



ISSUE 01 | 2025 / 2026

Lagniappe

NEWSLETTER

COME FOR THE
CULTURE
STAY FOR THE
EXPERIENCE



TOBAGO
OLE TIME
WEDDING

TOBAGO
BLUE FOOD
FESTIVAL

NATURAL
TREASURES
DAY

BELMANNA
RIOTS

TOBAGO
CARNIVAL

NATIONAL
CARNIVAL



Welcome

Welcome to '**Lagniappe**', our quarterly newsletter where you can catch up on all things festival. This publication allows you to keep yourself up to date on all that the Commission has achieved and gives you a glimpse into what's next on Tobago's cultural calendar.

This issue has the wrap ups for the **Tobago Blue Food Festival** and **Tobago Carnival 2025** and what's coming for 2026.

We hope you enjoy reading and we look forward to providing you with more engaging and cultural content in the future.

HAPPY READING!

Sincerely,
Tobago Festivals Commission Limited

CEO's Address

Mr. Kern Cowan



As we begin a new period at Tobago Festivals Commission Limited, it feels important to pause and reflect on just how productive and rewarding the last few months have been. The final quarter of 2025 and the opening months of the 2025/2026 fiscal year were filled with activity, energy, and growth, led by two major highlights on our calendar, Tobago Blue Food Festival and Tobago Carnival.

Both events welcomed thousands of visitors to the island and brought life and excitement to our communities. We also introduced new and distinctive merchandise that allowed patrons to connect with the brand beyond the event itself. One of our most exciting steps forward was the Tobago Carnival AI experience, which gave users a new and interactive way to engage with the festival and with Tobago. These initiatives reflect our continued effort to blend tradition with innovation.

Looking ahead, 2026 is shaping up to be an exciting year for culture and festivals in Tobago. Our schedule includes National Carnival, the Tobago Heritage Festival, Tobago Blue Food Festival, and Tobago Carnival, which will mark its fifth year. National Carnival will take place

in January and February, with events across Scarborough, Roxborough, and Crown Point, creating opportunities for participation and enjoyment across the island.

I would like to extend sincere thanks to all our sponsors and partners who supported us over the past quarter. Your partnership plays a critical role in what we are able to achieve. We value long term relationships and remain open to building new ones as we continue to grow and evolve. Strong partnerships allow us to do more, reach further, and deliver better experiences.

At TFCL, we remain committed to continued investment in Tobago's orange economy. Our festivals are not only celebrations of culture but drivers of opportunity, creativity, and economic activity, and this remains central to our work.

In this new year, we will also be sharing more of what happens behind the scenes at TFCL. From planning to execution, we want to give you a closer look at the people and processes that help bring these events to life.

Finally, I want to thank all our stakeholders for their continued support. Our staff, board members, the Tobago House of Assembly, suppliers, partners, and the wider community all play an important role in the work we do. TFCL's success is a shared one, and we look forward to continuing this journey together.

Thank you for being part of the TFCL story.

Regards,

Kern Cowan

Chief Executive Officer,

Tobago Festivals Commission Limited



Assembly Member Zorisha Hackett

Secretary of the Division of Tourism,
Antiquities and Creative Industries

Assembly Member Niketa Percy

Assistant Secretary of the Division of Tourism,
Antiquities and Creative Industries

WELCOME

The Tobago Festivals Commission Limited extends a hearty welcome to our new Secretaries of the Division of Tourism, Antiquities and Creative Industries. We look forward to the contributions that will help strengthen our efforts and advance the Division's goals.

Let's Recap the last quarter of 2025

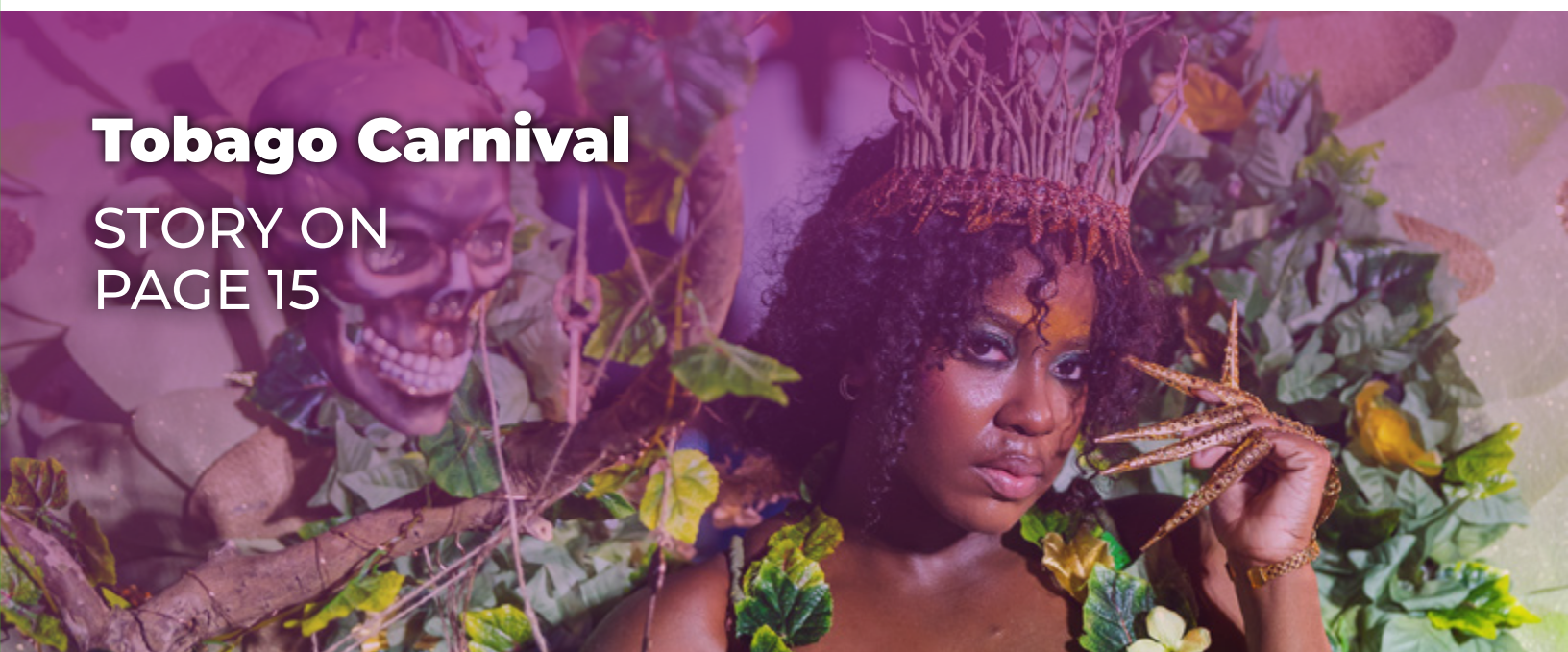
Tobago Blue Food Festival

STORY ON
PAGE 7



Tobago Carnival

STORY ON
PAGE 15





TOBAGO
BLUE
FOOD
FESTIVAL

WELCOME TO THE TOBAGO BLUE FOOD FESTIVAL



Patron standing at the entrance of the Tobago Blue Food Festival

Tobago Blue Food Festival

The **Tobago Blue Food Festival** 2025 came alive on *Sunday, October 19, 2025* at the *Bloody Bay Recreational Grounds*. The staple event maintained its appeal with a record number of patrons in attendance despite the heavy rainfall. The event featured over 40 food vendors showcasing innovative *dasheen based dishes and drinks*. These included punches, delicacies such as kurma, and cakes, ice-cream, wines, roti among other offerings. Also featured were several craft vendors offering handmade goods and cultural pieces.

Newly installed , permanent vending structures enhanced the overall festival experience, while family - friendly attractions, interactive games, and a lively petting zoo added to the day's appeal. Patrons also enjoyed performances from a lineup of local artistes such as Lord Nelson, Farmer Nappy, Verrse and Koquice Davidson, creating an energetic and festive atmosphere. The event reinforced the Blue Food Festival as a signature celebration of Tobago's food culture and ingenuity.



Ground provisions at the base of the entrance



A patron's meal at the Tobago Blue Food Festival



Locally crafted items from dasheen such as cake, fudge and bread.



Tobago Blue Food Festival's ambassadors show-off branded merchandise for sale.



Farmer Nappy entertains the large audience at the Tobago Blue Food Festival 2025



Live entertainment continued well into the night at the Tobago Blue Food Festival 2025.



COMPETITION RESULTS 2025

BEST DASHEEN DRINK

1ST - YZANNE WILLIAMS-CHANCE
2ND - DANNYELLE WILLIAMS
3RD - ANDREA SEAFORTH

BEST DASHEEN BLACK CAKE

1ST - DEBORAH SEAFORTH
2ND - ANTONIA JOSVEPH
3RD - YZANNE WILLIAMS-CHANCE

BEST DASHEEN WINE

1ST - ANDREA SEAFORTH
2ND - YZANNE WILLIAMS-CHANCE
3RD - SHARLENE JOHN

BEST DASHEEN LASAGNA

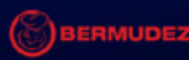
1ST - KAREN KERR-THOMAS
2ND - YZANNE WILLIAMS-CHANCE
3RD - ANTONIA JOSEPH

MOST CREATIVE DISH

1ST - ANTONIA JOSEPH
2ND - YZANNE WILLIAMS-CHANCE
3RD - DEBORAH SEAFORTH

BEST DECORATED BOOTH

ANDREA SEAFORTH



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Thank You



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TOBAGO
BLUE
FOOD
FESTIVAL

OCT . 18TH . 2026

10AM



**BLOODY BAY
RECREATIONAL GROUNDS,
TOBAGO**



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T**O****B****A****G****O**
CARNIVAL

Tobago Carnival | MUD, MAS & MUSIC



Mr. Kern Cowan, CEO of Tobago Festivals Commission Limited (Second from left), Councillor Tashia Grace Burris, former Secretary of the Division of Tourism, Culture, Antiquities and Transportation (middle), Verrse - the reigning Soca Titan Champion (right) and masqueraders from Vogue Promotions at 'The Unveiling: Tobago Carnival 2025'.

Tobago Carnival 2025 successfully wrapped up the Commission's year of festivals, delivering a dynamic celebration of culture, creativity, and community. Branded under a new theme '**Mud, Mas & Music**', the season unfolded through a full slate of signature events, including the Junior Calypso Monarch Competition, Monarchs of Mas, Soca Titans, Calypso Monarch, and a high-energy Carnival weekend on the road.

The competitive season officially began on October 2, 2025, with the Tobago Junior Calypso Monarch Competition at Shaw Park Complex, where Koquice Davidson of Signal Hill Secondary School captured the title with her powerful performance of "Appreciate Our Icons." Her victory set the tone for a season grounded in cultural pride and artistic

excellence, paving the way for the creative and musical showcases that followed.

Creative storytelling took centre stage on October 17, 2025, during **Monarchs of Mas** at Carnival City, Scarborough, where Tobago's designers and performers brought striking portrayals to life. Ayanna Nedd (Seraphina) claimed first place, followed by Dannel Salvery in second and Nicole Moses-Beckles in third.

Soca lovers were treated to a great battle on October 22, 2025, when Verrse (*with his song titled 'Paradise'*) defended his crown at the Tobago Soca Titans Competition, defeating nine other finalists to secure the title of Tobago Carnival Soca Titan for a second consecutive year.



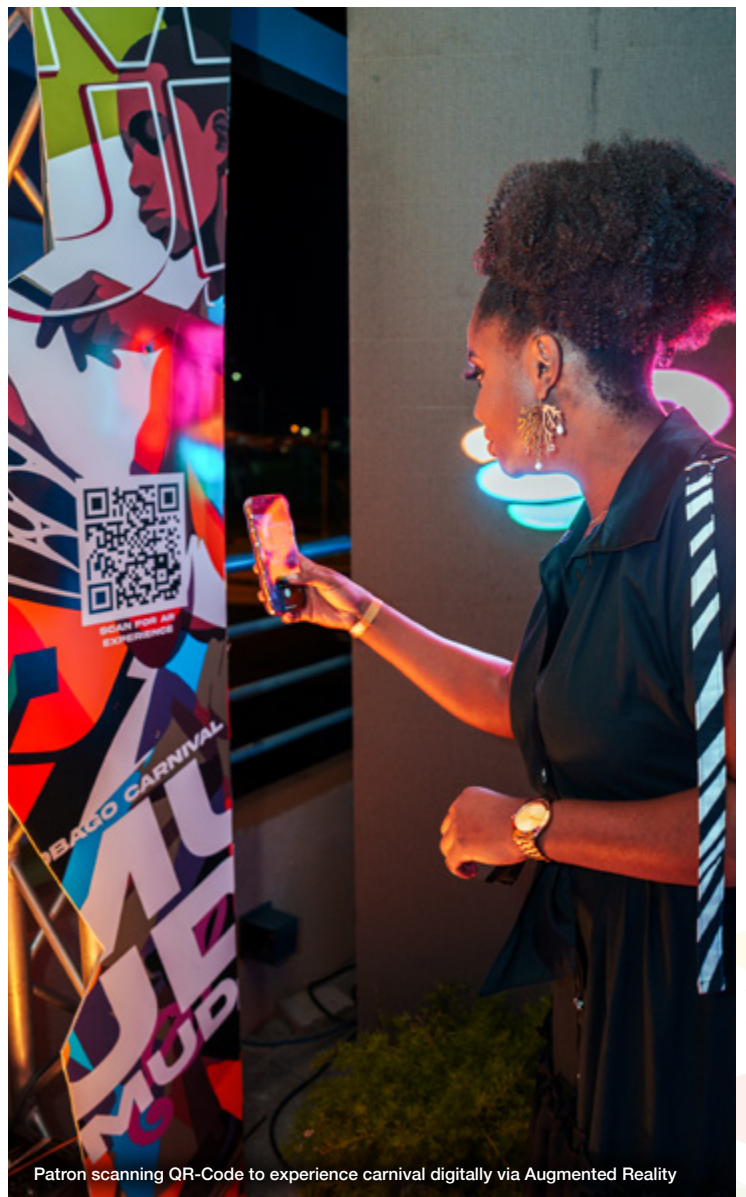
Soca Titan Champion 'Verre' performing on stage

Together, these events showcased Tobago Carnival 2025 as a dynamic journey from encouraging young talent to celebrating artistry and amongst euphoric road experiences all rooted in Tobago's unique cultural identity. The fourth installation was definitely a success.

2026 will be a milestone year, celebrating the 5th year of the Festival from October 30 to November 1. The Tobago House of Assembly, Division of Tourism, Culture, Antiquities and Transportation and Tobago Festivals Commission Limited thank our sponsors and partners namely Tobago Tourism Agency Limited, Tobago Information Technology Limited, Shaw Park Complex, Information Division, Tobago Updates, TTT, bmobile, AMPLIA Communications, CARIB, Bermudez, Holiday Snacks, GTC and Angostura White Oak.

The celebrations continued on October 23, 2025, as Nicole Thomas-Clarke (with her song titled 'Sacrifice') was crowned the TUCO Tobago Carnival Calypso Monarch 2025 following a fiercely contested final at Carnival City.

Carnival weekend brought the season to a close with several bands filling the streets during Dutty J'ouvert, Night Mas, Traditional Mas and the Parade of the Bands. Following the parades, persons were invited to vote for the **bmobile Band of the Road** People's Choice. In the winner's row were Vogue Promotions Mas & Events taking Contemporary Mas, K'Tique Mas claiming Traditional Mas, and Sisters in Culture earning Best Cultural Presentation.



Patron scanning QR-Code to experience carnival digitally via Augmented Reality







Contestants of the Tobago Soca Titans 2025 at a training session to enhance their performance, led by Avian Parks, Communications Director, Tobago House of Assembly.



Jab Molassies at the Speyside Water Wheel.



Oct 30 - Nov 1
2026

SAVE
THE
DATES



TOBAGO | MUD CARNIVAL | MAS & MUSIC



DIVISION OF TOURISM,
ANTIQUITIES & CREATIVE INDUSTRIES
TOBAGO HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY



TOBAGO
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BEHIND the **SCENCES**

CREATED BY PEOPLE. DRIVEN BY CULTURE.

C O M I N G
S  O N

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO CARNIVAL



TOBAGO CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2026

JANUARY | **FRI 30TH** | **Inter-Department Personality & Calypso Competition Street Parade**
2:00 PM | **Scarborough**

FEBRUARY

THUR 5TH | **THA Inter-Department Personality & Calypso Competition**
7:00PM | **Parade Grounds, Dwight Yorke Stadium**

SUN 8TH | **National Medium Band Finals**
7:00PM | **Parade Grounds, Dwight Yorke Stadium**

THU 12TH | **Junior Extravaganza**
10:00AM | **Shaw Park Complex**

SAT 14TH | **Kiddies Carnival**
10:00AM | **Scarborough**

SAT 14TH | **Windward Afro Queen Show and Calypso Monarch**
8:00PM | **Cyd Gray Complex, Roxborough**

SUN 15TH | **Kiddies Carnival**
10:00AM | **Roxborough**

MON 16TH | **J'ouvert**
4:00AM | **Roxborough & Crown Point**

11:00AM | **Parade of Bands**
Roxborough

7:00PM | **Mud Mas**
Roxborough

TUE 17TH | **J'ouvert**
4:00AM | **Calder Hall**

1:00PM | **Parade of Bands**
Scarborough

6:00PM | **Mud Mas**
Scarborough

Culture Classroom

Calder Hall Carnival

Calder Hall Carnival continues to stand as one of Tobago's most authentic community-driven Carnival experiences, rooted in tradition, togetherness, and cultural pride. What began as a small initiative by a group of friends passionate about preserving traditional mas has grown into a highly anticipated village celebration that brings the streets of Calder Hall alive each Carnival Tuesday.



Patrons chipping along with a music truck at Calder Hall Carnival



A patron masquerading as a Blue Devil at Calder Hall Carnival

Organised by the Pioneers of Calder Hall (POCH), the event centres on a traditional carnival parade that celebrates mas characters, steelpan, dance, and J'ouvert. Over the years, Calder Hall Carnival has become known for its emphasis on cultural education, community participation, and respect for Carnival heritage, welcoming revelers from all backgrounds to experience Carnival in an organic form.

A signature element of the celebration is the Calder Hall Mud Mas experience. With decades of history behind it, the mud camps and bands offer a unique, immersive Carnival tradition built on community. Calder Hall Carnival maintains its place as a vital part of Tobago's Carnival landscape, preserving tradition while strengthening community bonds year after year.



Steel Pan is always part of Calder Hall Carnival



Sun, Vibes and Good Sense

Your Guide to Festival Life in Tobago

By *Cayla Culture*, festival lover and seasoned event goer

If you have ever caught yourself wondering what to wear, what to bring, or what to expect before heading out to a festival in Tobago, then you are exactly where you need to be. Welcome to the blog series, **'Make It AND Make Sense'**, where we talk all things events, from the fun moments to the practical details that can make or break your experience.

I am not an event planner or an official anything. I am just someone who loves a good festival, has attended more than a few, and has learned along the way that preparation matters just as much as vibes. This series is about sharing those little tips that help you enjoy the experience fully, comfortably, and responsibly.

With National Carnival around the corner, this felt like the perfect place to start.

National Carnival takes place during January and February and brings activity across Scarborough, Roxborough, and Crown Point. It is colourful, energetic, and very much outdoors, which means one thing you cannot ignore, the sun. Tobago sun is not for play, so when planning your outfit, think light, breathable, and comfortable. Cotton shirts, loose dresses, shorts, and comfortable footwear are your best friends. Leave the heavy fabrics and tight shoes for another day.

What should you walk with? A small umbrella is always a smart idea, whether it is for shade or a quick shower. Sunscreen is a must, especially if you plan to be out for hours. Bring water and use it. A small crossbody bag or backpack keeps your hands free and your essentials close. And yes, bring your camera or make sure your phone is charged,

because there will be moments worth capturing. In terms of what to expect, National Carnival offers a mix of activities that showcase creativity, friendly competition, and community spirit. One of the highlights on the calendar is the Inter-department Carnival Competition on February 5, where divisions come together in a fun and festive way. We're heading back to the Parade Grounds at Dwight Yorke Stadium for this so you know that means walk with your crew, and your cooler. Beyond that, there will be activities spread across Crown Point, Scarborough, and Roxborough, each location bringing its own flavour and energy to the season.

My biggest advice for National Carnival, and really for any festival, is to pace yourself. Arrive early, know where you are going, take breaks when you need to, and most importantly, be respectful of the space, the people, and the culture being celebrated. This is just the beginning. In upcoming posts, I will be sharing more festival tips, what to expect at different events, how to move smart in crowds, and how to enjoy Tobago's festivals while still looking out for yourself and others.

So grab your shades, plan your outfit, and get ready for the season. I will be right here, walking with you. Also, the Commission's social media pages are updated quite frequently, so make sure to stay tuned to your platform of choice for ALL THINGS FESTIVAL.

See you in the crowd 😎

Your Festivals' Favourite
Cayla Culture



GET YOUR EVENT LISTED!

IN OUR 2026
CALENDAR OF EVENTS



The **Tobago Festivals Commission Limited** wishes to invite interested parties to submit their events for inclusion in our calendar of events for 2026.



REGISTER YOUR EVENT TODAY

Note that this is for informational purposes only and is **not** an invitation for sponsorship/support.

Contact us at tobagofestivals@gmail.com for more information

TFCL FAQs

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TOBAGO FESTIVALS COMMISSION LIMITED

Q: What does TFCL stand for?

A: Tobago Festivals Commission Limited

Q: Where is the TFCL office located?

A: TFCL'S office is located at GNV Place, Wilson Road, Scarborough, Tobago.

Q: In what year was TFCL incorporated?

A: The Tobago Festivals Commission Limited (TFCL) was incorporated in April 2019 as a company under the purview of the Division of Tourism Culture, and Transportation charged with the responsibility for "cultural expressions, festivals and activities indigenous to Tobago as well as National Festivals", that is, the hosting and elevating of National Festivals to stage Tobago as a Festivals' destination.

Q: What is TFCL's Mission Statement?

A: A resilient and adaptable TFCL, in partnership with its stakeholders, will embark on a passionate pursuit to promote and showcase world-class festivals, encourage innovation, and enrich the cultural and socioeconomic landscape of Tobago, within a framework of competency, productivity, inclusiveness, transparency and accountability.

Q: How do I get my events listed on the Calendar of Events?

A: You can email the following information to tobagofestivals@gmail.com ; Name, Date, Venue and Time of the Event along with contact details (name, phone number and email address).

Q: What is TFCL's Vision Statement?

A: To be internationally recognized as the mecca for festivals in the Caribbean region with year-round authentic Tobago cultural experiences.

Q: Where can I get branded merchandise?

A: Currently, TFCL and branded event merchandise are available for sale physically at our events and our office located at GNV Place, Wilson Road, Scarborough, Tobago. You can contact 639-4441 or tobagofestivals@gmail.com for more details.

Q: What events fall under the purview of TFCL?

A: TFCL is mandated to provide managerial support and strategic direction for cultural expressions, festivals and activities indigenous to Tobago, as well as National festivals. These include but are not limited to:

- National Carnival
- Tobago Heritage Festival
- Tobago Blue Food Festival
- Tobago Carnival
- Other Community festivals as approved by the *Division of Tourism, Antiquities and Creative Industries*.

Q: Is the TFCL responsible for village Harvests in Tobago?

A: No. The Harvest Festivals are observed throughout the year in various villages on the island to recognize the significance of food in Tobagonian culture. In this unique experience, many villagers cook and share food and drinks with friends, family and strangers in this house-to-house celebration.

Q: How can I register for news about upcoming events?

A: Sign up for our newsletter on our website : www.tobagofestivalscommission.com or click the link : <https://forms.gle/fFv72tZXHewTZuy8>



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