

Sweet TnT

MAGAZINE

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Issue #5 August 2013

Maracas
teens

South Trinidad is my home not Boston

Dropping the bomb on Aunt Freda

A cook by the road in Las Lomas

Cool Caura river not all curry duck and loud music

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Editor's note

If anyone has doubt about the love people have for Trinidad and Tobago then Issue #5 should clarify the matter for them. Sweet culture for so from front to back expressed by passionate Trinbagonians themselves. This magazine must be read and shared around the world with people who need to know that beauty, tradition and enjoyment exist in our magnificent twin islands despite the ills that have bombarded the media.

Congratulations to our team for producing an exquisite publication at such short notice and thanks to all our writers for contributing their brilliant works to make this magazine even possible. We appreciate the support that has been pouring in on our Facebook page and in the Forums on our website. We encourage our readers to share the links of the magazine on their social networks so that the name Sweet T&T can live again.

In this issue we feature a poem, and stories of a homesick Trini; cultural novelist; young artist; and an entrepreneur in the Lifestyle section. The Creole section has two short stories many of us can relate to and two Creole style poems. The Food section will make you hungry for Sunday lunch and something special cooked at the side of the road in Las Lomas. Lastly, we feature personal viewpoints from writers on Caura River, La Brea Pitch Lake, Piparo, Tobago and photos of Port of Spain in the Places section.

On our Home Page at <http://www.sweettnt-magazine.com/>, readers may use the Forum called "Magazine Comments" to express their views on the content in our magazines. Request for coverage can be made through the "Contact Us" section or press releases can be emailed to contact@sweettntmagazine.com. To keep up to date with our magazine, readers can "like" us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/sweettnt-magazine>, and follow us on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/sweettntmag> and Instagram at <https://instagram.com/sweettntmagazine>. Enjoy!

Talk nah!

How well do you know Trinidad and Tobago? Here are some questions for you to tell us. Send your name and answers to contact@sweettntmagazine.com to be published in the next issue.

1. Describe ONE way to enjoy yourself in Trinidad and Tobago.
2. Give ONE phrase only Trinbagonians would say.
3. Name ONE popular meal, drink or snack consumed in T&T.
4. Tell us about ONE place to visit when sight-seeing.

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These friends take a lime.



On our cover photo, teenagers Ade Imasekha, left, Barbara Arjoon, and Karen Nahous were found heading back to camp on the beach to have lunch. They were all too happy to strike a pose for Sweet TnT Magazine and show off their bake and shark to the world.



Jimmy Diamond shows off his items for sale at his souvenir stall where he claims busloads of tourists usually flood.

Maracas Beach

Sweet TnT Magazine visited Maracas Beach on a Monday in July just to catch some scenes that happen on an ordinary day at the popular beach in Trinidad. This day on the beach follows a busy weekend with endless people, loud music, and plenty bacchanal. Jevan Soyer captures scenes of friends and families relaxing or having the popular bake and shark for lunch while enjoying the sun, sand and sounds of the Maracas waves.



This cutie seems to love the camera.



People line up at Richard's Bake and Shark.



A lady shows how-to relax on your vacation.



A family has fun on the sand.



A vendor displays his coconut husk ornaments and handmade wind chimes on the way to Maracas Beach.



Friends kick back and enjoy each other's company.



Two partners sit on the sand to enjoy their lunch.



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Restoring the missing part of myself

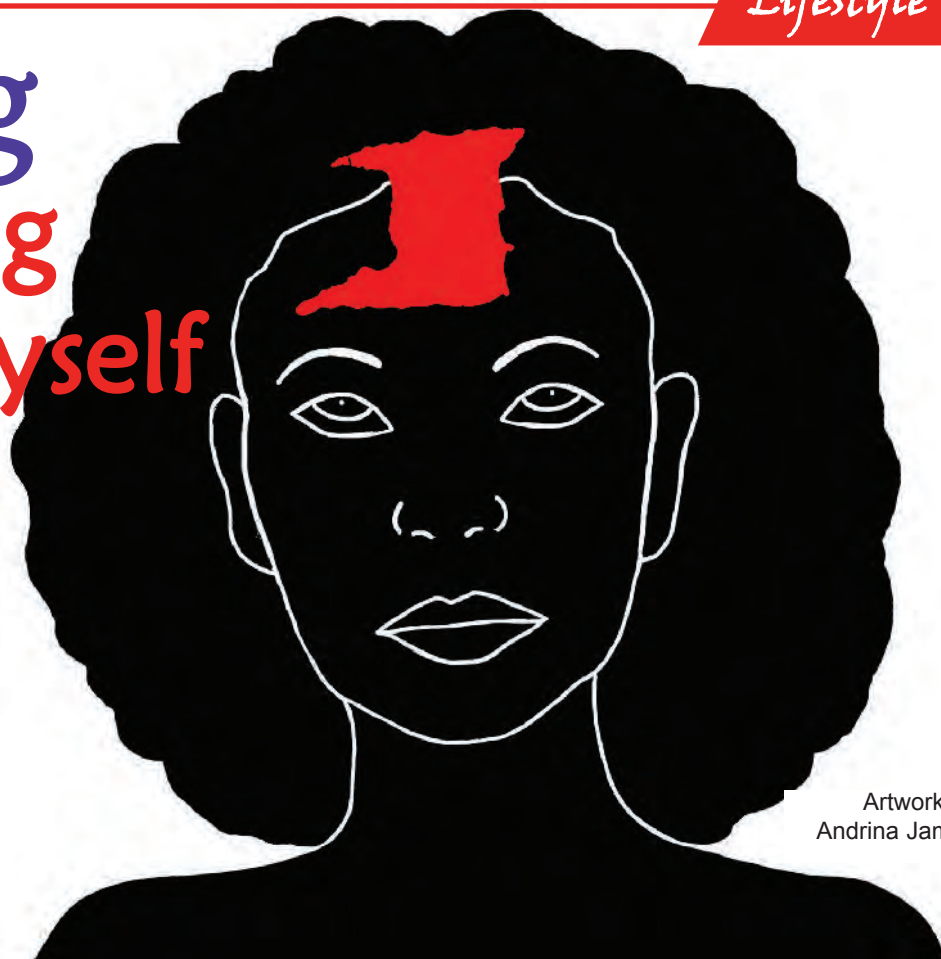
By Felesha Subadar

Growing up in the south part of Trinidad, in a family with two older sisters and a stay-at-home mother and a father who worked taxi, was a seemingly perfect life in the eyes of an eight-year-old. I attended ASJA Primary School with one of my sisters and every day after school, as the clock strike 3.30 we were at home and waiting patiently on the back step for our mother. Sitting on either side of her, she had enough food on a flowered plate for the two of us as she fed us one at a time.

But it wasn't just any ordinary day. My mother's eyes welled up with tears as she mentioned that we will be moving to Boston the next Tuesday. I cried, I begged, and I pleaded but we were still moving and leaving my oldest sister behind in Trinidad because she was old enough to take care of herself.

Upon arriving in Miami International Airport, we endured a five-hour delay because of a blizzard that was cascading throughout the Boston area. We finally arrived there late in the night and all I can think about is that this wasn't my home, I just left my home. We moved from place to place until we settled down in our own

“I knew I was missing out on the beautiful and festive holidays such as Carnival, Phagwa and Diwali, but mostly at Christmas time it wasn't the same as in Trinidad.”



Artwork by
Andrina James

apartment, while coping with family who was so strict that we couldn't eat meat which wasn't "Halal" in the house, and having to live off a small paycheck because my father alone was working.

Meanwhile in school, my accent was different from the average African American children and I was the laughing joke of everyone's conversation. I just wanted to go back home after all my humiliation. It became so serious that I began to steal from clothing stores just because I wanted my parents to send me back home. I tried every possible way to get home but it all ended in dismay. I knew I was missing out on the beautiful and festive holidays such as Carnival, Phagwa and Diwali, but mostly at Christmas time it wasn't the same as in Trinidad. It felt like a boring ordinary day compared to the parang music and gifts given out on Christmas day.

I love my parents with all my heart and I never meant to hurt or embarrass them but I knew deep down in my heart that this wasn't the place for me. Even though Boston is a beautiful and quiet place, I felt completely different from everyone else. My father always said that he came there for our betterment, for us to get a better job and education than which was given to us in Trinidad. Luckily,

my father knew how to handle his money and business and he got my mother and himself a job in the Massachusetts General Hospital.

After eight years in Boston, I couldn't manage to disappoint my father by telling him that I still wanted to go back home to Trinidad, so I actually wrote everything that I felt for the past few years until then on a piece of paper and gave it to my father. Tears streamed down my father's face and all that escaped his mouth was, "What else can I do babe, if you want to go I can't stop you anymore, if I say no you will find another way to go behind my back." My mother never hugged me or told me goodbye on the morning that I left to come back home and I felt completely heartbroken. A few weeks later, she finally talked back to me.

I love my country Trinidad and that never changed when I was in Boston. It was always meant to be my home and I knew that. I thank God every day for my wonderful family for understanding what was going on with me and I am overwhelmed to be back at home. As the saying goes, you can take a person out of Trinidad but you can't take the Trinidadian out of her.

Zeno Obi Constance

Preserving T&T's culture through literature

By Simone Charles

Zeno Obi Constance has been teaching since September 1972. He is a past teacher of St Thomas Aquinas High School and current teacher at Fyzabad Secondary School. He is author, playwright, director, basketball referee, and holds a BA in Spanish and Language. He talks about the work he has done and is still doing with the use of his literature to inform and restore the love of our culture. From the moment you see him all dressed in his dashiki, one can tell that he is a man of culture. Most of his dramas reflect the culture of Trinidad and Tobago, while others focus on social issues of the twin islands.

Zeno explains one of his dramatic pieces, "In 'Dragon Slayer Dream' for instance, I dealt with the attempt by locals to fight the negative influence of foreign (US) culture. This play also uses the character of the Midnight Robber. The Midnight Robber is one of the most beloved colourful traditional Carnival characters. He is well known for his speech patterns and vocabulary which are imitative of his former master. He summons and dismisses his audience by the blow of his whistle and threatening them with his gun, sword or blade. While in the 'Agouti's Tale', I used the folklore characters of 'Anancy and The Agouti'. I try to ensure that my plays entertain as well as educate people about the things which belong to us as 'Trinis'. The things that make us uniquely us: the culture and the landscape, the history and the politics."

Clearly, this is a man who is appreciative of his culture and is also educating both young and old through his dramatic work. His main focus is to educate, due to

that love, he also lectures on the history of calypso at the University of the West Indies. We surely do need more persons like Mr Zeno, so that foreign culture and literature would not dominate our local traditions. In addition, we would be able to maintain that love for our traditions.

He states, "I am also the author of three books: 'The Man behind the Music: Bro Valentino', 'Tassa, Chutney and Soca' and 'Sheer Genius'. The first is a biography of Calypsonian Bro Valentino, the second is an examination of the Indo Trini input and influence in the Calypso art form and 'Sheer Genius' is a collection of 14 of my plays."

He also explains his love for Calypso music, "Calypso is the world's greatest music! (he laughs) but I love calypso because it is a music that speaks and educates and entertains and it records our history." He adds, "I do believe that calypso music is beneficial for students pursuing



Zeno Obi Constance

ing qualifications in History or Culture, as a matter of fact, I have used the calypso in class many times in History, Social Studies, Theatre Arts, Caribbean Studies, etc."

He also hinted that there has been some consideration for calypso music to be introduced into the school's curriculum, particularly in the lower primary school level and the advanced (CAPE) levels. He mentioned that the younger ones at the primary level would be more responsive than the older ones.

Upon conclusion of our discussion, I asked Mr Constance, "What advice would you give to the youths, those who carry the light for the future, what or how would you show them to appreciate their culture?"

"Hmmm... always a difficult question to answer... but as long as WE continue to spread the message through our works, plays, etc, then the youths will be influenced positively."

Youths! I hope that this article was able to do just that.

In Sonata

By Joseph T Farquharson

Cymbals clash and strings vibrate,
Organ echoes joyful state.
Rising murmur fills the hall,
Notes of passion rise and fall.
Earthy tones, vibrating strong,
Lyrics, none, but still a song.

In sonata, oh what beauty!
As the players move so gently.
Ling'ring note, keeps holding on,
On and on till climax comes.
Over now, the grand sonata,
Silence waves goodbye to drums.



Danielle's art



All the birds in my spine
have led me here

Danielle Boodoo-Fortuné launched her first solo exhibition at the Art Society of Trinidad and Tobago, Corner Jamaica Boulevard and St Vincent Avenue, Federation Park, on June 29. The exhibit entitled *Criatura* showcased 44 previously unreleased pieces. *Criatura*, the Spanish word for “creature”, expresses the desire to highlight the duality of this multivalent figure as “both woman and untamed creature”, says the artist. Danielle participated in a joint exhibition alongside Katrina Inglis, hosted at Horizons Gallery, 37 Mucurapo Road, St James, from June 4 to 15.

Her other public installations and creative projects include a live mural painting session, conducted at the Art Society of Trinidad and Tobago's 70th anniversary celebrations, in a May 2013 exhibition entitled “Belle Eau”. In 2012, she was judged one of the winning artists of the Trinidadian arm of Urban Heartbeat, a transnational street art tour spanning Mexico, Latin America, and the Caribbean. *Criatura* ran from June 29 to July 5.

<http://danielleboodoofortune.com>
<http://www.facebook.com/DanielleBoodoofortuneArt>



Danielle Boodoo-Fortuné



criatura
An exhibition of new works by
Danielle Boodoo-Fortuné
June 29th - July 5th 2013

Opening Night
Saturday June 29th, 2013
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

The Art Society
of Trinidad and Tobago

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during regular gallery opening hours
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Oleander

Entrepreneurship in T&T

Proud to be my own boss

By Rachael Cedeno

Kassi Nicholas is the Managing Director of the Mortgage and Finance Consultants Ltd, a company which she has worked hard to establish and maintain for the past eight and a half years and whose success is a good indicator that the atmosphere for local business is promising, especially for young would-be entrepreneurs in Trinidad and Tobago.

"When I was starting off, things were not exactly ideal," Kassi says. "The decision to resign my job, at the insurance company where I worked, was gutsy. Though the 'propensity for people interaction' element of the job existed, I found myself desiring more. I had so many ideas but no way of expressing them." Upon leaving, however, she worked with two of her former colleagues for a while. This experience helped her to understand the running of a small business.

"I still wasn't sure if I had what it took to succeed on my own. I was only 24 and had no idea of the work, dedication and drive that are constantly needed when you launch your own company. Believe me, it can be very stressful with many sleepless nights. Everything falls squarely on your shoulders as the boss. That is an immense responsibility, as you can imagine, but the rewards, however, are equally enormous. I had, and still do have, a lot of support from my family, and though this is vital and irreplaceable to me, I attribute all of my success to my personal relationship with God... the source of my inspiration. Initially I worked from home for about a year before I decided to register as a sole trader, and subsequently succeeded in securing a loan from the New

Entrepreneurs Development Company (NEDCO) which gave me a great advantage and helped me to launch out confidently with many of my business ideas."

Today, at the age of 33, Kassi's greatest reward is still interacting one on one with her expanding clientele while conducting field appointments, but she can also be found working out of her office on Coffee Street, San Fernando, offering consultations, both corporate and individual, with regard to property acquisition and management, tax and financial consultation for sole traders like herself, and other supporting service. In 2007, the business was expanded into a limited liability company. Her desire for continued self-development has also seen her recently complete a BA (Hons) in Business Management, and she is currently pursuing her MBA in Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Leadership from the Anglia Ruskin University (London), through the local pathway of School of Accounting and Management (SAM).

She is her own boss, a fact that she

is especially proud of, while the nature of her job calls for her to develop and maintain close ties with other professionals such as lawyers, bankers and valuers to whom she can refer her clients. Mainly, the business acts as an agent which can help to increase the clients' chances of land and building acquisitions while meeting the necessary mortgage loan requirements where applicable. Some periphery services include links to contractors and other professionals who can assist in every area of property acquisition.

In 2008, Kassi was nominated for the National Youth Awards in the area of entrepreneurship. She believes that this initiative on the part of the government is one that will encourage other young people who have good business ideas to work toward achieving their goals. Her advice to them, "Stop sitting on your dreams, don't believe that you can't do something because you're too young, not smart or not important enough. Don't ever let anyone tell you that you can't. If I am doing it then you can too."





Adrian Reece (red jersey) and Chantelle Wilson (white vest) share photos of moments with friends on Ariapita Avenue, Woodbrook.

Me and My Crew



Darrel "Sucrose" Corke (black pants) and his cousin Kevin "Perry" Sylvester (white vest) have a blast with friends at their pool party "Sunlight" held in Tobago.

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Artwork by Euline Joseph

Dropping the bomb on Aunt Freda

By Euline Joseph

O oouu! The familiar cry of... oooweee... a bird... a crying doll... a whistling kettle demanding its mistress? What on earth made that eerie sound? Oh shucks! How could I forget? The early "bird" cooing... our expectant visitor.

Monday to Friday 8.15 a.m. on the dot you could look forward to Aunt Freda's all too frequent visits. The dark well-rounded aged lady

continuously complained about her ill feeling. I was over-exhausted from her daily recitals.

"Mih... mih knee. Look, see (raising her skirt) it ent good nuh."

In spite of her weakening limbs, Aunt Freda passed the attendance record with flying colours... at our home, together with punctuality.

We always welcomed Aunt Freda to our home, regardless of the long, lengthy mauvaise-langue chats with my mom (depriving her of her household duties).

"Ah fed up, ah damn fed up."

We never needed to inquire further. It was deeply injected into our brains by now the topic entitled "Aunt Freda's Grandchildren."

One day I became most annoyed with the aged lady's persistent consistent warm visits and openly remarked, "Oh gosh, she ent tired come here?" My younger five-year-old sister didn't hesitate to crack the news to Aunt Freda. Without me realising it, she rushed to greet Auntie by the gate and dropped the all ready to explode bomb on her.

I became dumb, dumb, dumb. My mother couldn't seem to convince the stubborn old woman, "no such thing was ever said".

Aunt Freda sat brap on the front step of our home, swearing, "Ah go never put foot in yuh house a... again!"

"Hum..." I thought. "What a relief! Yet, I felt somehow, the pain and embarrassment and humiliation and... that was a result of my true but insensitive statement."

Aunt Freda should feel free to make social calls to our home, but for heaven's sake why should she continue to do so at the expense of others?

Life in T&T by A. James sweetntmagazine.com



Artwork by
Andrina James

Single on a Saturday night

Renesha Roberts shares with Sweet TnT Magazine readers a short story from her blog Miss Relationships at <http://missrelationships.blogspot.com/2011/06/single-on-saturday-night.html>

It's Saturday night and newsflash I am single. So what am I going to do? Go out, that's what! Last week I went out alone. Just needed to get out of the house. Ended up at a popular night spot. Met an old school mate and started chatting. He soon left and I was standing there alone, just watching the cars go by. It was quite entertaining.

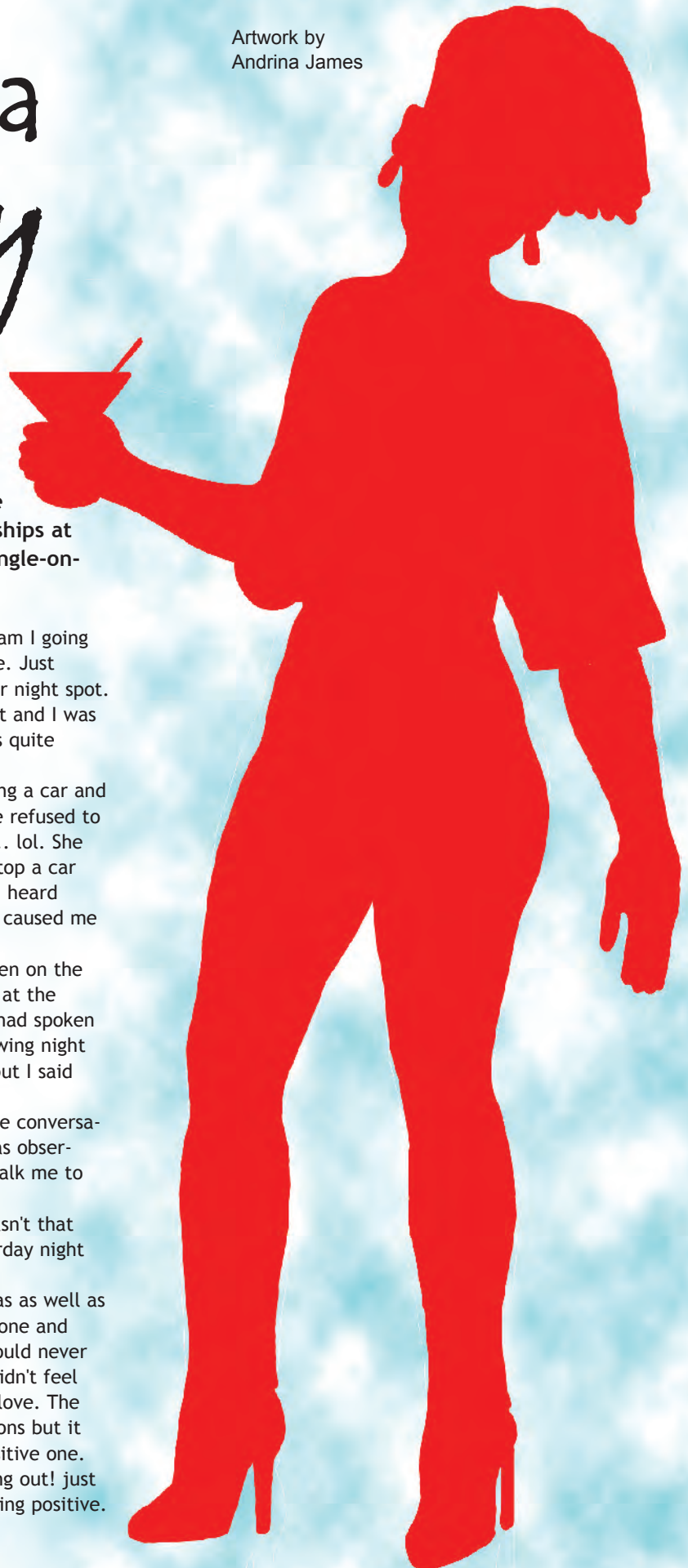
One girl was holding a parking spot for a friend driving a car and a guy just drove into it while she was standing there. She refused to move and he just neatly parked with her standing there... lol. She was so mad and it was too funny. How are you going to stop a car from parking by just standing there?! smh. A while after I heard someone whisper in my ear, "Macqueripe yesterday." This caused me to spin around because I was at "Macqueripe yesterday".

So I turned around and there was a guy who I had seen on the beach the day before. Coincidentally enough I was alone at the beach, at least I was until my two friends came, and he had spoken to me a bit in the water. So here he was again, the following night and I was alone again. He invited me to join his friends but I said was cool and about to leave. I left shortly after.

He was a cute guy, seemed humble, actually from the conversation I was thinking he was probably a service man. He was observant. However, he lost major points for not offering to walk me to my car.

Maybe I read too many romance novels or he just wasn't that interested. What I did like was that I went out on a Saturday night by myself! And it turned out alright.

American writer for Essence magazine Demetria Lucas as well as matchmaker Paul Carrick Brunson advocated going out alone and striking up a convo with a guy. I am proud of myself. I would never have gone out alone. I found it looked desperate but it didn't feel desperate, it felt like the continuation of my journey to love. The guy and I only exchanged names and basic address locations but it was cool to know that I made a step out and it was a positive one. So guess what... it's Saturday night again... and I am going out! just for me. If I meet a guy or not, my journey to love is looking positive.



Mih Neighbour Is Trouble

By Joyanne James

Every time de curtain pull ah does play ah ain see
Cause ah know is mih neighbour trying to macco on me
When mih family come visit, like mih uncles and aunts
All of ah sudden she watering she plants
And when ah telling dem how de woman so farse
She so want to hear she does water de grass
When yuh see ah dress and ah come out to pose
She does go fuh she basket to pick up she clothes

Doh talk fuh when ah nice fella come over by me
She does run across and say she hear I calling she
And every day she have ah story to give me
Is about who making child, and who man tracking she
Is who head she doh like and who feel dey is it
And how when dey pass she does feel to spit

But my neighbour ain bad, cause she does talk to me good
She say I is de nicest friend out in dis neighbourhood
Well I feeling so bad, cause I does real bad talk she
And to know all dis time, de woman real like me

So one day while riding on mih BMX bike
Ah meet up ah girl dat mih neighbour doh like
She say she now going up by mih neighbour to lime
As dat is she real friend from long long time
Ah feel sorry fuh de girl and ah tell she plain
Ah say mih neighbour cya stand yuh and she find yuh insane

De girl geh shock and tell me de truth
She hear I does borrow clothes and feel I looking cute
I have some ugly family like dey escape from de zoo
And ah does bring dem outside to show off like ah have nothing else to do
Mih neighbour say ah does call she when ah have ah fella by me
And when she reach over, he does cya stop watching she

Well I geh so vex when I find out how dis woman so bad
If ah really study she dat might send me mad
When ah see mih neighbour now ah does real smile with she
But is now self ah does gih she ting to say about me

He say she say

“My accent was different from the average African American children and I was the laughing joke of everyone’s conversation. I just wanted to go back home after all my humiliation.”

– Felesha Subadar, see story in Lifestyle section

Love My Country Fuh So

By Ria Mahepath

As a child growing up in our land Trinbago
Sunday lunch was always coo coo, callaloo or crab fuh so
Calypso, pan, and kiddie mas
Why those times had to fly so fast
But I love my Trini
Food, mas and fun
Blazing away Carnival Tuesday in the blazing hot sun
Tourists fly over to enjoy the celebrations
And leave with next year’s expectations
Or even if you visit for a trip
Places of interest are a steady tip
Bird Sanctuary, Pitch Lake or Maracas Beach
Trinidad and Tobago the twin island to reach
Soca music and icons fuh so
From Machel Montano to Cro Cro
The island of hope, fun, people and pride
Trinbago people are not ones to hide
Outstanding, beautiful, and also very loud
I am a Trinbagonian and I am very proud
Trinidad and Tobago, my country of act
Home of the Steel Pan and the Flag
Red, White and Black

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A cook by de road in Las Lomas

By Ian Boodoo

Question: Where in the world can you borrow a neighbour's pot and make a cook by the road? Answer: Sweet T&T. So we all know how Trinis does enjoy ah good cook by Caura River, but the truth is we doh need Caura to make ah good cook! All we need is ah pot!

Recently I was enjoying a few beers by our local watering hole up in Las Lomas known as Angie's Bar. This bar truly understands that a beer must be served beastly cold. True beer drinkers appreciate this. The sun was hot, not normal hot but a real, real crop time hot. Gentle breezes occasionally came and went driving the heat away from the shimmering asphalt roads. Even while sitting in the shade of the bar you can feel the heat reflecting off the surface of the road humidifying the room causing you to perspire. The only thing that could beat the heat was (say it with me) "ah cold Carib". Now I am not advertising for Carib but we all know that most times a cold beer can quench your thirst better than the spring waters from Maracas Valley.

One of the patrons known as "Bley" (a fixture of the bar who sometimes has conversations with himself) was either having a heat stroke or the beers were starting to take effect. He kept going on and on about Caura River. The weather was ideal for a Caura lime but on days like this we all knew that Caura would be packed and we could all imagine the music pumping from every vehicle, the smell of wood smoke and curry duck coming from every fireside, people laughing, and children bathing in the river. This is a place where strangers become good friends over a drink and some curry duck and everyone can be happy during this time.

"The menu was dasheen bush and pigtail with dumpling. This was cooked with coconut milk, one of the best meals I have ever tasted,,



Unfortunately for us transport was limited so we had to improvise and do what any normal thinking Trini would do - the next best thing - we brought Caura to Las Lomas. Now doing this is not as

impossible as you may think, we already had the major ingredient to pull this off - rum - just kidding - we were already friends!

One man jumped up and said, "Ah have ah pot!" Another one said, "I could organise ah stove!" Everyone chipped in to purchase the rest of the ingredients. We decided to make the cook across the road from the bar on a small piece of lawn shaded by some trees. The chef Vijai, in less than half an hour, had a pot bubbling at the side of the road. The menu was dasheen bush and pigtail with dumpling. This was cooked with coconut milk, one of the

best meals I have ever tasted. He is a true Trini. Well done, Vijai!

We ate, drank, talked, and played "All Fours" till the sun went down. As taxi drivers and people passed no one complained, all we got were smiles and compliments. The residents of Las Lomas are relatively civil toward each other. Everyone knows everyone and all the good stories are told by this bar. I have lived here for most of my 36 years and in that period very little has changed. The streets that I played cricket and football on when I was a child with my neighbours are now being used by my children and my neighbours' children to do the same. Our community is just like all the other small villages that make up our little island. True happiness is not money and wealth but it is to live the life of "ah True Trini". I am still trying to get the recipe from the cook.

Kerlysse's macaroni pie



Kielon Hilaire tells Sweet TnT Magazine readers about his sister Kerlysse's macaroni pie since it is a traditional Sunday dish in Trinidad and Tobago.

It was the night before Sunday when all through the house, not a rat had been stirring not even a mouse. The only thing making its way through the nooks and crannies of Kerlysse's kitchen was the amalgamated smell of oregano, garlic, pimentos and melted cheddar cheese. This was all a result of Kerlysse toiling in the kitchen for an hour or two, following every last step her mummy had taught her since the first day she ever decided to bake macaroni pie.

Macaroni pie has always been a traditional Sunday dish of many families in Trinidad and Tobago and is often the first meal that local teenage girls learn to cook. Though for many, the only one! The beauty of baking macaroni pie is not just in its ease of creation but in the fact that

you can make it with nearly any type of pasta or cheese, use nearly any seasoning agent or layer its insides with nearly any ingredient like carrots, pigeon peas or mixed vegetables, which makes it a favourite dish for everyone.

Kerlysse typically bakes her macaroni pie in pretty much the same manner as most people do. Also, like other pie makers in the kitchen she receives the same treatment from hungry people with comments such as "girl, what taking yuh so long to bake de pie?", "gosh girl, ah re'l hungry, hurry up nah!" and my personal favourite, "less talk, more pie!" In return the kind-hearted pie maker would usually sigh and continue to do her thing.

While Kerlysse might not be a stickler for tradition, she does believe that some things should remain the way they always have, particularly when people sometimes commend that her pie tastes as good as their mummies used to make it. However, the frequency in which the positive comments occur leaves one to question if behind the scenes Kerlysse may be threatening to starve her patrons should

they refuse to agree that her pie is delicious. She does smile a whole lot after all. Makes you wonder. Hmm!

What makes the pie Kerlysse bakes special is that every now and again she would either throw in a secret ingredient or a variation of a common one that would make it taste extra yummy. She was asked to name one of her secret ingredients and instead she gave a rather cheesy hint. She said, "It's in the cow." I was tempted to guess what the ingredient was based on what I assumed the punch line of that joke was supposed to be but then she cheekily said that though the answer did have four letters it did not begin with "s".

As for the best comment she has ever received, Kerlysse said that one time a neighbour told her, "If it looks good, feels good, smells good and tastes good then it must be Kerlysse's macaroni pie!" Kerlysse's only response to that was, "Thank you. Now go thank my mother!" Then she took a scrumptious bite of her own macaroni pie and said, "Ummmm, delicious!" I couldn't agree more.



Photo courtesy Priya B <http://www.flickr.com/photos/priyatard/5168414148/sizes//in/photostream/>

“Everyone looked forward to Sunday lunch, rice and callaloo or pigeon peas, boiled provision, a little eddoes, potato, dasheen, yam, and then fried in a little butter,,

By Marissa Armoogam-Ali

I think one of the mandatory requirements for being a Trini is that you have to be the owner of an insatiable appetite for our mouth-watering, delectable local dishes. Growing up in Trinidad almost certainly allows one to develop this Trini trait.

Our food is a marriage of many diverse cultures, a marriage which gives birth to a fabulous and unique style of food preparation and a culinary experience that goes unmatched. Every event which occurs locally goes hand in hand with a meal that usually makes you forget what you got dressed up for in the first place.

Now, don't get me wrong, everyone enjoys the occasional fast food, but yet somehow if the choice came down to a burger and fries or a nice rich helping of coo coo with callaloo and crabs,

Belly full

maybe fish, well let's just say... Wait! what was first choice? Oh yeah, the burger and fries would be long forgotten.

Almost all our dishes use only the freshest locally grown produce which got all its flavours from our dark rich soil and plenty of beautiful sunshine, nothing here is picked and then ripened through any processes, it's all natural. I remember as a teenager, my yard had every fruit tree you could think about, my Saturdays were spent with a big

bowl of the famous salt, pepper, garlic and green seasoning mix and knife going from tree to tree and making a "chow".

Everyone looked forward to Sunday lunch, rice and callaloo or pigeon peas, boiled provision, a little eddoes, potato, dasheen, yam, and then fried in a little butter and we all know the local favourite Golden Ray, you could eat that provision alone, it was that good. Some sliced boiled plantain, yummy stewed chicken seasoned with lots of pimentos and a nice crisp green salad. This all went down with homemade orange and lime juice or ice cold mauby, after that meal well you laid out like a big snake and couldn't move for hours.

So every now and then it's nice to take a trip down memory lane and indulge in the unforgettable taste experience that is Trinidad and Tobago.



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Children having
fun Trini style in
Caura River

Cool Caura River

By Marissa Armoogam-Ali

Trinidad has long been known for its tempo and exhilarating life movements, but for those of us who sometimes like to take it a bit slower, Trinidad has just what we need. Hidden among the ample mountains and hills of the northern range is the scenic and ever flowing Caura River.

Now just so you know it's not all curry duck competitions and loud music! I have been visiting Caura River religiously twice a month since I was just four years old. In fact I celebrated my fifth birthday there, sticking my birthday cake which was firmly planted on a rock in the middle of a shallow pool in the river with family all around.

The minute the car turns into the Eldorado Junction a wave of childhood nostalgia sweeps over me and the excitement begins. Not only is the drive up the mountain fun, but the scenery and cool mountain breeze is unbelievable. It's as though you

It's not all curry
duck competitions
and loud music

can actually hear your lungs sighing as they fill with crisp, clean mountain air. The drive from Eldorado Junction takes about 20 minutes according to how fast or slow you make the drive, for me, I like it slow, you know, take it all in!

Along the drive there are numerous fresh water springs that you can see and lots of little tributaries and hiking tracks. Hundreds of local fruit trees line the road side, once in season it is quite normal to see avid Caura enthusiast stop along the way to gather or "pick up" mangoes, plums, cashews and tancobeans.

Once you get to Caura itself there are two sites to choose from, Pool Side 1 and Pool Side 2, beside these there are many other little "secret" bathing areas to use. As soon as a spot is chosen that's when the fun starts, most people choose to cook at the river with fire-wood whilst others decide to bring something along and just spend the day relaxing.

After a good meal and maybe some chow made with local fruit, the next item on the agenda is a nice cool soak in the clear waters of the river. If you find a good area where the water is flowing over the rocks and you just lean back, get ready because you're in store for a natural massage. So next time you need a break away from the hustle and bustle, gather some family or friends and head to Caura and enjoy the pristine natural bamboo sheds, fresh air and cool water.

Tobago beauty beyond words

By Felesha Subadar

When I look back at the 21 years I have been in this world, I think my most meaningful experience in my life came about three years ago on my trip to Tobago. I finally had the chance to witness a beautiful unspoiled island that hasn't been ruined by pollution, littering and commercial businesses. While on my trip to Tobago I had the opportunity to embrace a different culture. The Tobagonians are a kind, shy and friendly people, and fiercely proud of their island.

My family and I took the T&T Express Ferry to Tobago which lasted approximately three hours of utter disgusting sea sickness. Non-stop entering the washroom to throw up but hearing the attendant banging on the door to say, "Get out of there you will only get more sea sick with this heat."

After escaping the long line to leave the boat, we finally managed to get to a KFC about ten minutes away, which was a well deserved meal. We checked into a hotel in Lowlands which created more of a headache. The staff gave us appliances that weren't working and while sleeping in the middle of the night the air condition stopped working, but the most amazing part was the pool. Not to mention, we got to bathe in the pool whole day and late into the night.

Despite being a tiny island, it isn't difficult to find a beach on Tobago. We went to Pigeon Point and Store Bay. We enjoyed Pigeon Point's white sand, coconut trees, shallow crystal clear sea and a gorgeous jetty. This is a great beach for small children to bathe as the water is calm and stays shallow for a long way out which my nephew and niece enjoyed a lot. Store Bay on the other hand is right next to the airport and at times you can see planes flying really low. The clear blue sea and white sand is by far the best beach in my opinion. There is little shade but recliners and umbrellas are available for hire. They have excellent changing and showering facilities which sadly closes at 5 p.m.

We visited many historic sites such as Fort King George and the Mystery Tombstone. Fort King George is known as Tobago's main historic site and it is situated in the island's capital. It was built by



Felesha with her niece and nephew

the British in the 1700s when it was also captured and occupied by the French and renamed Fort Castries. The forts powder magazine, cell block and water tanks are still popular attractions and men were selling small souvenirs and begging us to take one just for them to make a little money. The Mystery Tombstone, located in Plymouth, marks the final resting place of a 23-year-old woman named Betty Stevens and her baby who died in 1783. Its odd inscription has puzzled tonnes of locals and visitors alike. On her tomb was engraved, "She was a mother without knowing it, and a wife without letting her husband know it; except by her kind indulgences to him." The mystery tomb might always be a mystery, who knows.

The trip back on the Spirit ferry was much better than the first, because I realised I can go out into the back to get fresh air and it helped with the sea sickness. All in all, I think this trip has benefited me in ways I never imagined and I wouldn't have given it up for the world. Tobago is a true beauty which words can't even describe. It was absolutely amazing and fun especially having gone on this trip with my family.



Photos by Chantelle Wilson





La Brea Pitch Lake

Photo courtesy <http://www.fotosimágenes.org/lago-de-la-brea>

By Akeme Clarke-Abdullah

Walking across the hard pitch that led to the many holes filled with that magical elixir to youth, the breeze gently swaying the plant life, the stories about one of the most exciting and beautiful places in south Trinidad summed up to be the absolute truth. Its beauty flourishes in the surroundings – big cashew trees circle the lake while guava, mango and breadfruit trees have found a way to bear fruit amidst the tar. Beautiful water roses, nymph lilies and bird of paradise grow naturally in a place where normal plants could not survive. Herons everywhere, eating the algae that grow under pockets of water, along with hummingbirds, sandpipers and kingfishers.

The La Brea Pitch Lake deemed by its residents as the eighth wonder of the world deserves such a title. It is truly a wonder to look at; the experience of wading in the shallow pools of water and the

They call it the eighth wonder of the world

familiarity of its flora and fauna is thrilling. According to Mr Joe field, a local at the pitch lake, in the dry season the heat of the sun causes the lake to be an inferno while in the rainy season one can bathe in the various pools and cracks that have accumulated rain water some as high as ten feet. It is believed that the sulphur mineral waters is a good remedy for skin diseases and has miraculous healing powers for arthritis, pimples, infections and rashes.

One of the mysteries behind the formation of the pitch lake, as told by locals, is about two young lovers who were responsible for the destruction of the settlement of La Brea. This is what happened:

Callifaria – the daughter of Callisuna, who was the chief of the La Brea tribe, fled from her tribe to the long arms of her boyfriend, Kasaka – a prince of the Cumana tribe. Quite peeved by his daughter's flight, Callisuna and his warriors invaded Cumana, did battle, captured his daughter, tied her to a horse and speedily returned to La Brea. Unfortunately, Callisuna did not know that his drastic action so angered Pimlontas, the winged Arawak god, who damned the village of La Brea, making it sink into the earth, replacing it with a thick black substance.

Another version is the legend about the Chima Indians, a tribe which existed on the very spot where the present lake

occupies. Apparently, after a victory, these Indians had jubilant celebrations which included a grand feast in which vast quantities of Colibri Birds (Humming Birds) were cooked and eaten. The plumes of these small birds were used as accessories. The victory which had absorbed the minds of the Indians drowned the memory that the delicious Colibri Birds were really the spirits of their ancestors. As an act of punishment, the winged God opened up the earth and summoned up a lake of pitch which swallowed up the entire Chima village and its people. Interesting.

The villagers surrounding the lake were very warm and inviting, and ready to help a stranger in need of some assistance. Although the pathway to enter the lake was a bit treacherous, it was quite worth the trip. The scenic view was quite excellent, as the dark pitch was highlighted by the vegetative surroundings. It was extremely quiet, except for the few visitors splashing around in some of the deeper pools a little distance off.

In historical times, the pitch lake was called by the Amerindians, Piche, which means Pitch, while the Spaniards called it Terra de Brea which means Land of Pitch. The British however called it Pitch Lake, but like many parts of Trinidad, the Spanish name has been kept, hence the village is still called La Brea. When Sir Walter Raleigh "discovered" the Pitch Lake in 1595, it was already known as the Tierra de Brea, its Spanish name, by the Amerindian guides who introduced Sir Walter to the 95-acre lake of black gold. Sir Walter Raleigh immediately recognised the potential, even if he did not discover the lake, and began caulking his ships with the tar; proclaiming it "most excellent and good", far better in fact than the tar being used at the time in England.

On his second voyage to Trinidad, Sir Walter Raleigh seized the opportunity to take some of the black gold home with him, where it was used to pave Westminster Bridge for the opening of Parliament. Since the time of Sir Raleigh till now, tar from the La Brea Pitch Lake in Trinidad has been used to provide high ranking road surfaces not only in Trinidad and Tobago, and the other islands of the Caribbean, but it has also paved streets in over 50 countries including the United States of America, England, India, Singapore, Egypt, and even Japan.

The pitch lake is one of three natural asphalt lakes in the world, the others being in California - the famous La Brea

Tar Pit - and Venezuela. Pitch from La Brea is used to pave roads around the world. It quietly replenishes itself after quantities have been removed which is amazing. One resident commented on having dug out a large quantity of pitch and by the next day, the hole was completely filled and overflowing. The pitch lake is the result of a fault in the sandstone 250 feet down, through which crude oil or bitumen seeps.

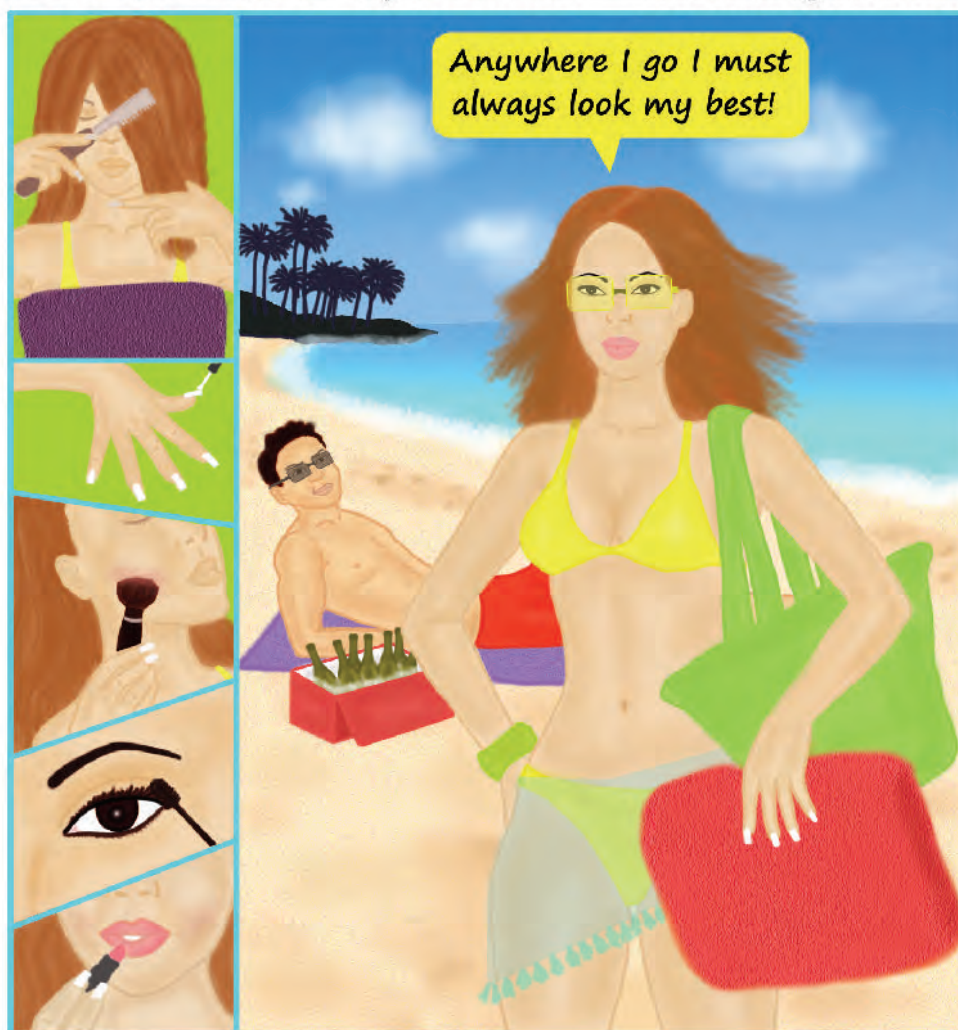
According to the tour guide, swallowed objects may reappear years later as the pitch slowly swirls. Logs hundreds of years old float to the surface perfectly preserved in some areas, while in other areas there are vents bubbling sulfur or even sea water. The surface of the lake is firm enough to walk on except for a small area in the centre called "the mother of the lake". When cracks on the surface become filled with rain water, gas can be seen bubbling in them. Tourists and locals

alike come to bathe in these cracks when they are filled with water. The cracks may reach a depth of up to five feet at times.

According to officials at the site of the lake, the lake is opened from Monday to Sunday and public holidays during the hours of 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. An official at the Ministry of Tourism stated that although the annual percentage of visitors that come to the pitch lake has declined, it has not dropped to an all time significant low. "We have made attempts to attract locals and foreigners by creating a more tourist attraction rather than just the backyard effect we had a while before," he said.

Ultimately, there is a timeless beauty of the La Brea Pitch Lake that infuses the culture and history of Trinidad and its people. Whether it's the name, residents or natural wonder, the pitch lake, a natural splendour, in all its glory will always remain a constant wonder.

Life in T&T by A. James sweettntmagazine.com





Photos by Marika Mohammed

Rural Piparo

By Marika Mohammed

Living in the city in Trinidad all my life I've never heard of Piparo, far less been there. The first thought that came to my mind as I cross the threshold to Piparo was, "This place is real bush!" There was nothing but bush, bush and more bush. Everywhere was bush. In saying that, I guess it's a good thing. Compared to more modern areas like Port of Spain or San Fernando, Piparo was filled with a variety of trees, bamboo and an adornment of flowers. The air was deliciously breathtaking as there were less pollution and dust.

However, to my surprise Piparo held more surprises than I thought. It is wonderfully peaceful and an uncorrupted environment from business development and traffic congestion. The area is absolutely scenic and one gets a sense of freedom and relief from stress. In other terms, it's laid back and easy going.

Another thing I found fascinating is



seeing living breathing freely-swalking goats. The only time I actually see a goat is on the dinner table. Imagine my excitement on seeing another animal other than the usual dog, cat and bird that can be found anywhere at any time in the city, trotting along the road. They looked adorable jumping as they do in the cartoons. It was such a delight looking at these goats enjoying their natural surroundings.

Piparo also has a volcano. Not the kind that spits out lava but something just as wonderful. I was ecstatic when I was told we were going to visit a mud volcano. This mud volcano is considered to be a must-see attraction for tourists. Now, if tourists are recommended to visit this natural landmark it is a shame if we, the locals, don't go for an occasional visit. Furthermore, the expansive landscape made the trip even better.

Scenes in the city

Jevan Soyer took a walk downtown Port of Spain and captured some of the scenes in the city. He shows views from South Quay, Nelson Street, Broadway, and Independence Square which is parted by the Brian Lara Promenade. Port of Spain is always developing, so these photos can only represent town for a short period. Enjoy!



Nelson Street Girls' RC

Nelson Street Boys' RC





Brian Lara Promenade



View of Lighthouse from Broadway



Scene on Broadway



Twin Towers



View of Frederick Street from Independence Square





City Gate crossing in South Quay



Water Taxi Terminal in South Quay

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