

St. Barts is shutting down due to COVID-19

By Jacquelyn Powers Maurice and Tamar Lapin

February 2, 2021 | 6:35pm | Updated



Jetsetters should bid “adieu” to upcoming St. Barts vacations.

The Caribbean island popular with celebrities will bar most visitors beginning Wednesday to comply with coronavirus protocols issued by the French government.

But local authorities in Saint Barthelemy, commonly known as St. Barts, are fuming about the new restrictions, The Post has learned.

“Independently of the will of our local authorities to keep St. Barts open, the French government has just decided to put in place new preventive measures against COVID-19 variants,” Nils Dufau, the president of the Tourism Board, said in a statement.

Dufau said that local authorities were currently “negotiating” with French officials “to ease the entry restrictions and find an alternative solution.”

"We have managed to keep it at bay, the situation is well managed and under control," he insisted.



A plane prepares to land on the runway at the airport on St. Barts island in the Caribbean.

EliotPress/MEGA

Fearing the spread of more contagious COVID-19 strains, France on Sunday **announced a ban** on all non-essential travelers from outside the European Union.

The French government **on Tuesday** also imposed travel restrictions on France's overseas territories, including St. Barts, St. Martin, Martinique and Guadeloupe.

The regulations could put a wrench in the plans of the rich and famous who frequently enjoy jaunting off to St. Barts' white-sand beaches and yacht-filled harbors.

Celebs recently spotted there included **Paul McCartney**, Steve Harvey, Mike Tyson and **Ramona Singer** of "The Real Housewives of New York."

As of Tuesday, bikini-clad revelers were still showing off their hedonistic vacations at St. Barts hotspots like Nikki Beach and Gyp Sea on their Instagram feeds.

But the fun will be shut down soon on the island, which has seen a rise in COVID-19 cases and has just one hospital.

Under the new rules, anyone wishing to come and go from St. Barts will only be able to do so for “compelling reasons,” such as pressing medical, professional or familial needs, the French government said.

They’ll also need to show a negative COVID-19 PCR test from at least 72 hours before their departure and will need to quarantine for seven days upon arrival.

Tourists currently on the island will be allowed to leave if they choose.

Dufau said that while the island has “some cases” of the virus, it is “thankfully not enduring any epidemic.”