

Bet Yuh Never Know Dat ...

1. What was the original Spanish name of the town Ocho Rios?.

Contrary to popular belief, and contrary to what is written in many guide books about eight rivers, the town got its name from a Spanish word which means 'waterfall'. This can be seen on very old maps of Jamaica. What was the Spanish name? Las Chorreras

2. This town clock's tower was paid for by one of Jamaica's German settlers and he designed it to look like a German (Prussian) soldier's helmet. Lucea.

3. Where was the first place in Jamaica to have electricity? Black River. It was installed by the Leyden family in their house in 1893. It is now Waterloo Guest House at 44 High Street.

4. Who said, "I would rather die in yonder gallows than be a slave another day"? Sam Sharpe.

5. Who said, "The monster is dead. The negro is free"; and where did he say it? William Knibb, midnight on August 1st, 1838 in Falmouth. He was preaching in what is now the William Knibb Memorial Church.

6. Where in Jamaica had piped water before New York City did? Falmouth. A 20-foot water wheel was installed in 1799 on lands at Martha Brae, which was turned by the current of the stream and emptied about 100 gallons of water per revolution into a wooden trough approximately 20 feet in elevation. A six-inch main carried the water for about a mile into a large tank in the town square of Falmouth. The town square is still called "Water Square" as a result.

7. Who was the first black Custos of St. Andrew, the first black millionaire in Jamaica, and what famous edifice did he build? George Steibel. Devon House in 1881.

8. What is 'Zella'? Another name for nine-night. (The term may be unique to Portland, however.) It may be a derivative of "zeli", the word for drum in Ewe, one of the Kwa languages of Ghana.

9. What would traditional midwives in days gone by put on a baby's navel after the umbilical cord was cut? A dressing made of castor oil and nutmeg.

10. What would she put in the water for the baby's first bath? Rum and a silver coin. Tradition holds that the father should provide the coin.

11. What animals, now died out, were brought to Jamaica in the 18th century to carry sugar? Camels.

12. What is another name for "Halifax Mutton"? Saltfish. Originally a cheap source of protein imported from Nova Scotia for enslaved labourers, many members of the planter class referred to it by this name while enjoying it as much as their slaves did.

13. What is a katta? A pad of leaves or cloth placed under loads carried on the head.
14. Why would you place a broom upside down behind a door in your house? To make an unwanted guest go away.
15. What is the heart of a soursop said to cure? Eneuresis (Bed wetting)
16. What is a thunderball (thunderbolt); and what is it used for? Any smooth stone found in a field. They used to be put in earthenware containers of water to keep it cool. Known in other islands as "thunderstone" or "lightening stone", they are traditionally believed to have fallen from the sky and used to be of religious significance. The ones found in Jamaica have been identified as Taino in origin.
17. What is 'pinda cake'; made of? Sesame seeds and peanuts.
18. What are senseh fowls good for? They will unearth any 'guzu' buried in your yard. Also used to chase mongoose.
19. What is 'Pickney Christmas? Easter celebrations. So called because they were the only celebration, other than Christmas, that slaves were allowed to participate in. It was shorter and less elaborate, however, as the name implies.
20. What is a 'panya' machete? A Spanish machete, with the blade sharpened on two sides. 21. The first commercially marketed oral contraceptive pills were derived from a species of this popular staple of the Jamaican diet. Yam.