

2005-2006
CBC Writing Competition
CBC Student Entry
Category: Poetry
Author: Geri Gustin

El Caribe

El Caribe in February tosses her head like a whimsical woman, and she goes from sunshine to grey clouds, soft wind to rainfall.

El Caribe in February sings an endless song played by strong, deft fingers searching for and finding a melody.

The willowy cocoa brown girl of *El Caribe* in her flowing cocoa brown dress with the shiny beadwork; she works as the shiny red car waits, and the keyboard artist plays “Day by Day” to calypso beat.

The smiling brown boy of *El Caribe* with thumbs hooked to his pockets; he walks like a slinky down the narrow street all day going somewhere, with no one waiting.

El Caribe fills the air with stimulating scents of spices sweet fragrance, delicious aromas and pungent odors, familiar and unfamiliar, a robust blend for the traveler to inhale.

El Caribe captions the *viejo* bending over his basket of thin beaded bracelets, hoping to sell them by sunset, or at least enough to buy rice and beans.

The proud mama of *El Caribe* strolls with her dimpled *nina* in pink ruffles and purple-laced tennis shoes, three black-eyed kids in tow, on an afternoon in February.

The wind of *El Caribe* blows until the rain bursts through the clouds, and the *turistas* run for cover into the sidewalk cafes as the *mariachis* play “*La Bamba*” for an American dollar (or two). Bring us trays of salsa and chips, beer and soda, coffee with cream and sugar! Let it rain!
Muchas gracias!

El mar azul del Caribe flows over the white sandy shore, the waves hypnotically swaying like a dancer on the ballroom floor.

The street vendor of *El Caribe* calls out his wares to passersby—in case his invitation could lure a buyer into his shop.

El Caribe captures every soul—by sight, by sound, by scent, by taste and by touch, and does not let him go for a long time after his departure.