilience, cultural connection, and personal well-being through nature and movement — blending sport, reflection, and Caribbean heritage into one transformative weekend.

The retreat opened with a symbolic “Opening Pour,” led by Rose-Ann Farrington, deputy commissioner the VI DOT. Her remarks set the tone for the weekend, focusing on resilience, unity, and shared Caribbean pride. The event was hosted by [Olympic medalist Thea LaFond-Gadson](#), who guided participants through exercises and discussions focused on balancing high performance with inner restoration.



*Photo Credit: Pelago Trips*

Each day of the retreat offered immersive, wellness-centered sessions. “Pilates & Prayer” welcomed mornings with mindful movement and meditation under the island sun, while “Athlete Talk” provided an intimate panel where participants shared stories of perseverance, recovery, and the mental strength required to overcome challenges both on and off the field.

The retreat’s finale — the WATO Experience, named after the Kalinago word for “fire” — became a powerful symbol of unity. Around a riverside flame, participants prepared traditional dishes, exchanged laughter, and reflected on shared experiences in the spirit of Caribbean kinship.

The weekend concluded with a keynote address by Ms. Farrington, whose message of resilience and personal growth reinforced the retreat’s core purpose: that the Caribbean rises together through wellness, culture, and sport.





*Photo Credit: Pelago Trips*

In a reflection shared by Pelago Trips, organizers described the retreat as a milestone that showcased the power of collaboration between Caribbean nations. “The Caribbean Inaugural Athlete Retreat brought together athletes from the Dominica State College and the University of the Virgin Islands in a space where sport, nature, and self-growth intertwined beautifully,” the statement read. “Guided by the theme ‘Embracing the Comeback,’ the retreat explored what it truly means to recover, rise, and reconnect not only as athletes, but as individuals learning to balance performance with well-being.”

Pelago Trips extended appreciation to the Discover Dominica Authority, Dominica’s Tourism Department, and the Government of Dominica for their support in promoting wellness in tourism, sports, and storytelling. Gratitude was also expressed to Dominica State College Sports Director Clevon Vidal for his leadership in athlete development, and to the University of the Virgin Islands and the V.I. Department of Tourism for “bridging islands through the shared language of sport and

resilience.”

The event was hosted at Sea Cliff Eco-Cottages, a retreat site that provided a setting for reflection, rejuvenation, and regional unity.

Pelago Trips also recognized the contributions of its extended network of partners and sponsors, including Medo’s Kitchen, Modern Caribbean LLC, Modern Day Goddess, Sutton Place Hotel, Bee Natural, J. Cuffy Pilates, Pharmore2see, Jolly’s Pharmacy, Decide On Dominica, PJ’s Getaway, Big Wave VI, Blue Whale Villa, Trés Chis, Nature’s Touch, D-Fam Car Rentals, Calibishie Tourism, Hodges Bay House, and the National Bank of Dominica.

In a forward-looking statement, Pelago Trips noted its mission as a Caribbean boutique travel and tourism brand focused on wellness-centered, authentic island experiences that encourage cultural pride and meaningful collaboration. The company invited athletes, tourism partners, and regional stakeholders to join the growing movement of mindful travel and empowerment, pledging to continue “curating journeys that inspire reconnection, resilience, and renewal across the Caribbean.”

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