

HASHING IN TOBAGO!

What is hashing you may ask?

In very much the same way that Tobago is a "secret", so too is Hashing. Hashing can be best described as all terrain running on the 'hares and hounds' principle. Confused? Okay, the hares set a trail and the hounds must find the trail. In hashing the trail is set in shredded paper or flour. Yes flour as in the main ingredient in bread, pastries and pizza. Hashing is International and there are approximately 1898 Hash groups in 1235 cities in 183 countries.

In Trinidad & Tobago there are actually two groups of Hashers; the Port of Spain Hash House Harriers (POSHHH) and the Men's Monday Madness (HHHMMM). Both groups are basically made up of the same people but the runs are on different days, every other Saturday and Monday respectively. The HHHMMM set live runs i.e. the hares are given a five (5) minute head start and the pack then tries to follow the trail. POSHHH on the

other hand have preset runs i.e. the trails are normally set in the early morning and the Hashers gather for the run in the afternoon.

Hashing was introduced to Trinidad & Tobago by Peter Frearson and Robin Foster-Brown and the first Hash run was on the 4th February 1984. The HHHMMM was then founded by Keith Nieves and Abel Coelho in 1997. There are no membership fees and there is only one formality regarding membership. At the end of your first run you are given a beer or a soft drink, depending on your preference. This beverage must be consumed while the rest of the group sings a hasher's song of welcome. At the end of the beverage you are deemed to have lost your "Hash Virginity"

So where does Tobago come in? POSHHH has an annual Hashers run in Tobago usually around September, October or November. The weekend chosen would normally have a long

weekend with the Thursday, Friday or Monday as a Public Holiday. Each year approximately 90 plus Hashers descend upon Tobago. The Johnston Apartments Management has put up with us since the mid 1990s and the relationship is not likely to end soon. The weekend consists of at least 2 runs in different parts of the island with a live run on the final morning.

The way of life in Tobago and the spectacular terrain is very conducive to a hash weekend. Tobago by its very nature has a very laid back and easy going way of life. If you are expecting the hustle and bustle of city life, you definitely will be in the wrong place. I like to say that Tobago has two speeds, dead slow and stop. But don't be fooled as Tobago's landscape, lush rainforest, rich marine environment & Beaches will entice even the most seasoned outdoor enthusiasts.

