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QUICK FACTS

POPULATION	Estimated at 2,641,600 (2003), Jamaica's population is a multi-racial mix, including African, European, East Indian, Chinese and Middle-Eastern.
CLIMATE	Jamaica's average annual temperature is 82°F (28°C). A tropical climate prevails inland, but temperatures can drop to the 50s (10°C) on the highest mountains. Northeast trade winds and mountain breezes keep the temperature pleasant along the coast. The average annual rainfall is 78 inches (198 centimeters).
GEOGRAPHY	Jamaica is the third-largest English-speaking Caribbean island at 4,244 square miles (10,991 square kilometers); the island is 146 miles (235 kilometers) long, with widths varying between 22 miles (35 kilometers) and 51 miles (82 kilometers). Almost one half of this mountainous island is over 1,000 feet (305 meters) above sea level. Blue Mountain Peak is the highest point at 7,402 feet (2,256 meters). Mountain ranges are rich in limestone, marble, alabaster, shale and sandstone. Jamaica has a lush terrain and a dramatic coastline, with valleys, cliffs, caves, bays, coves, reefs, mineral springs, waterfalls and some 120 natural rivers.
NATURAL RESOURCES	Bauxite, gypsum and limestone.
AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS	Sugarcane, bananas, coffee, cocoa, citrus fruits, pimento, vegetables, poultry, milk.
EXPORT COMMODITIES	Alumina, bauxite, bananas, sugar, rum.
LANGUAGE	English is spoken everywhere, and a local <i>patois</i> used by most of the population.

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**GOVERNMENT
AND
ADMINISTRATION**

Independent since August 6, 1962, Jamaica is governed by a constitutional parliamentary democracy. The People's National Party (PNP) currently holds the seat of government, with Prime Minister Percival James Patterson now in his third term of office.

The island is made up of 14 administrative divisions known as parishes: Clarendon, Hanover, Kingston, Manchester, Portland, St. Andrew, St. Ann, St. Catherine, St. Elizabeth, St. James, St. Mary, St. Thomas, Trelawny and Westmoreland. Kingston is the capital city.

RELIGIONS

Protestant 61.3 percent; Roman Catholic 4 percent; other religions 34.7 percent.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Jamaica boasts more than 24,000 guest rooms, including five-star resorts and hotels; all-inclusive resorts; private villas; small inns (with under 50 rooms) and guesthouses; condominiums; spa resorts; golf and tennis resorts; and convention hotels. An additional 800 rooms will be operative by the end of 2004.

CURRENCY

The official rate of exchange fluctuates daily, depending on the foreign exchange markets. The rate currently (March 2004) stands at approximately US\$1.00 = JA\$60.00. Foreign currency may be exchanged for Jamaican dollars at any bank during regular business hours (9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Monday to Thursday, and 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Fridays) or at licensed exchange bureaus in the airports and at hotels island-wide. Purchases of goods and services on-island, including accommodations, restaurant meals, car rentals and at duty free shops, may be made in U.S. currency. Jamaican dollars may be converted to foreign currency at any bank or licensed exchange bureau.

AIRPORTS

Norman Manley International Airport (KIN) is just 14 miles (22.5 kilometers) from Kingston's primary resort area. Sangster International Airport (MBJ) is ideally positioned for visitors traveling to the city of Montego Bay (3 miles/4.8 kilometers), and the towns of Negril (52 miles/84 kilometers) and Ocho Rios (67 miles/108 kilometers).

**AIR SERVICE
TO JAMAICA**

Major carriers serving the island from the Americas include:

- Air Canada
- Air Jamaica
- American Airlines
- Continental Airlines
- Copa Airlines
- Delta Air Lines
- Northwest Airlines
- US Airways

Many charter companies also operate flights between the Americas and Jamaica.

PORTS + HARBORS

Ports and harbors are located at Discovery Bay, Kingston, Montego Bay, Ocho Rios, Port Antonio, Port Esquivel (Longwharf), Port Kaiser and Bowden.

Cruise ship ports are Montego Bay, Ocho Rios, Port Antonio and Kingston.

Cruise ship lines calling at Jamaica include:

Carnival Cruise Line
Celebrity Cruises
Costa Cruise Lines
Fred Olsen Cruise Lines
Holland America Line
Norwegian Cruise Line
Princess Cruises
Pullmantur (Premier)
Radisson Seven Seas Cruises
Royal Caribbean Cruise Line
Royal Olympic Cruises

GETTING AROUND JAMAICA

By road:

All taxicabs have red license plates. Rates between locations are pre-determined. Limousines and air-conditioned coaches are available, and local bus service operates between villages, towns and cities.

Several reputable car rental companies operate in Jamaica. Drivers should note that driving is on the left side of the road; the speed limit is 30 MPH (50 km) in the towns and 50 MPH (80 km) on highways; service stations are open every day – cash payments and major credit cards are accepted. Rental-car drivers must be at least 25 years of age and present a valid license; to meet insurance regulations, drivers are required to post a bond with cash, major credit card or travelers check.

By air:

Scheduled air service between Kingston, Montego Bay and Ocho Rios is offered daily by Air Jamaica Express (800-523-5585 or 876-922-4661).

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