

# JAMAICA®

*For Immediate Release*

## **JAMAICA'S MINISTER OF TOURISM URGES DIASPORA TO CHAMPION THE COUNTRY'S GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**



***Pictured:** (Left photo) Jamaica's Minister of Tourism, Hon Edmund Bartlett makes his address to the Diaspora who attended the Team Jamaica Bickle event in New York on Sunday, April 14, 2024. (Right photo) Jamaica's Minister of Tourism, Hon Edmund Bartlett (At Left) enters the Team Jamaica Bickle event in New York on Sunday, April 14, 2024 with Consul General, Jamaica Consulate General, New York, Mrs. Alesion Roach Wilson (At Right).*

**NEW YORK, NY, April 18, 2024** -- The Hon. Edmund Bartlett, Minister of Tourism, Jamaica, is urging the island's Diaspora to be proud and champion the record growth being experienced in tourism and the country overall. The Jamaican diaspora is scattered across the globe with thousands who make up a vibrant and critical group that contributes to the development of the country.

Speaking at the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the popular Team Jamaica Bickle fundraising event in New York, Minister Bartlett highlighted the significant growth and development that the country was experiencing which he says the Diaspora should be proud to champion.

"The Jamaican Diaspora can be proud of the growth that their country has experienced since COVID. The island can be compared favorably with countries that show the highest level of recovery since the pandemic in terms of economic, social and human capital development," said Minister Bartlett.

He continued, “There is no question that Jamaica’s eleven consecutive quarters of economic growth; its reduction in debt from around 113% to 74%; and the country’s reduction in unemployment from 13% to 4.2% is enviable.”

Team Jamaica Bickle is a sports organization that provides support services for Caribbean athletes, particularly Jamaicans who compete at the annual Penn Relays Carnival, which is held at the University of Pennsylvania, (UPENN) in Philadelphia.

The event brings the Jamaican Diaspora in the Northeast United States together to support Jamaican athletes through advocacy and fundraising activities.

In closing his presentation to the group, Minister Barlett said, “Jamaica’s tourism has been at the heart of this consecutive growth as the island continues to outperform projections. Last year, we welcomed over 4 million visitors and earned USD \$4.2 billion, and already for January and February of this year, we welcomed 1 million visitors and earned USD \$1 billion. These positive strides being made by our little island should be heralded by the Diaspora so we can unite and take Jamaica to another level during this post COVID period.”

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#### **ABOUT JAMAICA TOURIST BOARD**

The Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB), founded in 1955, is Jamaica’s national tourism agency based in the capital city of Kingston. JTB offices are also located in Montego Bay, Miami, Toronto and London. Representative offices are located in Berlin, Barcelona, Rome, Amsterdam, Mumbai, Tokyo and Paris.

In 2024, TripAdvisor® ranked Jamaica the #7 Best Honeymoon Destination in the World and the #19 Best Culinary Destination in the World. In 2023, the JTB was declared ‘World’s Leading Cruise Destination’ and ‘World’s Leading Family Destination’ for the fourth consecutive year by the World Travel Awards, which also named it named “Caribbean’s Leading Tourist Board” for the 15th consecutive year, “Caribbean’s Leading Destination” for the 17th consecutive year, and the “Caribbean’s Leading Cruise Destination” in the World Travel Awards – Caribbean.’ In addition, Jamaica was awarded six gold 2023 Travvy Awards, including ‘Best Honeymoon Destination’ ‘Best Tourism Board – Caribbean,’ ‘Best Destination – Caribbean,’ ‘Best Wedding Destination – Caribbean,’ ‘Best Culinary Destination – Caribbean,’ and ‘Best Cruise Destination – Caribbean’ as well as two silver Travvy Awards for ‘Best Travel Agent Academy Program’ and ‘Best Wedding Destination – Overall.’ It also received a *TravelAge West* WAVE award for ‘International Tourism Board Providing the Best Travel Advisor Support’ for a record-setting 12<sup>th</sup> time. Jamaica is home to some of the world’s best accommodations, attractions and service providers that continue to receive prominent global recognition and the destination is routinely ranked among the best to visit globally by prestigious international publications.

For details on upcoming special events, attractions and accommodations in Jamaica go to the JTB’s Website at [www.visitjamaica.com](http://www.visitjamaica.com) or call the Jamaica Tourist Board at 1-800-JAMAICA (1-800-526-2422). Follow the JTB on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Pinterest](#) and [YouTube](#). View the JTB blog at [www.islandbuzzjamaica.com](http://www.islandbuzzjamaica.com).