



## **PORT ANTONIO PLAYS HOST TO LARGEST BLACK HISTORY EVENT IN JAMAICA**

### ***Visitors Get Hands-On at 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Fi Wi Sinting Celebration***

MIAMI, January 25, 2005 – Fi Wi Sinting, the largest African Heritage Celebration in Jamaica, will hold its 14th annual festival on Sunday, February 20. Located in the tropical setting of Portland, Jamaica, the festival blends lush natural beauty with vibrant cultural flair.

Fi Wi Sinting began in 1991 as a simple fundraiser for a local Jamaican school. The celebration showcased the talented children of Content, a tiny community in Portland. Visitors from all corners of Jamaica came to embrace the area's heritage and quickly spread word of the event.

Since that first successful festival, the one-day tradition has continued each February to honor Black History Month. While similar festivals focus on food with cultural performances added as part of “the show”, they lack a very essential part of the African culture; the participation of the community.

Fi Wi Sinting is different. Each year, the venue is transformed into an authentic African village. Activities focus on the music, dance, song, storytelling, and food of Africa. There is also a marketplace featuring handmade garments, jewelry, and crafts provided by local artisans. Visitors are not merely spectators. Both island natives and tourists alike dance to traditional drum rhythms and sing to African folk songs.

The colorful event is produced each year by Pauline (Sista P) Petinaud who has presented festivals and cultural fairs in Africa as well. “I am committed to keeping that which is African in our culture alive”, says Sista P, who views the event as a way to educate Jamaica’s youth and visitors about the area’s historical roots. This year’s Fi Wi Sinting is expected to attract over 2,000 tourists, students, and locals. For more information on Fi Wi Sinting, visit their website at [www.fiwisinting.com](http://www.fiwisinting.com).

Fi Wi Sinting is one highlight of a continuous cultural presence in Port Antonio. The destination is hands-on; visitors are not spectators, but rather active participants on a very personal level. Neither stilted nor staged, Port Antonio is completely authentic – allowing visitors to experience real Jamaica – to commune with nature and to join with the people and feel their most powerful rhythm.

Nestled between the Blue Mountains and the Caribbean Sea, Port Antonio is truly “The Other Side of Jamaica,” a place that resonates with the island’s essential character. Most important, Port Antonio is a shining example of sustainable tourism and has launched a campaign to earn Green Globe certification for the destination. There is a grass roots effort to preserve the natural beauty and cultural integrity of the destination and to share both the philosophy and the process with visitors. For additional information, please call the Port Antonio News Bureau at (305) 445-4944 or visit online at <http://www.portantoniotravel.com>.

