St Lucian Christmas Memories

"Yeah we would be meet at the spot, a few days before Christmas until Christmas day all of us would gather together and have a little coffee and stuff, and we'd be singing Christmas Carols. And on the day of Christmas we'd go to each other's homes to drink, cook – it was really really nice. Those Christmases will never come back again, those memories – these are memories to us. You know we definitely enjoyed Christmas those days."

"There are many thing I love about St Lucia during Christmas. The bamboo bursting, when you see little boys coming together and bursting the bamboo, those local traditions kept alive, I love it love it love it. Parang music, especially local Parang music Paylay, ah! Sets the tone. People busily painting their homes, putting on new curtains, love it, house to house. Love it. Laughter. I love house to house, going from house to house eating, drinking, playing music, dancing, beating drums, whining down, coming back up. Laughter. I love Christmas but Christmas isn't Christmas without the local traditions. The black cake, the fruit cake full of rum, black pudding – oh my gosh. I love St Lucia, but I love it most when it's Christmas."

"Papa Jab, they dance around for the kids. The kids you know, send them money, they go around in the village beating the drums, shaking the shak-shak and just shouting 'Papa Jab, Papa Jab' and just having fun.

Spending Christmas in St Lucia is wonderful. The week before Christmas we go to Festival of Light, decorate my home, by prepping, make my fruit cake, my milk punch, my rum punch, then Christmas Eve make the Creole Bread, cook the ham. Christmas morning cook my turkey, Christmas the mac and cheese, then go to Church Christmas Eve or Christmas morning, then I have my Christmas breakfast then friends and neighbors they come over, family, we have a good time. Then I go to their home and we go at each other's home and basically for the whole day we go door-to-door, until you get drunk. Then you go home, and relax and you repeat it again – and that's it! You have a merry Christmas."

"Hello there! The most amazing part of Christmas in St Lucia is spending time with family. Reminiscing over past years and current plans for the upcoming year. The smile on the children's faces after opening their gifts warms every parent's heart on Christmas day. Then the house-to-house greetings, family lunches – the rum cakes, the food, are the best. The day together, and, of course, the parties. If you have not been to St Lucia for Christmas then what are you waiting for.

Attending the festival of light and renewal was truly magical. The night came alive with the glow of handcrafted lanterns lining the streets, each telling it's own story of creativity and hope. I joined the lantern parade surrounding by the warm and inviting energy of the crowd. As we walked the sound of music filled the air. There was a strong sense of community with everyone celebrating together. The fireworks lit up the sky

marking the festival's peak and symbolizing renewal and new beginnings. It was an unforgettable experience, filled with beauty, tradition and a deep sense of unity."