

# Culture, Sports & Entertainment

## In search of Grand Matelot Falls

If your heart races at the thought of chasing waterfalls, consider setting your sights on this particular gem. It is the first time pictures have ever been



BY MARIO RUSSELL

posted of this natural wonder.

Fondly dubbed by locals as the Grand Matelot Cascades, this natural wonder remains

relatively unexplored due to its remote location and rugged surroundings.

Even the Matelot villagers themselves seldom venture into

this dense forest. The landscape is a tapestry of precipitous islands, bordered by meandering tributaries, and reaching its crescendo

is no easy feat.

The challenge would be getting to the confluence of the Petite Matelot and Ananas River. Picture a landscape akin to a challenging jungle expedition - no well-defined trails, numerous valleys to navigate, and steep ridges to conquer making the task even more challenging.

A decade ago, we embarked on our maiden voyage to uncover this hidden treasure.

Our journey led us up-

stream for miles, where the river's arms forked into multiple tributaries, each concealing the falls in its embrace.

One has to know which tributary the falls is located. Also the river can have a different set of challenge.

Treacherous rocks, fallen trees, swirling pools, cascading waterfalls, and treacherous gorges were our companions.

Experience taught us that the land route, though demanding, was a safer and swifter option. Just last year, while trekking from Cumaca to Matelot, we found ourselves above the falls.

Although we could not see the cascade we could hear its resounding roar echoing through the valley, igniting our curiosity and determination.

We looked forward to the day when we could follow the river's call and uncover this hidden spectacle.

A daring team of six individuals - Samuel Furlonge, Samraj Ramlakan, Michael Sando Nedd, Michael Char-



The Team: Samuel Furlonge, Samraj Ramlakan, Michael Sando Nedd, Michael Charlerie, Mario Russell, and the skilled navigator Chris Kelshall

lerie, Mario Russell, and the skilled navigator Chris Kelshall - embarked on this venture.

This quest wasn't for the faint-hearted. Armed with GPS and cutting-edge phone apps, we meticulously plotted our course.

From Matelot Village, our odyssey commenced at 6 a.m. charting a path divided into four legs, with an estimated total of 6 hours to reach our goal:

- Leg 1: The 3-mile trek through Santa Cruz Forest Trail (1 ½ hrs)
- Leg 2: Descending

the ridge to an old camp crossing an unnamed tributary (1 hr)

- Leg 3: Tackling unmarked and precipitous terrain to the confluence (2 hrs)

- Leg 4: Traversing the Ananas River to the falls (1 ½ hrs)

Our journey from the village began by heading south along the Santa Cruz forest road. Chris adeptly charted a course through the dense forest, guiding us first to a forest camp, and from there, we navigated through intricate and challenging terrain, ultimately descending to the confluence to the point where the Petite Matelot and Ananas Rivers converge, a journey spanning approximately 4.20 hours.

At this juncture, deliberation ensued regarding the continuation of our expedition. The turbulent, brown waters flowing from the Petite Matelot raised concerns.

Yet, just a short distance away, the calm and navigable Ananas River beckoned from the confluence. Choosing to press on, we proceeded to trek along the Ananas tributary, a path that ultimately led us to the falls.

Our hesitations may have pro-

longed the journey, culminating in a seven-hour endeavor, but the sight that met our eyes was worth every step.

The Grand Matelot Cascades proudly display three tiers, each with its own enchanting allure, reminiscent of Tobago's Argyle Falls.

We explored two levels, discovering tranquil pools fed by four spouts at the base, while the second level required scaling rocks to indulge in its refreshing cascade.

The third tier beckoned, an ascent too lofty to conquer within our limited time.

Anticipating another six-hour return journey, we chose to bid adieu to this upper realm.

On Google Maps the region is designated as the Heather-Dawn Herre Nature Reserve. The river's origin traces back to the Zeno and east of the Zeno watershed, at an elevation of 2042 feet. Amidst our exploration, the graceful presence of a buck graced the river's edge, a fleeting yet beautiful encounter.

So, if your heart yearns for the thrill of uncovering nature's hidden gems, set your compass towards the Grand Matelot Cascades - an adventure that promises challenges, awe-inspiring beauty, and memories etched into the very fabric of your soul.



Grand Matelot Falls

## PRESS PLAY TOP 20 SOCA HITS

1. TALIBANS - BYRON MESSIA & BURNA BOY FEAT NICKI MINAJ AND STEFFLON DON
2. DRIFT - TEEJAY
3. BAD GYAL - 450
4. WHING AND JUMPING SHAGGY FEATURING PATRICE ROBERTS
5. ALL MY LOVE - PATRICE ROBERTS X TARRUS RILEY
6. WHO READY - NESSA PREPPY, ALISON HINDS & J SPIDER
7. TALK DE THING - PATRICE ROBERTS
8. FOREVER LOVE - ERPHAAN ALVES FT DEAN FRASER
9. V6 - MALIE DONN
10. MAAN MERI JAAN - RAVI B X ROCHELLE CHEDZ
11. YOUR LOVE - VOICE X TEMPOE X WALSHY FIRE
12. SHORT SKIRT - SKILLIBENG
13. HEAVEN ON EARTH - MICAL TEJA AND V'GHN
14. THE GREATEST FEELING - VOICE X LEADPIPE AND SADDIS
15. MY SIZE - MARZVILLE AND SKINNY FABULOUS
16. CALM DOWN - REMA X BUSY SIGNAL X SALENA GOMEZ
17. CHAUDHVIN KA CHAND - RAVI B X RAKESH YANKARAN
18. IF YOU LIKE PINA COLADAS SHAGGY & DL CASIDY FEAT RAYVON
19. ENDLESS SUMMER - IWER GEORGE FEAT ARIANA
20. 90z - BYRON MESSIA (NEW)



Climbing the rocks