Arima, Trinidad

The official home of the first peoples

The city of Arima, Trinidad is located on the banks of the Arima River in the foothills of the Northern Range. It is the third largest city on the island, and is considered the gateway to the north-eastern section of Trinidad. Arima, which is the Amerindian word for "water," was founded in 1757, by Capuchin monks from Spain who had travelled to Trinidad to convert the natives to Catholicism, as part of that country's colonizing efforts.

Trinidad was taken over by the British in 1797, and by the 1850s, Arima, because of its strategic position, had grown large enough to be regarded as one of the key villages in Trinidad. The 1870s brought further transformation to Arima, when the cocoa industry began to spread into the central regions of the island. Planters insisted on a system of improved transportation to get their goods into Port of Spain so, on August 31, 1876, Arima saw the inauguration of the first passenger and freight railway line in the country. On the first day of August 1888, Arima was granted the status of a Royal Borough. Today, Arima extends over an area of approximately 4.6 square miles and has a population of approximately 41,000.