

ROUTES

A Guide to African-American Culture

July 29-August 4, 1991

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

Vol. I No. 10 \$1.00

**LISTINGS INSIDE: ART CABARETS CONCERTS DANCE
RESTAURANTS FREE-FOR-ALL THEATER**

VERNON'S JERK PARADISE

WHERE A BAD WORD MEANS GOOD TASTE



If Noah Webster were alive today, Vernon's Jerk Paradise would make him eat his words—literally. Whereas Webster defines the word “jerk” as a dull, stupid person, this two-year old Jamaican restaurant, 252 West 29th Street gives it new meaning: Jamaican barbecue. And if the old lexicographer could taste just one morsel, he would gladly become a Jerk. Especially if he tastes the sauce. It can become habit forming says the 48 year old Vernon, a dead ringer for a Fitter George Foreman. Sitting at my table, he supports his claim with the following story.

“A man came in here the other day, exclaiming: ‘The worse thing to have happen to me was to come into this damn restaurant. You are making me an addict! What the hell do you have in this thing, Marijuana?’ ‘But that’s not the worst of it,’ adds Vernon, his muscular frame shaking with laughter. ‘The man sent a jar to his mother in Virginia, and now all he can hear is ‘Hey Joe, when are you going to send me more of that Vernon sauce?’”

The jerk craze began in 1982, when Vernon and his now deceased brother opened their first restaurant in the Pelham section of Westchester.

They pioneered Jerk cooking in America, and a national appetite for it has developed. "Restaurants have sprung up all over," he says, "not only in Brooklyn. You see them in places like Montauk, Long Island and Seattle, Washington." Chicken-giants are cashing in on the hunger too. Leaning forward over the table, Vernon asks: "Have you seen Frank Perdue's TV commercial?" Mimicking one of Frank's commercials, he quips: "How would you like to try my spicy, marinated chicken?" "Settling back in his chair, Vernon says "Go to Kentucky Fried Chicken, and What do you see?—Hot and spicy, marinated chicken! They don't call it Jerk because they suspect that people will think that Jerk is jerk. But we are changing a bad word to good."

It never was a bad word in Boston Bay, Jamaica. This area, lying about 65 miles southeast of Kingston, the capital, is the home of Jerk cooking, still done in the traditional way. Pepper, spices and herbs are rubbed into meat, especially pork, chicken or fish then placed in a deep pit covered with pimento wood and smoked for several hours. The locals are split on the origin of this method. Some say it arrived with the Maroons, a small, self-governed group that descend from the Ashanti in Ghana, West Africa. Others give credit to the first inhabitants, the Arawak Indians. These south American hunters would jerk a pig for 24 hours. But a *Jerk* doesn't care about the origin, only about the taste.

At Jerk Paradise, Vernon has simulated the process which is enhanced by the house sauce. Chicken, meat and fish are marinated overnight in the house sauce. The meat is baked, then grilled. In the case of pork, this insures thorough cooking.

Vernon brags about the hot demand for the house sauce. "Bill Cosby," who sometimes hires him to cook for his show, "is a fan of it." And food chains, such as Zabbar's, Balducci's and Bloomingdales, stock it, thanks to his marketing company, Entre. "It's going to be my money maker". Holding up a jar, he says, "At the moment, that's the role of the restaurant."

An elegant place with a white latticed ceiling, murals depicting tropical birds and pink tablecloths, Jerk Paradise has the perfect ambience for enjoying the Jerk experience. It can begin with either Goat Head or Cow Cod Soup (\$3), followed by a selection of Jamaican *hors d'oeuvres*: fried plantain, beef patties, vegetable patties, codfish cakes, which could use more fish, and Festival, a tasty cornmeal dumpling normally eaten with fish.

Of course the entree (\$10-\$12) should be a Jerk dish, of pork, chicken, fish, lobster or seafood. If you have room, try a side order of Oxtail or Curry Goat. Both are as tender and juicy as the Jerk dishes.

The short menu, kept that way to insure fresh food daily, also offers other Jamaican specialties, including the traditional dish—Ackee and Salt Fish. It's a sauté of Ackee, which resembles scrambled eggs, codfish, tomatoes and onions served with white rice or rice and peas. Absolutely delicious! And sitting on the table is a dish of the addicting house sauce.

For dessert (\$2.50-\$3.00) try the Jamaican-flavored ice cream or a piece of Rum Raisin, Jamaican Rum or Carrot Cake. Beverage choices (\$1.25-\$4.50) vary widely. There is coffee; exotic drinks such as Passion, which tastes like a cocktail of flowers; tropical sodas, including homemade ginger beer.

Still waiting for its liquor license, the restaurant allows patrons to bring their own "brown bag". It offers a wine list, along with a list of "Powerful Drinks," whose names suggest a kick. The Knock-Down, for instance, is reputed to "nice-up" your sex life. Ah! Another lexicographical twist. If so, ain't that another one up on Webster!

Vernon's Jerk Paradise is open Monday to Friday, 11:30am to 11pm and Saturdays, 3pm to 12pm. Live Caribbean music on Fridays. Visa, American Express and Master Card are accepted. Telephone (212) 268-7020.

—Estelle Whiting

CABARETS

Ramsey Lewis Trio
July 30-August 4, 9pm & 11pm
The Blue Note 131 W. 3rd St.
475-8592

The Bottom Line 15 W. 4th
St. 228-6300

Gary Bartz, sax
Larry Wukkus, piano
Buster Williams, bass
July 30-August 3

Bradley's 70 University
Place/11th St. 228-6440

• Lou Donaldson Quartet
July 30-August 4

Condon's 117 E. 15th St.
•254-0960

• Jean Taylor
August 4, 18, 25, Sep 8
&15, 5:30pm

• Special guest, Mae Barnes
August 4

Don't Tell Mama 343 W.46th
St. 757-0788

Lester Bowie
July 30-August 4
Sweet Basil 8 Seventh Ave./
Bleecker 242-1785

• Clarence Carter
August 2 & 3

• Chitlin' Circuit R&B
Musical Review
Saturdays, 3pm

Starring David Jennings.
Mable Lee, Dennis
Legree, Boncella Lewis.
Tunde Samuel, Jan
Mickens

Sweetwater's 170
Amsterdam Ave./68th St.
873-4100

Santi Debriano Trio
July 31-August 4

Village Gate Bleecker/
Thompson Streets 475-5120

Horace Tapscott Trio
July 30-August 4

Village Vanguard 178 7th
Ave. South 255-4037

Hilton Ruiz, piano
Jimmy Rowser, bass
July 29-August 3

Zinno 126 W. 13th St.
924-5182

•Brooklyn•

• Jay McGovern, vocalist &
pianist
August 1

• Jan Parker, vocalist
August 2 & 3

• Wednesdays, open mike
for vocalists and
comedians

Sportin' "Life"13 Greene
Ave./Fulton St. (718)
797-2099

•New Jersey•

Red Rodney
August 2& 3

Trumpets 6 Depot Square
Montclair 201 746-6100

RESTAURANTS

Abyssinia Ethiopian
Very informal

35 Grand St/ Thompson St.
226-5959

B. Smith's
Southern & American cuisines

Trendy

771 Eighth Ave. 247-2222

Caribe
Jamaican cuisine

Pleasant and informal, cash
only

117 Perry St/ Greenwich St.

Copeland's
Southern Cuisine

A Harlem institution
547 W. 145th St. 234-2457

Honeysuckle
Southern cuisine

Trendy
507 Columbus Ave.
496-8095

Jamaican "Hot Pot"

Small restaurant of 7-8 tables inside and 3 outside but has a large reputation for good food at bargain prices.

2260 Adam Clayton Powell Jr., Blvd/133rd St. 491-5270

Jerk Paradise
Jamaican cuisine

Jerk preparation of meats.
252 W. 29th St. 268-7020

Jezebel
Southern/American cuisine

Scarfs, swings and sophistication
630 Ninth Ave./45th St.
582-1045

La Famille Restaurant
Southern cuisine

Roomy and informal
2017 5th Ave./125th St.
534-9909

Livi's Restaurant
Caribbean & Southern cuisines

Informal
29 E. 126th St./Mad. & 5th Avenues 831-4931

Omjavi
Jamaican cuisine

Primarily lunch hour takeout
112 Chambers St. (Bet. Church & W. Broadway)
732-1949

Sylvia's
Southern cuisine

Relaxed and informal
328 Lenox Ave. (126 & 127th Streets) 966-0660

The Blue Nile
Ethiopian cooking

103 W. 77th St. Columbus Ave. 580-3232

The Shark Bar
Southern cuisine

Trendy

467 Amsterdam Ave.
874-8500

Third World Cafe
Third World cuisine

Spices From West Africa—A very special little cafe.

700 W. 125th St. /West Side Highway 749-8199

Wilson's Restaurant & Bakery
Southern Cuisine

A Harlem institution
1980 Amsterdam Ave./158th St. 923-9821

• **Brooklyn** •

McDonald's Dining Room
Country home cooking—Tues.-Sun.

327 Stuyvesant Ave. (718) 574-3728

Greene Avenue Grill
Grilled American & Southern cuisines

13 Greene Ave./Fulton St.
718 797-2099

• **Queens** •

La Detente
Continental & Caribbean cuisines

23-04 94th St. East Elmhurst (718) 458-2172

Manhattan Proper Cafe
Southern cuisine

217-01 Linden Blvd / Springfield Blvd (718) 341-CAFE

THEATER

Once on This Island
A musical, set in the Caribbean, about a poor

girl's passion for the son of a wealthy landowner.

Booth Theatre W. 45th St. / Broadway 239-6200

Our Young Black Men Are Dying And Nobody Seems To Care
Through August 31

An original music play by James Chapman about the destruction of young men by drug abuse, crime, police brutality, alcoholism, poverty and AIDS.

Castillo Cultural Center 500 Greenwich St. 941-5800

Looking For Love
Through August 4

Written by C. Ceasar

Jackson; directed by Tunde Samuel A joyful soul searching musical (gospel, R & B and jazz) celebration.

The story centers on two people, Marla and CJ, who experienced similar childhood traumas and how they overcome them through self realization workshops and religion.

The cast of 16 certainly gives its audience reason for joyfully shouting, clapping and rocking.

Cloister Theatre Riverside Church 490 Riverside Drive 864-2929

Ms. Hazel's House of Heavenly Rest
Sundays, 3pm, through Sept.1

By **Hazel Smith**, featuring, **Jimmy Hayson, Louise Mike, Jerry Love, Lee Kirk, Kim Yancey, Boysie White & James Smith** A Comedy-full of laughter and good vibes.

**I WANT TO FOLLOW
ROUTES**

A Guide to African-American Culture
Old Chelsea Station, P.O. BOX 20103
NEW YORK, NY 10011

HERE'S \$36 FOR A 1 YEAR SUBSCRIPTION.

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Harlem School of The Arts
645 St. Nicholas Ave.
362-3681

Six Degrees of Separation

Courtney B. Vance
Set in Manhattan, about a mugger who seeks refuge at an elegant dinner party.

Vivian Beaumont Theater/
Lincoln Center Broadway/
65th St. 239-6200

The Good Times Are Killing Me

*Previews through August 7,
Tues.-Sat., 8pm, Mat. Sat.,
2pm, Mat., Sun., 3pm*

A play with music, follows the comic coming of age of two girls, one white and one black, as they explore the mysteries of adolescence, music divided families and racism.

Minetta Lane Theatre 425
Lafayette St. 307-4100

CONCERTS

The Indians Are Coming...

*The Indians Are Coming
August 3, 5pm*

Genesis II Museum is hosting a film presentation *Black Indians of New Orleans* at the community center in Marcus Garvey Park. The film will be followed by a parade and performance by the White Eagle Tribe.

Marcus Garvey Park 121st
St./Cathedral Parkway
666-7222

Amateur Night

Wednesdays, 7:30pm
Apollo Theatre 253 W. 125th
St. 864-0372

ART GALLERIES

Multi-Cultural Expressions

July 10 through August 18
Seven artists, associated with the Art Students League representing France, Latin America and the United States. Prints, drawings, oil and acrylic paintings and sculpture.

The Cinque Gallery 560
Broadway/ Prince St. Room
504 373-2707

Hollingsworth, Greene, Bearden, Lawrence, Olugbefola, Rahman

Design Masters Intergroup
Gallerie 301 Cathedral
Parkway 666-8440

Romare Bearden, prints, Stringfellow, William Carter, Fred Jones & Lester Gunther

By appointment only
Essie Green Galleries 419A
Convent Ave. 368-9635

Robertson's African Arts Gallery of African art

By appointment only
36 West 22nd Street, 4th Fl
675-4045

• Queens •

Renee Green, Multi-media works

Through Sept 7
• Mark Hassinger, sculptor
and installation artist

• Greg Henry, painter and
sculptor.
Jamaica Arts Center 161-04
Jamaica Ave. (718) 658-7400

MUSEUMS & CULTURAL CENTERS

The Caribbean Cultural Center

The Center serves as a meeting place for people of all ages and backgrounds who share a common interest in the cultural heritage of people of African descent

408 W. 58th St/9th Ave.
307-7420

Africa Explores: 20th Century African Art

Exhibit explores the continuing vitality of traditional art which coexists today with a modern art that is uniquely African.

The Center for African Art
54 E. 68th (Bet Mad. & Lex.
Avenues.) 861-1200

Through December '91, and

The New Museum for Contemporary Art

Through August 18
The New Museum for Contemporary Art 583
Broadway/ Houston St.
219-1222

Designers to the Stars

Costumes from the permanent collection, including *Ann Low: In Memoriam; TV, Films, Theatre.*
Daily 12:30pm to 8pm, *By appointment only, adults \$1.50 children \$.50*

Harlem Fashion Museum
155 W. 120th St. Bet. Lenox
and Adam Clayton Powell
Boulevard 660-1320

Barbara Chase-Riboud

All That Rises Must Converge,
painting

Horace Pippin

Victorian Parlor I, painting
Martin Puryear
Tango, sculpture

Museum of Modern Art

Fifth Ave. & 82nd St
535-7710

Robert Colescott
Emergency Room (1990)
presently on display.

Museum of Modern Art 11
W. 53rd St. 708-9400

The African Presence in the Americas

Through December

African-Americans In
Space Science
Through December

Guided Tours by appointment only.

The Schomburg Center for
Research in Black Culture
515 Lenox Ave./135th St.
491-2000

• Memory and Metaphor
Romare Bearden
Through August 11

• Painting Workshop
August 3 & 10, 2pm

• Workshops for Groups:
Block Printing Workshop
August & September

Design with cardboard
stamps, printing inks and
colored paper.

A two-part workshop
using watercolors, acrylics
and tempera. \$10 per
person. Reservations
required.

Studio Museum of Harlem
144 W. 125th St. 864-4500

American Life in American
Art: Selections from the
Permanent Collection
Through Nov 10

Jacob Lawrence

The War Series, 1946-1947
Whitney Museum of American
Art 945 Madison Ave./75th St.
570-3600

• **Bronx** •

James Buxton, Painted Wood and Sculpture

Through October 31

Buxton's work involves such personally significant issues as religion and motherhood.

The Bronx Museum of Art Satellite Gallery at Hebrew Hospital for Chronic Sick
801 Co-Op City Boulevard
379-5020

• **Staten Island** •

Black Photographers:

1840 - 1940

Through September 2

Gordon Parks, James Van der Zee, Austin Hansen, and the Goodridge Brothers—nomads who

roved in the late 1800s hundreds through New York, Pennsylvania and Michigan shooting portraits.

Staten Island Institute of Arts and Sciences 75 Stuyvesant Pl. (718) 727-1135

FREE-FOR-ALL

Al Rapone, zydeco & blues
Jul 31, 5-6pm

Austin J. Tobin Plaza/
World Trade Center

The Uprise & Shine 1991 Youth Concert Tour

Latin Empire with special guests
Aug 3, 2pm

Sponsored by the Caribbean Cultural Center

DeWitt Clinton Park W.
54th St. / 11th Ave

7th Annual Carnival in New York sponsored by The Caribbean Cultural Center
Aug 3 & 4, 11am-8pm

A weekend extravaganza celebrating African-derived Carnival traditions.

DeWitt Clinton Park, W.
54th St. / 11th Ave

- **Concerts**
- Fascinación** (Puerto Rico)
- Rio Funk** (Brazil)
- Wao Talibe** (Senegal)
- Morgan's Heritage** (Jamaica)

Kimati Dinizulu & the Kotoko Society (Pan Africa/USA)

Daniel Ponce (Cuba)

- **Children's Carnival Village**
Aug 3, 4pm
Carnival costume making piñatas, face painting, clowns. mural painting, hands-on photography workshops, plus a Children's Carnival Parade.

• **African Marketplace**

Handcrafted jewelry, clothes, instruments, books, fine arts, international foods.

• **Carnival Parade**

Aug 4, 7pm

Dance through the streets, behind the **Teme Brass Band & the White Eagles Mardi Gras Indians** to Damrosch Park (W. 62nd St. & Amsterdam Ave) for an 8pm concert of New Orleans Mardi Gras music.

For information: 307-7420

Classic & Cool on the Hudson

Women in Jazz

• **Kit Mo Clure Big Band**
Jul 30, 12:15-1:15pm

• **Valerie Naranjo**
Jul 31, 12:15-1:15pm

• **Janet Grice**
Aug 1, 12:15-1:15pm

• **Jeanne Lee**
Aug 2, 12:15-1:15pm

1 Chase Plaza (Nassau & Liberty Sts.)

A Midsummer Night's Dream

Jul 30-Aug 11, 8pm Tues-Sun

Performed by **Teatro do Ornitorrinco** of Brazil in Portuguese. This production of Shakespeare's comedy is infused with the festive and erotic spirit of the Brazilian Carnival.

Tickets are distributed free beginning at 6:15pm. 1 per person.

Delacorte Theater (Enter Central Park at 81st St. & CPW or 79th St. & 5th Ave)

• **Bizet's Carmen**
Jul 31, 7:30pm

• **Dianne McIntyre with Don Pullen, & Yoshiko Chuma**
Aug 2, 8:30pm

Modern dancer and Broadway choreographer of *Mule Bone* teams up with piano virtuoso Don Pullen for an exquisite performance.

• **Boozoo Chavis & Johnnie Johnson**
August 3, 3pm

Zydeco's founding fathers.

• **Diblo Dibala**

Aug 4, 3pm

Zaire's master guitarist Diablo, accelerates momentum with his popular *Soukous* a supercharged fusion of Rumba and African beats.

Rumsey Field in Central Park—72nd St/5th Ave. Mid park • 529-1955

Jazzmobile

• **"Persipitation"** led by **Charli Persip**
Jul 30, 7pm

138th St/ ACP, Jr. Blvd & Lenox Ave

• **Jimmy Heath Quintet**
Jul 31, 7pm

Grants Tomb, 122nd St. & Riverside Drive

Brooklyn

• **Vanessa Rubin & Quartet**
Aug 1, 7pm

2750 Linden Blvd/Drew St.

• **Qderts Lane Walt Bolden Sextet**
Aug 2, 7pm

McDonough St/Ralph & Patchen Avenues

Bronx

• **Eunice Newkirk & Friends**
Jul 29, 7pm

Vyse Ave / 173rd St. & 174th St