Cave Hunting in Hellshire

Heroes Day weekend is just around the corner, and more than likely most of us will be at Hellshire Beach this weekend soaking up the sun and eating fish and festival.

But did you know there is lots more to do there than just swim and people-watch? Located in the rich, tropical hills of St Catherine is the Two Sisters Cave. One of Jamaica's historic sites, the caves were once a submerged cavern that became two after the 1692 earthquake in Port Royal. The name of the caves came from a combination of the earthquake and a story of two slave sisters who ran away and sought refuge in the single cave. Upon realising that they were about to be recaptured, the girls were said to have committed suicide in an effort to escape re-enslavement. As you enter the compound, you are greeted with a cool, calm, garden scene where you can enjoy your food and relax. You will be surrounded by some of Jamaica's most interesting fauna such as the Reuilia, Lantana, Yucca, and Bromeliad. Then there is the entrance to the mysterious Two Sisters Cave, said to be over 200,000 years old. Descending into the cave, the board stairway reveals the Little Sister Cave, located on the east and the Big Sister Cave located to the west. Flowing in each cave is brackish water, which is a combination of salt and fresh waters. We also learned that a river flows into the caves. A deep, dark recession, each cave is home to some rather interesting life forms such as the Greater Bulldog Bat, the Blue Crab and the Barn Owl. Interestingly, there are several passages that run through the caves, with one large enough to allow for a boat-ride. There is a third cave called the One Brother Cave, with one of the passages linking it to the other two caves. Depending on the tide and the temperature of the 60-foot caves, you will realise the water has different colours and there is sulphur produced from the heat and limestone. You never know which creature you will see in the caves, but we are sure what you see will fascinate you. The site was once home to the Taino Indians who used it for religious ceremonial reasons. There are also stone etchings on the rocks of the cave, as well as beneath the water. After having a tour of the cave, be sure to explored the nature walk. Be sure to wear sneakers, as this is rugged terrain. Along the path is a variety of the cacti found in Jamaica and the One Brother Cave. Though not as big as the other two, water from this cave was used for many domestic purposes such as washing and cooking. So, go soak up some sun and see the breathtaking oceanic view as you venture into the mysteries of the Two Sisters Cave.