

Fondation Espoir Développement Beachcomber Beautiful LocalHands unveils its revamped craft shop in Trou aux Biches

Wednesday 8 November 2023 was marked by a spirit of confidence and optimism for Beautiful LocalHands! This programme run by Fondation Espoir Développement Beachcomber (FED) has reached a new milestone with the reopening of its fully renovated and redesigned craft shop in the heart of the village of Trou aux Biches.

Visitors are already heading to the concept store to discover diverse handicraft items. The shop abounds with treasures, including handmade *ravann*, a collection of paper jewellery, sega dancers made from recycled fabric, elegant handmade pottery, bamboo cases, trivets made of cattley guava wood and keyrings. So many precious and authentic souvenirs from Mauritius! This useful and inventive programme is a delight for tourists and locals alike. It supports some craftworkers – mainly from vulnerable backgrounds – by promoting of their savoir-faire. Most of the proceeds are redistributed to the artisans and the profits are subsequently reinvested in the project to enhance its scope and support more craftworkers.

“FED launched the Beautiful LocalHands programme 17 years ago with the aim of working alongside small-scale craftworkers to help them progress by promoting their know-how, supporting their skills development, and increasing their access to the tourism market. The reopening of this craft concept store marks a new milestone for the project and pays tribute to the talent of Beautiful LocalHands’ craftworkers,” says Karine Perrier Curé, FED’s Chairperson and Beachcomber Resorts & Hotels’ Chief Brand & Communication Officer. *“A total of 55 craftworkers now showcase their collections in this place where solidarity, living together and helping each other are practised. Buying their creations means supporting the handmade products of Mauritian craftworkers.”*

The Beautiful LocalHands shop was inaugurated on 8 November but has been open since 26 October. The shop is already a resounding success. This is no surprise to the Beachcomber Group’s CSR Manager, Viren Vythelingum. *“Customers who visit the Beautiful LocalHands workshop in Bambous often ask us where they can buy the beautiful creations of the craftworkers we support. Today, we are very proud to inaugurate our own benchmark concept store, which showcases their exceptional creations and highlights other essential aspects of this social project. This includes the use of local raw materials such as guava wood, vacoas, coconut, as well as our commitment to empowerment, recycling and the preservation of traditional know-how.”*

After being slowed down by the health crisis, the project received a major boost in 2021 through Isabelle Dausse Sauzier. The designer agreed to support the programme's craftworkers in the design and creation of two themed collections, which are odes to our lagoons and tropical flowers respectively. The story continues with a third collaboration, which will be presented in early 2024. Stay tuned!

The Beautiful LocalHands boutique in Trou aux Biches is open Monday to Saturday, from 9am to 5pm.

About Beautiful LocalHands

FED firmly believes that Mauritius abounds in talented artisans, many of whom are little known. The Foundation launched the Beautiful LocalHands programme in 2006 to give them the opportunity to develop both their skills and sales network through the Group's hotel boutiques. The project helps preserve and enhance traditional crafts and local cultural heritage. It has provided support to some 50 craftworkers and has achieved great success since its inception.

This programme gives of these small entrepreneurs the opportunity to grow their business by selling some of their products through Beautiful LocalHands. It is also aimed at supporting their empowerment by improving the quality of their workmanship and providing a platform for exchange, combating isolation and vulnerability and offering a flexible system that gives them maximum support in any situation, among others. Since 2022, people are taught how to make and play the *ravann* at Beautiful LocalHands' workshop in Bambous to preserve this local art and know-how.

Contact presse :

Sheila Ramsamy – sramsamy@beachcomber.com - T (230) 6019380

Beachcomber House, Botanical Garden Street, Curepipe 74213, Mauritius