

Sweet TnT

MAGAZINE

Issue #6 October 2013

www.sweettntmagazine.com

Acting it out

Akil Samuel as Romero Montano and Natasha Lake as Julie Capildeo. See pages 4 and 5



'Ah Trinbago Ting'
fun puzzle book

High tea Trini style

**Trip to Brasso
Seco Waterfall**

**What to do
when in Tobago**



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Sweet TnT
MAGAZINE

Lifestyle
Creole Language
Food
Places

Trinidad and Tobago culture for so!



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Sweet TnT MAGAZINE

Editor's note

"What is so sweet about T&T these days?" Our team is faced with this question ever so often when preparing the issues of Sweet TnT Magazine. In the midst of all the horror stories making the headlines, how does a writer compose a piece about the positives in Trinidad and Tobago for readers to smile? The news is outrageous, depressing, and very discouraging. It is impossible for us to ignore it and move on with our lives. We all want to find a solution for this problem that seems out of control.

We can offer some suggestions to ensure that there is a Sweet TnT for future generations to enjoy. We must ensure that our mistakes are not repeated by our children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews. We owe it to them to steer them down the right path, one that creates a safe environment for them to enjoy and for us to enjoy our twilight years. Also, we must realise that this situation is one that took a while to develop, so if we are serious about fixing it, it is likely to take just as long. We owe it to the next generation to leave a version of Trinidad and Tobago that is better than the one that we know now.

Issue #6 is packed once again with T&T's culture. We are proud to show readers that "long time" Trinidad and Tobago still exists in the midst of all the madness. Our job is to highlight these positives and hope that every individual can play a part in restoring the name sweet T&T.

Thanks to our team, freelance writers, interviewees, and press release contributors for making the October issue a success. The positive stories just keep pouring in. Remember to "like" us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/sweettnt-magazine>, follow us on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/sweettntmag> and also Instagram at <https://instagram.com/sweettnt-magazine>. Enjoy!

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‘Act It Out’ Theatre Festival creates history



Steven Edwards and Alderman Beverly Ali share a light moment at the end of the show.

by a member of
Steven Edwards Productions

Patrons of the National Academy for Performing Arts, Port of Spain, witnessed history in the making when the “Act It Out” Theatre Festival came to an end on August 4, 2013. It was the first of its kind and the first time any theatre company put on five different plays in succession on five different days in Trinidad and Tobago (more impressively with the same cast). Steven Edwards Productions has accomplished what has previously been thought of as impossible to the delight of over three thousand in attendance over the period of the festival.

The festival began on Wednesday July 31, with a private screening of “For Better or Worse”, followed by a kids show on Thursday August 1, comprising of a concert by the participants of the Theatre for Tots to Teens Programme and two short plays, “David and Goliath”, and “King Hungry Belly and the Palace Pelau”.

Day three, hosted by the Ministry of National Diversity and Social Integration, began with the sweet sounds of the Alternative Quartet and featured speeches by the Permanent Secretary of the said Ministry, Jacinta Bailey Sobers, and followed by Lincoln Douglas, Minister of Arts and Multiculturalism.

In attendance also, were members of the Diplomatic Corp such as Yoshimasa Tezuka, Ambassador of Japan, Lorena Guzman, Deputy Head of Mission and Chargé d’Affaires of Chile, just to name a few. The production for



Neeshan “D Hitman” Prabhu and Rachael Mahabir as Tyronne and Lady Capildeo.



that day, “Romero and Julie”, featured the debut performances of Neeshan “D Hitman” Prabhu and brought to life the attention of the general public, Fayaz Bocus, who starred as Mr Partap. The leads of “Romero and Julie” were played by Akil Samuel who performed six roles in the five plays and Natasha Lake who made her debut performance as well.

Saturday August 3 featured “Mango Alley” a play which conjured reminiscent feelings of Trinidad and Tobago long gone but still loved and longed for. This production featured the live singing and drumming of many great and old calypsoes and folk songs. Patrons were brought into the world of stick fighting and got a glimpse of village life as it used to be. “Mango Alley”, the only play not written by Steven Edwards, featured the talent of young and upcoming writer Evan Charles and highlighted the spoken word talent of Osei Jackson.

Sunday August 4, persons were thrilled

with two shows on one ticket. “David and Goliath”, was again featured at 4 p.m. and “For Better or Worse” at 6.30 p.m. “David and Goliath” had patrons flying off their feet with stunts and scenes analogous to those of World Wrestling Entertainment and “For Better or Worse” left many in the audience in stitches, speechless and in tears all at the same time. As the final day came to an end, most persons left with the only regret that there was not another week of plays to attend.

This event would not have been possible had it not been for the kind participation of the Ministry of Community Development St George West, Caribbean Lifestyle Communications Group and the Ministry of National Diversity and Social Integration, organisations that have been Platinum Sponsors for the event. Special mention should be made of Atlantic LNG. Additionally, Steven Edwards Productions would like to thank Alderman Beverly Ali, Carol DeVerteuil, Community Development

Officer Two, and the Minister of National Diversity and Social Integration Clifton DeCoteau.

Next on the agenda for Steven Edwards Productions is the production of a children’s TV series, “By the Bay”. The organisation just won an award from Trinidad and Tobago Film Company to start the said project. The intention is to take a rehabilitation programme entitled “Freedom Behind Bars” to the Youth Training Centre and to girls within the women’s prison system. Moreover, the goal is to carry the “Act It Out” Theatre Festival regionally to Antigua and Internationally to Atlanta.

In light of the above, persons interested in performing can contact 304-9159 or actitouttheatrefestival@gmail.com.

Sponsors are still being sought for the Children’s programme. Persons and entities interested in coming on board can contact Steven Edwards Productions via the above contact information.



Patrons at Napa opening night.



Las Cuevas Beach Lodge

Las Cuevas Beach Lodge is a small unique hotel catering to eco-lovers and quiet type interested in local culture and cuisine. Turtle watching, bathing, diving, hiking and deep sea fishing available. Local food from fresh produce and daily caught seafood.

Snugly nestled on a hillside overlooking the Caribbean Sea, against a background of mountains of the Northern Range, and surrounded by lush tropical rain forest, our lodge offers all the ingredients of a Caribbean vacation and more. Sun, sand and sea with the added bonus of crystal clear rivers, deep green valleys and majestic mountains.

Las Cuevas Beach is a nesting ground for leatherback turtles. The turtle watching season runs from February to August and many adult females return to lay their eggs on the same beach where they were hatched many years ago after navigating the world's oceans. They come ashore at night and if not disturbed, will lay about 60-80 tennis ball size eggs, several times during the season.

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Point Fortin craft shop



African interior decorations



Point Fortin African craft shop business owner, fondly known as "George", poses with his merchandise for readers of Sweet TnT Magazine.

Photos by Simone Charles

By Omilla Mungroo

Strange encounter

Working from eight in the morning to five in the evening, rain or shine, can be a killer, especially six days a week, same hours, single mother, with a very demanding boss. I was already late to pick up my son from the day-care centre as the sky grew darker. Threats of rain appeared in the distance, and as I started to panic and rebuke myself for leaving my umbrella at home that day, a silver gray car slowed to a stop where I waited for a taxi on the highway, just opposite the entrance to Bamboo Settlement #2; it was not a taxi though.

When the front glass went down, the driver, thick set, of African descent, well-dressed and smiling, asked ever so nicely if I would like a drop. "Of course I would like a drop!" He pointed to the black sky and I sat down without a second thought as the rain came pounding down.

As I sat in the car, we introduced ourselves. Whilst turning down the air condition he said he was a lawyer. I told him what I did. I was dressed in my work suit – a moss green jacket and a pair of slacks to match, no jewelry, no make-up and from anyone's perspective I don't think I made as grand a statement with my appearance than I did with my words.

He seemed very interested when I thanked God aloud and mentioned how grateful I was for his kindness. Then he asked me what was my religion, since I used the word "Jehovah" with reference to God. I told him I embraced all religions and tried to learn from each one. He then casually picked up a topee from the space between the seats and toyed with it smiling mischievously.

"Do you know what this is?" he asked.

I took a closer look because I had no idea they could be any other colour but

white. This one was black and green. So I shook my head because I wasn't sure. He then continued, "What religion will you associate this with?"

A sinking, sudden realisation gripped me as I felt all kinds of fear. "Oh my gosh!" I thought, "I'm in a car with a member of the Jamaat!" I'm sure he read me well, but for some queer reason my composure shocked me even more, and my act nominated me for an Oscar on the spot.

Feigning enthusiasm, I asked if he was a Muslim and that I hadn't really known too much about Islam. He answered yes, and our conversation took off from religion to politics and the coup of 1990. I listened with interest and it began to dawn on me that my knowledge of the coup and the Jamaat could mean life or death.

We were just passing Valsayn when he announced that he had to pick up something at a mosque near the University of the West Indies, and if I was not in a hurry, he will drop me off in Curepe on his way back to Port of Spain, since it was still raining heavily. I resigned myself to faith in God and replied that it was okay, quite cheerfully, I suppose.

On passing the Kay Donna roundabout I smiled my Demi Moore smile as his left hand loosened his tie about his shirt collar whilst chatting. I wondered if he knew how afraid I was, when he turned off the highway.

"Why did he take off his tie? Is he going to strangle me?"

Thoughts of the news headlines with my name popped all over my face. Then a verse from the Bible, "For God has not given me a

spirit of fear, but of power, and of love and of a sound mind."

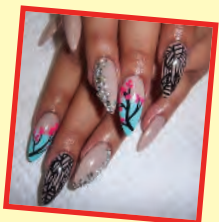
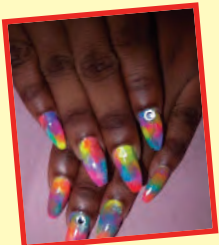
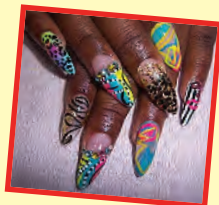
As he entered the compound where the mosque stood he asked if I wanted to come inside and wait. The rain had slowed to a slight drizzle by then. I think he anticipated a positive response from me because he hesitated a few seconds, but I gave a most charming smile and confidently replied that I would wait in the car. He smiled and left.

Watching him walk to the mosque, my initial thoughts were to get out of the car and run! But my apprehension somehow was soon quelled because it was no more than ten minutes when I saw him walking back to the car with a small, brown, rectangular package in his hand. "Is it a gun?"

He apologised for taking so long and started out the driveway. I really believed he could hear my heart pounding in fright because it got so quiet. No one spoke.

As we approached Curepe he gave me his call-card. We shook hands and exchanged courtesies, and I hurried off to get a taxi to pick up my son. It was only when I crossed the road and glanced back I saw him driving off with speed. He waved at me, and I waved back, thanking God all the way. Then I read the information on the call-card.

About a month later I saw him on The Morning Edition programme on TV-6. They were discussing the justice system and the state of the country, at the time. I smiled with renewed interest as I listened to the man who I thought would take my life that ominous evening.



Nail artist Kelly:

I always try to meet my customers' needs

My name is Kelly Baptiste and I am 23 years old. I am a final year student of International Relations at the University of the West Indies. Also, I am what most people would refer to as a nail technician but I prefer the term nail artist. The difference: a nail tech does what they're taught while a nail artist explores their imagination, goes beyond the borders and draws inspiration from life.

I have been doing nails for over a year professionally and personally since forever. Currently I am in the process of sourcing a unique location of my own to establish as my business place. I'm also constantly learning as this industry develops rapidly. I've found a new niche which would be my next venture of natural hair care and styling.

At present I rent my station from a hair-dresser situated in the busy San Juan. Although it's a prime location, some of my clientele journey from as far as Arima, Cunupia and South and have said they become aware of my work via Facebook or Instagram.

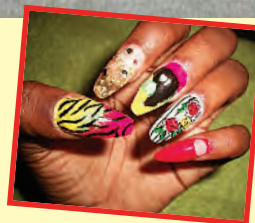
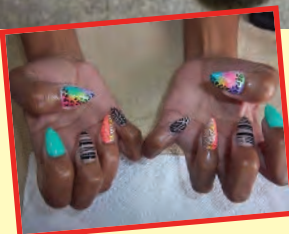
As a service provider I always try to meet customers' needs. As such, there have been good and bad times. My worst experience has to be when I was asked to do airbrush nails. With my strength being hand drawn nail art I made a very unsuccessful attempt. Everything was



I always try to meet my customers' needs



“Nail art is used to reflect someone’s personality. Everyone is different so I take full advantage of their individuality. The art is in the details.”



wrong from the malfunction of the air-brush gun to the poor choice of colours.

On a better note it is impossible to rate any job as my best as each set is representative of the client themselves. Sometimes I may spend hours on a piece but what matters is that the client is pleased in the end and that creates a warm feeling of peace and inner joy.

Nail art is my therapy and I take pleasure in doing it. Such that I have received wonderful comments such as “You drew that? I didn’t know people did nails like this in Trinidad,” “A lot of people are doing nails but not doing nails, you know what you’re doing,” and “You’re really good, very creative.”

First timers always promise to return. One of the best compliments I have received was from NAILgasm Doc (documentary done capturing the work of the nail artists, nail techs and their work around the world) when they told me via Instagram that they wish they had known about me when they were doing the documentary as my work is amazing.

As in everything else I have also received some negativity. I understand that not everyone has the appreciation for nail art. Nail art is not what is common but what is unique. Anything can be put on nails making them accessories. Nail art is used to reflect someone’s personality. Everyone is different so I take full advantage of their individuality. The art is in the details.

Nail art in Trinidad is an old thing. However it has been revived over the past few years around the world facilitated by the Japanese. Trinidad is home and will always remain regardless of where I may venture. Despite our flaws I feel blessed to live here as we are much better off than a lot of the developing world.

What I love most though are the freedoms that we enjoy as being a diversified society. Next to that is the food as well as the fact that it’s an island because I love the sea. We are free to express ourselves and one can never get bored as there is always an event, somewhere to go, something to do. We adapt quickly to the latest trends. We are no longer that far

behind thanks to globalisation. Therefore I would definitely continue to do nails here although the industry may seem saturated.

There is still a market out there with people who do not get their nails done for various reasons from not being sure of what they want to not wanting to use nail extensions. I try to cater to different needs and desires. I also have plans to enhance the industry with the help and cooperation of likewise beauty professionals. I feel as though we are not as respected as we should be.

The advice I would give to younger people is the same one that I have received, “Your education is there to fall back on.” I say it’s free so take full advantage. Study something that you like if you have a passion for it. If you have a dream, desire, passion whether it be sports or arts or you have a gift and want to use it, GO FOR IT.

Never let anyone hold you back from doing what you have a passion or gift for because not everyone is built the same way. Believe in yourself. People may frown upon what you choose to do because we all have dreams but remember it’s not in all of us to have commitment and discipline that is required to bring our dreams into fruition.

So I would say again if you have a passion for it, GO FOR IT.





Local novelist Donna Mae Greaves:

I'm Donna Mae, Deemay to friends. I'm a spoken word artist, singer, writer, cookie mistress... all-round artistic busy body, or so I've been told. I'm in my forties, but feel like I'm still in my twenties – and I consider that a wonderful blessing.

I'm currently self-employed as a caterer/baker, having walked away from being an Executive Assistant for most of my working life. I've run my company – Decadence Cookies Cakes & Catering – as a side line since 2003, but made the leap into full time as of July last year.

I've been writing for a few years – blogging mostly, but managed to have one novel, *At Last*, published in 2009. Since then I have completed another novel – *The Man in the Shadows*, and a poetic anthology – *Whispers Within*, all three of which will be released together in the not too distant future as a triple t(h)reat. The books are being published by Amorous Ink.

My novels are romance novels. My first

Writing books a sweet challenge

book was actually a doodle that blossomed into a novel. At the time, I thought I was writing a blog... then I thought it was a short story... and then it dawned that it was actually a book being born. Initially, I panicked, but the challenge was too sweet to leave it alone so, write on I did. My choice of genre was influenced by the romantic that lives within me.

My second novel was born out of a dream that I had, honestly, where the majority of the story played out. It was about putting it down on paper, and I had ignored it for a while, until the dream came back and I eventually began writing it. My poetry is borne out of life experi-

ences – mine and those of friends.

Since publication *At Last* has gotten pretty decent reviews from people who have read it. It was reviewed by the *Trinidad Guardian Newspaper*, and was said to be a good read, although it was thought that there wasn't enough tension, but I firmly believe that we all need a feel good read every now and then.

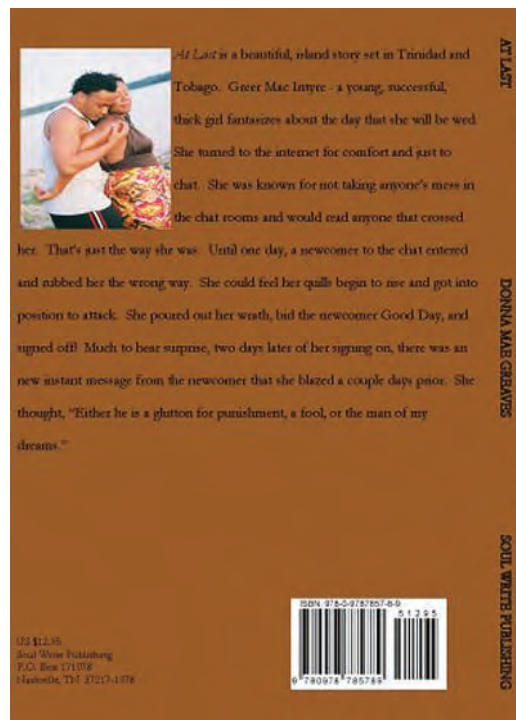
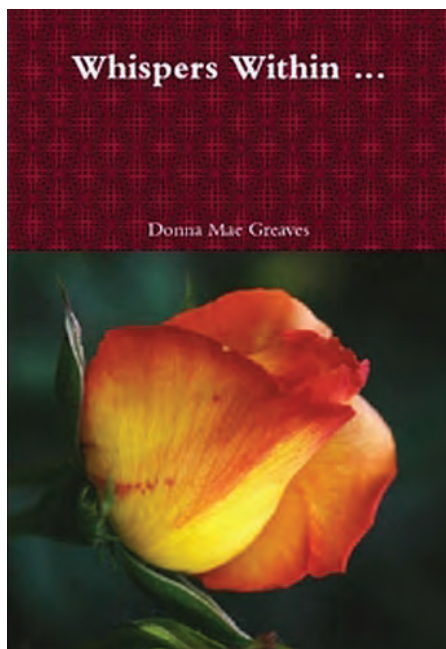
At Last is written in Standard English, but there is a lot of Trini Slangue involved. There were so many Trinidad references, be them food or phrases, that I actually included a glossary at the back of the book for ease of reference. *The Man in the Shadows* is also in Standard, but there

are many references to our Creole speak, particularly in a portion of the novel that refers to Tobago.

My characters actually speak the way that I speak and the way the people around me speak. My characters are constructed out of the essences of many people, so that there really isn't anyone who speaks in a purely Standard or Creole way.

The challenge was trying to find a way to straddle that fence between the Standard English and the Trini Creole in all cases, as well as the challenge in *At Last* to add the Latino inference to the male lead Tre, who was Boricua in heritage. I had to call up my secondary school Spanish, as well as chat with a couple of my online friends who shared that heritage. The Trini Creole wasn't that hard, as blessedly, my secondary school English Language and English Literature teachers frequently gave us exercises in writing the vernacular. Talk about harking back in time to call up lessons taught!

My advice to others would be to write and speak your truth – whatever that may be. Do so in such a way that makes you easy to understand... easy to be bonded with... easy to tell your story without compromising it. There's no right or wrong way to speak your truth. It just has to be YOUR truth... your story. Once a reader is able to get into a story to the point of restarting it in the hope that somehow, there would be extra pages available when they yet again come to the end, then you have accomplished what you have set out to do.



Life in T&T by A. James

sweettntmagazine.com



Sweet TnT Magazine FORUMS

A "Talk Nah" section in Issue #5 featured some questions. These die-hard Trinbagonians have kept the forums busy answering them. They are posted on <http://www.sweettnmagazine.com> See what they had to say.

Foods you have to eat in T&T

SweetTnTMagazine:

Welcome to Sweet TnT Magazine's forum. We in Trinidad and Tobago love a good pelau and curry. Whatever we eat, you can click and read about it in the magazines on our Home Page. Tell us what's on the menu.

zoomedic:

believe it or not a fry fish "cro cro" with simple hops can make my day even with salad or not and for the wash down i had a coconut and as i said believe it's under \$20 TT EMAIL ME AND I GO TELL YOU HOW
slackseed@gmail.com

TrueTrini:

I eat 2 hot doubles for breakfast this morning before I went to work.

Ralph Seegobin:

Well i had doubles for lunch today

Sandra:

There's nothing like fried bake and saltfish. I eat that hot and spicy this morning.

KC Hilaire:

Macaroni pie, Jap's fish and fry King fish or Carite!

valdeen shears:

made roast bake on a platin last night usually taste best for me straight off the fire and with melted butter. Going to make quaker oats porridge for kids, goes with the bad weather.

marc algeron:

What better cuisine than a bake and shark in Maracas Bay, washed down with a cold Stag by Sam's

Gloria:

Nothing can beat stew salt fish with plenty tomatoes & green fig, not green bananas, green fig!

Deloris:

Me love dem doubles and busupshot badd!!!

chanti:

Made corn pie, caribbean fish, fried vegetable rice and fry plantain for Sunday lunch!!!!!! Couldn't get any better than that!

Sherona:

Curry duck!!!!

Keisha M:

I heading to the market to get all of what i need for Sunday lunch

Hungry:

Homemade bake and shark with zaboca

Talk like a Trinbagonian

SweetTnTMagazine:

Welcome to Sweet TnT Magazine's forum. "Wha is de scene", "Whappenin' now", "All yuh is trouble yes" and "Crapaud smoke yuh pipe" are things we say in Trinidad and Tobago in our Creole language. Whatever we say, you can click and read about it in the magazines on our Home Page. You can talk like a Trinbagonian in this forum.

valdeen shears:

am from country, point fortin to be exact so grew up on all them sayings and loads more, in fact had a column with express called "Granny Used to Say", dont know if u would remember that was back in 2000. Love trini adverbs, they are so colourful and say so much without saying so much.

marc algeron:

we say things like "Champagne taste and mauby pocket", "God is ah trini", "all ah we is one family", my personal favourite "wen she say to stand up is time to run" lmao

Michelle Pierre:

"Ah have to make ah piece ah money to finish de house yes!"

Meiling:

so funny, I miss Trinidad so much, these comments made me laugh. lol

Donna:

better belly buss dan good food waste.

marc algeron:

monkey know what tree to climb...

keisha:

yuh sticking

tyler:

Watch nah! yuh better do it if yuh kno wat good fuh yuh!

chanti:

"Yuh better check yuhself before yuh wreck yuhself inno... cause I done talk"

plenty to say:

yeah those are the oldies but am a teacher and try my best to keep up with the lingo of my students have u hear "an iz dat" usually u put up ur hand n rool up ur eyes and there is "pat down pat down" that means cool it take it easy and then there is "like yuh GT" this one kills me lol it means like u get thru but it's like putting spot lights on you so like a guy chattin with a girl n he gets her number and while he putting the number in the phone his friends jokingly says "like yuh GT" some may even say "like yuh get thru"

Meiling:

Hmmm, well I learn something today because I never heard "like yuh GT" before. I know "like yuh get thru". hahahha

What we do for fun

SweetTnTMagazine:

Welcome to Sweet TnT Magazine's forum. People in Trinidad and Tobago like to lime "on the Avenue", go to Maracas Beach, Pigeon Point, Movie Towne, Gulf City Mall, La Nuba, Zen, or a show at NAPA. Whatever they do, you can click and read about it in the magazines on our Home Page. Tell us what you do for fun in T&T.

DJ Roc:

I go to karaoke and I am also a karaoke DJ... it's really the best thing for me after partying hard in my younger days...

Bago girl:

Nice topic, I'm from Tobago and I basically live on Store Bay because the beach is amazing. I party a lot at The Shade night club too.

KC Hilaire:

My idea of fun is generally not based on the location I'm at but who I'm spending time with. When you have people around you who are not afraid to either just relax or let loose and just do some random things like playing All Fours, eating and drinking or "good talking" people, any and every event can become fun.

Alana:

LOL @ "good talking" people

valdeen shears:

hi am a family person so fun for me may be boring for others but a good beach or river lime with lots of home cooked food and my children belly full is fun for me, thinking about a double whammy this weekend, cause its my husbands birthday and fathers day, so maybe river then straight to cinema, if not this weekend then for sure month end, bless!!!

marc algeron:

i just love the way they did over Maqueripe beach. This is one of my favourite landmarks in sweet T&T. This time i actually saw porpoises out in the distance jumping out the water. What better place to lime on a holiday like Labour Day.

Alana:

Hi Marc, I'm from New York and have visited Trinidad many times but never heard about Maqueripe beach. It sounds fascinating. Thanks for telling me.

marc algeron:

Hey Alana, you simply must check out Maqueripe the next time you're here, there are many other beaches you can check out also, we have a diversified palate, just make sure and go along with good company and designate a driver...

Richard Singh:

Who say "Avenue" later

Places worth visiting and why

SweetTnT Magazine:

Welcome to Sweet TnT Magazine's forum. People in Trinidad and Tobago visit Gasparee Caves, Nariva Swamp, the Pitch Lake, National Museum and Lopinot for recreation. Wherever they go, you can click and read about it in the magazines on our Home Page. Tell us about your favourite places in T&T.

Marcus:

Caura river with de crew is ah bess place to check out.

valdeen shears:

when I was a child in country, point fortin, la brea pitch lake was an occasion so were Clifton Hill and vessigny beaches.

Alisha Perez:

I myself enjoy Gasparee Island and plan on going when I visit sweet T&T.

chanti:

Alisha u wud die wit awe when u visit Gasparee caves, it's really amazing and so unexpected!!!! Definitely a must see!

llovetrinidad:

I like to sit on the Brian Lara Promenade and gape at people lol

What went wrong?

By Chantelle Wilson

Sitting in my gallery talking to my friends
Thinking of ways we think our life may end
Really strange topic, you think it's really taboo
But the way things going really isn't cool
De place get grimey and yet life goes on
What really happens, what really goes on?
Let me tell you something, listen attentively
I'm going to show the cycle of crime in T&T

Bought a new car last month and I said thank God
Woke up in the morning to see my rims and lights were gone
I wasn't too shocked, really wasn't surprised
But then I started to feel that anger burning inside

What really happens what really goes on?

Called my bredderin up and showed him the scene
Bout the disrespect that was done to me
He said very calmly, "Don't you worry bout a thing, I make a swing up and get back your things"
I pout petulantly, I hang up the phone, I plug my iPhone in and listen to Montano
Curiosity oozes through my veins
And reprisal fills my heart leaving a stain

What really happens, what really goes on?

Front page and headline news the very next day
Reads big "shoot out over theft on Broadway"
Before I can even think who it could be
I was stabbed in the heart by reality
Plastered on the screen was my very best friend
He really said he down with me to the end

What really happened, what really went wrong?

"Killers for hire" reads the Newsday
6 murders on weekend says the lower page
Woman murders woman about 6:30
And just 2hrs later man was gunned in Laventille

What really happened, what really went wrong?

Looking at the mirror, searching desperately
To see and perceive what could have been done differently
We often blame those who did us wrong
We then feel shame when the spotlight is on
Thinking of how good we have it in T&T

Especially when education is for free
COSTAATT, UWI, UTT I name
And don't get me started with the vocational schools on display
Negative imagery holds us down
Time and again we give up always wanting more
Wanting more than the promises made to us, told to us, lied to us
Wanting more promises we can trust
We start off sharing love because of what we got
But then folks say they're happy when they're really not
Cry ourselves to sleep a couple of times to hide the pain
Then we fall into the world and change
Not noticing the route to the pain
Really it is with you, there you'll find change

The Andrew Lewis Foundation is blooming nationally
Beautiful sisters are going up for Miss T&T
The confusion, tribulation, delusion of your heart
Will stop, get better when you realise your art
Yes the crime in T&T is spinning fast
And sometimes it's better not to ask
I'm going to tell you something, listen attentively
The cycle of crime can only stop when you say "it starts with me!"

Whop, whap, yuh dead!

By Euline Joseph

WHOP! WHAP! Seldom broke the stillness of the night at my house. My brother displayed the true likeness of a mannequin, perched in front of the television set, whether it is a comedy drama, documentary or a "sudsy soap".

But boy! Ah tell yuh, not when dem peculiar pesky parasites come out to play. If yuh see sp...eed! He would definitely glow on a race track!

His agility didn't carry him upstairs (like the rest of us). It was a race to the finish line for a shoe or a slipper or anything that would

whop whap he victim dead dead!

The pale walls were endorsed with footprints of every size in various angles. At one time my brother found the most appropriate weapon... a paper plate.

Yuh know ah didn't mind all this whopping and whapping on the floors or on the walls or even on the table! But he used to say, "STAND STILL!"... yeah, he wanted to whop whap we too.

And after all this hair-raising bacchanal and commotion, guess what?

The foreign German or the Creolised Oriental cock-a-roach would make... its escape!!!



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Ah Trinbago Ting



Fun puzzles based on local culture, personalities, places, sites, folklore, and foods

Sandra Maharajh Shah, creator of “Ah Trinbago Ting” a series of 21 Word Search Puzzles all on the culture of Trinidad and Tobago, introduces herself to readers of Sweet TnT Magazine and shares insights about her book.

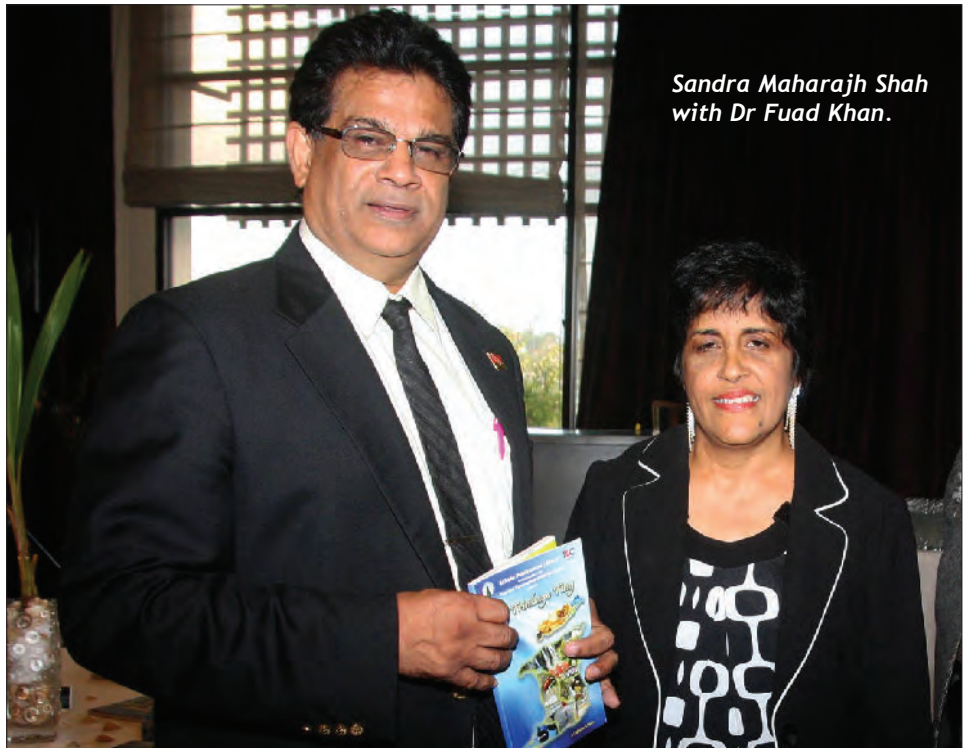
My name is Sandra Maharajh Shah. I am a single mother with three fantastic teenage sons. I worked at Republic Bank Limited for 17 years. I resigned when I became pregnant with my last son. The boys were born in three consecutive years and I wanted to stay at home to be with them and do something that allowed me to work at my own time. I came up with the idea of creating colouring books where we can teach children while they are having fun.

On December 4, 2000 Ashoka Publications Limited was born. We created two colouring book series. One, “Chhote Bachche” which is Hindi for “Little Children”. In this series I took the Hindu religion and simplified it in English and put it in a format anyone of any creed or race can read and understand. We have dealt with topics such as Divali, Phagwa, then cultural things like history of the Indentured Labourers, etc.

These books are circulated in the Hindu schools and schools within the Indian communities. When events come and the kids have social study projects the books provide ready-made material. We also assist the schools financially from sale of the books. The second series is www.colourmekids.com a series which deals with national topics, The Pan Story, Colour and Learn about the City of Port of Spain, Gee Whiz it's Christmas.

We are also the first company to design gift paper for Indian weddings locally and Hindi alphabet charts. Apart from my own publications we have also published a book for Guardian columnist/lawyer Mr Lennox Sankersingh – Politics in the Indo Trinidadian Constituency.

“Ah Trinbago Ting” is a series of 21



Sandra Maharajh Shah with Dr Fuad Khan.

Word Search Puzzles all topics pertain to Trinidad and Tobago. It covers culture, personalities, places of interest, historical sites, folklore, foods, fruits, and snacks. What makes it different is that it is in full colour with pictures and explanations for every word in the puzzles. It is a book

designed to promote both domestic and external tourism. I love my country with a passion and this was my way of showing it off. The language was not a problem because I maintained Standard English throughout the book since I was catering for international readers. Only the name of the book is in Creole English.

The book was launched at Trinidad Hilton on August 23, 2013 and the feedback has been overwhelming from people who have read it. These are people from professional backgrounds as well as parents with children.

One woman told me her daughter sleeps with the book because she will not put it down. The book surpasses any other book in terms of the amount of information in it.

I believe my book can help move T&T forward because it can create a new sense

“Our country is the greatest country in the world... We have to stop worrying about what our country can do for us and start worrying what can I do for my country”

“It is my humble plea to my fellow Trinbagonians to learn to love what is ours. See our country for what it really is – a Paradise. There are people in other countries who are persecuted for their gender, or others who are persecuted for religion, or race”

of appreciation for our country, both locally and otherwise.

Our country is the greatest country and I will repeat THE GREATEST COUNTRY IN THE WORLD. There are more positives than negatives but our people need to open their eyes and see it. They need to stop complaining and start building. We have to stop worrying about what our country can do for us and start worrying what can I do for my country.

I would like to share my speech given at the launch of “Ah Trinbago Ting” at the Trinidad Hilton:

“It is truly an honour and a privilege for me to be here today, a week before this great nation of ours celebrate its 51st anniversary of Independence, to present to you, my humble contribution, my tribute to the Government and People of Trinidad and Tobago – “Ah Trinbago Ting”.

A book which I hope would have captured the love and passion I feel for this great country I PROUDLY call my home. If this book can help my fellow Trinbagonians and people the world over, to see T&T through my eyes and see the beauty I see. If it could touch their hearts to feel the love and pride which I feel, and bring out their nurturing spirit to want to preserve and elevate this, which is ours. If it can create a sense of patriotism within their hearts, then the years of labour which went into the making of this book would have been worth it.

All love stories begin somewhere, and although I was born here in Trinidad, my love story began in Tobago in the late 60s. My dad was in charge of an estate and the Bird of Paradise Inn, which was located in Speyside, in the lane that runs alongside the Wheel from the old sugar factory. The beauty of that place, with the brilliant bouganvilles cascading down the hills remain embedded in my memory. Our home was built so close to the sea, that when the tides were high, the waves would come crashing under the house.

As young children, my siblings and I would spend hours at night with our father, fishing on the shore, looking for the ball of fire we sometimes saw flashing through the night from the village of Speyside. We spent our days, rafting down the river



Sandra and Denyse Plummer

which ran next to our house, or stealing old man Lau’s gauvas which he never allowed us to pick because he said they were for the birds. We thought he was just plain old stingy. The meadow opposite the house, where we played, now stands Manta Lodge; and of course there was old man Cordner coming down the hill riding on his donkey.

One wretched Saturday is carved forever in the depths of my memory, when my sister and I almost conducted an entire church service, stuck on the face of a treacherous cliff, with the dirt loosening from our palms. We never prayed so hard. The big grey rocks glared menacingly from below, whilst the road above seemed light years away. We had gone to catch cray fish with Pa and had lost track of time. The priest always stopped dutifully on his way to church to pick us up. Our efforts to find a short cut almost cost us our lives. We muttered every prayer we knew and finally dropped on our knees, kissing the road and saying the 23rd psalm, when we finally reached the top.



Giving her speech at the Trinidad Hilton.

We had no electricity in the house. At nights we would play under the street lights. That was after we dutifully caught all our mother’s beautiful Dominican fowls, and put them on the sea grapes trees to sleep.

What children read about in Huckleberry Finn and Tom Sawyer books, we lived those adventures in Tobago.

My love story with Trinidad began about 13 years ago when I started this company. We had teamed up with Mastana Bahar as a sponsor, and on Sundays we would join them for the auditions throughout the country.

Armed with hundreds of colouring books, a large cooler with Flavorite lollies and ice cream and a big bag of Radio 90.5 FM promotional items, my family and I went throughout the villages of Trinidad. My sons were really young, three, four, and five years old, but everybody got together every Sunday from village to village marketing these three companies whilst at the same time experiencing the love and warmth of our people. Some areas the people would prepare meals for the entire team and we dared not leave until we ate.

After the auditions were finished we would leave and explore the area. Through this I was able to see places I never knew existed and from then to now. It has become the norm for my sons and I to just jump in a car and drive to any given place in Trinidad. I have always made it a point of duty to expose my children to the various religions and culture of our country, so it is not unusual to see us in a Baptist gathering in Moruga, or up on Mount St Benedict or in St James for Hosay.

I believe that we are lucky to be living in this country where we can truly experience and appreciate each other’s religion and culture. A visit to the Queen’s Park Savannah on Easter Sunday for the annual Radio 90.5 Kite Flying competition would demonstrate Trinbago’s togetherness in all its glory. That is what makes Trinidad and



At the book signing.



Rachelle Regis-Glourd
dancing to "Sugar Island"

Tobago beautiful.

It is my humble plea to my fellow Trinbagonians to learn to love what is ours. See our country for what it really is – a Paradise. There are people in other countries who are persecuted for their gender, or others who are persecuted for religion, or race. There are places where prostitution is inherent to females from birth. Where women are barred from schools or from furthering their studies to higher degrees.

Read about all those houses on the internet that are up for sale because work is so hard to get. The countries where people have to pay for everything. Correct me if I am wrong but I believe this is the only country where the people experience so much freeness. Is free breakfast and lunch, free school, free books and free bus. Free medical, dental and surgeries, Gate approved Tertiary education, and free media for people to complain.

We are one of the few countries where the sanctity of the Hindu religion is still maintained. There are countries where Divali is celebrated with parties. We took a contingent of artistes up to Suriname earlier this year to expose our culture for their Phagwa celebrations. We were shocked when we saw meat and alcohol on the grounds.

We have freedom which we should cherish.

Times have changed from when I was a child. Family life has been lost to technology. You can hardly sit with your children and enjoy family time together. You take them for a drive, they are either messaging on their cell phones or an earphone is stuck in their ear so they can't hear you.

At home they are stuck in front of the computers or television sets.

This was the reason I chose to make the book in the format in which I did it, since I consider family time to be an integral part of our life. As a word search puzzle, you can have family fun finding the words, and with the short synopsis, you can have in house know your country competitions. Children barely know our fruits. They do not know our history and I was told these things are not taught in schools, not as in depth as in our days. Some of our heroes who have contributed significantly to our country remain unknown entities. There are so many more I would have liked to include in the famous personalities section, but space would not permit.

In this book I have tried to touch on topics of relevance. There are so many places, which I did not mention, as well as personalities, but like I said in the fore-



word, the book is to whet your appetite, to entice you to want to learn more about our country. This book was a learning experience for me. I feel proud of the knowledge I have acquired whilst researching the information. It has room for a sequel.

If someone came to me now and asked me to make one wish – I would say I wish I could tell the world about the greatness of the land in which I was born. I wish I could go from country to country and sing the praises of my Motherland but since I may never be able to do that, I hope this book will reach countries the world over, so they too can learn about my sweet T&T.

I want to say thank you, to all who have contributed in one way or the other in making this book a reality. Special thanks to Dr Rupert Griffith, who in his capacity of Minister of Tourism, had the vision to see how far this book could go.

Simone Sant for painstakingly going through the book and editing.

Brian Ramsey for allowing us to use articles from his site Trinioutdoors.com. and for the photography.

Diane Ramlogan the graphic artist who put the book together, who worked with me throughout the years, creating and recreating, tolerating me and patiently bringing out what is now our golden creation.

Kiran Maharaj – who has always been, still is and I hope always will be by my side as no other friend has.

To the three men in my life, my sons, I hope in every life time I will be lucky to have you with me.

All the sponsors who supported the book and those who supported us throughout the past 13 years.

Mr and Mrs Khan of SK Printers of Charlieville who willingly took the challenge of producing the book to the international standard I wanted and worked with me to ensure it would be completed on time.

And last but not least I want to thank Almighty God, not only for blessing me with the gift of writing, but for granting me the wisdom to use it for the good of my country and my fellowmen. You see the pen is a powerful tool – it can elevate or it can devastate. And it is my solemn pledge today that all material coming out of Ashoka Publications Limited will always be for the upliftment of our country and our people.

I thank you for the courtesy of your attention and may God bless the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. ”

Doubles man

By Marc Algernon

I pushed through the crowd that was growing larger by the minute. I tried to make myself be seen. My stomach ached and my mouth watered as the aroma filled my nostrils.

"Gimme one there with slight pepper!" I was beginning to get annoyed as I pushed up my hand so sure that this one was mine... Nope.

"Why them nice woman them does always get them own first, you know how long I standing here."

If you don't raise your voice they don't notice you and it helps to be very visible as well, like right up under their noses that way they try to feed you and run you fast before you start making the other customers uncomfortable, or even worse, agreeing with you.

Each of the six doubles stands here in Curepe has the words "d original sauce" written on the front in bright red letters, it is so hard to tell who is authentic.

Finally, I am handed a napkin and very soon a hot sheet of grease proof paper that plates a piping hot bara which holds the most



Photo courtesy <http://bellyinhand.blogspot.com/2011/04/doubles.html>



Photo courtesy Rishijai <http://www.flickr.com/photos/foto-lab/1931217023/>

delicious combination of curried channa, tamarind sauce, pepper sauce and shadon beni sauce that four dollars can buy.

Soon my hands are dirtied as I dig right in, this is a hand food not for the cutlery folks. Grease proof paper in the garbage (we never litter) and up goes my hand again to collect another one. I am one of the club now. No longer pushing to the front of the crowd but now one of the respected "have to pay" customers.

"Eh, give meh some pepper with some doubles in it." Everyone laughs. That is Broad, one of the die-hard customers. He is what you would call a "pepper mouth". Men like Broad don't stand in the line, he is given VIP treatment because he got the name Broad by his big and very loud mouth. He can cause a scene in seconds so it's no playing around with him. I wish I had his courage.

I remember when doubles was only two dollars, then inflation stepped in but there was no decline in customers, always a great breakfast like I'm having now or a splendid dinner. It even acts as "cutters" if you have been drinking too much; just remember you cannot and should never eat just one.

Anyway I have to go now before I eat out all of my money and can't afford to take a taxi to go home... again!

High tea Trini style



Photo courtesy

http://www.mumslounge.com.au/images/com_yoorecipe/AaronF-3710/21-lemongrass%20ginger%20tea%20.jpg

By Marissa Armoogam-Ali

As the world becomes more and more caught up in the weekly changing health craves, the one that stood out to me the most is the different types of teas that are supposedly really great for improving ones health. Now I would definitely consider myself a tea enthusiast. I drink tea maybe as often as I can get a hold of some.

From time to time I do my research on

which tea has the anti-oxidants as opposed to the ones that are caffeine free I mean everyone wants the secret to endless youth. One day I visited a new gourmet food store that all my friends could not stop talking about, and to my surprise there on the shelves staring back at me for the price of \$70.99 was a bottle containing six stalks of Lemon Grass for the purpose of drawing to make a white tea. Now imagine my shock (mainly at the \$70.99) since this Lemon Grass is a favourite local

tea called “fever-grass” which I recall having since I was a child.

This brings me to my point, here in Trinidad, there are so many old favourites that we have somehow allowed to die or just refused to pass on to younger generations. I remember my mother using the young soft leaves at the tips of the lime plant to draw and make a delicious “limebud tea”. I also remember after having my children and they had bouts of colic or “gas” she thought me that a little limebud goes a long way in relieving them. Sometimes the peels of an orange that had been hung somewhere in the kitchen to dry was made into a very aromatic and very nerve calming tea.

After marriage my mother-in-law showed me how to use ginger or garlic to make a much stronger tasting tea as compared to the earlier ones and she used these teas to lower her blood pressure. Another favourite is a warm and inviting spice tea using a little cinnamon stick, some ginger and maybe a clove... hmm.

So in essence what the world’s health gurus are now figuring out and bring to us has long been passed generation to generation in sweet Trinidad, and furthermore our teas are not pulled out of a box wrapped with little labels... oh no! When we want a relaxing cup of tea, just step out into your yard and gather some succulent leaves or stalks and draw yourselves a cup of tea that could have the queen herself talking. So, how many sugars for you, one or two? Enjoy.



Photo courtesy <http://www.cmela.com/Buy-herbal-teas/Buy-100002756-green-tea-with-lemon-grass.html>

Long time snacks

By Marissa Armoogam-Ali

This year at the start of August vacation my children made what sounded like a mandatory list of places they would like to go, things they'd like to get and numerous daily request for snacks and junk food. So in my attempt to try to fulfil these very demanding and expensive requests my mind took me back to the days of when I was a child on August vacation. Somehow my mother always managed to have the house stocked with countless interesting and very delicious snacks.

The kitchen counters were always lined with bottles of homemade salted nuts, fried pepper channa, containers of sugar cake... I remember helping my mother make the sugar cake, she always used fresh coconut and I would sit and grate the pieces until there was a full bowl, I don't know what she did next, but I remember going in the back yard to cut a nice long fig leaf for her to heap spoonfuls of the sugar cake mixture onto



Photo courtesy <http://www.flickr.com/photos/21249124@N03/3174500192/> for cooling (no baking trays needed), and in about twenty minutes my siblings and I had crunchy sugar cake to eat.

Throughout the yard were planted many fruit trees – plums, mangoes, pomecythere and much more and my mother always made sure there was a non-stop supply of soaked pomecythere and jars of chow.

In the refrigerator were containers of preserves (red mango)... you know the nice saucy one that you had to lick all your fingers and the back of your hand for. In between she would make a sponge cake, now long time sponge cake is a totally different kind of cake from the cakes we get today. Before we realised, it was work, my brother and I would fight to mix the cake beating the butter and sugar for what seemed like hours just for the honours of getting the bowl and spoon to eat the cake batter. Let me tell you when you ate that cake, you tasted every ingredient, the vanilla essence, the freshness of the orange zest or peel added to the cake, I swear cake then and now, they are not even related.

Anyone remember turning the ice-cream pale for hours and usually that was a family or neighbourhood event and ending up with the most delicious homemade coconut, custard, barbadine or soursop ice cream? Now that was ice cream!

So I think I need to look into reviving some of these August holiday traditions and make long time “now time”.



Photo courtesy http://www.retireearlylifestyle.com/lake_trip.htm



Surfs up in Maracas Beach

By Therese Chung

When you visit the paradise island of Trinidad and Tobago, you have to go to Maracas Beach, where you could swim, tan and surf. Our lifeguards are on location and SURFS UP!!!

One Sunday in April, I was tanning on the beach, when the sound of clapping engulfed my body. As I opened my eyes, I saw a guy practically walking on water. I walked towards the clear waters to see that the man walking on water was actually gliding on a surf board. I was intrigued by his entertaining moves as he spun around performing tricks in the water for all on the beach.

I waited for him. I had to get this interview. As he was walking to the shore, leaving the glistening reflections of sun-kissed waters behind, I approached this handsome surfer and told him, "Good job." He blushed and quickly responded, "Got some good waves today." I had to ask him, "Could you tell me how you feel when you're out there?" He smiled and answered, "Words can't describe the feeling you get when you're out there. I mean, you feel a connection with the water, with the sound of the waves slowly approaching. It's as though your spirit unites with this place and you have all respect for the waters, the seas, the ocean. It's you and God out there. When you want to spend time with him, it's the place to feel that oneness with him."

So for all you surfers out there, come to Trinidad's North Coast and you will definitely get more than you bargained for.

Ohh Maracas

By Felesha Subadar

What a beautiful beach
As I look out into the ocean
I see an astonishing view
As the sands blew in the wind
And the trees intertwined into each other
As flying fishes head for the water
And the crabs head for land
As a warm but cool breeze
Flows through my hair
The air smells fresh
But the strong aroma of bake and shark lingered in the air
And the waters a dark blue, green color
But unfortunately this moment must come to an end
As the sun falls into the ocean
And darkness hits once again
Then like a spotlight shining bright
As cars can be heard honking up the hills
Once more the moon brings a light
Ohhh Maracas.

The Toco Lighthouse

By Nadia Ali

The Toco lighthouse is a national landmark, located at Galera Point on the east coast. It sits majestically amid tranquil surroundings. Visitors can relax under the shade of trees at the wooden picnic tables after the long scenic drive and enjoy their home-packed food and drinks. The beautiful white structure of the 70-foot lighthouse is the centre of attention as it towers into the blue of the sky.

A recent road trip to the Toco Lighthouse took my family and me on a long scenic drive along the extent of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway heading east to the village of Toco. The journey is about 65 miles from the heart of Port of Spain or two-and-a-half hours drive. The trunk of the car had everything we wanted to eat and drink and just before we entered the main town there was a doubles vendor that caught our attention for an early morning breakfast on the go.

We then turned off at Antigua Road towards the Valencia Junction and onto the Valencia Main Road. The scenery is lush countryside. It is here you can see the Valencia Forestry Division with its impressive tall forest. As the car turns the wide corner at Cumaca Road it slopes downwards to a beautiful river spot where the Valencia River offers an ideal place for curry cook-outs and river limes.

Driving along the roadway a bridge crosses over the Matura River into Matura. This is the first turtle watching area where locals and foreigners alike can visit to see the 5,000 or so Leatherback Turtles nest. The area has many signs with turtles shown on them and a sign that reads, "Welcome to the Turtle Village Trust". This is where the protected beaches for turtle conservation is located under the watchful eye of the popular Nature Seekers organisation.

As we continued along the Toco Main Road, we turned onto Galera Road. It's a fairly long winding road that takes



The Toco Lighthouse

you past the Keshorn Walcott Secondary School and downwards towards the sea. The sign for Salybia Bay comes into sight and from there on we started wondering where the lighthouse was. It soon came into sight on the straight of the road peeking over the tall grassy fields.

The entrance takes visitors into the 10,000 sq foot car park facility which is free of cost. Having parked you then walk to the picket fence which encloses the area around the Toco Lighthouse. The brilliant white structure stands at 70-feet tall and has a big plaque which briefly tells of its history having been built in 1897 by the British.

The area surrounding has picnic tables under the shade of the trees; allowing visitors to sit and admire the lighthouse and not to mention eat and drink. Walking down the pathway to the back of the area reveals a stunning cliff edge. Simply go through the white fence and you find yourself on the rugged coastline. The view is wonderful allowing you to view Tobago on a clear day and witness the rough waters below where the Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea meet. Legend has it that this was the point that Arawaks jumped off in order to escape from the Spanish.

The drive to Toco Lighthouse was definitely an experience that I would recommend to others. The scenery beckons you to pull aside and step outside of your vehicle to fully look, admire and photograph the exceptional beaches, bays, bridges and lush forest.

Once at the Toco Lighthouse, the surroundings welcome you to take a seat and enjoy the view. So, pack up a picnic and enjoy the east coast of Trinidad.

How to get there

Take the Churchill Roosevelt Highway east to Valencia Road; Once on the Valencia Road continue east to the Toco Main Road sign; From the Toco intersection turn east into Galera Road and follow the sign to Galera Point.

Driving Time: Two and a half hours

Distance: 65 miles (one way)

Cost: FREE entrance with free parking in a 10,000 sq area

Hours: 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.



That water was cold and stinging.

A trip to Brasso Seco Waterfall

By Annisa Phillip

As the early morning sunshine beckoned us forward, the walk to the waterfall seemed too easy, a bit long but easy. Framed by unscathed grass, shrubs and trees, the trek began on a paved road and then tailored off onto dirt and gravel.

The journey was filled with entertainment with acts from our friend who either slipped or fell on vicious stones that were out to get him, random bursts of song and the treasure hunting experience of finding nutmeg.

We met a few companions along the way; three different crabs whose reaction to being startled was to raise their claws as if to say, "Aye doh mess with me hoss. Yuh looking for a fight or wa?" We glimpsed one snake on the way to the waterfall as it slithered into the grass and another on the way back as it stood its ground along the track and scared a female friend in the process. However, of our new friends I felt tiny pangs in my chest for a turtle that got its shell crushed while along its journey, probably by a passing 4 X 4 pick-up.

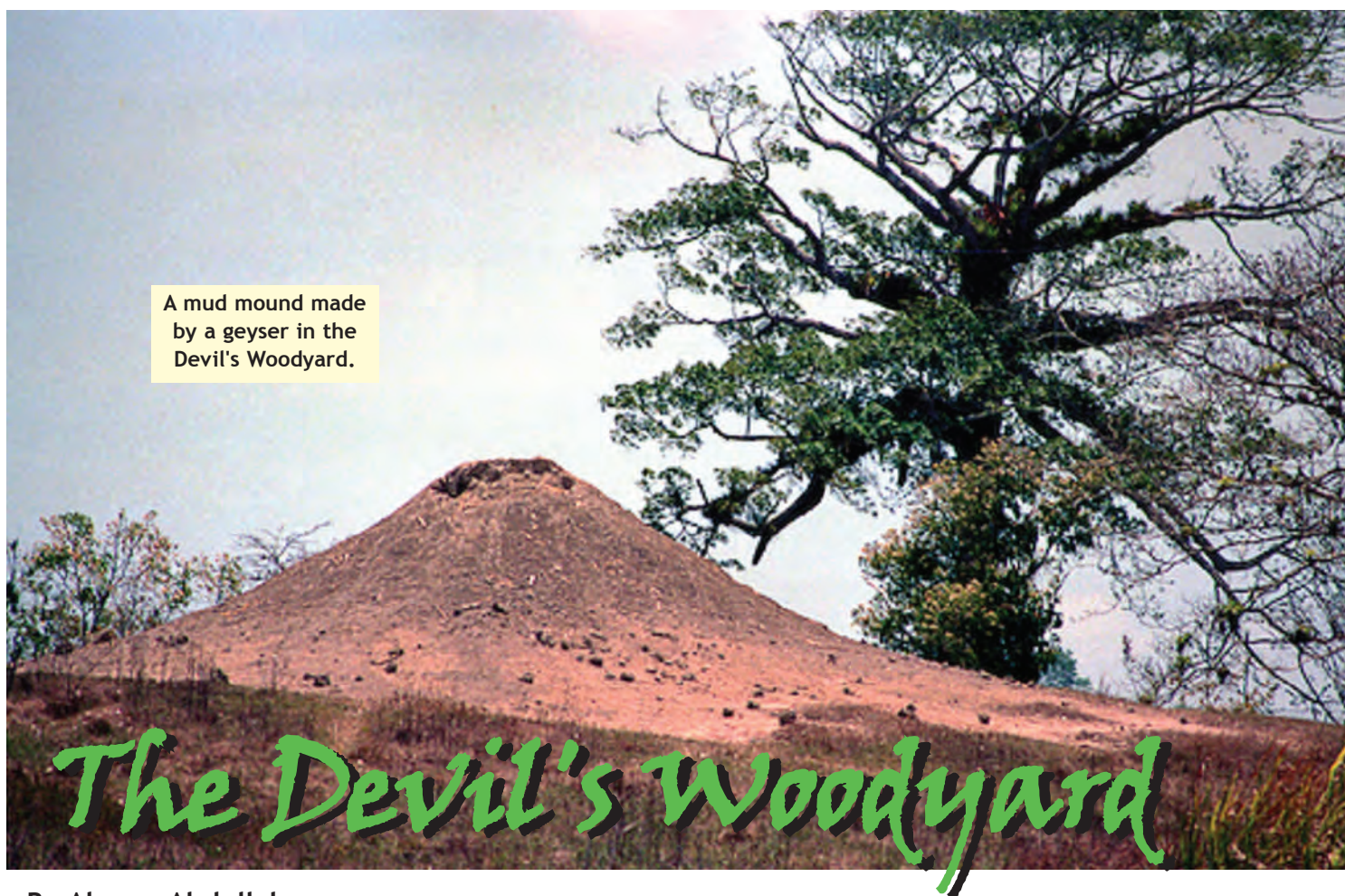
The terrain got steeper as we neared the waterfall, and though it

appeared quite treacherous, reaching the destination cancelled my inhibitions. The water was crisp, clear and cold enough to chill a bottle of Dasani. The waterfall stood mightily as it forcefully shed its cold water on the brave hikers who dared to enter the pond.

Our journey back was greeted by a torrential downpour – a much welcomed gesture of the skies – through which we strolled in absolute bliss. With clothes dripping and sneakers soaked, the journey, the experience and the view made waking early an easy compromise. How anyone discovered this site is beyond me but I am grateful that they did and was unselfish enough to pass it along.



A crab spotted on the journey.



By Akeme Abdullah

The name might sound scary, but there is nothing dangerous about the Devil's Woodyard, Trinidad's most visited mud volcano.

The Devil's Woodyard, an area of mud volcanoes, lies in the area of Hindustan, near Princes Town. A mud volcano is a mound of watery mud or clay, forced out of the earth by methane gas. These volcanoes can either spew material with violent force, causing damage or simply release a mild surface upwelling of muddy water accompanied by gas bubbles; this is the more common occurrence.

These volcanoes are sometimes known locally as "bouffe" (French for swelling), "morne" or "yard." The original Amerindian inhabitants of Trinidad called these areas "guaico", meaning "mud-stream". When the mud is of the dry type, a conical or volcano shape is usually formed. Wet mud tends to result in depressions.

The Hindustan area, where this volcano is located, lies amid rolling low hills

and wide plains charred now with the effect of fires brought on by the extreme dry season. The landscape is noticeably clayey and cracked in places, but it is a peaceful area, almost unnatural in its stillness, yet quite breezy and refreshing with few houses and people walking or traveling along the road.

The site itself of this natural landmark appears quite harmless on first approach. It is an extensive park with a few benches and gazebo-type thatched roof huts probably erected by those people who maintain the area. Further into the park, however, the grass gives way to cracked, dry, grey earth that looks as though when wet, would make the area quite tricky to navigate. This covers a wide expanse of the area, with cracks in some areas large enough to make walking tricky going.

There are several small mounds of grey mud which are visible, from a few feet to a few inches in height. Most were quite dormant but some may show signs of recent activity. Fresh mud on the side of some cones with dry caked mud on others could be seen. Some cones still bubble occasionally with grey mud that

was cool to the touch. In other areas medium sized pools held grey muddy water, which still bubble occasionally indicating that gases were still escaping the vents. It was quite interesting to observe and eagerly anticipate the chance bubble of the mud and to observe the few times it accumulated to the point that new mud would roll down the sides of the small cones and form new layers.

According to legend, a relatively young volcanic site got its name after the first eruption in 1852. This shook the entire village and fell the tall trees and frightened the dwellers there. The villager at that time believed that the devil had come from beneath the earth to fell the woods. The mounds of earth still continue to amaze visitors and villagers alike.

Although it may not be the most spectacular site of the world's natural wonders, it is a very curious phenomenon. The Devil's Woodyard is one of the most accessible sites scattered about southern Trinidad. It also has the best facilities which include a play area for children, picnic tables and toilets. A great place filled with much wonder and beauty.

Top view on **San Fernando Hill**



By Marika Mohammed

San Fernando Hill is considered a landmark of South Trinidad. It's amazing to see how much of it has changed over the years.

For those who are looking for a great, no gym way to get fit or wanting to spend quality time with family before the holidays are over, walking or driving up the hill is a fun activity for all.

First and foremost it gets everyone more social since its more outdoors than indoors and it's healthy both physically

and mentally.

For the little ones there's a park where they could have tonnes of fun and make new friends while parents could sit back and get some relax time in.

Further up the hill there are tonnes of gazebos and patios for picnics and parties. It's a great hangout place for those who have no idea what to do and don't want to rip their pockets. Most of all there are great views all around, 360. There is even a lookout where you could look through the telescopes and get a close-up of scenery.

Get a group together and go have a blast treading up the hill for a picnic or afternoon lime, I did it and it's not as terrifying as it sounds. Think about it this way you get to spend time with friends and family and have a fun workout at the same time.

By the way the views along the way aren't bad to get a peek of and when you reach the top you see from Point Lisas to the sugar factory in St Madeleine. It's definitely somewhere to get away from life down the hill and to get some rest and relaxation.

By Rachael Cedeno

Malls are always a good place to find activities that can keep you entertained. With trendy boutiques, exquisite dining, game centres and sometimes even exercise facilities they are hot spots that continually attract the young and old alike.

If you have never been to Gulf City Mall in La Romaine or at least haven't been there in a long time, like me, I think you'll be very impressed by the wing that they've added on. You see, Gulf City used to boast about being the largest mall in the country, and although that is now no longer the case, I think that what they lack in size they plan to make up for with impressive infrastructure, aesthetics and careful placing of stores.

Take the Children's Village as an example. It's a carefully placed section

Gulf City Mall

then and now

where stores catering to youngsters (from newborn babies to about 13 years) are located. Everything is colourful and bright. The floor tiles sparkle and some even change colours when you walk on them.

I couldn't help staring at the ground while I walked in childlike awe so I didn't notice when I stumbled upon the play area in which bumper carts were set up for the little ones to play. It was so cool. Oh, and

I won't tell you about the bathroom, you just have to see it for yourself.

Why wasn't the mall like this when I was a kid, so creative, magical and bright? Everything is well placed and whoever has been designing this mall seems to have a well thought out plan.

If this is an indication of what we can expect for the entire mall when all work is completed, definitely Gulf City will be quite impressive. I can't wait.



Interesting sights on

By Kielon Hilaire

If you are a visitor to Trinidad, there are quite a lot of attention-grabbing things that you can encounter on Queen Street in Arima. The best one for me was a real clown, dressed up and everything, juggling balls and blowing up doggy and elephant-shaped balloons in the middle of the road. No joke! I was angry with myself for leaving the camera at home that day.

The other things that I speak about are found not only on Queen Street but throughout Trinidad and Tobago. A popular sight is the Rasta men trying their very best to sell exquisite custom leather shoes and sweet smelling oils on the street. You can see these vendors targeting women in particular, grabbing their hands and sprinkling the sweet oils on them.

At the same time you may see a woman fighting to escape, you may see another being hypnotised by the sweet-smelling sample and giving them the sale. Also, the merchandise is very popular

Queen Street

in Arima

among car owners who check these suppliers to purchase the special oils for their upholstery.

Another famous sight on this street is the civilians who stand on the sidewalk or sit on the pavement all day looking as though they are not doing anything. They spend their day chatting with their “peeps” on this busy street. You see them so often on this spot that they have become “landmarks” for giving directions to strangers.

Also, it is interesting to see the number of activities taking place on the small

sidewalk close to the road which is occupied by speeding cars. Imagine, you can shop for clothing on the sidewalk while you are fully entertained by the loud music from the mega boom-boxes also set up on the sidewalk. Furthermore, you can see a group of people liming with a snow-cone vendor also on the sidewalk.

More amazing than a cluttered sidewalk is to see how pedestrians go around these obstructions by using the road with speeding drivers and playing “boldface” by taking their time.

Crazy? Nah! That is Trinbagonians for you. People on Queen Street and many others throughout T&T have long gotten used to a carefree nature that makes for a much less stressful life.



Ready! Aim! Fire!



"My friends and I posed for some fun pictures with the cannons."

A view of Fort James in Tobago

By Annisa Phillip

One of the historical sites in beautiful Tobago, Fort James, like other forts in the country is known for an epic panoramic view. Fort James was built in the early 1760s by our European colonisers, changing hands between the British, French and the militia, like a baton in two relays. It is regarded as Tobago's oldest fort site.

Take a stroll alone or with company,

read a book or pose for a picture of your head shooting out of a cannon. Either way, Fort James offers scenic atmosphere for everyone who appreciates our culture and history, nature lovers or anyone in for a different scene or getaway.

I was fortunate enough to visit Fort James in Plymouth in March of this year for the first time and fell in love with the scenery – manicured lawns, ocean view, benches to sit on and of course the

cannons. While taking in the view of the Great Courland Bay, of course my friends and I posed for some fun pictures with the cannons. We were not able to go into the building but we lingered with the trees and shrubs outside.

It is a site indicative of our fortunate or not-so-fortunate past of colonisers, manipulation and independence, proudly displaying to the world our triumph in the scenic view and tone that it offers.



What to do when in Tobago

By Simone Charles

Yes, everyone has their favourite spot that they love to go when in Tobago. They love to go onto the Buccoo Reef and to Fort King George but I believe, what I'm about to share with you guys, you would want to try it whether you are going with your family, a group of friends or for adventurous couples.

You must visit Store Bay beach and if you are staying close to the airport, then you would be visiting there pretty often. This is such a beautiful beach with extremely clear waters. It is perfect for those who just want to relax after a long journey. There you would also see many little shops with vendors selling countless souvenirs at exceptional prices. If you would like to take tokens back to your friends or loved ones this is the place to buy them. In addition there is a bar located at the front and also a mini-mart called Delightful Pleasures which sell ice-cream and many other sweet treats.

Your next expedition would be to take an adventurous yet lengthy drive to the country side. Your destination can either be Speyside or Charlotteville. It's a narrow road however there is a lot of corners because the roads are on the mountains but don't worry, you would be awed by the spectacular view of the many bays, beaches and islands of Tobago. As you enter into Charlotteville, your eyes will strike the shimmering, refreshing waters of Pirate's Bay. Feel free to dive in.

When you are on your way back down the road, stop at Roxborough and when you see the sign, "Welcome to Argyle Waterfall", put on your indicator to that direction. If you don't have a hik-



ing boots you can rent one or if you want a tour guide one will be provided for you. Most importantly, take a leap into the plunge pools. There are approximately three plunge pools, see if you can climb all the way to the first one!

Now, before you return home after

doing all your activities, be sure to stop at the airport or in Scarborough to purchase many of their traditional sweets such as benne balls, benne sticks, sugar cakes, chilli bibi, rice cakes, nut cakes...

First visit to Salt Pond

By Omilla Mungroo

We built our camp hurriedly alongside the small, red-brick structure which housed two water-tanks. These were reserved for the light-house keeper, our friend. It was the neatest tent we ever managed to set up: the blue tarpaulin was new and stood stable against the forceful Easter winds. How those winds howled! They portended something horrible. In spite of that, we couldn't wait to go exploring again.

It was old Mr Pete, a rugged-looking fisherman and lone camper, who spoke about the Salt Pond every year. Whenever he passed near our campsite, he would stop for a while carrying a brown sack, slung sloppily over his shoulder, which always seemed to be full of fish. He would relate stories of the island while my aunt made him coffee. Mr Pete had cloudy, ancient eyes, dark, mapped skin and wore the same dingy clothes every day. He gave us tips on where the biggest fish could be caught. This information always pleased the boys in camp. We believed Mr Pete knew Chacachacare Island like the back of his hand. If he said the Salt Pond was worth visiting, it was.

We packed our gear early and left camp after lunch on the first day. Our goal on this trip was to find that Salt Pond. The regular hikers – my sister, her boyfriend and his brother, my cousin, my uncle: the oldest, most humorous member of camp, his friend and I, set out.

Not too far from camp my good-natured cousin, Ryan, wondered aloud if we might see the famous “buck”, usually described as a short, midget of a man, wearing a wide-brimmed hat which covered half his face, and wearing a poncho draped over his entire body. He was said to be “sighted” at several different spots across the island, but everyone knew he was fictitious. My uncle, however, made a u-turn to head back to camp. He was not the bravest of the lot but he wanted to see



Photo courtesy JBest <http://www.panoramio.com/photo/25512290>

the Salt Pond. We joked along the way, reviving Mr Pete's stories. These included ghost stories, and accounts of illegal drugs being brought in by Venezuelans.

Two camps before, my brother had told us about a night when he was fishing on the jetty. One by one the other men had left with their fishing rods and buckets, until it was only him and one man at the other end – about ten yards from him. He said he noticed the man could not sit still and was about to go across to him for company, when, during blinks of sleepiness, he saw him walk away from the jetty

and into the sea, hat, poncho and all! Of course, Ryan told my brother that he was probably too tired that night.

“Tired?” My brother had answered ironically. “Not me again on that jetty alone in the night! That was the buck for sure!”

Anyway, we hiked across that day; an invincible bunch of us. The Salt Pond seemed to be waiting for us. It was a large body of sea-water, trapped inland, about twelve yards from the sea – an amazing sight! Trees and bush surrounded it, but an open space was cleared to the front, facing



Photo courtesy http://photos.wikimapia.org/p/00/01/78/03/90_big.jpg



What a sight at Matura Beach!

Tourists stand nearby waiting for the turtle to lay her eggs.



A researcher monitors the heart rate of the leather back turtle.



A tour guide looks at the eggs being laid by the leather back turtle at Matura. *Photos by Joanna Hayde*

The Salt Pond is waiting with its eerie silence and mysterious stillness

the hill which overlooked it. This was the point from where we first glimpsed its greenish outline. Getting there was challenging but worth it. The view was spectacular! My sister's boyfriend took some pictures. Then skirting down the hill instead of following the track, we stood facing it. I thought the pond looked too still and mysterious. An impending gloom settled upon us.

We decided to survey the white, pebbled shoreline instead and had not gone very far when my sister's boyfriend let out a yodel. It did not echo like he expected it to. Then we heard voices: loud, unclear shouts coming from the far end of the shoreline. The seven of us huddled closer into the thick bush near the Salt Pond and peeped out. Ryan, my cousin, pointed to the sharp bend which cut away to the far back of the island. Of course, there was

the outline of a pirogue! Then we counted five big men! Obviously they didn't know we were there, but we wasted no time deliberating on plan B – to get back to camp promptly.

This unexpected intrusion took us quite by surprise and while scampering through the slush near the Salt Pond, Ryan fell into it. We urged him to get up quickly but he was pointing to a log on the bank and stammering. His eyes seemed wild and he could hardly talk, but he swore that the "buck" was sitting on that log, laughing at him. Concurrently, the men's voices sounded louder. Yes! They were indeed Spanish!

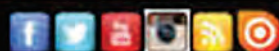
We scampered up the trail very quickly, like squirrels with their tails in the air! My uncle's friend had pulled Ryan out of the mud. He looked very disoriented, and only spoke when we were halfway back to camp.

"Never me again!" My uncle panted. We all wondered about the men and their boat, and although we explained to Ryan that there was no one sitting on that log, he insisted that he saw him, with his big sombrero covering his eyes, and his dark gray poncho draped around him, laughing sarcastically at him... and at us, I suppose.

This trip to the Salt Pond took place on Glorious Saturday, the Easter weekend of 1994. Except for the sighting of the men and the pirogue, and the laughing "buck" everything else is true. If you ever visit Chacachacare Island, you can look for the Salt Pond. It is still there, sprawled and waiting, with its eerie silence and mysterious stillness. On our second trip, we found the remains of a crocodile, but that's another story!

Sweet TnT

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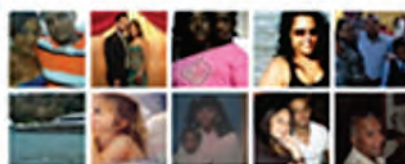


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