

The caribbean culture essay sample

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When most people hear ' Caribbean' what jumps to mind is colour, steel drums, good food, smoothies, beaches, laid back attitudes, and all we do is party. Hopefully at the end one's stereotypical thoughts would have changed. Brief History

I shall start from the beginning Christopher Columbus did not discover the Caribbean, it was already there, people inhabited the islands before he ' discovered the new world'. He died believing that he'd reached the islands southeast of India-Indonesia and Malaysia. Numerous explorers -Spanish and Portuguese, followed his path, knowledgeable of the ' New world' but they brought diseases which the natives were victims to and their population diminished. The Spanish, English, French, and Dutch colonists began to settle, they grew tobacco, spices, Sugarcane, rice. But to profit from the healthy soil they'd need a large work force, so they tricked the Africans and brought them as slaves from Ghana, Chad, Mali, Cameroon and many more. This was the famous ' slave trade' and they worked for back breaking hours in the hot sun on the plantations. Slavery was abolished in 1833, but the Europeans brought East Indians, Chinese, and Portuguese (from Madeira) as Indentured laborers to work the plantations with slightly better conditions.

Islands

The Caribbean islands are part of the West Indies consisting of the Greater Antilles on the north, the Lesser Antilles on the south and east (including the Leeward Antilles), the Bahamas and the Turks and Caicos Islands), as well as countries such as Belize in Central America and Guyana in South America which are historically and culturally part of the West Indies.

Cuisine

Food in the Caribbean has been passed down from generations before and new foods have been introduced. Traditional dishes are cook-up and foo-foo (brought by the Africans), curry, roti, gulab jamun (brought by the Indians), pastries, cakes, (brought by the Europeans) Fried rice, lo Mein (brought by the Chinese). The national dish of Jamaica is Ackee and saltfish.

Common staples in most islands' dishes are rice, plantains, beans, cassava, cilantro, bell peppers, chick peas, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, coconut, and various meats that are locally available (beef, poultry, pork or fish) Reggae

Music

Reggae music is a genre of music; typical instruments would be Guitars, steel pans, Bass and Drums. It has a steady, choppy beat the kind that makes you tap your feet and nod your head. Bob Marley a Jamaican has been the greatest influence of Reggae music worldwide. He didn't have the greatest voice but his words of wisdom spoke to every nation and people outside of Jamaica were now exposed to a different style. I absolutely love Bob Marley's music whether it was due to my family or outside influences he is an amazing inspiration.

Traditional Clothing

The weather in the Caribbean is very warm and colorful fabrics and loose clothing is usually worn. Women traditionally wear a headscarf to keep their hair in place. There is also quite a significant Indian culture that contributes to the fashion as well. Caribbean women wear the shalwar, and sari. Some

people may have adopted the North American style of dress but out colours and usually a distinct mark.

Cricket

Cricket is a very popular sport in the Caribbean. It's a sport where two teams each of eleven players, one team bats whilst the other bowls. Cricket in my opinion has gotten very technical, not for the players but those watching.

Little things are scrutinized to bits. But children of all ages can be seen in school, on the road, anywhere playing cricket, because all you need is a bat and ball. The West Indies-The cricket team of the Caribbean is made up of player from Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, British Virgin Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, Puerto Rico, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Maarten, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago. The West Indies team was one of the strongest teams in the world in both Test and One Day International cricket. A number of cricketers considered among the best in the world have come from the West Indies: Brian Lara, Clive Lloyd, Malcolm Marshall, and Sir Vivian Richards.

Festivals

Festivals are the chance for our inner colour, diversity, originality to shine through. Throughout the Caribbean there are different festivals, for example in Guyana we celebrate ' Mashramani' which is an Amerindian word meaning ' celebration after hard work' it's held on the 23rd of February which is also our Republic day. Preparing for ' Mash' is big excitement in Guyana there are costume competitions, essay competitions, float parades, companies promoting themselves in random ways and masqueraders roaming the

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streets. On the day itself, streets are packed, people in their costumes, masked in a face full of glitter, music pounding for trucks and everybody everywhere dancing and having an amazing time! Trinidad and Tobago celebrate Carnival. Barbados celebrates Crop over. The Bahamas celebrate Junkanoo.

Languages

Majority of the Caribbean speak English, the minority speaks French and quite a few speak Dutch and Spanish. Central America and Guyana speak Creole which is spoken very choppily and quickly. Dreadlocks

Dreadlocks are matted coils of hair formed intentionally by not brushing or combing hair so it tangles together as it grows becoming twisted, matted ropes of hair. Locks can be an expression of deep religious or spiritual convictions, political statement, or a fashion. Rastafari Movement

Is a spiritual movement which first arose in Jamaica and is a highly visible movement and “ one of the most powerful cultural forces among youths in Jamaica” They worship a singular God whom they call Jah and draw their beliefs from the bible. For Rastas, smoking cannabis, usually known as herb, weed or ganja it’s a spiritual act, often accompanied by Bible study; they consider it a sacrament that cleans the body and mind, heals the soul, exalts the consciousness, facilitates peacefulness, brings pleasure, and brings them closer to Jah. Haile Selassie I was the Emperor of Ethiopia from 1930 to 1974. Rastas claim that he will lead the righteous into creating a perfect world, called “ Zion”. Zion would be the ultimate paradise for Rastas.

I'd like to bring my project to an end, by saying that The culture of the Caribbean is so vibrant and engaging that it's impossible not to want to come crawling back. We've come a long way as slaves but we're on top and enjoying life with as much enthusiasm as possible. We work hard and have fun.