

Proud To Be Jamaican

Dutty tough, and for some, life rough, but Jamaicans have so much to be thankful for. Join Chat Bout as we celebrate the pride in being Jamaican.

Good food. Ackee and saltfish, boil banana, yam, dasheen, cocoa, sweet potato, dumpling and cassava... need more? Run down, curried goat, fritters, bammy and fried fish, stew peas, manish water, potato pudding, dukunoo, beef patty... just thinking about the culinary heaven that is Jamaica makes your mouth water... Nuff said.

Plenty fruit trees. In a time when the world is worried about a possible food crisis, lucky Jamaicans can just go into their backyards and pick an apple or a mango or a jelly to eat. This is a blessing. There are many people who live in other parts of the world do not have this, especially those who live in concrete jungles, where trees are a rare sight, or are suffering from dire starvation and food shortage.

No major war zone (nuclear, that is). No threat of nuclear wars here, no country trying to bomb us off the map. Jamaica is simple, quiet, known for nothing but fun on the international scene. Of course there is a little black streak where violence has tainted the picture, but on the whole, the international arena still knows us more for our culture than for any of these negative things.

Brand Jamaica. Believe it or not, Jamaica is a brand. Being Jamaican is 'hip' and 'cool.' Or else why do so many people try to speak Jamaican, wear Jamaican colours, idolise our artistes, and religiously drink our coffee every morning?

Sunshine and natural beauty. We market this to our tourists, and never take the time ourselves to revel in the breathtaking beauty around us. Jamaica is a remarkably beautiful country. It has glorious sunshine, beautiful white sand beaches, and bevy of natural bounty that just thrills the heart and makes the spirit come alive. Or else why is our tourism sector so successful?

Bright, vibrant national colours. Black, green and gold. Can you imagine any other colours representing the nation? (Okay, maybe red because of the Rastas, but still...) Jamaica's national colours are lovely to behold. They are wonderful to wear, and what they represent is the resilience of a people who refuse to be enslaved, and refuse to lay down and die. They are as alive as Jamaicans are.

A very simple national flag. Now you can imagine if our school children had to draw all sorts of intricacies and fine details of birds and coats of arms or anything like that? You can imagine not being able to draw your national flag with three colour crayons and a blank paper? All we need is a yellow crayon, a green one, and a black 'x' in the middle... Jamaica land we love.

Tamarind Balls!! Hard to imagine a childhood without these sweet/sour treats. I know, I know, they don't fit into the minds of some, but they are a favourite of so many of our Jamaican people that I pity any part of the world that does not know about this fantastic treat.

Music. Reggae to the weeer!!! Whether it be roots, rock or dancehall, Jamaican music has taken the world by storm. Bob Marley and the vintage reggae greats set the stage, and now our dancehall artistes, and roots reggae rockers continue this tradition of making the world sit up and take notice of the Jamaican beats which are hard to miss, hard to resist. You know that sometimes the Japanese mix up the letters 'l' and 'r'. Well I heard a very excited Japanese man shouting "I Love Leggae music."

Coffee and chocolate tea! Two hot beverages that Jamaica can be very proud of. Blue Mountain coffee is a delight, and many foreigners will have no other brand of coffee in their morning mugs. As for chocolate tea. Well, ask any bonified country bumpkin about this breakfast must.

Strict parents. It may not have been nice when you were a child, but now that you see where the other countries have reached and how their teenagers behave (and turn out), aren't you glad that your Jamaican granny did walk you with a switch properly when you did misbehave?

The Ability to Laugh At Wiself : Yuh ever hear di Jamaican proverb “ Yuh haffie tek kin teet kibba heart burn?”, well that is the epitome of the Jamaican and the essence of our personality. We know how fi ‘teck bad sinting mek laaf’. Even when the joke is on us, we are still laughing, and perhaps we would have started the laughter. That is why the unofficial motto of Jamaica No Problem, is really true.