



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts

World Steelpan Day



Senator the Honourable Randall Mitchell
Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts
Trinidad and Tobago

“ On July 24, 2023, I had the privilege of attending the 77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York along with our Permanent Mission to the UN, where I proudly delivered a Ministerial Statement introducing a resolution that August 11 be declared World Steelpan Day and recognised annually by the UN as one of its International Days. What a special day in history that was, as 84 states provided their support through co-sponsorship of the resolution that August 11 be designated as World Steelpan Day! Today, moving forward, the world will be invited into an annual celebration of the legacy, impact and captivating experience of the Steelpan.

As Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, I am pleased that Trinidad and Tobago can boast of having invented the foremost acoustic musical instrument in the twentieth century. But I am even more proud of the strides that the Steelpan has made over the years in gaining local adoption and global resonance. For years, it has been a force by which marginalized groups in our society have found accessible expression and musical participation. The theme of this year’s Pan Festival “From Behind the Bridge to the Global Stage” is a testament to this reality of Steelpan music emerging among socially disadvantaged groups in our society. It has also been a tool for youth development, providing a positive outlet for young people to learn teamwork, literary and aural skills, discipline and self-esteem, while keeping them away from negative influences. It has indeed been a critical contributor to our nation’s festival development and creative exports. Today we can boast of the versatility of the Steelpan, with its vibrant rhythms being enjoyed at our annual Panorama festivities; its technological advancement being showcased in the latest pan innovation: the Genesis pan; and its sophisticated tones being displayed as Trinidad and Tobago’s National Steel Symphony Orchestra shares our sound all over the world. I must also commend the contributions of our esteemed stakeholder, Pan Trinbago, and our Steelpan fraternity in forging the way forward.

Today, I charge the nation of Trinidad and Tobago, and those of the diaspora, to take pride in your country and to not hold back your jubilation as we lead the world into a global celebration of all that Steelpan means to us. I salute the Consulate General in New York who will be hosting an exciting concert “Pan in Times Square” this evening in Times Square, featuring some of the world’s top pan performers. Locally, we hope to see our Trinbago residents joining us in Woodford Square and on Buccoo Bay this weekend as we let the sounds of the Steelpan resound throughout our twin-isle. Wherever World Steelpan Day festivities may find you today, I encourage you to join in the celebration.

We have so much to be proud of, Trinidad and Tobago!

Happy World Steelpan Day, 2023!

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