



Photo: Crobard / Shutterstock.com

Fort-de-France



Tony Moran / Shutterstock.com

With its unique mix of Creole culture and European cosmopolitanism, the French overseas territory of Martinique, and in particular its capital Fort-de-France, has just the right blend of tradition and sophistication. A fast-developing city boasting first-class shopping and dining as well as a bustling urban life. But the main draw to this Caribbean island remains its surrounding natural beauty made up of lush tropical rain forests, an active volcanic mountain, and picture-perfect beaches, which have captivated visitors for centuries.



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THE CITY



Pack-Shot / Shutterstock.com

Fort-de-France is finally living up to its potential and becoming the up-and-coming city many knew it could be. There has always been plenty there to exploit, from the "One of the World's Most Beautiful Bays" (an honor recently bestowed upon the Fort-de-France Bay) to the historical landmarks dating back to the early days of colonization, to the eclectic and sophisticated Creole cuisine, to the incomparable natural beauty of the surrounding area.

The city has been called "The Paris of the Caribbean," and though this may be a bit of an exaggeration, there are solid reasons for the comparison.

Recent development projects are finally coming to fruition, renewing the central park of La Savane and the wonderful beachside promenade, and more projects are planned for the future which will surely make Fort-de-France one of the most appealing, walkable, beautiful and cosmopolitan cities in the Caribbean. Also take the chance to explore the surrounding areas, climb Mount Pelée, visit natural reserves and revel at some of the island's dream-like beaches.

DO & SEE



Lisa Strachan / Shutterstock.com

The picturesque seaside city of Fort-de-France offers plenty in the way of sights and attractions, including beautiful historical buildings, an imposing fort, and ample walkability, but it is best used as a home base for exploring the natural surroundings of the island of Martinique.

Laze at idyllic beaches from coast to coast, hike up the commanding Mount Pelée and marvel at the lush, tropical beauty of the island. The more historically-minded can check out the Musée de la Pagerie or contemplate the solemn Anse Cafard Slave Memorial, a sobering reminder of the country's and region's tumultuous past.

Bibliothèque Schoelcher



Named after Victor Schoelcher, a leader in the fight to free slaves in the Caribbean during the 19th century, this beautiful public library is one of the most recognizable landmarks in Fort-de-France. It was first built in Paris for the 1889 World Exposition, then taken apart and shipped to Martinique to be reassembled as it is seen today.

Photo: Pack-Shot / Shutterstock.com

Address: 1 Rue de la Liberté, Fort-de-France

Phone: +596 596 55 68 30

Fort Saint-Louis



The imposing Fort Saint-Louis, which towers 200 feet over a steep cliff offers some of the best views of both city and sea. The original

construction dates back to 1640, but little of that remains, and what can be seen today is largely composed of later additions. Reopened in 2014, tours are now available in several languages.

Photo: Aristoi / Wikimedia Commons(image cropped)

Address: 29 Rue Victor Hugo, Fort-de-France

Phone: +596 596 80 00 70

La Savane



La Savane is a vast and meticulously landscaped park with lots of trees, benches, and fountains, the heart of public life in Fort-de-France with

shopping, dining, and entertainment options all around. Locals gather at the many cafés at all hours of the day, and visitors use it as a springboard from which to explore the surrounding sights.

Photo: Caio Vinicius Reis de Carvalho/CC BY 2.0/Flickr(image cropped)

Address: Boulevard Chevalier De Sainte-Martine, Fort-de-France

Phone: +596 596 73 97 72

Jardin de Balata



The Jardin de Balata, situated slightly inland from Fort-de-France, is a lush, 3-hectare expanse of green that contains a beguiling range of flora, comprising over 3,000 different species. The grounds are carefully landscaped, tailored, and looked after, and the view from the suspended rope bridges is enchanting.

Photo: Mica / Wikimedia Commons(image cropped)

Address: Km 10, Route de Balata, Fort-de-France

Opening hours: Daily 9am-6pm

Internet: www.jardindebalata.fr

Email: jardin-balata@wanadoo.fr

Route de la Trace



The scenic stretch of highway N3 that runs from Fort-de-France all the way to Mount Pelée, better known as Route de la Trace, follows an old route carved out by the Jesuit missionaries of the 1600s, running through beautiful expanses of thick rainforest. Stunning hiking trails branch off from the main route should be thoroughly explored to get an idea of the wild natural beauty of Martinique.

Photo: next-step / pixabay.com

Address: Route de la Trace, Highway N3, Martinique

Mount Pelée



The imposing Mount Pelée towers over the island of Martinique with a menacing gaze. The volcano is going through a quiet phase, but it is still active, and as recently as 1902 had a violent

eruption that destroyed the city of Saint-Pierre. Visitors today can hike up to the summit and marvel at the views on a clear day.

Photo: Wikimedia Commons(image cropped)

Address: Mount Pelée, Martinique

Sainte-Anne



Sainte-Anne, Martinique's southernmost village, is one of the island's prettiest towns. It is often frequented by visitors for its shops and restaurants, as well as its great crafts market, but the biggest draw to the area are the wonderful beaches, like the idyllic Les Salines, just a short distance away.

Photo: Pack-Shot / Shutterstock.com

Address: Sainte-Anne, Martinique

Le Carbet



Located between, Fort-de-France and Saint-Pierre, the village of Le Carbet is a place of special historical importance, as it was the landing site for Cristopher Columbus' fourth and final voyage to the Caribbean in 1502. Today, this village houses some fantastic gardens, including Latouche's Creek Garden, which boasts over 200 species of tropical plants.

Photo: dpvue studio / Shutterstock.com

Address: Le Carbet, Martinique

Diamond Rock



Lying some 3 kilometers off the southern coast of Martinique, Diamond Rock is an imposing 175-meter-high rocky island, once claimed by the British as a ship (the HMS Diamond Rock), before being reclaimed by the French. Today, it is known as one of the island's best dive spots.

Photo: T photography / Shutterstock.com

Address: Diamond Rock, Martinique

Caravelle Peninsula



Caravelle Peninsula is a narrow strip of land that shoots out into the Caribbean waters from the east coast of Martinique. It is

protected as a nature reserve and thus wonderfully unspoiled. It is home to a large number of animal and plant species, making it a fascinating place for a hike.

Photo: Pack-Shot / Shutterstock.com

Address: Caravelle Peninsula, Martinique

Ajoupa-Bouillon



Ajoupa-Bouillon, located at the foot of Mount Pelée, is an area renowned for its natural beauty, featuring lush tropical landscapes.

There are hiking trails leading through the forest, along ravines, and past waterfalls. The Ajoupa Gardens also display an abundance of colorful flowers and plants.

Photo: Greudin / Wikimedia Commons(image cropped)

Address: Ajoupa-Bouillon, Martinique

Les Salines



With one kilometer of soft, warm sand, clear, tranquil water, and idyllic coconut palms lining the whole area, Les Salines is one of the most popular beaches in Martinique. Families tend to crowd it a bit on weekends, but during the week it tends to be less hectic.

Photo: DPiX Center / Shutterstock.com

Address: Les Salines, Martinique

Pointe Du Bout



Directly across the city of Fort-de-France, on the other side of the bay of the same name, lies Pointe Du Bout, Martinique's most popular resort area. The streets are lined with quaint boutiques, breezy cafés, and great restaurants, prompting many to hop on the regular ferries departing from the Fort-de-France Marina in search of entertainment, shopping, and fun in the sun.

Photo: Anna Jedynak / Shutterstock.com

Address: Pointe Du Bout, Martinique

Musée de la Pagerie



The magnificently preserved Musée de la Pagerie is a former sugar estate and the birthplace of Marie Joseph Rose Tascher de la Pagerie, better known as Empress Josephine, Napoleon Bonaparte's first wife. A guide will take you through the estate to admire the numerous artifacts and share fascinating stories from

Josephine's childhood.

Photo: Pack-Shot / Shutterstock.com

Address: Quartier Pagerie, Les Trois-Îlets

Phone: +596 596 80 71 00

Anse Cafard Slave Memorial



The shores of Le Diamant are home to one of the Caribbean's most impressive and sobering memorials to the region's history of slavery. The 20 beautiful statues face out towards the water with their heads bowed down, in honor of the 20 victims of a slave ship sinking that took place in 1835.

Photo: Pack-Shot / Shutterstock.com

Address: Le Diamant, Martinique

DINING



Lucy Liu / Shutterstock.com

Martinique owes its eclectic culinary tradition to a mix of cultures and influences, creating Creole specialties that combine French sophistication with African spice and flavor, drawing also on Asian ideas. Seafood features prominently on any menu, including shellfish, smoked fish, crab, stewed conch, and curry dishes. Start your meal with a mixed rum drink and finish with a fine vintage, and indulge in the flavors and aromas of the rich Martinican cuisine.

Chez Carole



Chez Carole is a Fort-de-France institution, a favorite among locals and visitors alike. The colorful setting and kitchen, the small but cozy dining area, the internationally famous hospitality of the restaurant's eponymous owner, and most importantly, the top-notch Creole cuisine bring many to dine at the modest place located in the Grand Marche Couvert.

Photo: JoannaTkaczuk / Shutterstock.com

Address: 47-53 Rue Antoine Siger, Fort-de-France

Opening hours: Mon-Sat 11:30am-3pm, Sun closed

More Info: Located inside the Grand Marché Couvert

The Yellow



The Yellow comes highly recommended by many in the tourism industry on Martinique for its fantastic typical cuisine, consisting largely of fish, rice, vegetables, and mashed plantains, as well as seafood specialties, like fish chowder, and other options, such as duck or steak.

Photo: Shebeko / Shutterstock.com

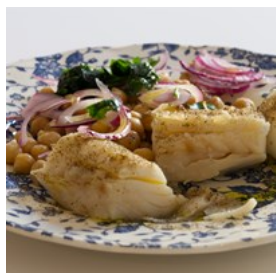
Address: 51 Rue Victor Hugo, Fort-de-France

Phone: +596 596 75 03 59

Internet: www.the-yellow.fr

Email: the-yellow@orange.fr

Le Petit Tonneau



An authentic Portuguese restaurant in the middle of Fort-de-France, Le Petit Tonneau offers a great alternative to Caribbean food which includes escargots, frog legs, duck, steak, cod,

and more.

Photo: Jorge Manso / Shutterstock.com

Address: 32 Avenue Frantz Fanon, Fort-de-France

Phone: +596 596 61 19 17

Nuevo Mejico Mojito Bar



Nuevo Mejico is a prime exponent of Tex-Mex cuisine, offering all the staples you would expect, from tacos and burritos to quesadillas, fajitas,

chimichangas and enchiladas. The menu even includes other dishes, such as pasta, so there is no shortage of options.

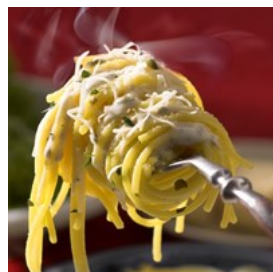
Photo: svariophoto / Shutterstock.com

Address: 108 Rue Ernest Deproge, Fort-de-France

Phone: +596 596 60 60 21

Email: nuevomejico@wanadoo.fr

La Tavola Italiana



La Tavola Italiana may not look like much from the outside, but venture into the bright interior with its checkered-tile floor and colorful walls

and let yourself be impressed by the high-quality Italian cuisine. The best dishes are those that include seafood, and it would be a mistake not to try a dessert.

Photo: fotohavran.eu / Shutterstock.com

Address: 70 Route de Didier, Fort-de-France

Opening hours: Tue-Sat noon-2:30pm / 7pm-10:30pm, Sun & Mon closed

Phone: +596 596 64 24 58

Internet: www.la-tavola-italiana.com

CAFÉS



Monkey Business Images / Shutterstock.com

Coffee has been produced on Martinique since the 1700s when a naval officer stole a seed and brought it to the Caribbean. For about half a century after that, Martinique was the most important coffee producer in the world, and the inheritance from that time is still palpable today.

Exquisite cafés can be found throughout the island striving to brew that perfect cup of coffee. Try some of the boutique cafés or pop into a chain boulangerie in Fort-de-France for a quick snack and caffeine boost.

BARS & NIGHTLIFE

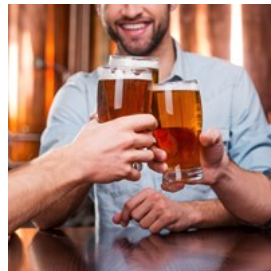


Monkey Business Images / Shutterstock.com

There is plenty to do on Martinique once the sun sets and the cool evening breeze starts to blow. Excellent dining and drinking can be found in and around Fort-de-France, at fancy beachfront locations or grittier downtown joints. The best evening entertainment, however, is to be found

on the island's cultural arena, at theatres, and performance venues where local troupes put on fantastic performances of Martinique's traditional music and dances.

Garage Popular



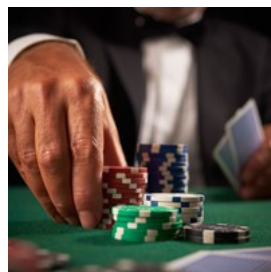
Simple fare and affordable drinks are the norm at Garage Popular, a simple but often crowded car-themed restaurant and pub in downtown Fort-de-France. They often host special events, like karaoke nights and themed parties, and screen big sporting events, mainly football.

Photo: g-stockstudio / Shutterstock.com

Address: 116 Rue Lamartine, Fort-de-France

Phone: +596 596 79 86 76

Casino Batelière Plaza



If you're feeling lucky, test your skills at poker or the whim of fortune on roulette and try to earn back some of your vacation expenses. Casino Batelière Plaza is the island's premier casino, which besides the usual games also hosts live musical performances and other events.

Photo: 18percentgrey / Shutterstock.com

Address: Résidence les Alizés de Batelière, Schoelcher

Opening hours: Tue–Thu 9am–3am, Fri & Sat 9am–4am, Sun & Mon closed

Phone: +596 596 61 73 23

Internet: www.casinobateliereplaza.com

Tropiques Atrium Scène Nationale



Tropiques Atrium Scène Nationale de Martinique is the island's foremost cultural institution, regularly putting on concerts, plays, workshops, exhibitions, and other artistic and cultural events. Check the website to find out what's on the program during your visit.

Photo: aerogondo2 / Shutterstock.com

Address: 6 Rue Jacques Cazotte, Fort-de-France

Phone: +596 596 70 79 29

Internet: tropiques-atrium.fr

Email: info@tropiques-atrium.fr

Le Grand Ballet de Martinique



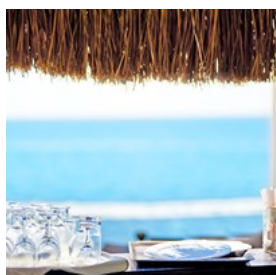
Le Grand Ballet de Martinique is a troupe of about thirty dancers, musicians, singers, and choreographers who put on spectacular displays of the traditional music and dances of Martinique. They regularly tour the island, hitting theatres, hotels, and other venues, so check their website to see where they will be during your visit.

Photo: Frameme / Wikimedia Commons(image cropped)

Internet:

www.grandballetdemartinique.com/martinique/index.php

Hotel Bakoua



Hotel Bakoua, across the bay from Fort-de-France, offers different forms of nighttime entertainment, including occasional live jazz and even swimsuit fashion shows. The hotel has several dining and nightlife venues, including the Coco Bar, a beach bungalow on stilts over the water.

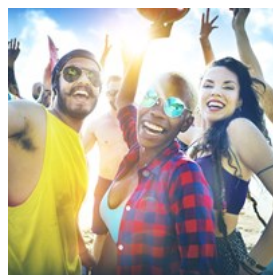
Photo: kosmos111 / Shutterstock.com

Address: Pointe du Bout, Les Trois-Îlets

Phone: +596 596 66 02 02

Internet: hotel-bakoua.fr

Wahoo Cafe



Martinique's quintessential beach bar, with a dream location by the sea facing the sunset, Wahoo Bar has swagger, attitude, and personality

to spare. It boasts an effortlessly cool and laid-back vibe where crowds gather to drink, dance, and groove to the frequent live music.

Photo: Rawpixel.com / Shutterstock.com

Address: All. du Débarcadère, Le Carbet

Opening hours: Daily 10am-11pm

Phone: +596 596 74 69 95

Internet: www.instagram.com/wahoocafe

SHOPPING



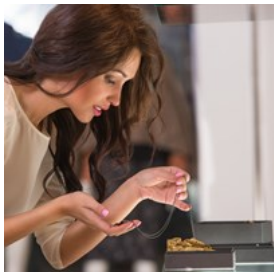
Ollyy / Shutterstock.com

Martinique is one of the better shopping destinations in the Caribbean, with a wide variety of shops and boutiques showcasing everything from local crafts and jewelry in the best Creole tradition to stunning artwork and the latest in French fashion, fresh off of Parisian catwalks.

The numerous markets can also be a fascinating visit, offering the chance to wander through

colorful stalls browsing fresh produce, spices, and local rum, for a memorable and authentic Martinican experience.

Bijouterie Pascal de Rogatis



Bijouterie Pascal de Rogatis has taken pride in celebrating Creole culture and tradition through the creation of jewelry since 1946.

Rings, earrings, necklaces, and more, all reflecting the traditional crafts of the island, are forged into unique and beautiful pieces.

Photo: Milles Studio / Shutterstock.com

Address: 47 Rue Isambert, Fort-de-France

Opening hours: Mon-Fri 9am-4pm, Sat 9am-1pm, Sun closed

Phone: +596 596 71 36 78

Market Hall Fort-de-France



The small and manageable Marché couvert de Fort-de-France has been in use since 1885, operating as the city's

main marketplace, where Martiniquais purchase fresh produce, spices, rum, crafts, and souvenirs. The colorful stalls are especially lively in the early mornings, so it is worth getting up early to see them.

Photo: Pack-Shot / Shutterstock.com

Address: Rue Blenac, Fort-de-France

Opening hours: Mon-Fri 6am-4pm, Sat 6am-1pm, Sun closed

Phone: +596 696 79 03 68

Galerie Sophen



Located in the area of Trois Îlets, Galerie Sophen showcases original watercolor creations by artists Sophie and Henry. Each work of art is completely unique (they vow not to sell reproductions, but only original pieces) and depicts gentle island scenes ranging from sailboats to wildlife, all full of color and life, yet understated and beautiful in their simplicity.

Photo: Kuznetcov_Konstantin / Shutterstock.com

Address: Rue du Chacha, Les Trois-Îlets

Opening hours: Daily 9:30am-1pm / 3:30pm-7pm

Phone: +596 696 02 32 74

Internet: www.galerie-sophen.com

Email: galerie.sophen@gmail.com

La Galleria



For more general shopping needs, you can visit La Galleria, a large and modern mall featuring dozens of clothing, shoe, jewelry, and perfume stores, as well as supermarket and casual dining options.

Photo: Monkey Business Images / Shutterstock.com

Address: Acajou, Le Lamentin

Opening hours: Mon-Thu 9am-8:30pm, Fri & Sat 9am-9pm, Sun closed

Phone: +596 596 42 77 46

Internet: www.galleria.mq

Rue Victor Hugo



Rue Victor Hugo is Fort-de-France's answer to New York's Fifth Avenue, lined on either side with high-end and refined shopping options.

The island's most fashionable residents and visitors come to find the latest trends from the French fashion world, and to indulge in the fine dining found all along the avenue.

Photo: Olesia Bilkei / Shutterstock.com

Address: Rue Victor Hugo, Fort-de-France

Galleries Lafayette Martinique



The colossus of French department stores has a location near Fort-de-France, in La Galleria, which offers everything one might expect. Clothes, accessories, perfumes, bags, toys, shoes, jewelry, suitcases, you name it. Find everything you need in one easy location at Galleries Lafayette.

Photo: Akhenaton Images / Shutterstock.com

Address: Acajou S, Le Lamentin

Opening hours: Mon-Fri 9am-8:30pm, Sat 9am-9pm, Sun closed

Phone: +596 596 42 72 70

Marche aux Fruits & Legumes



The freshest, most succulent, and most affordable fruits and vegetables on the island can be found at the Marché aux Fruits et

Légumes in Fort-de-France. Come and wander among the stalls, marvel at the colors and aromas, and sample some of these tropical

delights.

Photo: Avatar_023 / Shutterstock.com

Address: Avenue Paul Nardal, Fort-de-France

Parfums des Îles



Parfums des Îles is sleek, elegant, and modern, and is at the cutting edge of fragrance design and production. Products include soaps, sprays,

oils, and of course, perfumes that not only have lovely smell but also evoke images and feelings of the island.

Photo: sarsmis / Shutterstock.com

Address: Rue Lamartine, Sainte-Luce

Phone: +596 696 62 22 90

Centre des Métiers d'Art



Perhaps the best gallery and souvenir shop on the whole island, the colorful and vibrant Centre des Métiers d'Art offers a wide variety of especially

beautiful local handicrafts in the form of quilts, painted fabrics, baskets, shells, pottery, and more. Find gifts or mementos to take home with you and cherish for years to come.

Photo: Maciej Czekajewski / Shutterstock.com

Address: 11 Lotissement les Tropiques, Fort-de-France

Opening hours: Mon-Fri 8am-5pm, Sat 8:30am-1pm, Sun closed

Phone: +33 5 96 70 25 01

TOURIST INFORMATION



Crobard / Shutterstock.com

Martinique Aimé Césaire International Airport (FDF)



Martinique Aimé Césaire International Airport (FDF) is located in Le Lamentin, a suburb of Fort-de-France. There are regular flights from many

destinations in the Caribbean, as well as Miami, Paris, Montreal, and seasonally from Frankfurt, New York, and Boston.

As an overseas territory of France, EU immigration laws apply, so some visitors may need a Schengen Visa in order to visit.

As for transportation, most large hotels offer complimentary shuttle services from the airport. Private shuttles and taxis can also be arranged, and there are numerous car rental companies located on the premises of the airport.

Photo: Juan Garces

Address: Martinique Aimé Césaire International Airport, Le Lamentin

Phone: +596 596 42 19 95

Internet: www.martinique.aeroport.fr

Public Transport



The main form of public transport on Martinique consists of vans and large Mercedes-Benz cars known as "Taxis Collectifs" (marked 'TC').

They are an affordable and convenient way to get around the island, but they can often get crowded and don't follow a schedule (rarely running past 6pm).

Many travelers prefer to rent a car during their stay. Rates are often low and the road infrastructure on the island is very good, making it an easy and convenient way to travel around Martinique.

Photo: Pierre-Luc Auclair

Taxi



Taxis can be on the expensive side in Martinique, with a fare from the airport to Fort-de-France costing about €30. A 40%

surcharge is added at night and on Sundays and holidays. A 15% tip is also expected.

Madinina Taxi

+596 596 70 40 10

Taxi Martinique Chauffeur & VTC Services

+596 696 38 38 07

Photo: ArrivalGuides

Ferry



There are daily ferry services, called "vedettes," between Fort-de-France and a few destinations on the island (Pointe du Bout,

Anse-Mitan, Trois-Îlets, and Anse-à-l'Ane), each one taking about 20 minutes. They run from 6:20am to 6:30pm, departing about every 30 minutes.

There are also a few international ferry services to nearby islands, like Dominica and St. Lucia a few times per week.

Photo: Pham Thi Dieu Linh / Shutterstock.com

Post



Post Office (Office of Saint Teresa) Rue du Faubourg la Camille, Fort-de-France Mon & Tue 7am-5pm, Fri 9am-5pm, Sat 7am-noon,

Wed, Thu & Sun closed

Photo: Andy Fuchs

Pharmacy



Pharmacie du K'Nal 74 Boulevard Allègre, Fort-de-France +596 596 30 11 11 Opening hours: Mon-Fri 7:30am-7pm, Sat 7:30am-1:30pm, Sun

closed

www.pharmacieduknal.com

Photo: Gemma Garner

Telephone



Country code: +596 Area code: 596

Photo: Jardson Almeida

Electricity



Voltage: 220 V
Frequency: 50 Hz Power sockets: type C / D / E

Photo: Stirling Tschan

Population

74,219 (2023)

Currency

Euro, €1 = 100 cents

Opening hours

Shops tend to open at about 9am and close between 4pm and 5pm, many of them closing for an hour or two at lunchtime. Restaurants usually open closer to noon, taking a break for a few hours in the afternoon, and then staying open until late, often 10pm or even 12pm.

Internet

tourisme-centre.fr

Newspapers

Caribbean News Now — thecaribbeannewsnow.com
Journal France-Antilles Martinique — www.martinique.franceantilles.fr

Emergency numbers

Fire: 18
Police: 17
Ambulance: 15

Tourist information

Office de Tourisme Centre Martinique
29 rue Victor Hugo, Fort-de-France
+596 596 80 00 70
contact@tourisme-centre.fr
www.tourismefdf.com
Opening hours: Mon-Fri 8am-4pm, Sat 8am-1:30pm