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GRENADINE ESCAPE BECOMES A SUPPORTER OF THE TURKS & CAICOS REEF FUND

17 December 2012, Providenciales, TCI – The Turks & Caicos Reef Fund (TCRF) continues to gain financial support from businesses that rely on healthy coral reefs not only within the TCI, but in other parts of the Caribbean. The latest supporter is Grenadine Escape, Ltd., a United Kingdom-based real estate advisor, rental villa and yacht charter agency.

Lara Cowan, Managing Director of Grenadine Escape, Ltd. said, “We were interested in finding a way to support coral reef protection in the Caribbean and learned about the TCRF through our contacts in the UK Overseas Territories Conservation Forum (UKOTCF). We were excited to hear that the TCRF is a volunteer run, non-governmental agency dedicated to the protection of the marine environment and committed to using 85% of the funds they raise to support marine environmental programs.”

Bruce Dinwiddy, the Wider Caribbean Working Group chairman of the UKOTCF said, “Since the TCRF was founded in 2010, they have been very dynamic in the projects they have pursued which are greatly benefiting the health of the reefs around the Turks & Caicos Islands. Their work with the TCI Government to replace missing dive and snorkel boat moorings and expand the number of moorings available will significantly reduce the damage done to reefs in the Marine National Parks caused by boats anchoring when moorings are unavailable.”

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Grenadine Escape, Ltd. has kindly undertaken to donate 10% of their gross profits from all yacht charters to the TCRF on an ongoing basis. “We are sincerely grateful to Lara Cowan and Grenadine Escape, Ltd. for their generous offer of support,” said Don Stark, Chairman of the TCRF. “This funding commitment will help us expand our program efforts in the TCI to include not just moorings and snorkel trails, but to continue to add new educational programs and support our advocacy efforts to help protect the marine environment of the TCI. Without our healthy reef systems, these islands would be very different places and would not have the healthy fish populations and lovely beaches that attract visitors.”

The TCRF has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the TCI Government Department of Environment and Maritime Affairs designating the TCRF as the lead agency for the installation and maintenance of dive and snorkel boat moorings within the Marine National Park boundaries. This effort has already yielded substantial results in Grand Turk and Salt Cay where 19 dive boat moorings have already been restored and/or repaired. Around Providenciales, the work has just begun, but already the TCRF working with the local dive and snorkel boat operators have replaced over half a dozen missing dive boat moorings and identified ten new snorkeling sites at which new permanent moorings will be installed.

### **About TCRF**

Founded in 2010, the Turks & Caicos Reef Fund is an all volunteer-run organization that provides funding for education, research and conservation programs to individuals, organizations and agencies that help to preserve and protect the marine environment of the Turks & Caicos Islands. Our goal is to have at least 85% of all funds raised through voluntary contributions from divers and snorkelers visiting the Turks & Caicos Islands directed to the Fund’s programs.

Anyone wishing to donate or assist the TCRF in any way can contact them through their website, [www.TCReef.org](http://www.TCReef.org). Scuba divers visiting the islands are encouraged to make a \$10 donation through the purchase of a dive tag that can be attached to their dive gear to show their support. Snorkelers visiting the islands can show their support through the \$5 purchase of a pink or blue silicone wristband. A complete list of outlets for TCRF merchandise can be found on the organization’s website.

### **About Grenadine Escape, Ltd.**

Grenadine Escape Ltd is luxury travel and real estate agency, which provides expert and unbiased advice on luxury property and boats in the Caribbean providing individuals with the ability to book the best charter yachts available, the best dive instructors, fishing boats and the best private villas available for rent in the Caribbean and research and invest in unique real estate opportunities.

### **About UKOTCF**

The UK Overseas Territories Conservation Forum exists to promote the co-ordinated

conservation of the diverse and increasingly threatened plant and animal species and natural habitats of UK's Overseas Territories (UKOTs) and Crown Dependencies. It aims to do this by providing assistance in the form of expertise, information and liaison between non-governmental organisations and governments, both in the UK and in the Territories themselves.

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