

# JAMAICA<sup>®</sup> HOME OF ALL RIGHT





# THE LAND OF WOOD AND WATER

JAMAICA IS A STUNNING COUNTRY FILLED WITH BEACHES, MOUNTAINS, CULTURE, AND ALL BEAUTIFUL THINGS IN BETWEEN. IF YOU'RE PLANNING A BREAK FROM THE HUSTLE AND BUSTLE OF LIFE, THEN YOU'VE FOUND THE PERFECT PLACE. A PLACE FULL OF WARMTH AND SMILES WHERE YOU CAN CHILL AND LET THE 'REAL WORLD' MELT AWAY.

## A BRIEF HISTORY

Our first inhabitants were the Arawak Indians from South America. They named our island 'Xaymaca', meaning "land of wood and water".

In 1494, Christopher Columbus sailed from Spain in search of a route to the East. Instead he stumbled across our fair land, which quickly became a strategic port for military and trade.

The English, Spanish and French fought over Jamaica for years until 1655 when the English finally won. British rule lasted until 1962, when national independence was declared.

These days Jamaica is home to a vibrant mix of people from all over the world. Our official language is English, but Patois (our local dialect) is also spoken by the majority of the population.

This brochure will give you all the reasons why the next visitor to our little slice of heaven should be you. Read on.



# THE LAY OF THE LAND

LET'S TAKE A LITTLE LOOK AROUND. HERE ARE SOME INTERESTING LITTLE TIDBITS ABOUT JAMAICA.

## POPULATION

Located right in the middle of the beautiful Caribbean Sea, we have a population of 2.7 million (as of 2013), which makes us the world's 137<sup>th</sup> most populous country. Kingston is our capital and is home to just over a million people.

## GEOLOGY AND GEOGRAPHY

Our island, along with the other islands of the Antilles, evolved from an arc of an ancient volcano that erupted out of the sea millions of years ago. We can split the island into three regions: the eastern mountains, the central valleys and plateaus, and the coastal plains.

## WEATHER WISE

It's always warm in Jamaica, and year round there's not much variation. In the lowlands we average 25 to 30°C, and up higher it hits around 15 to 22°C. It only really gets cooler than that at the peaks of the Blue Mountains.

## GREEN MINDED

We Jamaicans are extremely respectful of our environment. Green issues are given high priority and are an integral part of the progression of our country. Natural areas like The Blue and John Crow Mountains National Park are highly valued, protected, and cared for. When you visit, we'd love it if you did the same.

## FLORA AND FAUNA

Even though we're a reasonably small island, we still have areas of remote and untouched beauty. In the plant world you'll discover everything from coconuts, pineapples, mangoes and bananas, to coffee, yams and sugar cane.

Wildlife is equally as varied. Prepare to discover tropical butterflies, hummingbirds and the majestic sea turtle, as well as the much wilder crocodiles, iguanas, and mongooses.

# COME TO JAMAICA

## BETTING HERE

We have three international airports: Sangster International Airport in Montego Bay, Norman Manley International Airport in Kingston and Ian Fleming International Airport in Boscobel.

Direct flights from the UK usually take nine and a half hours, or you can fly via the U.S. It's only three hours from New York and 60 minutes from Miami. Speedy.

If you're travelling on a European passport and are here for less than three months, you won't need a visa to come and visit. Just get yourself a return ticket, turn up and enjoy, but do check travel details before you visit, just in case.

## VERY ACCOMMODATING

Jamaica invented the 'all inclusive' concept. We have a huge range of world-class accommodation that caters to any taste and budget.

For example, if you don't want a typical resort holiday, we have villas, B&Bs, small luxury hotels, as well as hotels in cliffs and mountains where you can stay for a more laid back feel.

# ON THE GROUND

## BETTING AROUND

**Local Taxi** – Always check that your taxi is licensed by JUTA or JCAL. It'll say so on the door and the licence plate will be red. Check the fare with locals before you jump in. Like bus

fares, the prices are fixed by the Government and are non-negotiable.

**Bus** – This is a great way to get around, and will see you hanging out with the locals. They can get a little crowded though so might not be ideal for long journeys.

**Private driver** – This option is much more comfortable, but of course more pricey. For driver recommendations in different parts of the island check out the local forums for the area where you're based, or ask at your hotel. Make sure you negotiate with the driver before your journey begins. JUTA and JCAL are the official names of the licensed taxis.





# GET AMONGST IT

THERE'S A MULTITUDE OF THINGS TO DO IN JAMAICA. FROM CHILLING ON ONE OF THE STUNNING BEACHES, TO CLIMBING THE MOUNTAINS, TO RELAXING IN ONE OF THE HUNDREDS OF BARS AND RESTAURANTS. HAVE A LITTLE LOOK AND SEE WHAT YOU FANCY.

## HIT THE BEACH

Our beaches offer a truly classic tropical experience. Grab a juice or a cocktail, get your swimwear on, and get in for a day of utter relaxation.

**Doctor's Cave Beach, Montego Bay** – The reason for Montego Bay's fame. Expect white sand, crystal clear water, and a beach bar called The Groovy Grouper.

**Seven Mile Beach, Negril** – A golden sand family favourite, this stunning seven mile stretch of beach is the perfect place to relax and work on the tan, or grab a drink at Margaritaville.

**Treasure Beach, South Coast** – Spread out, relax, and enjoy the dramatic seascape as impressive waves crash onto the beach. Follow up with a cheeky cocktail at the Jack Sprat Beach Bar.

**Boston Bay Beach, Port Antonio** – White sand, clear water, big surf, and jerk-pork stands. Swim. Surf. Bathe. Eat. Repeat.

## THE GREAT OUTDOORS

There's so much to discover beyond the beaches. Rivers, mountains, caves, waterfalls, and plantations. Get exploring!

**Dunn's River Falls, Ocho Rios** – Check out this 'staircase waterfall' that cascades down to the beach. This 600-foot waterfall can get really crowded on certain days in high season though, so try and get there nice and early.

**Martha Brae's Rafters Village, Falmouth** – The most incredible river rafting experience you could wish for. Sit on a raised dais on bamboo logs, and watch the scenery unfold.

**The Black River, South Coast** – Get in touch with your inner Tarzan, amidst mangrove trees and crocodiles.

**Green Grotto Caves, Ocho Rios** – A fantasy limestone world of stalagmites and stalactites, this cave network has seemingly endless chambers and an eerie grotto lake that you can visit by boat.

**Canopy Tours** – Enjoy the ride of your life as you take a zip line adventure through the tropical rainforest. These tours operate out of all major resorts.

APPROX MILEAGE	Black River	Falmouth	Kingston	Mandeville	Montego Bay	Negril	Ocho Rios	Port Antonio	St. Ann's Bay
Black River	.	62	107	43	46	49	94	156	87
Falmouth	62	.	91	53	23	75	44	110	37
Kingston	107	91	.	6	119	153	54	61	59
Mandeville	43	53	61	.	70	92	72	117	62
Montego Bay	46	23	119	70	.	52	67	133	60
Negril	49	75	153	92	52	.	117	181	110
Ocho Rios	94	44	54	72	67	117	.	66	7
Port Antonio	156	110	61	117	133	181	66	.	73
St. Ann's Bay	87	37	59	62	60	110	7	73	.



# A FEW EXTRA BITS & PIECES

## BUSINESS HOURS

Banks are open Monday to Friday 9:00am to 2:00pm, although they are often open later on Friday.

Most shops open at 8:30am and close at 4:30pm or 5:00pm Monday to Friday. These hours vary though. Some shops open Saturday until noon. Shops in resorts, however, are open daily.

## BANKS

The Bank of Jamaica has exchange bureaus at all International Airports, at cruise ship piers, and in most hotels too.

The currency is the Jamaican dollar, but US dollars are also widely accepted.

## DOCTORS

Many resorts will have a Doctor on call, but if you need any particular medicine or treatment, bring evidence such as a letter from your home Doctor.

## DIALLING CODE

The area code for Jamaica is +1 876.

## ELECTRICITY PLUGS

Most places use the standard electrical voltage of 110, just like in the U.S. However, some places operate on 220 volts, 50 cycles.

**Horseback Riding, Montego Bay** – Gallop along trails and see your horse swim through the waves in this unique horseback ride and swim tour.

**The Blue Mountains, Portland** – This is the biggest, wildest and greenest park in the Caribbean. Take a stunning five to six hour hike through vegetation to reach the summit.

**North Coast Marine Sports, Montego Bay** – Go diving amongst breathtaking coral reefs with the best scuba diving company in the area.

**Negril Scuba Centre, Negril** – Hands down the best-equipped dive facility in all of Negril, with lovely staff to boot.

**Lady Godiva's Dive Shop, Port Antonio** – Everything you could possibly need in the way of equipment for dives and snorkelling off the beaches of Port Antonio.

## FEELING ARTY

The art of Jamaica is beautifully unique. Check out the galleries and see creativity with a distinctively island flavour.

**Harmony Art Gallery, Ocho Rios** – Situated in a beautifully restored mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Methodist mansion.

**Hi-Oo Art and Framing Gallery, Kingston** – An esteemed art gallery featuring diverse work by diverse artists.

**National Gallery of Jamaica, Kingston** – Here you'll find the oldest and largest gallery, with modern and contemporary art from all over Jamaica and the Caribbean.

## MUSEUMS AND HISTORY

There's a world of exciting culture in Jamaica that's worth checking out. From museums to music to natural history, it's all waiting to be discovered.

**Bob Marley Museum, Kingston** – What better place to have a dedication to the King of Reggae than in his former home? The house is located in the heart of Kingston on the famous Hope Road.





**Bob Marley Mausoleum, Nine Mile** – Nine Mile is where Marley came into the world, and it's also his final resting place. It's here that you can check out the reggae master's original guitars, awards and photographs.

**Firefly Estate, Oracabessa** – This used to be Sir Noël Coward's holiday home but is now a listed National Heritage Site. The estate is now a government-sponsored museum dedicated to the English author.

**Discovery Bay, St Ann** – This is where Columbus landed in 1494, and it's here that you'll find Columbus Park. It includes an open-air museum with a wide range of historical artifacts and information about the area.

**Natural History Museum of Jamaica, Kingston** – This is the oldest division of the Institute of Jamaica. It grew out of the Science Museum and was established in 1879.

**The Mystic Pavilion, Ocho Rios** – Not only can you enjoy a display of sporting memorabilia from Jamaica's greatest sporting moments, but you can ride a rainforest bobsled too.

**Falmouth** – This 18<sup>th</sup> century port town is full of historical buildings, and The Good Hope Great House is nearby.

**Greenwood Great House, Montego Bay** – One of the finest and best restored of the former plantation homes, it's well worth a look. The house is filled with antiques, paintings, rare books, and furniture from the 1800s.

## BET DOWN

Music and nightlife in Jamaica are as eclectic and fun as you'd expect. For example, hit one of the multitudes of beach bars, like the ultra raffish Alfred's Ocean Palace in Negril.

Dance on the sand at parties in Negril and Montego Bay's

Hip Strip. You'll get copious servings of soca, calypso, and reggae. Serious reggae fans should head to one of Kingston's sound system dancehalls for the real deal.

## EAT

Of course, you can't go to Jamaica without sampling the wonderful jerk chicken, curried goat and ackee & saltfish. You'll find all this and more in the restaurants around the country. Roadside stalls serve chicken, pork and lobster, or you might like to try something a bit different. Escoveitch is one of our prized local dishes made from fried fish pickled with peppers and onions.

## LOVE IS IN THE AIR

What better place to get married than Jamaica? You can even tie your honeymoon into the trip and share the paradise with your family and friends. Also, you can tie the knot just 24 hours after arriving in Jamaica.

**GoldenEye, Oracabessa** – Intimate and romantic, this is the location where Ian Fleming created James Bond. Rock stars and celebrities are constantly spotted here.

**The Blue Lagoon, Port Antonio** – Made famous by the film with the same name, you can enjoy a swim in this enchanting pool surrounded by a natural amphitheatre. The water's cool depths are said to have aphrodisiac powers.

**Reich Falls, Manchioneal** – Just east of Port Antonio you'll find one of the most photographed areas in the Caribbean. Enter a virgin rainforest for a cooling dip under the falls.

**Lovers' Leap, St Elizabeth** – A stunning lookout that tells the story of forbidden love between two slaves who supposedly leapt to their deaths in order to remain together forever.

# DATES TO REMEMBER

HERE'S A RUN DOWN OF WHAT'S GOING ON AROUND THE ISLAND THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. JUST MAKE SURE YOU CHECK BEFORE YOU TRAVEL BECAUSE SOME DATES VARY FROM YEAR TO YEAR.



## JANUARY

**Accompong Maroon Festival, St Elizabeth** – Early January comes to life with this annual celebration filled with dancing, traditional singing, feasts, and ceremonies.

**Jamaica Sprint Triathlon, Negril** – In late January hundreds of competitors get together for a swimming, cycling and running extravaganza.

**Jamaica Jazz & Blues Festival, Falmouth** – Enjoy a series of concerts, featuring a range of both international and local artists. A must see for any Jazz and Blues fan.



## FEBRUARY

**Bob Marley Week, Kingston** – Reggae concerts, movies, arts & crafts, and food. All things Marley related.

**Bob Marley Birthday Bash, Montego Bay** – Early February sees an annual concert that pays tribute to the great man.



## MARCH

**March Spring Break** – All over Jamaica, Uni students from America flood in for their Spring Break holiday. Get set to party, especially around Montego Bay and Negril.

**The Inter Secondary Schools Boys and Girls Championships (CHAMPS), Kingston** – See the future sprinting and athletic stars of tomorrow as the best of the best of Jamaica's youth go head to head. This event changes dates each year depending on when Easter falls.



## APRIL

**Montego Bay Yacht Club's Easter Regatta** – Enjoy an annual sailing event off the North Coast over the four days of Easter.

**Carnival in Jamaica, Kingston, Ocho Rios & Montego Bay** – In the first week of April, see a week long series of fêtes, concerts, and street parades.

**Treasure Beach Off-Road Marathon, Treasure Beach** – Late April sees the south coast buzz with sporty people from all over the world.



## MAY

**Calabash International Literary Festival, Treasure Beach** – See 30 authors and musicians from across the world reading and performing.

**StyleWeek Jamaica & Fashion Block, Kingston** – At the end of May, this three day fashion festival brings creativity and design to the forefront in Kingston.



## JUNE

**Kingston on the Edge Urban Art Festival (KOTE), Kingston** – From mid June until the end of the month you can enjoy this cultural explosion, with plays, concerts, multimedia shows, an art auction, and exhibitions.

**Caribbean Fashion Week, Kingston** – From early to mid June you can mingle with influential Caribbean fashion designers and models alike.

**Ocho Rios Jazz Festival, Ocho Rios & Montego Bay** – Check out world class Jazz with a combination of International and home-grown artists.



## JULY

**Little Ochi Seafood Carnival, Alligator Pond** – In mid July every form of seafood is on offer, along with live music and events.

**National Dance Theatre Company's Season of Dance, Kingston** – Sit back and soak up traditional and modern dance from July through to August.

**Reggae Sumfest, Montego Bay** – The true essence of summer comes to life on stage for a five day festival.



## AUGUST

**The Appleton Temptation Isle (ATI), Negril** – In early August summer is in full force with this event that features about a dozen enormous parties.

**Smirnoff Dream Weekend, Negril** – It's around the same time that you'll find party lovers enjoying food, drink, reggae, and parties that stretch right through the night.

**The National Independence Float Parade and Grand Gala, Kingston** – At the start of August, we also see the most significant celebratory event in our calendar. The celebrations take place on the streets around Kingston. Expect floats, costumed groups, music trucks, classic cars, and marching bands. Keep your eyes peeled for street fêtes too, because this is a time when the locals party to celebrate Jamaican Independence.



## SEPTEMBER

**Falmouth Blue Marlin Tournament, Montego Bay** – Huge news with the locals, this is all about who can land the big one.



## OCTOBER

**Port Antonio International Fishing Tournament, Port Antonio** – One of the oldest and most prestigious sport fishing events in the Caribbean, with participants from all over the world.



## DECEMBER

**Motor Sports Championship Series, St Ann** – A prestigious championship event that takes over the Parish.



# HOTEL, INNS, GUEST HOUSES & FACILITIES IN JAMAICA



**FURTHER INFORMATION**

If you would like to find out more about our beautiful island:  
 Visit: [www.visitjamaica.com](http://www.visitjamaica.com) Telephone: 020 7225 9090 Email: [mail@visitjamaica.uk.com](mailto:mail@visitjamaica.uk.com)  
 or find us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/visitjamaicauk](http://www.facebook.com/visitjamaicauk) or on Twitter: [@visitjamaicauk](https://twitter.com/visitjamaicauk)