Diving for Easter Eggs at the Underwater Hunt

By Leslie Hickerson

This coming Monday, April 22nd marks the 6th annual Underwater Easter Egg Hunt hosted by The Scuba Shop at Divi Little Bay Beach Resort. The event is geared towards all ages of visitors and residents, the perfect family event for Easter Monday!

Each year participants of the Underwater Easter Egg Hunt pay a $10 registration fee to dive in the water and search for ‘eggs’ (painted stones) that have been placed on the sea floor by volunteers. After an hour of collection time the eggs can be exchanged for raffle tickets that are drawn for amazing prizes donated by both local businesses and international companies. All proceeds are donated to the St. Maarten Nature Foundation to support their education programs.

“We had the idea of creating the Underwater Easter Egg Hunt just as a diving and snorkeling event, and as we were working on that we realized that it presented the possibility of turning it into a fundraising event,” says Kim Frye owner/operator of The Scuba Shop.

The Hunt has been held at Divi each year with the exception of 2018, which had to be relocated to Indigo Bay due to the rebuilding of the resort after Hurricane Irma.

“Divi Little Bay Beach Resort is very accommodating and welcomes the event. They were very disappointed after Hurricane Irma that it couldn’t be there. They contacted us in December/January saying that...”

How Dying Easter Eggs Red Started

By Lazette Browne

Years ago, eggs from the Playboy mansion Easter egg hunt made their way into my collection of gifted oddities.

Carnival 50 is Here With Jump Ups

Before the parades come the Jump Ups - find out how they are different but an essential part of the experience.

Full Article on Page 14  Full Article on Page 4  Continued on Page 13
Letter From the Editor
April 19, 2019
Thanks for reading the ST-MAARTEN.COM Weekly Edition; I am thrilled that you chose our publication to enlighten you on where to dine, shop, party and do activities while on St. Maarten/St-Martin.

I cannot believe it is Easter weekend already, which also notes the official start of Carnival on St. Maarten!

As you participate in Carnival events I urge you to visit the Festival Village, which has several pop up eateries with all sorts of local delicacies. Remember to keep hydrated during Jump Ups and if you plan on drinking case of beer yourself, make sure to have a designated driver!

If you enjoyed our publication and would like to continue to read from home, please use the QR code to the right to access our digital publication on our website.

Hilary Grant, JNDG
Editor

Online Portal
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Carnival is here and St. Maarteners are Jumping, Jumping Up!

“We are the sound of a hundred thousand coming down the road. We are the vibrations that you feel in your heart and soul.” With those words Soca star Bunji Garlin, perfectly summed up the spirit of that much beloved Caribbean Carnival tradition: the Jump Up! To clarify for those who might think, when I say Jump up, that I am talking about Parades; I am not. Parades and Jump Ups are two very different events.

Parades are the two days of revelry, when thousands of costumed dancers and spectacular floats fill the streets with color, glitz and glamour during the day time; in a parade behind bands playing on large trucks. Parades are made up of troupes and you have to pay to be a part of one to participate. Troupes are judged and participants must stay with their section for the entirety of the route. A Jump Up, on the other hand, is for everyone. It is the general population; young, old, locals and visitors, background be danged, jamming along behind, large trucks

The people in unity, letting loose and reveling in life are the body of the Jump Up, the physical manifestation of the spirit of Carnival. The bands on their trucks, however, are the heartbeat of the Jump Up. Their music is the animating force that propels the body forward. Like pied pipers they cajole the tired feet of both hard-core revelers and tender footed novices, to “chip”, a kind of a slow rhythmic walk. Without them there could be no Jump Up.

They are judged on song quality, popularity and crowd participation amongst other things. They vie, yearly, to produce the best song(s) that will attract the most revelers to jam with them in hopes of being awarded the “Best Road March Band” title and the honor of leading the most important Road Marches. Popular bands on the island include No Limit Band, TG Band, Xscape the Band and Youth Waves, just to name a few. Competition is hard for the Road March title and bands need to bring it to win it.

“Jam” or “jamming” are terms used to indicate participating or dancing in both the Parade and Jump up processions. While they may sound alike; one is just the other minus the pretty costumes, right? It’s the difference in energy and vibe that sets them apart. A Jump Up is much more high energy and a bit row. Jump Ups are to, as the locals say, “Free up yaself” and “get on bad”. No frippery, no judges, just the music the road and the jam; just the thrill of waving hands, stomping feet and rotating waist lines. There is a freedom of movement as people switch back and forth between their favorite bands, and now in more recent years DJs.

St. Maarten’s Carnival usually has five Jump Ups, although the number increased to six this year as a part of the 50th year celebrations, but only three occur during the Carnival. The other three this year took place during the pre-Carnival season. The Causeway Jump Up was the first and kicked of carnival preseason. This Jump Up was added to the roster in 2014 after construction of the Causeway bridge, over the Simpson Bay Lagoon, allowed for a procession from Simpson Bay over the lagoon and over to Cole Bay. It was the first Pre-Carnival event that SCDF used to build the hype of Carnival.
Continued from previous page

Next up was Unity Jump Up and this route took the procession from the Galisbay Carnival Village, on the French side, to the St. Maarten Festival Village on the Dutch Side. For anyone wondering what is the distance between the starting and ending points it is 8 miles or 13 km. The Unity Jump up is a symbol of our friendship with our neighbors on the north side of the island. The third and last Pre-Carnival Jump up was the “Around Town” Jump Up, renamed “Golden Balloon Around Town” Jump Up in honor of Carnival 50.

On April 20th, 2019, the official opening of the Golden Jubilee of St. Maarten Carnival, begins with, of course, a Jump Up. The opening Jump up is the herald of Carnival. Thousands of people are expected to participate and just as many will be watching. At the end of the Jump Up when all bands have passed in front of the Carnival Village, the minister of TEATT (Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and Telecommunications) Stuart Johnson will turn over the keys of the Village to SCDF (St. Maarten Carnival Development Foundation) President Alston Lourens. This signifies that the Carnival Village is open and Carnival is fully underway.

Jouvert Morning is the biggest, wildest, wettest Jump Up of them all. Starting at 4AM, Jouvert takes revelers on a grueling early morning bacchanal filled journey. From the Salt pickers roundabout, through Sucker Garden, unto the Arch Road to the A.T. Illidge Road back finally emptying out unto the Pondfill Road and up to the Festival Village. Usually ending at about 10AM, it is a six hour testament to how serious St. Maarteners take their fun. Individuals and groups in creative, homemade costumes, water trucks, powder in the air, the music and everyone on the road with not a care in the world for those few hours, are just a few of the things you can expect to see and experience at Jouvert.

If you are robust enough to complete the route- hats off to you, but if you are not quite up to the challenge of the full route you can always join somewhere along the route that best suits you.

Finally, there is the closing Jump Up. The last procession normally begins at the Carrefour Market, former Le Grand Marche Bush Road and up to the village. An effigy of King MoMo, the lord of revelry, is burnt and Carnival is put to rest until the anticipated return next year. Jamming is serious business and not to be undertaken lightly. The route(s) of a jump up are usually several miles long and the pace, though not grueling, is exacting. I like to think of Jump ups as “really lit walkathons.” However they are not for everyone. If you are new to Jump ups remember to:

- Wear proper athletic shoes and comfortable clothing
- Stay hydrated
- Don’t overdo it
- Have fun

As Carnival seasons opens I would like to say Congratulations St. Maarten on this milestone anniversary of your biggest cultural festival. Have a happy and safe Carnival 50 to everyone.
The Woman Behind Caribbean Feisty Flavors

By Sarina Alexander

If you truly wish to learn about a person, you must first discover their background; the roots of that individual. When dealing with strong women, the need to find out how they became that way is even more enticing. We had the pleasure of sitting with the founder and chef of the restaurant Caribbean Feisty Flavors on Bush Road, Sherlyn Montclaire; who was openheartedly willing to share her story of her journey towards self-accomplishment.

When I asked my guest to present herself, the first thing she said was, “Well, my name is Sherlyn Montclaire and I’m a mother of five children.”

I never understood why women that had children almost always first referred to themselves as being such until reading an article called, “What happens to a woman’s brain when she becomes a mother” which explains the biochemical changes and reactions in a woman’s brain even before she gives birth. I guess Sherlyn was right when she said she felt like, “they are a part of me, they also make me who I am.”

Besides being a mother, the owner and main cook of Caribbean Feisty Flavors is also a go-getter who doesn’t believe in giving up, but rather in persistence. She loves to travel and is clearly a family person despite being an only child of single Haitian mom.

“I never knew who he was, my mom never spoke about him and when I asked she would tell me that we are not to speak of him. She was my mother and my father.”

What was it like growing up for you? “My mom was a single mom until I was 12, when she got married for the first time. She taught me how to work hard for what I believed in. We didn’t celebrate birthdays because she couldn’t afford it but she would always give me two dollars to buy six sodas. I would then split one can among three of my friends. One thing my mother always said was that if she knew how to read and write, she would have been in a better position today. So, she always highly encouraged me to go to school and get an education, so I can have a better future.”

Are you the first generation in your family to go to school? “As a girl, did they think it was a necessity to get an education? No, her mother and father didn’t see the necessity of getting an education, but when my mother came to St-Martin, she saw the importance of her daughter getting an education.”

Let’s talk about motherhood and your children. “Well, I have five children: three daughters and two sons. They are 24, 23, 17, 12 and 7 years old. My first born is a girl. My mother didn’t have time and patience to teach me about relationships as a young teenager growing up. I was inquisitive and intrigued to learn about love, so I went searching for answers on my own and wound up pregnant at 16. I didn’t have that positive influence and guidance to realize that I wasn’t ready, but I kept the baby regardless. Haitian parents are strict, they give orders- don’t do this, don’t do that and you just obey. That lack of communication and explanation is one that I chose to fill with my children, so they don’t go through the same experiences I did. I got married very young, at the age of 17.”

You could legally get married at 17 in those days? “Yes, once your mother approved and signed for you by law you can get married; so, I got married in 1997.”

Is that what you wanted? “Honestly, no. But I didn’t have a choice. You’re pregnant, you get married. That was part of our Haitian customs. Yes, I loved the guy at that time, but I wasn’t ready and that’s a mistake I won’t replicate with my children. Despite that, I believe that my mother was a great mother. She did what she thought was best for me.”

Okay. So, you’re 16, you’re pregnant, you get married at 17. How does the course of your life proceed from this point? “I had to stop school because I was pregnant, but I didn’t want to be a maid like my mother was. I got little odd jobs to make money to raise my two children. I got preg-nant again a year after. I moved to the Dutch side and took night classes at the University of St. Maarten for two years, where I got offered a job from one of my teacher’s daughter as a bookkeeper.

It wasn’t always easy juggling between an abusive marriage, motherhood with two infants, being a student and working several jobs; but I did what I had to make it all work. As the years went by, my efforts and my drive to get an education despite my circumstances paid off. I worked at the Atrium Resort as a maintenance coordinator for ten years, I also worked at Dockside Management as a secretary, but my dream was always to open an elegant little restaurant of my own and showcase my passion for cooking.”

That’s inspirational, going from a high school drop-out, teenage mom to accomplishing all that you have thus far.

You gave birth six times: five times to your beloved children and once to your dream. How long did it take you to bring this project to life? “I have been thinking and writing about this project since 2001. The hardest part was the financing, but as time went by, I began to cook food to sell on Fridays for delivery and made ‘friday’ on Saturdays. As my daugh-ters grew older, they became a source of strength and encouragement for me. They would say things like, ‘You are a strong woman, this is no time to give up!’, which helped me keep the faith and motivation to go on. I saved the money I made from selling food for nearly six years and a great friend of mine from England who also strongly be-lieved in me, gave me some funds to bring my dream to life; doubling the amount that I was able to patch together.”

Continued on Page 19
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5  A restaurant/bar with Karaoke
7  Casino close to Buffalo Wings
12  Where is The Boon Beach Bar?
13  Not Pineapple Pete
15  Inside which hotel is the Ocean Lounge?
16  Area around the Sonesta Resort
20  Restaurant with swim-up bar
22  Westernmost Dutch side restaurant
23  Beach bar
25  Restaurant in Simpson Bay

DOWN
1  A colorful music instrument
2  Where is Rendez-Vous Lounge?
4  Wings close to the movies
5  What is Island 92?
6  For a night out in Philipsburg
8  Winner of the 2018 Cocktail Competition
10  Restaurant close to Beacon Hill
11  Italian, not only for gamblers
14  We find it special
17  What to watch from Driftwood Boat Bar?
18  At Maho Beach
19  Jamaica’s second large city
21  Neighborhood of Red Piano
24  How does Topper’s spell the drink they produce

Background photo courtesy of Sotheby’s St-Martin Real Estate

Careful! This week's crossword puzzle has a couple trick questions. You will notice that all questions are rooted in the Caribbean hemisphere and might take a bit of research to answer if you haven't spent much time here. It also means: the answers are valid for St. Maarten/St-Martin and the neighboring islands. For example, if we ask for an island directly to the North of our location, it can only be Anguilla.

If we are using compound words in the answer, they do NOT have spaces!

If you try to solve the puzzle as a visitor to our island and you get stuck: don't be shy! Approach a local and ask. You might find they struggle to answer as well. Or strike up an interesting conversation and learn a bit about our very unique region.

Mistakes do happen, even though our puzzle is produced right here on the island. If you detect an error, drop us a line at SXM@EMAIL.COM.

Puzzle Solution on page 18
Find Shopping, Activities and Services Here

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they wanted us back,” said Frye.

“They love the event for their guests, but they make the point to me every year that the event is not only for those staying at the resort. They love that this is an event that they can host that is attended by the resident population of St. Maarten/St-Martin.”

Divi Resort makes sure that even the spectators enjoy the event by having specials on Easter breakfast and lunch at their restaurants; Pureocean, The Shack and Gizmos. Aquamania Watersports will have beach chairs and umbrellas available to rent so families can relax while participants work hard for their raffle tickets and chances at amazing prizes.

Each year the event grows as more and more people try their best to win some of the amazing prizes. In 2018 they opened up a scuba diving section for those who would like to participate with their favorite dive shop.

This year’s grand prizes are: a weekend resort stay with food vouchers donated by Divi Beach Resort at their location in Little Bay and a GoPro Hero 7 Black camera donated by GoPro. There are several other great prizes from local restaurants, tour and boat operators, the marine industry, and many other businesses!

This is a must-do event for residents and visitors here for Easter Monday, and perfect way to spend the day for the whole family.

Tips/Reminders:
- Parking is limited so please car pool!
- Bring swimming goggles or a mask, and fins are encouraged!
- Carry a float to hold the “eggs” you collect!
- Check that your sunscreen is reef friendly!

For those that would like to participate registration begins at 9AM and the Hunt will start at 10AM. It is a good idea to bring along a float or boogie board of some sort to hold the eggs you have found while you search for more. Last year the event switched to using brightly painted eco-friendly rocks rather than the traditional boiled eggs from the past.

“An avid swimmer above the age of six is the ideal age, a comfortable swimmer who can dive down three to five feet to pick up the eggs,” said Frye. If younger siblings accompany the spectators and would like to take part there will be a small section in the shallows for those who cannot dive very deep!
Dying the Easter Eggs Red

Continued from Page 1

Years ago, eggs from the Playboy mansion Easter egg hunt made their way into my collection of gifted oddities. Every year prior to his death, Hugh Hefner had opened his house to former playmates and their families for an annual egg hunt to search for gorgeous hand-painted Easter eggs—some from known artists and most created by mansion staff. 3,000 eggs were hidden around the famous California property to be discovered by children enjoying their Sunday at this peculiar choice in venue for a child's game.

So, when I was gifted these eggs, I had to wonder—how did eggs and egg hunts become an integral part of Easter tradition? What do painted hard-boiled eggs (or in the case of these Playboy mansion masterpieces—hollowed eggs) have to do with a religious belief that someone rose from the dead?

Eggs have been a symbol for many cultures of new life, fertility and rebirth. Iranians for thousands of years have decorated eggs for Nowruz, the Iranian New Year that lands on spring equinox. It is possible that Easter eggs also have pagan roots.

Prior to Christians celebrating the alleged resurrection of Jesus, ancient pagans in Europe observed the equinox as the return of the sun god; finally rebirthing light from a dark winter.

For Christians, the Easter egg is a symbol of the resurrection of Jesus. Painting eggs evolved into a beloved tradition from dying eggs red to represent the blood of Christ that was shed on the cross—boy, is that dark. The hard, outer shell of the egg is supposed to symbolize the Tomb of Christ, and the action of cracking the egg represents his resurrection. And the rolling of an egg is supposed to depict the rolling away and opening of the tomb door.

But now we are in a time where the belief of someone rising from the dead and blood-painted eggs has evolved into kids running around outside to find the hidden Easter eggs, and in the case of my Playboy mansion Easter eggs; Playboy playmates and their kin hopping around the California estate to find their hand-painted treasures. It seems a strange way to celebrate the holiday, I think I will stick with eating sugar-coated marshmallows and jelly beans as my holiday ritual.
The Alluring Sapphire Rainbow

By Hilary Grant, GIA Graduate Gemologist

For hundreds of years, sapphires have been associated with royalty and romance. There is a belief that many gems have healing properties—sapphires included. Ancient Greeks believed that sapphires protected their owners from harm and envy.

Typically, when someone mentions a sapphire, most people think of the color blue. However, sapphires naturally occur in a delightful rainbow of colors including violet, green, yellow, orange, pink, purple, black and white. The only color sapphire does not come in is red: although it is the same mineral, corundum, red gets its own name—ruby.

White sapphires have been used for years in the jewelry industry as a less expensive alternative to diamond. Although they closely resemble the hardest and most sought after gem in the world, white sapphires still don’t sparkle the same as diamond.

One of the most famous sapphire’s in the world is Princess Kate’s, which weighs a whopping 12 carats. She started a trend among millennials of using colored gemstones for engagement and wedding rings.

If you are in the market for a sapphire, there are a couple things that you should know. The depth of color in these sparkly treasures is part of what sets the price: an intense yellow will cost you a few bucks more than a buttercup yellow. Any sapphire that is over five carats will typically cost more and that tends to be the line between commercial and fine quality.

Do not compromise on the cut! Sapphires of any color should dance in the light, just like a diamond would. Although you won’t see spectral colors, you should see lots of flashes of white bouncing off the surface of the gem.

When it comes to care and cleaning, it is pretty simple. Sapphires of all colors, and rubies, rank just under diamond in terms of hardness. While difficult to scratch, diamond can scratch the surface of a sapphire so use caution if your twinkle gems aren’t set into jewelry pieces. Sapphires are also difficult to break or chip and are stable to routine repairs.
Sudoku Puzzles

Try your skills on our Sudoku. Ranging from easy to difficult, giving you the opportunity to see if you are a puzzle master. Need help or want to see if you got it correct? Find the Sudoku solutions on Page 18. Good Luck!

Easy

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Get A Free Rental Car

Free rental car for couples vacationing on our island? If this sound too good to be true, you might be right- just not on St. Maarten. Here, very good things are possible and true.

There is a resort close to Philipsburg and only minutes away from Simpson Bay: the Belair Beach Hotel. Competently managed, the Belair has served vacationers for decades and is for many, their home away from home.

Of course, Hurricane Irma didn’t spare the hotel, but the sturdy structure survived well. The business interruption turned into an opportunity for a fresh start; the generous vacation suites have been completely refurbished. As typical for timeshare properties, the accommodations are spacious and much larger than a standard hotel room.

The management of the Belair Beach Hotel feels that they have something unique to offer to North American vacationers who consider returning to the island frequently. If you are a visitor, you are invited to a preview of the resort - a presentation which lasts only about 90 minutes. Transportation to and from the resort will be arranged for you.

As a thank you for stopping by, you can choose to either take a rental car from Starlite Car Rental for a few days or receive a voucher for a sumptuous dinner for two. There is no obligation to purchase anything. Certain conditions apply, and you need to contact the sales office at the resort for an appointment and to see if you qualify for this promotion. Get in touch now by sending an email to sales@belairbeach.com.
Roy van Zutphen with New Projects

Since the months shortly after Hurricane Irma, Roy van Zutphen has been a member of the St-Maarten.com publishing team, where he was a customer relations representative. He has now moved on to other ventures and does not represent St-Maarten.com anymore. For his new projects, we wish him good luck and much success. We all appreciated Roy’s love for the island and his never ending stream of ideas of how to improve any possible situation he came across.

Roy is also well known on the island as the former bartender of the Holland House Hotel Beach Bar.

Adventures in Sex and Dating in St. Maarten
A Regular Column by Leslie Hickerson

The other day on the way home from work Maria noticed that in the car in front of her a man was driving and the woman in his passenger’s seat would go from sitting normally to laying her head in the drivers lap.

Each time she surfaced she would give her mouth a ‘lady-like’ wipe and sit while pedestrians passed the car before heading back downtown.

As soon as her head disappeared the driver would lean back and relax. This went on from the bridge all the way to The Daily Extra where the car stopped for just long enough for the passenger to give her driver a kiss good-bye and hop out the car. She walked off and the car kept going.

Maybe it’s love, or maybe the radio was just broken. Either way it certainly made Maria’s drive a lot more entertaining!
Crossword Puzzle Solution

Sudoku Solutions:

Easy

3 6 5 7 4 1 2
4 7 1 9 3 2 8 6
2 5 4 6 3 7 9
1 4 3 2 8 6 9 5
5 8 6 9 4 7 2 1
9 6 2 5 7 1 8 3
2 3 4 1 8 5 9 6 7
6 1 9 7 4 3 2 5 6
7 5 8 2 6 9 1 3 4

Medium

2 3 6 5 4 9 1 7
4 7 5 1 9 3 2 8 6
9 1 2 6 7 3 4 5 6
3 2 7 5 4 9 1 5 8
5 1 9 3 7 8 4 6 2
6 4 8 5 1 2 7 9 3
7 6 3 4 8 9 5 2 1
9 5 2 6 3 1 8 7 4
1 8 4 7 2 5 6 3 9

Difficult

4 5 7 3 2 8 1 6 9
6 8 3 5 1 6 2 7 4
2 1 6 7 4 9 3 5 8
1 3 5 4 8 3 7 9 6
3 6 9 2 7 5 4 8 1
7 4 8 9 6 1 5 3 2
8 3 2 6 3 4 9 1 7
5 9 1 8 3 7 6 5 2
6 7 4 1 9 2 8 3 5

1 Nowhere Special Damn Barb
dinner)

In Search of Caribbean Flavors?

Nowhere Special offers incredible menu items which include Caribbean lobster, traditional stewed oxtail, conch fritters, grouper creole, and so much more.

Along with the best Johnny cakes, fried plantain and funchi you’ll ever find on the island.

Best Happy Hour

Happy Hour Daily from 4 PM to 7 PM
2 for 1 on all house mixes, beers and frozen drinks
Reduced prices on appetizers
HEINEKEN RUSH HOUR from 5 PM to 6 PM:
$1 for one Heineken Beer!

Near the Simpson Bay Bridge
*Kitchen opens at 11 AM

10% discount voucher

Valid for lunch & dinner

Exp. May 11, 2019

Info or reservation: 721.544.2440
The Woman Behind Caribbean Feisty Flavors

Continued from Page 6

You said that you enjoy writing down your projects and goals. Did you write anything that you are now witnessing the manifestation of?

“I consider myself to be a spiritual person, who loves to pray and put God to the test. When I now look at my bucket list, I realize that everything I said I wanted or that I was going to do has come to past but one, but I give myself until I’m 40 to accomplish that goal.

Let’s talk a little about your restaurant. What inspired the choice of style and colors?

“I’m an elegant person, I like class and cleanliness. When people come, I want them to feel this atmosphere and vibe the minute they step in, that makes them say ‘wow’. The colors red, black and gold are my favorite colors and the colors of my logo; so, I wanted the interior decoration to be a glimpse of remembrance.”

After accomplishing one of your ultimate goals, what would you say is your biggest wish right now?

“My biggest wish would have been for my mother to see what I have accomplished. I lost my mom on June 5, 2015. My mother was an early bird. She always came to the house on Friday mornings to see her grandchildren before they went to school. She had an operation once due to heart issues. The last time I saw my mom alive was the Monday of the week she passed. I remember having this terrible gut feeling telling me to call my mom the days that followed but I ignored that feeling because I figured I would see her on Friday. But she never showed up that morning. Normally I listen to SOS radio, but that particular day I didn’t, so I never heard the news about the elderly woman that got a heart attack on the bus...

The hospital called me and said my mother was not in a good condition. Little did I know my mother had already passed. When the nurse finally gathered the courage to give me the news, I felt like I got stabbed multiple times in the heart. I went to my mother’s bedside and begged her to wake up but she didn’t and reality hit me. My mother was gone.

I didn’t have the time to grieve yet, as I had administrative duties already. I was advised that my mother couldn’t stay there after 11AM and had to be taken to a morgue. Suddenly, she became nothing. I called a family member that had recently dealt with a loss also to ask for advice, as the hospital at that time only gave the names of two morgues that could be contacted but didn’t advise on the procedures to take.”

One of the laws of alchemy is equivalent exchange, which highlights notions like lost. When looking at the lives of many successful or high-achieving people, you realize that life-changing event occurred in their lives after the loss of something or someone they really cared about.

Do you think that your mother’s passing sparked something in you that allowed you to be more of the woman you became today?

“Yes, she was my help, my everything. She was very supportive. I’m an only child, I’ve been through bad marriages, bad relationships, hard times and she was there. Now she is gone and I suddenly have to find this womanly force, as we say in Haitian Creole “mèt fam moun mwen, mèt rein” (put on my womanhood, tighten my belt). Even for one of my products, my créresse (coconut cream punch), my mother was the one that grated the coconuts for me. One of my daughters is currently following in my footsteps of becoming a business woman, owning her own nail parlor at the age of 18.”

Wow! Your story is motivational. If you have advice to give to women who are going through hard times, who are struggling to find balance between family duties and accomplishing their dream as an individual, as their own woman; what would you say?

“I would say believe in yourself. Go after your dreams and don’t rely completely on others. Whatever you want to become, put your head into it and get it done. Whatever you want to do, go for it and never give up.”

Sushi, Teppanyaki & International Cuisine

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