

JAMAICA[®]



Click photo to download images from this newsletter. Photo credit: Hideaway at Royalton Blue Waters.

Visit Jamaica Newsletter

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Photo credit: Rockhouse Hydroponic Greenhouse

Farm-to-table tours connect travellers with nature

Sustainability is top-of-mind for travellers in 2024 according to a [new trend forecast](#) from Booking.com. As 'Mindful Aesthetes' seek out eco-conscious travel experiences, Jamaican farmers are leveraging the country's natural resources and opening a growing wave of agro-tourism attractions. Visitors can connect with the natural environment in a responsible way while supporting local communities at these working farms across the island:

- [Rockhouse Hydroponic Greenhouse](#): Rockhouse Hotel in Negril recently opened a 4,500 square-foot greenhouse designed to educate visitors on local produce, organic farming and composting. Featuring both horizontal and vertical hydroponics, the new greenhouse is home to 28 varieties of produce, including lettuces, sage, mint, eggplant, cilantro, heirloom tomatoes, and sweet peppers. Guests staying at Rockhouse and sister property Skylark Hotel can join private greenhouse tours twice a week and visit the hotel restaurants to sample menu items showcasing the grown-on-site ingredients.
- [Sun Valley Plantation](#): This working plantation and botanical farm in Oracabessa is owned by Lorna and Nolly Binns. Travellers can sign up for a 90-minute tour to hear the fascinating story behind the property's evolution from its slave-era beginnings to present day farming operations. Participants learn about tropical fruits and plants, taste fresh coconuts and exotic otaheite apples straight from the treetops, and spot dazzling hummingbirds and other local wildlife along

the way.

- [Stush in the Bush](#): Specializing in sustainable and regenerative agricultural practices, Stush in the Bush invites visitors to enjoy an elevated al-fresco Ital dining experience and farm tour in a picturesque hillside setting just outside of Ocho Rios. The immersive experience begins with a guided ‘Earth Walk’ to give guests a chance to explore the farm property and foster a connection to the earth. Farm tours are followed by an intimate plant-based meal featuring organic, seasonal vegetables.



Photo credit: Canada Jetlines

New direct flights from Toronto launching this winter

Canadian travellers looking to jet off to Jamaica’s sunny shores this winter season can now take advantage of two new low-cost flight options departing from Toronto Pearson International Airport throughout the week. [Canada Jetlines](#) began flying twice weekly to Montego Bay on December 9, with departures every Saturday and Sunday. The airline will be adding a third weekly flight on Fridays starting January 5. For those travelling to Jamaica’s capital, [Flair Airlines](#) launches its new thrice-weekly Kingston service from Toronto to Norman Manley International Airport on December 16, with flights operating on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. The two airlines are expected to bring more than 33,000 passengers combined into Jamaica over the winter season, contributing to Jamaica’s overarching goal of attracting 500,000 annual visitors from Canada by 2025.



Photo credit: Water Lane in Kingston / Jamaica Tourist Board

Downtown Kingston emerges as burgeoning art district

Non-profit arts organization [Kingston Creative](#) is helping Jamaica's cultural capital transform into a thriving arts district. Founded in 2017, the group works in collaboration with public and private sector partners to empower the city's artistic community and reimagine the downtown core as a creative hub. Powered by a team of 100 volunteers, Kingston Creative puts on regular events and hosts thematic city tours to encourage visitors to explore Kingston's lively music scene, culinary hotspots, history, architecture and more. Dedicated street art tours offered in partnership with [Kulcha Connect](#) guide participants along Water Lane to admire dozens of vibrant murals. On the last Sunday of every month, a signature Artwalk festival brings together local visual artists, musicians, dancers and creative types for open-air performances and a pop-up artisan market.

Photo credit: Princess Senses The Mangrove

New and noteworthy hotel openings

Travellers looking for a fresh hotel experience on their next Jamaican getaway can check-in at these new and soon-to-open resorts offering modern guest rooms and state-of-the-art amenities.

- Following a \$30-million (USD) renovation, Royalton White Sands officially reopened in mid-November as [Hideaway at Royalton Blue Waters](#). Now part of

the Autograph Collection, the intimate adults-only oasis boasts 352 elegantly appointed rooms, three exclusive restaurants, a private islet and personalized butler service. Guests have access to all the facilities at the adjacent family-oriented Royalton Blue Waters, while staying in a more intimate and elevated enclave.

- Princess Hotels and Resorts is set to open two new high-profile properties in April 2024: [Princess Grand Jamaica](#) is an all-inclusive resort offering amenities for families and groups, five pools, an aquatic waterpark, and 590 modern and spacious suites. The adjacent [Princess Senses The Mangrove](#) is a 415-suite adults-only property with overwater villas and VIP amenities such as a state-of-the-art wellness centre offering a full range of spa treatments and equipped with hydrotherapy pools.
- RIU Resorts will open its newest property, [RIU Palace Aquarelle](#), in May 2024. The sprawling 753-room resort in Trelawny will be the seventh property in Jamaica for the Spanish hotel chain. Guests at the hotel will have access to six restaurants, family-friendly pools and facilities, and a special adults-only waterpark.



Photo credit: Devon House / Jamaica Tourist Board

Finding the perfect patty in Jamaica

The City of Toronto recognizes Jamaican Patty Day each year on February 23, but the mighty pastry pocket is celebrated year-round in Jamaica. From classic spicy beef to tasty vegetarian varieties, here's where to find Jamaica's most mouth-watering patties:

- [Juici Patties](#): With more than 60 locations across Jamaica, this local chain is a perennial favourite among island locals. Patties are available in traditional meaty flavours and plant-based options like vegetable, soy, and ackee (a native island fruit).
- [Devon House Bakery](#): Foodies will find this artisanal bakery located in a picturesque courtyard on the grounds at Kingston's historic Devon House. While decadent cakes tempt visitors, the fresh-baked gourmet patties are the stars on the menu. The must-try savoury pastries feature a buttery, flaky crust stuffed with premium fillings like curry goat, lobster, ackee and saltfish (the island's national dish), and shrimp.
- [Tastee Patties](#): First opened in 1966, this longstanding patty purveyor has expanded from its humble beginnings and now operates more than a dozen quick-service restaurants across the island. Alongside classic beef and jerk chicken patties, the menu also boasts a range of traditional island dishes like cornmeal porridge, curry chicken, and red pea soup.
- [Mother's Jamaica](#): Guests can select from a variety of fillings to customize their own grab-and-go patty at this popular Jamaican eatery with 16 locations island wide. Level up a classic beef patty with added cheese, bacon, fresh lettuce and tomato for a flavour-packed meal. Mother's also serves patties with classic or whole wheat coco bread, and offers vegetarian patty crusts.