

Lucea - An Ancient Wonderland

Midway between Montego Bay (the Second City) and Negril lies the coastal town of Lucea, the smallest parish capital in {mosmodule phpinc=ttpopup.php,Jamaica}

Though a humble township, Lucea has a rich history and thrives as the passageway between two distinct resort areas. However, Lucea is yet to capitalise on the thousands of tourists that pass through its borders each year.

There have been talks of restructuring Lucea to measure up against the Second City and Negril.

That idea still creates much debate among some Lucea residents and tourism sector leaders.

Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett previously announced plans for designating Lucea a resort destination, rather than a passageway.

Certain Privileges

"The designation will give Lucea certain privileges and will also allow for us to look at the resort's planning development, which other resort towns are getting," Bartlett had told the media last February.

"Lucea will be able to join Negril, Montego Bay and Ocho Rios as a properly planned resort centre," he had said.

Since the addition of the Grand Palladium Resort and Spa, Lucea may be on its way to becoming the type of resort development Bartlett and his team desire, offering more than just a mellow atmosphere.

Preserved History

While Lucea lacks the resort amenities other areas throughout Jamaica have, the capital has something those do not - a preserved and diverse history.

The small town brags of veiled, historical gems like the unspoiled Bulls Bay Beach, a hidden hang-out and crab catcher base for Lucea residents.

Behind the Rusea's High School is Fort Charlotte, once called Fort Lucea, which overlooks the Lucea harbour and the Dolphin Head Mountains.

The 266-year-old fort is adorned with remnants of the area's molasses tanks, aqueducts and cannons.

The only open-air museum on the island is located in Lucea and is a constant reminder that the preservation of history can provide a profound glimpse into the past, for Lucea's mystery also lies in its history.

It is said there is a tunnel that leads from the Hanover Parish Church to nearby Fort Charlotte, which was built as a safe haven in case of war.

Lucea's diversity is also explained through its past. Many people of Jewish decent camped at Lucea's shores to escape persecution, bringing about the existence of a Jewish cemetery just off Watson Taylor Drive.

The Ettu people, from a small tribe in Nigeria, Africa, also left their mark with a dance that is still performed at area funerals, weddings and dance competitions. Further, the graveyard in front of the Hanover Parish Church tells the story of German descendants finding solace in the parish capital.

An exclusive liaison to more lively resort areas, Lucea awaits the nomadic traveller with countless mysteries and long-lasting traditions.