

Christmas in the Bahamas

(outline)

Bahamas a Christian Nation so Christmas celebrated there just as in any other Christian nation

Common Denominations:

Methodist

Roman Catholic

Anglican

Presbyterian

Baptist

Church of God of Prophecy

Nondenominational

Mormon

Others

Most of Christmas in the Bahamas is centered heavily in Christ and his birth as a gift to the world.

The Bahamian people are a very religious people and place a huge emphasis on Christ and therefore Christmas is a big deal there

Of course there is still evidence of all of the commercialization of the Christmas season but these people are a very faith based people and Christmas church services are perhaps the biggest turn outs of the year there and the day is spent by most in church with a large Christmas service with folks dressed in their Sunday best, paying homage and respect to Christ and commemorating his birth!

Christ's mas- Christmas

As far a Bahamian tradition and culture and the commercialization around Christmas is concerned in the Bahamas, it revolves around, Most notably : "Junkanoo Festival Masquerade"

The true origin is unknown but two theories exist:

1. Named after John Canoe -a 18th Century West African Tribal King: He insisted and demanded the right to dance and celebrate with his people on "Boxing Day" even after being brought to the "New World" from W Africa. The tradition grew both in popularity and significance over time and grew into a big commercial Festival
2. Junkanoo also believed to come from a poor English translation of French origin, was believed to be French phrase "gens inconnu" - later pronouncing it as Junkanoo!

Festival directly connected to the Ghana Slave Trade (Ghana - formerly Gold Coast

A 17th Century tradition based in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. It's history and West African Heritage (GHANA)

Based in the "Kakamotobi or "fancy dress festival" of Ghana. Elmina Castle - erected 1482 in Ghana
Also called : "Castelo da Mina"

"A Mina"- the mine because of the gold and ivory mined there and discovered by Prince Henry the Navigator

"Mina" -("Feitoria da Mina")

"Cobra Verde" Drama film shot on location there- 1987

1st trading post built on the Gulf of Guinea

Became the most important stop on the route of the Atlantic Slave trade

1637- Dutch seized it from the Portuguese and took over the Portuguese Gold Coast in 1642

Slave trade continued under the Dutch until 1814 until

1872- The Dutch “Gold coast” and trade became a possession of Great Britain □□

Finally in 1957 - Ghana becomes an independent Nation

Christmas in Bahamas

Brief History of Bahamas

Bahamas independent nation in 1973 From Great Britain

West African Junkanoo tradition kept and celebrated and becomes even more entrenched and passed down traditionally to the young in the Bahamas culture as insured by the new Government under Sir Linden Pindling it's first Prime Minister.

Christmas there: Describe the climate, Customs

Delicious and savory dishes and Foods :

Christmas cake

Rum cake

Christmas pudding

Guava Duff In rum custard sauce

Christmas Bun

Christmas Ham

Macaroni and cheese

Cranberries

Rice and peas

Stuffing

Turkey

Sweet potato

Coleslaw

Other local dishes tied to slavery

Pug feet souse

Chicken souse

Sheep tongue souse

Oxtail souse

Others

Rock lobster - dream and boiled

Crayfish

Shrimps

Great Barracuda

Grouper fingers

Yellowtail Snapper

Bone fish

Grunt

Hogfish
Squirrelfish
Mackerel
Dolphin- Mahi Mahi

Conch - many ways prepared

Soup – chowder

Conch Salad - ceviche style which is uncooked conch in citrus sauce which denatures the meat and somewhat cooks the meat by a process known as “denaturation”

Also contains Tomatoes, Onions, Green pepper, Cucumbers, Celery

Bruised

Scorched

Cracked - fried conch

Conch chowder and Johnny cake

Crab

Pigeon peas

Pork potatoes

Pimento

Onion pepper stew fish

Boiled fish

Christmas Day service there

Christmas Dinner

Christmas Caroling around town

Gifts under the tree

Rest til 10 pm

Open House concept



Parties

Junkanoo Festival begins in the streets at night and continues into Boxing Day

Describe: Junkanoo music

Cowbells, bugles, horns, whistles, and Drums.

Dancing in the streets

The route

The bleachers - standing and paid seating

Barricades due to the crowds and all the tourists from all over the world and the locals present together

Describe

All levels of society having fun together regardless of class or race or position or rank in the nation

Prime Minister, Senators, members of parliament, the house of Assembly Governor General, Doctors, lawyers, cpas, bankers, maids, taxi drivers etc etc

Vantage points to see parade:

Roof tops of homes, Trees, Roof of businesses,

Churches - Trinity Church where my dad pastored as its first ever black pastor for 8 years
Banks
Government buildings

The Junkanoo groups / names
.Saxons
.Valleyboys
.Music makers
.Roots
.One Family
How they dance "Rushin" concept

Contest Timing
The Competition - categories of judging -music, dancers costumes
The prize money
The judges
Costumes worked on all year
Their size variation and pieces and how made and what they are made from
Parade rest stops and rules

The "goatskin" African Drums
Heated inside to increase the resonance of the sound - yielding a heart throbbing force!
Gumbay from Gambian for "Drum"

Tourism activities / hotels booked out
Rio carnival type scene
Food, Drink

At the end
Judging announcements
Winners declared
All People go home
Rest - Bahamas a literal ghost town after the Junkanoo parade has ended.

Boxing Day slavery concept in more detail

Family tradition in Bahamas
Joy
Festivity
Gift Giving
Christmas Caroling

Appeal to the audience to go and experience Christmas in the Bahamas for themselves