



By Barbara Arrindell

Antigua and Barbuda's official position on whaling does not necessarily fit with the thoughts, beliefs and concerns of many who live here.

Over 5,000 people have already signed a petition asking Prime Minister Gaston Browne to ensure that Antigua and Barbuda stops supporting commercial whaling and supports a South Atlantic Whale Sanctuary instead.

With a heightened awareness about not just whales but also the practice of whaling, others in Antigua and Barbuda may be asking why do whales matter and why should we be getting involved in the global disagreement about whaling.

What are whales?

Whales are part of a group of marine mammals called cetaceans. This group include whales, dolphins, and porpoises.

Whales, however, are among the largest and oldest animals on Earth. They are in every ocean. The smallest are the small dwarf sperm whale, while the largest is the massive blue whale, which is the largest animal on the planet.

Whales breathe air through lungs, they give birth to live calves, and nurse their young with milk. They are also warm-blooded.

In the Caribbean, it is possible to see a wide variety of whales but the four most commonly sighted are the humpback, Short-finned pilot whales, Minke and Sperm whales.

Sperm whales are considered to be Caribbean resi-

Whales and Whaling

dents; or at least the females and calves live here year-round, often in deep-water areas like Dominica. Short-finned pilot whales may also qualify for CARICOM Passports as they live throughout deeper Caribbean waters, and so are typically spotted on boat excursions.

Minke whales were, for a long time thought to simply pass through or to visit during the winter months to give birth and allow their calves to swim in our waters for the first few months of their lives. However, more and more of them are being heard and seen during the summer months in places as varied as between Montserrat, Guadeloupe and Antigua and further North by the US Virgin Islands and beyond to the Dominican Republic.

Humpback whales, however, are tourists. They swim over in time for Christmas and stay until Easter, using our waters to mate, give birth and to train their young. By April, they head back to colder places like Iceland and Canada.

Some of whales species are on the endangered list. The list of 12 comprises the Bowhead whale, Beluga whale, Fin whale, Blue whale, North Atlantic right whale, Gray whale, Humpback whale, North Pacific right whale, Southern right whale, Rice's whale, Sei whale, and Sperm whale.

Why should we protect them and why is commercial whaling a problem?

The following is taken with permission from:

[https://www.antiguapro-
tectwhales.org/](https://www.antiguapro-
tectwhales.org/)

"Commercial whaling (killing whales for profit) has been banned globally since 1986 by the International Whaling Commission (IWC). Antigua and Barbuda joined

the IWC in 1982 and voted for the commercial whaling ban.

However, since 1994, Antigua and Barbuda's representatives to the IWC have been vocal supporters of proposals to resume commercial whaling and have opposed whale conservation measures such as the establishment of whale sanctuaries. This is despite having no whaling tradition of our own, no practice of eating whale meat and strong domestic laws protecting whales. Our pro-whaling position is a result of close diplomatic and financial ties to Japan, one of the last three remaining commercial whaling nations.

At the last two recent IWC meetings, Antigua and Barbuda has submitted proposals to create a pathway for the return of commercial whaling. Both times, these have been withdrawn, but

Antigua and Barbuda has submitted the proposal again to the 70th meeting of the IWC to be held in Australia in late September, 2026. This is not who we are!

A recent opinion poll shows that a majority of Antiguan and Barbudans oppose commercial whaling and are not aware that their government supports it. They are concerned about the impact this support could have on our international reputation and tourism industry.

Given these risks, the Coalition believes that our country's position on commercial whaling and whale conservation should reflect the views of our people, not be dictated by a foreign government: Antigua and Barbuda should be a voice for whale protection, not whale killing."

JOB VACANCY

We are looking for a **Cruise Port Retail Development Manager** for Maison Royale

Key Responsibilities

1. Manage procurement, visual merchandising and new boutique development
2. Oversee daily boutique operations, ensuring smooth performance and strong store standards
3. Drive sales and achieve monthly and annual targets
4. Coach and motivate staff to deliver exceptional customer experiences
5. Build strong client relationships and maintain high standards of store presentation and brand image
6. Manage reporting, operations, and ad-hoc duties as required
7. Manage projects
8. Build and maintain vendor relationships

Job Requirements

1. Associate's degree
2. Minimum 10 years of supervisory/management experience in luxury retail or similar industries
3. Strong leadership and customer service skills
4. Sales-driven with a proven track record of achieving targets
5. Willing to work retail hours, including weekends and public holidays