

Exploring **Hidden T&T**

Exploring Brasso Seco

The village of Brasso Seco / Paria nestled within the distant folds of the Northern Range, its pristine landscape is a haven for nature lovers and a place worth discovering. Situated 16-miles (26km) northeast of Arima, the gateway to this adventure land begins at the 12-mile milepost on the Arima, Blanchisseuse Road.

To reach the village centre requires a further 6km descent, on the Paria Morne Bleu Road. Boarding its territory are some of T&T highest mountains, to the southeast is the tallest peak El Cerro Del Aripo (940metres) and to the southwest is the fifth-highest Mt. Bleu (853metres).

A 7-mile walk, heading northeast through the enchanted forest will lead to Paria Bay and Waterfall. The sources of the Paria, Marianne and Madamas Rivers originate from the Brasso Seco Region. Its mountainous terrain is an ideal place for adventure and placed within its boundaries there are as many as eleven waterfalls.

Life is usually peaceful in Brasso Seco and crime is almost non-existent. Villagers usually travel to Arima for employment while others earn their living through agriculture.

Before the pandemic, Brasso Seco was a number one attraction and tourists would come from all over the world to enjoy the ambience, hike the trails and even do some bird watching. The variety of outdoor activities brought employment to the community and opened the door for specialized tour guides, caterers and the rental of guesthouses.

Carl Fitzjames who for many years has been the village's most reputable tour guide is familiar with all the trails and is always willing to assist nature enthusiasts. He should be given recognition for his years of service to his community. On the national stage, he and his wife Kelly raised awareness in his community by promoting its indigenous food and culture.

Before the Pandemic their food Fest and Family Day was a much-anticipated event. Their association with the Alliance of Rural Communities (ARC) assisted villagers in earning more income by utilizing their cocoa to make chocolate. Out of the idea, The Brasso Seco Chocolate Company developed.

At the heart of the village, there is the Visitors Centre where avail-



By MARIO RUSSELL



Double River Falls

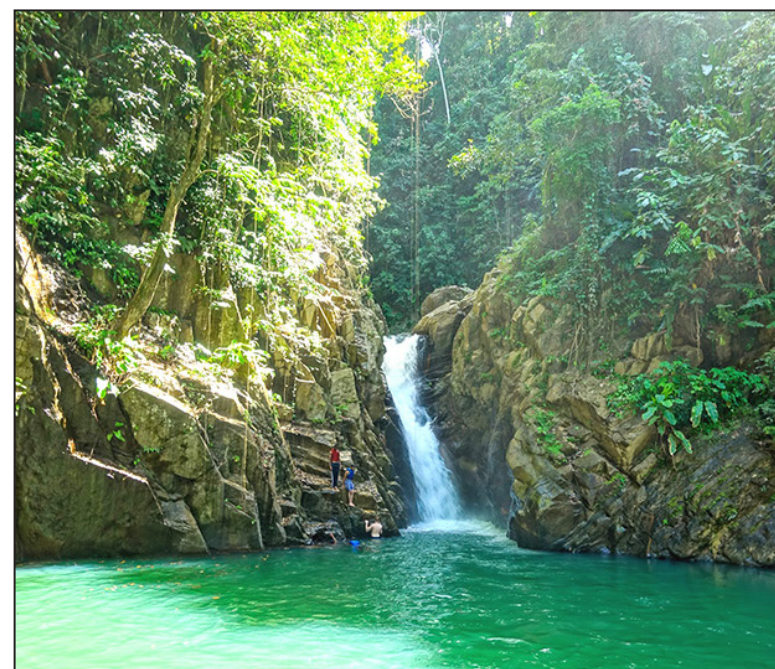
able are freshly squeezed juices, delicious pastels, homemade cakes, sweets and ice cream.

There are approximately 350 residents in the village and prominent landmarks are the Roman Catholic Church, The Primary School, Beacon of Hope Ministry and the Community Centre. The village consists of two prime roads to the east is the Madamas Forest Road and to the west is the El Brasso Trace Road.

The evergreen forest provides a sanctuary for a variety of wildlife including the red brocket deer, ocelot, tayra or high-woods dog and the quenok or wild hog.

Many exotic birds frequent the Brasso Woodland such as a variety of hummingbirds, hawks, tanagers, honeycreepers, toucans, bellbirds, trogons, and the golden-headed and white-bearded manikins.

The name "Brasso Seco" is a Spanish word when translated means "dry-branch". Today, just like in the early nineteen century a variety of crops are cultivated including cocoa, coffee, and cit-



Paria Waterfalls

rus. Brasso Seco was virtually unknown to the rest of Trinidad until the fatal plane crash on 3rd June 1934 of sports champion and war hero "Marvelous Mikey" Cipriani.

His body later recovered deep in the forest on the outskirts of the community in an area known by hunters as El Chiquito. Remnants of the plane can be seen at the Visitors Centre.

Double River Falls located 6km from the town centre is one of the major attractions that bring visitors to the village. Its water source comes from the El Cerro watershed. The 40-minutes walk to get there is along the Madamas Dirt Road.

The trail, which is mostly flat, has some short inclines to ascend. In some areas, the trail is muddy due to constant water drainage that filters from the hilltops. Cultivated along the rugged slopes are vineyards of lush christophene plantations, which add rich splendour to the wild scenery. At the entrance to the falls, there is a confluence of two small tributaries, which may have complimented the name



Carl Fitzjames

Double River.

The falls are located 100 metres away in a concealed valley and it drops 89-feet of the rocks into a shallow basin.

Huge boulders and evergreen vegetation surround its perimeter and enhance the picturesque scenery. Flowing above the falls, there are a series of undisclosed cascades however due to the difficulty of the terrain they are not easily accessible. The most mysterious is

the Laughing Buddha Falls.

A short trek on a nearby trail will lead to Sobo Falls, which is another fascinating fall to visit where its watercourse comes from a nearby tributary.

Deeper in the forest there is the Madamas Waterfall where along the river course there is numerous waterfalls and fascinating watercourses and gorges. Another waterfall on the western side of the community is the El Brasso Trace Falls.

In Brasso Seco, there is always some interesting place to visit and one can spend months researching its fascinating flora and fauna. It is a hiker's dreamland and along with its numerous cascades, rivers and mountains, there is lots of exciting forest trails to conquer.

Visitors are always welcome, to come and enjoy the peaceful ambience, and superb countryside. However, uncaring outsiders sometimes leave trash on the trails.

Large groups with their 4-wheel pickups and ATV cause further destruction to the already waterlogged forest roads. Brasso Seco is a secret gem every Trinbagonian should visit.

PRESS PLAY

TOP 20 TRENDING SOCA

1. OUT AND BAD VOICE
2. JOLENE KES
3. DINGOLAY MICAL TEJA X NAILAH BLACKMAN
4. MIND MY BUSINESS (HAPPI PAPI RIDDIM) PATRICE ROBERTS
5. TAKE BAMBOO (Dutty Dutty Riddim) MELICK & BOOGY RANKS
6. TOUCH THE GROUND (save the soil riddim) MACHEL MONTANO X MARGE BLACKMAN X PRIVATE RYAN
7. TILT (Tilt Riddim) KERNEL ROBERTS
8. MASH UP BLAXX
9. JELLY NADIA BATSON
10. BLESS BODY ERPHAAN ALVES X PRIVATE RYAN
11. FREE AGAIN PREEDY X PRIVATE RYAN
12. SURVIVORS KERNAL ROBERTS & ZAN
13. FETE CYAH OVER (Brunch Fete Riddim) LYRIKAL
14. DRIP DRIP CHINGEE
15. ACTION MOVIE (AUDREY RIDDIM) SKINNY FABULOUS
16. COME DOWN FROM DEY (Dutty Dutty Riddim) MISTA KILLA
17. LEAVE IT ALONE (Big Joy Riddim) VIKING DING DONG
18. DOWN DEY (Uncle Joe Riddim) GBM NUTRON
19. FLING BAM BAM (Boss Level Riddim) TERRI LYONS
20. IRON BABY (SHE WANT THE IRON MAN) RKG