



## **NEW STRAW AND CRAFT MARKET TO OPEN ON BAY STREET IN NASSAU/PARADISE ISLAND**

*The Iconic Bahamian Straw Market is Back and Better than Ever*

NASSAU, Bahamas – Dec. 20, 2011 – Visitors in Nassau can now explore Bahamian culture in the new \$12 million Straw and Craft Market. Set to officially open its doors on Dec. 21, 2011 the new Bay Street establishment will house over 450 vendors, making it easy for visitors to bring pieces of authentic island crafts home.

Designed by Patrick Rahming & Associates the market contains two sections allowing for hundreds of vendors. The 37,000 square foot ground level space (4,500 square foot mezzanine) not only showcases straw vendors but accommodates 34 specialty booths designed to encourage experiences such as authentic Bahamian music, dance and fashion. Shoppers can also enjoy ATM access, public washrooms and wireless technology for the processing of credit card sales.

Straw work has been an important element of the Bahamian economy since 1720. Straw plaiting techniques, styles and materials vary from island to island, but the Nassau market allows visitors to see many styles in one place. Local artisans will offer everything from handmade hats, mats and bags, to woodcarving, baskets and even local guava jellies.

Due to the straw market fires in 1974 and 2001, extensive fire safety measures have been taken for vendors and tourists protection at the new venue including a sprinkler system with on-site water storage and fire hoses. There is also a full-service generator for use in case of emergency. For more information and images of The Islands Of The Bahamas or the Straw and Craft Market please visit [www.Bahamas.com](http://www.Bahamas.com) or [The Bahamas Media Center](#).

The Islands Of The Bahamas have a place in the sun for everyone from Nassau and Paradise Island to Grand Bahama to The Abaco Islands, The Exuma Islands, Harbour Island, Long Island and others. Each island has its own personality and attractions for a variety of vacation styles with some of the world's best scuba diving, fishing, sailing, boating, as well as, shopping and dining. The destination offers an easily accessible tropical getaway and provides convenience for travelers with preclearance through U.S. customs and immigration, and the Bahamian dollar at par with the U.S. dollar. Do everything or do nothing, just remember It's Better in The Bahamas. For more information on travel packages, activities and accommodations, call 1-800-Bahamas or visit [www.Bahamas.com](http://www.Bahamas.com). Look for TheBahamas on the web on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#). To purchase one-of-a-kind items from The Bahamas, visit [www.eshopbahamas.com](http://www.eshopbahamas.com).

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