



Global Travel &  
Tourism Partnership  
(GTTP)  
Aldo Papone Case  
Study

The Inclusion  
of *Nine Night*  
in the  
Jamaican  
Cultural  
Tourism  
Product

Prepared by:

Nakatia Spence &  
Tavia Powis  
Oberlin High  
School

**Global Partners:**



Cover photo courtesy of The Jamaica Tourist Board

## ***Acknowledgement***

We the researchers would like to thank the Jamaica Tourist Board along with the Global Travel and Tourism Partnership (GTTP) fro giving us the opportunity to be participants in the Aldo Papone Study Competition.

We must acknowledge Ms Marcia Lobban, Librarian of The African Institute of Jamaica for providing relevant information in order to put this research together.

We thank the members of the team from the Jamaica Tourist Board for their assistance in providing information through their library, editing and formatting this research in order for it to be completed.

Our gratitude is extended to everyone who contributed or played apart in making this research a success.

Nakatia Spence

Tavia Powis

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Definition of Key Terms.....	6
Executive Summary .....	8
Chapter 1: Research Outline .....	9
Research Objective.....	9
Aim .....	9
Methodology .....	9
Significance of the Research.....	10
Chapter 2: Cultural Tourism in the Caribbean .....	11
Benefits of Cultural Tourism .....	13
Chapter 3: Jamaica – The Island of Culture.....	16
A brief look at the Culture of Jamaica.....	18
Language .....	18
Music .....	18
Dance .....	19
Religion.....	20
Food .....	20
Stories and Riddles.....	21
Jamaica’s Culture Tourism.....	22
Burial Practices in Jamaica .....	23
Chapter 4: <i>Nine-night</i> : An introduction to one of Jamaica’s most practiced customs ...	24
Music .....	25
Food .....	28
Special Note: The Nine Night Table.....	30
The Ghost of the Past battles the Ghost of the Present.....	32
Chapter 5: Data Analysis .....	35
Questionnaires.....	35
Limitations.....	36

Chapter 6: Conclusions & Recommendations.....	37
Summary.....	37
Challenges.....	38
Recommendations.....	39
Bibliography.....	40
Appendices .....	42

## ***Definition of Key Terms***

<b>Tourist</b>	According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), a <i>tourist</i> is a person who travels for " <i>recreation, holiday, business, religion, sport, family reasons, professional or intellectual pursuits, staying at least 24 hours, but not more than one year</i> ".
<b>Tourism</b>	Tourism is the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside of their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes (World Tourism Organization).
<b>Cultural Tourism</b>	It is an immersion in the natural history, human heritage, the arts and philosophy and the institutions of another region or country (World Tourism Organization).
<b>Heritage Tourism</b>	According to the World Travel Dictionary, heritage tourism is holidays taken with the sole or principal aim of exploring the history and culture of the region being visited.
<b>Sustainable Tourism</b>	This is described by the World Travel Dictionary as tourism that has a minimal or manageable effect on the natural and cultural environment of the area visited.
<b>Culture</b>	This is regarded as the distinctive characteristics, achievements, attitude or way of life of a group or nation. (World Travel Dictionary)

**Set up/singing**

These are Jamaican terms used to describe the rituals of staying awake for a certain number of nights until early next morning. The set up is an important part of funeral activities.

***Nine-night/wake***

A *nine-night* is the final set-up or religious social gathering in company with the family of a dead person. It is traditionally held on the ninth night after death.

**Tracking or lining**

This is a "call and response" form used at *nine-night*. A leader or lead singer calls out a line or two to start, and thereafter slips in the words of one or more successive lines in the period of silence between verses or the singing of shorter portions.

**Bands**

According to Bernard Burrell in his book, *American Vision*, bands are professional nine-night singing groups that are hired by the family of the deceased to lead the singing at the wake.

## ***Executive Summary***

In an age where visitors and peoples all over the world look for new experiences, especially authentic ones, there is a place for the culture of a destination to take pride of place. Cultural and heritage tourism have been discussed by many authors and it has largely been seen as positive for the countries which practice them. Jamaica's Master Plan for Sustainable Tourism Development also speaks to the use of culture and heritage tourism to be a significant part of our tourism product.

In the past many proposals have been put forward for culture and heritage tourism in Jamaica. Many of them have not happened because of lack of funds (see Gleaner article in Appendix 3). This study looks at a cultural practice that is unique to Jamaica called nine-night. Our research shows that nine-night can be successful as it is a community event and happens as part of our daily lives in Jamaica. It does not need a lot of expenditure and gives visitors a look at our folk culture.

Nine-night can be a very important part of Jamaica's tourism when we ensure that what is offered is of good quality. Our study revealed that using nine-night would not only provide benefits to visitors but also to Jamaicans as a whole.



## Chapter 1: Research Outline

### ***Research Objective***

In order to complete this research, we came up with the following aim and goals.

### ***Aim***

Our aim was to take a look into the practice of '*nine-night*' and the ways in which it can be used as part of Jamaica's cultural tourism product.

### ***Methodology***

#### **Our research goals were:**

- To determine whether persons knew about "nine-night"
- To determine ways in which *nine-night* was observed in different communities
- To determine the circumstances in which this concept may be offered to an audience such as visitors to Jamaica.

With the aim and goals in mind we used several forms of primary and secondary research to complete this project. Questionnaires, interviews and visits to *nine-nights* were the main forms of primary research.

Libraries, The African Caribbean Institute/Jamaica Memory Bank and the internet were used for secondary research.

## ***Significance of the Research***

Tourism is Jamaica's number one foreign exchange earner providing over US\$1 billion per year to our economy. Visitors come to Jamaica from the Caribbean, USA, Canada, Europe, Japan and other countries as well.

Jamaica is known to tourists for white sand beaches, sunny tropical weather and reggae music. We also have wonderful people who provide great service to our guests. But we need to offer more than just sun sea and sand. Tourists need to come for their vacation and feel fulfilled, that they have received value for money.

Heritage and Cultural tourism can offer the difference to visitors and *nine-night* is one of our most practiced customs. It incorporates different parts of Jamaican life in the food, dance and music making it a colourful and interesting experience. We believe that customs such as nine-night can be used to provide visitors with a greater experience of what is JAMAICA. This project explains *nine-night* , as well as shows how it can be used as a part of the tourism offers of Jamaica.

## Chapter 2: Cultural Tourism in the Caribbean

*The genesis and expression of Caribbean Culture throughout the region have been shaped by a shared experience of history: of European colonization, Indigenous destruction, slavery, indentureship, and the struggles for freedom, migration and independence. Those experiences have made for societies where everything and everyone which reach the Caribbean shores has been transformed into being part of Caribbean identity.<sup>1</sup>*

It is Polly Pattullo in her book, *Last Resorts*, who sets the stage for our discussion of Cultural Tourism in the Caribbean and Jamaica specifically.

Ms. Pattullo states that the reason we have a history is because of the experiences of our descendants. They fought for freedom of life and speech giving us the necessities we need to have a well rounded culture therefore recreating the lives of Caribbean people. It is this unique culture borne of the unique history of the Caribbean that forms our cultural tourism product.

According to the World Tourism Organization, Cultural Tourism is an immersion in the natural history, human heritage, the arts and philosophy, and the institutions of other region or country. Cultural tourism forms an important component for international tourism in the Caribbean. It represents the movement of people which are motivated by cultural intents such as study tours, performing arts, festivals, cultural activities,

---

<sup>1</sup>Pattullo, Polly. *Last Resorts: The Cost of Tourism in the Caribbean*. p. 180

visitation to sites and monuments as well as travel for pilgrimages as stated by the World Tourism Organization.

Jamaica is very fortunate in that its culture is still alive and reproducing itself. That culture has given rise to expressions in modern form which have proved internationally attractive, including reggae music, film, dance etc. Jamaica also boasts an excellent legislative framework to preserve and promote Jamaica's culture through Jamaica Cultural Development Commission (JCDC).<sup>2</sup> The JCDC is a government agency whose purpose is "to unearth, develop and showcase the best of Jamaica's culture"

Culture and cultural tourism in being used as a vehicle for sustainable Tourism Development; it has become a major item in the priority of public policy planners. However, apart from the socio-economic benefits that cultural tourism generates towards the wellbeing of countries, the World Tourism organization endeavours to explore the possibilities of using cultural tourism as a potential tool to fight against poverty. It is with this belief that we aim to make the *nine-night* practice a product of enrichment and value creating a difference in the lives of Jamaican citizens.

The UNWTO International Conference on Cultural Tourism and Local Community held in Indonesia in February 2006 presented seven main benefits of cultural tourism. These are summarized below.

---

<sup>2</sup> Commonwealth Secretariat – Jamaica Master Plan for Sustainable Tourism Development

## ***Benefits of Cultural Tourism***

Cultural tourism aims to create opportunities and reduce poverty with the use of capital provided that some aspects are addressed. Some benefits of cultural tourism are:

### **1. Employment**

Individuals situated in the lower strata of society are employed as a guide or a guardian in heritage sites and theatres within or outside cultural sites or monuments.

### **2. Supply of goods and services to tourism enterprises**

It entails items such as food, textile furnishings, handicrafts and decorations which if produced by using traditional techniques should doubly enhance the experience of culture by our visitors.

### **3. Direct sales of goods and services to visitors**

This includes the selling of food and handicrafts from a market or shop. It is all about an informal economy where the informal sector is of good importance in countries which are developing as this is one of the great ways to get visitors sending money with the local people.

### **4. Establishment and running of tourism enterprises**

This is a small or medium enterprise. Unlike the informal economy this is focused on the development of poor communities through long term endeavours, it's basically placing power and control in their hands.

Where cultural tourism is concerned the corresponding authorities have the capability to grant financial, technical or simple marketing support to the poor

communities to enhance their art work performances thus diversifying the cultural tourism offer.

### **5. Tax or levy on tourism income or profits**

This is aimed towards channelling resources to needy people and communities without the requirements of their involvement in the tourism activity whether directly or indirectly. In Jamaica, a Tourism Enhancement Fee (TEF) started in January 2006. This fee is collected from airline and cruise tickets and is used to create opportunities for communities as well as beautify resort areas.

### **6. Voluntary giving/ support by tourism enterprises and tourists**

This may involve payment by tourists and tour operators into general charities and social local programmes.

Tourism enterprises have been supporting social programs in their neighbouring communities.

Even though these approaches may generate resources which are worthwhile and are directed towards needy causes, it is important to show sensitivity when promoting this type of activity and to avoid gestures such as that of tokens.

### **7. Investment in infrastructure stimulated by tourism also benefiting the location population**

This is merely about local and direct support through other sectors. It includes sanitation, provision of roads, energy supplies are all on the back of tourism

investment. Structures of culture such as theatres or music halls also benefit from the presence of tourist.

These benefits can also be realized in the Caribbean if we plan well for Cultural tourism. In the words of Professor Elliott Paris "If we ignore our history and the cultural legacy that it has left us we run the risk of developing tourism as an industry which puts the dollar first and our people last."<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> Elliott Paris quoted in Last Resorts by Polly Pattullo, p. 182

## Chapter 3: Jamaica – The Island of Culture

Jamaica, famous for its ability to lead anyone into a trance to behold the framework of land, wood and water, is a small island of 4, 244 square miles or 10,991 square kilometres. The island is 146 miles (235km) long with widths varying between 22 (35km) and 58 (93km) miles. She is the third largest of the Caribbean islands and the largest of the English-speaking islands in the region.



Jamaica is very mountainous. Almost half of the island is about 1,000 feet (305m) or higher. The highest point of the Blue Mountain peak is 7,402(2,256m) above sea level. The annual average rainfall is 78inches (198cm). Because the island is mountainous, rainfall is somewhat evenly distributed. Some hilly areas get nearly (762cm) of rainfall each year while parts of the western plains gets as little as 30inches (76.2cm).



The annual average temperature is 27 degrees Celsius. The hottest months are in summer – June to August - and the winter months (December to March) are appreciably cooler. For example, the Blue Mountain peak has an average annual temperature of 13 degrees Celsius.

Jamaica has about 120 rivers, most of which flow to the coast from the central mountain ranges. Those on the north side of the island tend to be shorter and swifter than those on the south side.

The word Jamaica comes from the Arawak word "Xaymaca" meaning 'Land of Wood and Water'. The Tainos, an Arawak-speaking people were the first inhabitants who met the Spanish group led by Christopher Columbus on arrival in 1492.

Jamaica's first town built by the Spanish in 1509 was "Seville Nueva" or New Seville near St. Ann's Bay on the North Coast. In 1534, the Spaniards having abandoned Seville for health reasons, founded Spanish town on the south coast and made it the island's capital.

The official language of Jamaica is English. However, the majority of the population speak a Jamaican Creole called Patois, which is a mixture of English and African forms, and words adopted from foreign sources.

Beneath our surface of history and natural beauty, Jamaica is blessed with recreational facilities such as mineral springs, waterfalls, beaches, gardens and a strong proud people.

Today Jamaica and its people are standing proud and embracing our motto: "Out of Many One People". Over ninety percent of Jamaica's population is of African descent and this is evident in the food Jamaicans grow and eat; in some religious practices; in music and dance; in folk tales; proverbs and aspects of the language. It is largely this African heritage that is the basis for the *nine-night* practice which is the subject of our study.

## ***A brief look at the Culture of Jamaica***

Like our Caribbean neighbours, Jamaica cultural offerings can be described as a “melting pot” – a mixture of several thousand years of history and modern contacts, which make us what we are.

Jamaicans are a lively people. Our African roots and European mix has helped to create several cultural forms that are unique to the island. As Jamaicans say “wi likkle, but wi tallawah” – that is, although a small island people, we have made a great impact on the world”

### **Language**

Although our official language is English, the language of the people is “Patois”. This is a mixture of many languages and is used by everyone at all levels of society. Patois is also used a lot in our music and stories. Some words and their meanings are given below:

Brawta	more or extra amount
Dem	them
Irie	everything is cool; all is well
Likkle	little
Tek	take

### **Music**

The music of Jamaica is reggae, which has come from the root of mento, ska and other folk music. Reggae is the heartbeat of our people and is used to speak about fun, life, troubles and make listeners feel better.

Reggae has gone international, thanks to people like Bob Marley, Peter Tosh, Sean Paul, Beanie Man, Shaggy and others. The music has a strong bass beat which has come from our African roots, and uses several types of drum. Reggae music can be heard all over Jamaica in bars, on the radio, blaring from boom boxes and sound systems at parties and sessions.

## **Dance**

True to our African roots, dance is tied to music in Jamaican culture. We dance with our whole bodies – from head to foot – keeping pace to the rhythm of the beat. There are folk dances such as Dinki Mini, Quadrille, Gereh and Bruckins. Dinki Mini and Gereh used to be performed at nine-nights.

We have taken Jamaican dances to such a level that there is even a competition that combines the hit songs and hit dances in a dancehall queen competition.



Bruckins performed by school children at the Festival Competition

## **Religion**

The Guinness Book of Records states that Jamaica has more churches per square mile than anywhere else in the world. These churches come from our English and African roots. We have Pentecostal, Orthodox, New Life, Baptist and Anglican churches and many others. It is a good sight to see many persons going to church in their best clothes.

Rastafari is a religion that began in Jamaica where people believe that His Majesty Haille Selassie is the Messiah and is "ever living, ever faithful, ever sure". Rastafarians wear locks, do not eat meat or salt and wear clothes with the "ites [red], gold, black and green" which represents the motherland Ethiopia, where Selassie came from.

## **Food**

Jamaica has a lot of foods and fruits that are not found in many places – papayas, otaheite apple, plantains, jackfruit, starapple, yams and dasheen. The foods that grow in Jamaica are said to have better taste and flavour than anywhere else.

Our National Dish is ackee and saltfish with roast breadfruit. Ackee is a fruit which is poisonous before it is ripe (opened naturally) and has the consistency of scrambled eggs. Ackee and saltfish with roast breadfruit was eaten even during slavery times when food was rationed.

## **Stories and Riddles**

Our country, Jamaica is known for stories and riddles. We use these a lot to entertain children and some of the stories have been made into movies or plays. Louise Bennett-Coverly, popularly known as Miss Lou is famous for stories and poems in Patois. She had several programmes on television for children called Ring Ding in which she would tell stories and sing folk songs. Sadly Miss Lou passed away earlier this year and we miss her. Amina Blackwood Meeks is another great storyteller and comedian.



**The Honourable Louise Bennett-Coverly "Miss Lou"**

Many of our stories are told about the folk hero "Anancy" (a spider) who is a trickster and always tries to get himself out of trouble.

## ***Jamaica's Culture Tourism***

Jamaica's cultural tourism largely can be divided into five (5) main areas: theatres and plays, music festivals, food festivals, other cultural productions and museums & galleries.

Theatres and plays include such things as pantomines, features and plays, including dance which put some of our cultural traditions and changing lifestyles on stage.

Food festivals showcase the foods of Jamaica from sweets and pastries to soups and meats. Food festivals also show ways of cooking such as jerk – a Jamaican way of roasting meats.

Cultural productions can be used to describe productions such as community festivals, shows on Jamaica's history and culture e.g. Jonkunno-Mento Festival and Viva Xaymaca.

Museums and galleries document and showcase written and filmed culture.

## ***Burial Practices in Jamaica***

All the acts connected with the burial of the deceased are based upon a belief in the power of the dead and particularly in the continued animation of the dead and his power to return and disturb the living, unless precautions are taken to inter him properly. Hence fear or respect keeps alive today much of the folklore which surrounds the rites for the dead.

Here are some of the myths and superstitions surrounding the burial of the dead:

- ✚ The body of the dead must be washed by two men;
- ✚ They must work on one side each from head down;
- ✚ Should they come back toward the head the dead will laugh;
- ✚ Should either of them touch the back with water, the ghost will haunt him;
- ✚ In sewing the clothes, no knots should be made in the thread or the ghost will return;
- ✚ Care must be taken to cut out the pockets in the man's suit, lest the ghost will return with its pockets full of stones and harm the living;
- ✚ All buttons must be cut off and the clothes sewed or pinned together;
- ✚ No member of the family must neglect to bid the dead farewell;
- ✚ Each member of the family comes to the side of the coffin and says a few words to the dead, and every baby is passed over the coffin and its name is spoken to prevent the dead from molesting the child;
- ✚ Tears must not fall upon the body or the ghost will return to haunt the mourner.
- ✚ The body must be buried so that the face is to the morning sun

## Chapter 4: *Nine-night*: An introduction to one of Jamaica's most practiced customs

A *nine-night* is also known as a wake. It is a ceremony of passage, where people meet to give comfort and support to the relatives of the deceased person. The *nine-night* is the night before the person is buried. According to Ivy Baxter in her book *Arts of an Island*, once upon a time a *nine-night* was the final social gathering that was held on the ninth night after the burial of a dead, hence the name *nine-night*. There was also the belief among slaves that the spirit of the dead took nine nights to return to the motherland, Africa, to join its ancestors<sup>4</sup>.

At the *nine-night*, there is singing of hymns, praying, playing of ring games, dominoes, story telling (often about the deceased) and riddles (to entertain the children that were present).



**People playing dominoes**

---

<sup>4</sup> Senior, Olive. *The Encyclopaedia of Jamaican Heritage*. p. 506



The real ceremony begins at approximately eight or nine o'clock with a prayer in the room of the departed. This is followed by hymns and choruses.

## **Music**

There is no nine night without music. A master of ceremony is normally selected to host the programme and lead the singing. This person is either the leader of the "bands" if one is present (see definitions) or the village leader of folk philosophy. This person MUST know the hymns by heart to be able to "track" or "line" them (see definitions). If this is done expertly then the hymns will change to an intensely interesting combination of words and song. For example of tracking or lining, see the songs below:

### **Swing Low Sweet Chariot**

**Lead:** *Swing low, sweet chariot*

**Chorus:** *Swing low, sweet chariot; Coming for to carry me home*

**Lead:** *Swing low, sweet chariot*

**Chorus:** *Swing low, sweet chariot; Coming for to carry me home*

**Lead:** *If you get there before I do*

**Chorus:** *Coming for to carry me home*

**Lead:** *Tell all my friends, I'm coming too*

**Chorus:** *Coming for to carry me home*

### **When mi madda a go dead**

**Lead:** *When mi madda a go dead*

**Chorus:** *When mi madda a go dead*

**Lead:** *An' she no mek no will*

**Chorus:** *An' she no mek no will*

**Lead:** *But she lef' one cow*

**Chorus:** *But she lef' one cow*

**Lead:** *Fi di whole a wi*

**Chorus:** *Fi di whole a wi*

**Lead:** *But mi bigga bredda*

**Chorus:** *But mi bigga bredda*

**Lead:** *Him tek it way from mi*

**Chorus:** *Him tek it way from mi*

**Chorus:** *Glory be to God Glory be to God mi own a mi own*

“Tracking” also occurs in the singing at street corners and religious meetings but it has come to be a recognized characteristic of *nine-night* singing and takes on an added poignant, echoing quality when heard all through the night, from far off, over hills and plains. The *nine-night* singing is said to sound the best from the non-participants who reside in the distant communities.

In our research, one of the authors had an interview with Mrs. Clovis Brown, a 75 year old widow from a St. Ann’s Bay address who stated that:

“Back in the days *nine-night* singing was one of the most beautiful singing ever heard, especially if you were listening from afar”.

The slowness of the singing sometimes causes the break-up of long note into shorter ones to fit the newly-made syllables. For example,

*"Rock of Ages, cleft for me; Let me hide my-self in The-ee"*

was often split into new syllables:

*"Ro-ock of A-ges, cle-eft for me-ee, Le-et me hi-ide my-se-elf in Thee-ee".*

This is a typical example of how the songs would have been sung at these gatherings. This is an example of the features of West African melody, in contrast to the melody and harmonies of the written European hymns which have classic intervals.

At mid-night, certain hymns such as "*Jesus, lover of my soul*" and "*Rock of Ages*" are sung while the bed of the deceased is wrecked or turned (mattress flipped and/or bed turned in different direction). It was remarked that: "to hear both these sounds, the muffled thuds and the slow singing, is striking, especially if the hymn "Rock of Ages" is given the particular arrangement that would be heard in a hill village in St. Thomas"<sup>5</sup> At this point (during the breaking down of the bed), every two spoken lines were followed by four lines of a chant: "what a beautiful river, river, river" and the hymn is taken up again. The combination is then repeated in this order over and over again.

Dances were also popular at nine-night. Gereh and Dinki Mini are two forms of dance done in celebration of the deceased's life. The Dinki Mini is pictured below.



**The Dinki Mini being performed at the Nine Night of Miss Lou.**

---

<sup>5</sup> Ivy Baxter - The Arts of the Island Pg 213

## Food

A *nine-night* would not be complete without refreshment. In the past nine-night food would include cooked yam, bananas and whatever meat was available at the time. These were cooked in big metal pots outside in the yard. Today nine-night food would be of a particular kind, namely: coffee or chocolate-tea, fried fish and hard-dough bread. This is passed around usually after frequent and amusing demands in songs.



**Cooking food for the crowd at a local nine-night.**



Rum is also an important part of the items on the refreshment list as it is said by Mrs. Clovis Brown that: "if you never had rum, di *nine-night* wudda mash up". The type of rum used in burial, both nine-night and the actual funeral, is white rum (pictured here). This is over-proof (150 proof, 75% alcohol by volume) and is used to cleanse the home from the duppies (ghosts), soothe the dry throats

of the singers, and raise the good spirits of all present.

There was always time for more singing after refreshments which would take them until day break and they would sing until dawn came.



**People attending a nine-night ceremony.**

**The musicians are in the centre of the crowd.**

The family place in a Jamaican society is normally measured and reassured based on the turn out at the *nine-night* as the ceremony is not only for the family members but also for those who live abroad and return to attend this final farewell celebration. Some of them throw themselves in the whole affair by helping to pass around the refreshment. Persons of higher status, such as the teacher, shopkeeper, clerk and those who came from far showed their respect just by being present.

## Special Note: The Nine Night Table

The table setting is integral to the nine night function. There are several items that must be included and there are designated locations for these items on the table. Below, we have included an outline of the table and the items. We have also provided information on the significance of each item.



*White Tablecloth and clear fluids.* Purification of the area is important and this signified by the use of white tablecloths, clear fluids and salt. The area is purified with white overproof rum before the nine night ceremony begins. This is done with the use of clear fluids. The rum is sprinkled around the ceremony area to remove any "bad spirits". Cream soda is also used on occasions in some ceremonies.

*Sugar and a meal* are used as food for the ancestors. Sugar is placed opposite to the salt on the front of the table.

A *lamp* or bottle torch is used for light. In modern nine nights, candles are often substituted for lamps.

A *Bible* rests on top of a *hymnal* to the left of the lamp. The Bible is generally opened to the Book of Psalms. Psalm 23 is one of the chapters used in the ceremony.

A branch of the *Croton plant* rests on the table. The type of *croton* used is called the Jerusalem Croton and is also planted around graves in rural areas. The croton with its colourful leaves is believed to be one of the plants in which the departed can relive.

## ***The Ghost of the Past battles the Ghost of the Present***

In the parishes of St. Mary, St. Thomas, St. Ann, and in parts of Trelawny and Westmoreland where folk culture is highly acknowledged, you will see the real *nine-night* taking place. Here you will see the preservation of the practice taking place with the use of the goombay drum which is an important aspect of African tradition.

The beating of the goombay drum is a familiar accompaniment of death ceremonies. It is said that the beating of this drum plays a very significant part of the African culture because it represents the heart beat. So much faith is placed in the beating of this drum, that it is said that if it is not beaten properly, the person beating it could be in grave danger. In our research we found an interview with an elderly lady who was born and raised in Clarendon but now resides in the parish of Kingston who shared her experience:

*"I was once at a nine-night in my home town in Clarendon. Not the modern one now, I am talking about the real nine-night." She explains. "Now this young man was there beating the drum but unfortunately he was not doing it properly. A cliff was near by and when the spirits took him over, they led him to the edge and were going to lead him straight over the cliff. Lucky for him one of my Maroon friends was there and him had to take another drum and beat him back into reality"*

When we asked if this could just be an unfortunate situation, she shook her head and said "it's because the drum has contacts with the spirits, that's why they use the white rum to control the spirits."

If you should travel to St. Mary for example, to witness a *nine-night*, there will be singing, dancing and stories of the deceased which are intended to provide support to the grieving family. Here one will see the use of the goombay drum, the use of the



white rum and one will also see a lot of rituals such as the sprinkling of the rum before the beginning of the singing or any other activities being carried out.

On the other hand, *nine-nights* in Kingston and other big towns are the total opposite as the "Ghost of the past" battles against the "Ghost of the present" for supremacy. We would hear voices raised in solemn singing, for example, "Walk Holy, Walk Holy" and a mixture of lively songs would fill the night air until morning as the harmony of voices would be heard over hills, valleys and plains comforting the weary and encouraging sorrowful hearts.

At some nine nights on the outside one would see speakers/sound system *set-up* and blaring dancehall music and everyone would be having a festive time. Having no cares in the world for the dead as "the dead is already dead and they can't come back to harm the living" the exact words of a young lady who was interviewed while we were investigating the matter.

Here in Jamaica, we see where the traditional practice of *nine-night* is battling to stay alive. And this is where many of the respondents of our questionnaires believe that the Ministry of Tourism, Entertainment and Culture should step in and preserve our heritage/culture.

Some aspects of the traditional practice still exist at the *nine-night* of the present. We may not see singing, story telling and praying taking place (although not true for all *nine-nights*), but refreshments has secured its position. In fact, there have been some additions to the menu as well. We can no longer call it refreshment but late night supper as some persons only attend *nine-nights* to indulge themselves in the food which ranges from a wide variety of dishes. White rice and curried goat is the main dish served for the night. Jerk chicken and pork has balanced the menu as newly served dishes, and of course no *nine-night* is complete without the "manish water" otherwise known as goat head soup.

Singing is only done if the over-proof Jamaican rum along with a wide range of assorted alcoholic beverages are present because the rum controls the spirits, keeps the sleep out of one's eyes and keeps the rhythm alive.

It may have evolved and changed with time but all is not lost and we can get back to the "real" traditional *nine-night* with a little help and assistance from the Ministry of Tourism Entertainment and Culture and its agencies. There are some groups on the north coast who put on nine night shows and this gives visitors an understanding of our culture. We believe that all stakeholders should play their part by promoting or using the *nine-night* practice as a part of the package for Cultural Tourism.

## Chapter 5: Data Analysis

### Questionnaires

Questionnaires (see Appendix 2) were handed out to random persons in an effort to get wide views on the concept of nine- night.

The target audience for the questionnaires was made of Jamaicans in the parishes of Kingston, St. Andrew and St. Catherine. These persons who completed the questionnaires were selected randomly. There were thirty persons who responded, seventeen of whom were females and thirteen of which were males. The age group of the respondents ranged from thirteen to twenty (17%), ages of twenty one to thirty five (23%), 16% percent fell between the ages of thirty six to fifty and five percent were over the age of fifty one.

Based on the evaluation of the questionnaires, half of the respondents had received some form of tertiary level education as fifty percent; forty percent stated that they received secondary level education and ten percent received only primary level education.

The questionnaires also revealed the width of the *nine-night* practice as eighty three percent of the respondents revealed that *nine-night* was practiced in their family.

The response of the questionnaires also indicate the significance of this practice among Jamaican people as over fifty percent of the respondents believe that it is very important in the Jamaican society.

Persons were also asked how *nine-night* impacted on their lives. Among the interesting responses to this question were:

*"This practice makes me feel unique and makes me feel proud to be a descendent of the African race."*

*"It has taught me things about my culture, ancestral groups and where we are all coming from."*

It was also evident from the responses (70%) of the sample that members of the Jamaican society believe that the publicity of the *nine-night* practice should be promoted.

### **Limitations**

The main limitations of this study were time and size. We believe that other persons should take on this study with more time in order to prove to the Ministry of Tourism that nine-night can be an important part of the tourism product. They could also increase the size of the research by questioning more persons including Jamaicans from all walks of life and visitors as well.

## Chapter 6: Conclusions & Recommendations

### **Summary**

The information obtained in this research gave us a better understanding of Cultural Tourism in Jamaica. Throughout our project we examined the possibilities of including the cultural practice of nine-night as a part of cultural heritage package for tourism.

The analysis of the nine-night practice, led us to conclude that we possess a rich heritage and with a little help from the stakeholders, both government and private, in the culture and tourism sectors, and the Jamaican society at large, the practice can be packaged as a part of our tourism product.

Our investigation also led us to conclude that a lot of the younger generation of Jamaicans along with visitors to the island have been exposed to the cultural practice and have some knowledge of the practice.

Based on the response of the public through the use of questionnaires it can be safely concluded that it would be accepted by the public as most of the respondents encouraged the idea of visitors viewing and videotaping the practice. We believe that viewing the event would allow people from other cultures to be more appreciative of ours.

## Challenges

There were three main challenges that may prevent us from quickly placing nine-night as a part of the local tourism offer.

- ✚ One challenge is to retrieve the traditional nine-night practice. Nine night practices vary across the island. It is quite difficult with the particular nuances of each parish and community to state what aspects of nine-night are truly authentic. Each community group has similarities, but there are also many differences.
- ✚ There is always the fear that cultural offerings get watered down to suit the tastes of tourists. This is a fear also with the nine night practice as it has varied much just with the changing tastes of the society. The watering down may in fact destroy the few traditional things that are left.
- ✚ Location of nine-nights are always in a home setting. The best nine nights are in the country areas (rural Jamaica). There may be security issues involved where visitors have to travel on long, lonely roads at night to view the event. Many of the visitors do not know the road well and driving at nights on unfamiliar roads may be dangerous.

Many of these challenges can be overcome by making Jamaican citizens aware of our cultural heritage and its importance as well as the role visitors play in helping our country and economy.

## **Recommendations**

It is recommended by the researchers that the Ministry of Tourism Entertainment and Culture should undertake its own research to see the benefits of using nine-night as apart of the cultural tourism product and make it accessible to visitors. This will allow our cultural tourism package to be diversified.

We would also recommend that traditional nine night bands and folk group experiment with offering nine night sessions as part of the entertainment package offered in their concerts and festivals which visitors attend. This will provide more exposure of the practice to the visitor.

Practicing to smaller local groups of visitors and locals at festivals can help to gauge persons reactions to the concept of nine-night on stage. This would help to determine the likely best audiences and groups to whom nine-night would appeal.

## ***Bibliography***

Baxter, Ivy. *The Arts of an Island*. The Scarecrow press Inc, Metuchen, N.J. 1970

Bryan, Patrick. *The Jamaican People 1980-1902*. Macmillan Caribbean

Lewin, Olive. *Rock it come over: The Folk Music of Jamaica*. The University of the West Indies Press. 2000

M<sup>c</sup>Carthy, Bridget. *Cultural Tourism: How the Arts Can Help Market Tourism Products*. Oregon, USA. 1992

Ndombet-Assamba, Aloun. *Ministry of Tourism, Entertainment and Culture's Contribution to secretarial Debate June 13-15, 2001*

Pattullo, Polly. *Last Resorts: The Cost of Tourism in the Caribbean*. Ian Randle Publishers, Kingston. 1996

Schular, Monica. *Alas, Alas, Kongo*. The John University Press, Baltimore

Senior, Olive. *The Encyclopaedia of Jamaican Heritage*. Twin Guinep Publishers Ltd. St. Andrew, Jamaica. 2003

Simpson, George. *Religious Cults of the Caribbean, Trinidad, Jamaica and Haiti*. Institute of Caribbean Studies, University of Puerto Rico. 1980

Tanna, Laura. *Jamaican Folk tales and Oral Histories*. Institute of Jamaica Publications Limited. 2000

Taylor, Frank. Paper on *Heritage tourism and Caribbean Development March 8-11, 1995*

Warren Martha. *The Black Roadways*. Beckwith/The Negro Universities Press, New York



WTO. Paper on *Cultural Tourism and Local communities*. World Tourism Organization. Madrid, Spain. 2006

WTO. *Cultural Tourism and Poverty Alleviation*. World Tourism Organization Madrid and Spain 2005

\_\_\_\_\_. World Travel Dictionary. Highbury Columbus Travel Publishing. USA. 2003.

#### News paper articles and photographs

Observer Teenage - *Nine-night* - Tuesday August 09, 2005

[www.jamaicaobserver.com](http://www.jamaicaobserver.com)

#### Other Websites

[www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com)

[www.negrospitituals.com](http://www.negrospitituals.com)

## ***Appendices***

### **APPENDIX 1: TEACHER'S NOTES**

The following notes are compiled to assist teachers who may wish to introduce the Caribbean, and more specifically, Jamaica, within the course content of particular classes. This Aldo Papone study looks at the cultural practices in Jamaica, primarily *nine night* and provides opportunities for students to learn about the different and similar ways in which cultural phenomenon are expressed.

#### GTTP Study Overview

Celebrations are a part of our lives and our shared culture; they know no geographical boundaries and help to cushion us from life's more tiresome burdens. In many cultures the most awe-inspiring and colourful of celebrations are those associated with births, marriages and death. The sages and our ancestors tell us that these are the most important events in one's life and those milestones should be shared with immediate family and, often with the community at large.

Jamaica's largely African heritage has endowed our people with a great love of life and the journey of life. We see many elements of our African heritage – food, music, dance – morphing and evolving into many cultural norms that are distinctively Jamaican. Many of these cultural norms are celebrations of their own. One of the most common celebrations in which our African heritage is most evident is *nine night* and this is the focus of this study.

*Nine night*, rather than being a morbid activity, is a celebration of life – a coming together of family, community and co-labourers to share in the good memories and bid the deceased safe passage to the land of the ancestors. *Nine night* has also been called

a Jamaican farewell, bidding good tidings for the journey ahead. Most importantly, *nine night* represents a way of providing comfort to the family of the bereaved. The occasion provides opportunities to reunite with friends and relatives as well as discover new ones.

*Nine night* provides a unique opportunity for cultural tourism as it allows the visitor to:

- observe and participate in a celebration that is uniquely Jamaican.
- see varied ways in which other cultural elements – food, music and folk forms – are integrated into Jamaican life
- compare and contrast celebrations in Jamaica and their own cultures
- recognize the universality, yet frailty of man
- appreciate more, the journey called LIFE

It is our hope that this study will provide an understanding of this celebration and prompt further discussion on how *nine night* can be integrated into Jamaica's Cultural Tourism product.

## Jamaica

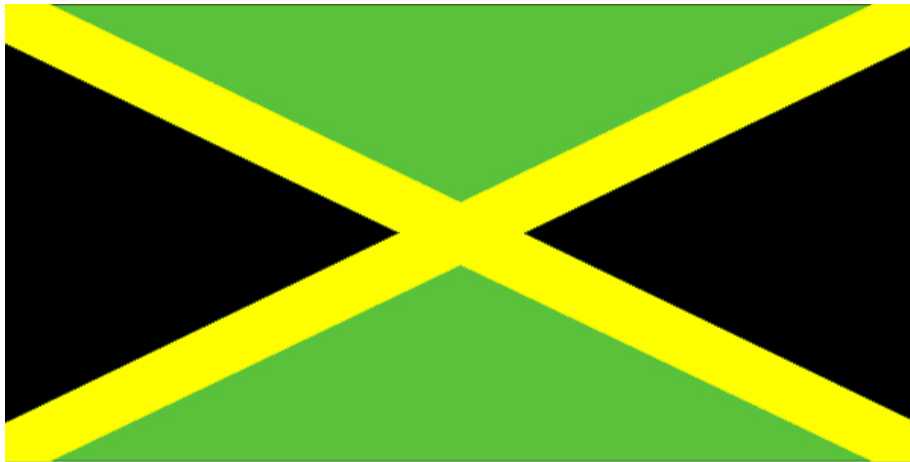
In order to communicate the concept of *nine night* to students it is necessary to understand a little about Jamaica. Below, some information is provided on Jamaica's geography, history and culture. There are specific references to the *nine night* concept which was discussed in the student's research but there are also three fun learning activities which can be shared between teacher and student.

### *Geography*

Jamaica is the third largest of the Caribbean islands, located almost equidistant between North and South America. The island is 4,244 square miles with several political and administrative divisions. The island is very mountainous with the highest point, Blue Mountain Peak, rising 7,402 feet above sea level. The climate is tropical with cooling effects provided by trade winds and seasonal rainfall.

### *History*

Jamaica's earliest inhabitants were the Tainos, an Arawak speaking people who greeted Christopher Columbus and the Spaniards on arrival in 1494. The Spaniards landed on the north coast of the island in an area now called Discovery Bay. The British came and conquered in 1655, led by Lord Rodney, they brought a system of government and social class – slavery – which lasted for more than 200 years. It is under British rule that many enslaved Africans and other nationalities were brought to the Caribbean. It is the coming together of these peoples which has given Jamaica the kaleidoscope of cultural mosaics that are visible today in our food, architecture, music, poetry, dance, religious celebrations, and other artistic expressions that makes Jamaica, **JAMAICA**.



#### Jamaica's National Flag.

The flag symbolizes, by its colours, the resilience of Jamaica and the Jamaican people. "The sun shineth, the land is green and the people are strong and creative". Black depicts the strength and creativity of the people; Gold, the natural wealth and beauty of sunlight; and green, hope and agricultural resources.

## SUGGESTED CLASS ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY	GOAL	DETAILS	MATERIAL/TOOLS	TEACHER	STUDENTS
<b>1. Know the Islands</b>	To assist students in locating and identifying the islands of the Caribbean	This may be part of an evaluation activity for students in a structured geography class or a fun activity for any other class. It involves a class competition using a blank map to show the islands of the Caribbean	1 full map of the Caribbean complete with island names 1 blank map of the Caribbean showing the islands of the region but not the names	Introduces the region highlighting the countries of the region and things that are unique about them. The fill map is used here.  The blank map will later be used for the competition, using the information earlier provided by the teacher as clues to identifying the islands' locations and names	Reflects and shares their knowledge of the islands of the Caribbean.  Uses key information given to identify each island.
<b>2. Cultural Showcase</b>	To help students recognize the uniqueness of their own culture  To compare and contrast similarities between their own cultural norms and those of one Caribbean island	This activity is expected to be very entertaining and provide students with insights on how, despite geographic differences, there are some similarities between cultures	Dependent on the scale of this project	Can pre-select islands in the Caribbean for comparison.  Makes random assignment of islands to students  Provides guidelines of the extent of the assignment.	Complete research on the island assigned  Show ways in which the culture of the island differs from that of their own  Provide visuals to support presentation
<b>3. Melting Pot</b>	i. To discover the foods that are used in Caribbean households  ii. To communicate how new foods/meals are created through fusion of other foods	This is a practical approach for a cooking class or fun activity to help students understand the differences between food preparation in 3 – 4 Caribbean islands as well as their own.	Dependent on the scale of this project	Classes are divided into groups to complete research to look at ways of cooking and foods eaten in the Caribbean.  Students will then be asked to create a meal of their choice using ingredients available to them from the Caribbean with that of their own country	Groups will complete research ahead of the class in which the food preparation will be done.  Student groups will create one dish each that incorporates many of the ingredients used in the Caribbean and in their own country

## APPENDIX 2:

### Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability. Please place a tick (✓)

OR fill in the blanks where appropriate.

1. Gender:

Male [ ]

Female [ ]

2. Age group:

13-19 [ ]

20-29 [ ]

30-39 [ ]

40-49 [ ]

50-59 [ ]

60 and over [ ]

3. Level of education:

Primary [ ]

Secondary [ ]

Tertiary [ ]

4. What does the term 'nine night' means to you?

---

---

5. How do you feel about our culture as it relates to the 'nine night' practice?

---

---

6. How has the practice of 'nine night' been impacting on you life and the lives of young people today?

---

---

---

7. How do you see people react to our culture as it relates to the 'nine night practice'?

---

---

8. How has our culture evolved as it relates to the 'nine night' practice?

---

---

9. Do you practice 'nine night' in your family?

Yes [ ]

No [ ]

10. If 'no', how do you deal with death in your family as it relates to the Jamaican cultural practice of 'nine night'?

---

---

---

11. Do you think that it is important to practice 'nine night' in Jamaica?

Yes [ ]      No [ ]

12. If yes or no, why?

---

---

---

13. How significant is the nine night practice to you?

Very significant [ ]      little significance [ ]      no significance at all [ ]

14. Do you think the Tourism sector should promote the publicity of this practice?

Yes [ ]      No [ ]

15. If yes or no, why?

---

---

---

16. How would you feel if tourists should visit your 'nine night', video tapes it and take photographs of the proceedings?

---

---

---

17. In what ways do you think this practice can be used to earn foreign currency?

---

---

## APPENDIX 3

# Challenges to cultural heritage tourism in Ja

Vivienne Pitter  
Contributor

**M**UCH HAS been happening in the cultural heritage tourism sphere in Jamaica. The showcasing of our cultural resources has widened, especially in recent times, in a bid to diversify the traditional tourism offerings.

The provisions for the development of this kind of tourism in the Tourism Master Plan (2001) are quite impressive. These provisions include the creation of a heritage unit to administer a heritage fund, process applications, provide technical assistance and monitor cultural products.

Despite what is happening and the plans that are being made, there are several challenges confronting it. The foremost challenge is lack of government funding.

### MANY FAILED PROJECTS

Sources at the Tourism Product Development Company (TPDCo) reveal that many projects have fallen by the wayside due to the lack of money.

Another problem is that many private sector representatives are reluctant to invest in cultural projects, since they believe that the financial returns cannot be guaranteed, as for returns from setting up a hotel or a guesthouse.

Tied to this is that some local investors fail to invest in cultural tourism since some of them tend to see things to do with culture as leisure and recreational activities, and not as commercially viable ventures.

People with this mindset need to realise that culture will sell if



PHOTO BY JANET SILVERA

Royal Palm Estates actress, Gracie-Ann 'Patience' Watson, dressed as a Taino, showcases the cultural heritage attraction 'Outameni' which is to be introduced in Falmouth, Trelawny, in 2007.

managed properly since more and more people are now travelling to see unique cultures across the world.

Another challenge to cultural tourism is that many projects that have been undertaken have been started on too large a scale.

Port Royal – slated for development on a number of occasions – for

which plans have failed to materialise, is a prime example. Potential developers could start with a small initiative, for example utilising what is already present at the site, instead of trying to develop a grand project, which would need a mass injection of fun. The key really, is to start small.

Lack of community participation provides another obstacle, especially when a cultural site is present within a community. Many developers tend to work without including community members. This oftentimes irritates them, as they certainly do not want outsiders to come in and develop around them



PITTER

without their input. When this happens, they usually do not give their full support and such projects have a tendency to fail. This problem, however, may be eliminated in the near future, as the tourism master plan stresses community involvement and participation and pledges to monitor community projects to ensure that persons in the community are not left out of such developments.

### SHOULD NOT BE MANIPULATED

The way some Jamaicans view cultural resources creates another problem for the development of cultural heritage tourism. Many of them feel that they should not be manipulated to gain profit. There is the feeling that the product exists for the community and they are to show it off to visitors without charging them a fee. For these persons, aspects of the culture are really not for sale, but exist only for the development of national pride.

The Government has to move with dispatch to seek private sector partnership to aid in the development of cultural tourism as traditional tourism needs the culture and heritage to sustain it. The society also has to change the way it views cultural attributes, because it can provide a new source for competitive advantage in the Jamaican tourism industry.

Source: The Gleaner Hospitality Jamaica –October 18, 2006