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JAMAICA TOURIST BOARD
MEETINGS AND CONVENTIONS NEWSLETTER
FALL 2018 ISSUE



GREETINGS FROM JOHN WOOLCOCK

Dear Valued Partners,

As we approach the close of what has been another successful year, let me say a big thank you on behalf of the Jamaica Tourist Board's Groups and Conventions team, for your continued support of the destination. It is as a result of your commitment and hard work that we have continued to benefit from an ever-increasing number of group and incentive bookings.

We are confident that the destination will continue on its growth path, as a result of your growing interest in having your clients host their meetings and incentive groups in Jamaica.

Overall, the tourism sector has seen substantial growth in the first half of 2018 alone. During the first six-months of the year, the sector saw an overall market growth of 5.4 percent, welcoming over 100,000 more tourists year over year. With an increasing number of visitors to the island, Jamaica is becoming more and more a prominent destination for group meetings, reunions, seminars or anniversaries due to the proximity to the United States. We have all legacy carriers flying to the destination. We also have great nonstop service from most major markets as well as great connecting service from feeder markets.

In this issue, we'll give you a few hints why Jamaica is considered an "A" class destination for meeting planners, and as is customary provide an update on some of the new developments on island, so you can share with your clients. We'll also profile Amstar, one of our experienced DMCs. Also, in our new Quick Word feature, we hear from Lylibeth Eaton, Area Group Sales Manager Jamaica for AMResorts why Breathless Montego Bay has been a great addition to their portfolio.

It is our hope that you will find the Meet You in Jamaica eNewsletter, a useful tool in helping to keep abreast of what's happening on island, while informing you of the activities your clients can experience.

Most important, we look forward to welcoming you and your clients to Jamaica, which received TripAdvisor's 2018 Travelers' Choice Award for #1 Destination in the Caribbean.

Sincerely,

John Woolcock
Manager - Groups & Conventions
Jamaica Tourist Board

DESTINATION BUZZ



Jamaica: An “A” Class Destination For Meeting Planners

Jamaica has long been a meeting planner’s dream and continues to score top marks due to its location. The destination is a favorite given its energy, flair and warm hospitality which ensures your corporate event, retreat or convention is unforgettable.

Access

Getting to Jamaica has never been easier. With air service from most major gateways in the United States, you can choose to arrive at any of the island’s three international airports. Unlike other destinations, a tourist visa is not required for U.S. passport holders, expediting the pre-trip process and making booking large corporate conferences much easier. Depending on your meeting location, planners may choose to arrive Kingston or Montego Bay and can now easily connect via the scenic North-South highway corridor. Private buses are available for charter for large groups.

Airlift

Jamaica has seen an increase in airline seats from the United States, making the destination easier to get to. For the period May-December 2018, the destination secured a total of 1.6 million airline seats from various U.S. gateways to Kingston and Montego Bay. This is an increase over last year’s 1.4 million air seats. With the increasing demand of travel to Jamaica, several airlines have increased daily service from popular U.S. gateways for Kingston and Montego Bay.

Airports

The Jamaican experience starts on arrival, whether in Kingston at the Norman Manley International Airport or Montego Bay at the Sangster International Airport. In September, operators of Sangster International commenced a transformation project to not only improve infrastructure with the latest technology, but also positioning MJB as a bastion of Jamaican culture through interior design upgrades to reflect the island’s natural beauty, while the store fronts will be revitalized to feature unique Jamaican products.

Arrive in style

What better way to begin your Jamaican travel experience than with personalized expedited service through the airport? For a small fee, enjoy ‘Fast Track’, a hassle-free process that quickly takes you through immigration and customs. Afterwards, you’ll be taken straight to VIP Attractions in Kingston or Montego Bay premium lounge where a range of comforts await you, from large screen TVs, refreshing drinks and delicious snacks to private restrooms, newspapers and magazines, all while you wait for a member of their team to notify you when your transportation to your accommodations on the island has arrived to pick you up.

Attractions

There’s so much to do even if you’re on business. After a long day of meetings, there is a variety of activities to enjoy and numerous attractions for groups of all sizes. There’s no shortage of things to do whether it’s a group rafting session down the Martha Brae River in Trelawny, or taking a zipline/bobsled tour of the jungles of Mystic Mountain overlooking Ocho Rios. Reggae lovers can make the trek to Nine Miles in the hills of St. Ann to view the reggae legend, Bob Marley’s Mausoleum. There’s the option of playing a round of golf at one of our championship courses, participating in a historic tour, or just soaking up the cool healing properties at Doctor’s Cave Beach.

WHAT'S NEW



Excellence Oyster Bay: The Excellence Group, renowned for its award-winning luxurious properties, opened its first property on June 1 in Oyster Bay, Trelawny. The first of its kind in the area - and the first Jamaica property by Excellence Group - the Victorian-style property which comprises some 315 rooms is located 35 minutes from the Montego Bay's Sangster International Airport, constructed on a private peninsula bordered by the Caribbean Sea and Jamaica's famous Luminous Lagoon. Excellence Oyster Bay offers everything you need to host a memorable event from a business convention to a social celebration. Guests will find five-star features in all of the suites, nightly entertainment, daily activities, eight world-class restaurants, nine bars, state-of-the-art fitness facilities, two beachfront swimming pools, a lounge with rooftop pool, the exclusive Excellence Club, and the brand's famous Miilé Spa. For more info please visit: <https://www.excellenceresorts.com/resorts/excellence-oyster-bay/>.



Skylark Negril Beach Resort: Skylark Negril Beach Resort, sister property to Rockhouse Hotel, opened this past summer. Skylark Negril Beach Resort is situated along Negril's famous white sand Seven Mile Beach, offering 220 feet of pristine beachfront and sweeping views of the turquoise Caribbean Sea. The hotel evokes a seasoned travelers' Jamaica beach pad, recalling the retro glamour and carefree indulgence of the West End's bohemian beach scene in the 60's and 70's. The 28 fully-appointed guest rooms include two ocean view, beach-front rooms, 22 studio rooms with furnished balconies overlooking the lush interior garden, and four standard rooms. The hotel features an expansive open-air private events space located on the second floor above Miss Lily's restaurant. With sweeping views of the white sand beach, the 1500-square foot indoor event hall can seat up to 70 guests and is customizable for weddings, rehearsal dinners and group events. Guests are provided with a Skylark "Roots & Culture Passport", encouraging them to take full advantage of everything the property and surrounding community has to offer. For more information visit: <http://www.skylarknegril.com/about.html>.

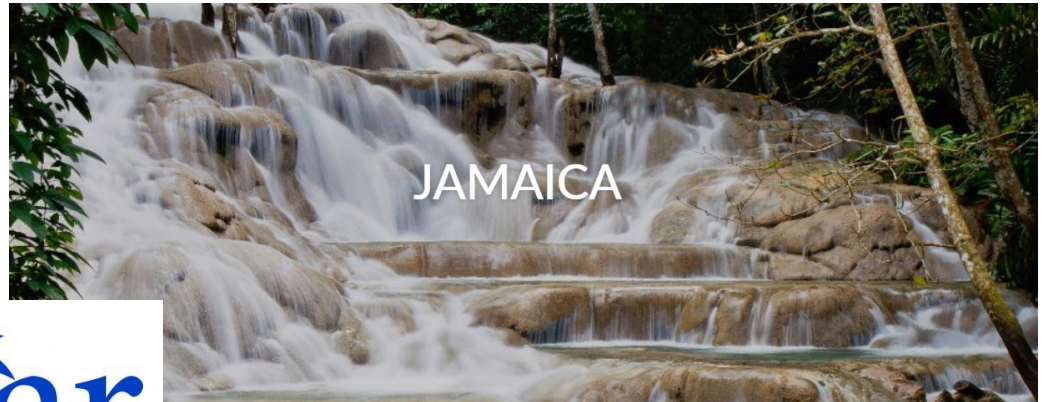


S Hotel Montego Bay: The S Hotel Montego Bay is scheduled to be completed in January 2019 with 124 rooms, offering views of Doctors Cave Beach, plush beds and spa-like bathrooms with Roman tubs. S Hotel Montego Bay will feature stylish facilities including vibrant bars, a café, a swimming pool with swim-out cabanas, a luxury spa, a boutique and a modern fitness center. There will be a beachside rum shack, a Sky Bar and Lounge, and a restaurant serving international cuisine. Situated just five minutes from Sangster International Airport, the hotel is also within walking distance of bars, nightclubs, restaurants and shops. During their stay, guests can play golf at the White Witch Golf Course or Cinnamon Hill Golf Course, take a tour of the historic Great House Rose Hall mansion and former plantation, or indulge in some shopping at Shoppes at Rose Hall.

AMSTAR DMC CONTINUES TO PROVIDE TOP-QUALITY DESTINATION SERVICES

For the past 15 years, the Amstar Meetings & Events team has been providing award-winning service to Groups and Corporate Events. Amstar has a team of destination specialists who have a knack for matching the right venue, location or event to the unique needs of any group. In 2017 alone, they served more than 1,100 Group Programs and 150,000 attendees.

From handpicked destination experiences to private VIP itineraries, plus a wide range of transportation options, they deliver the kind of experience and service you need to create memories for life. And rest assured, you're in good hands. Their operational capabilities, attention to detail and destination expertise help transform great events into memorable experiences. In 2016, Amstar Meetings & Events was a co-winner (with BCD Travel) of the SITE Crystal Awards for Most Impactful Effort Toward Corporate Social Responsibility Part of an Incentive Program.



The team comprises people from more than 20 different nationalities, including many active members of SITE, MPI, FICP and PCMA, who proudly serve a global client base.

According to Michael Freedman, Vice President of Amstar Meetings and Events, “Having lived and worked extensively in Jamaica, the island holds a special place in my heart. With a rich culture, wonderful people and a wide variety of beautiful locations, Jamaica has everything that screams the word ‘Incentives.’ Led by a team of certified Meetings and Events specialists, Amstar can create memorable programs in the most stunning spots of this one-of-a-kind island.”

Take a quick peek into some of the DMC's offerings available to individuals, travel agencies, tour operators, corporations and meeting planners: [Amstar - Yaaman Adventure Park](#)



Lylibeth Eaton
Area Group Sales Manager Jamaica
AMResorts

Lylibeth shares why Breathless Montego Bay has been appealing to the MICE market.

What kind of groups do you attract?

We attract and cater to all kind of groups, we are very fortunate to have outstanding team members and great facilities to provide Jamaican Hospitality at its best!

How do you ensure groups keep fun in their agenda?

We always add our Jamaican flavor to our group events, from check in to check out. We also have the ability to incorporate many fun activities to our program on property or with our DMC partners.

What do planners enjoy about most about your property?

Besides the obvious, the property itself, we are very well known for our flexibility and ability to meet our group needs.

Any unique features?

Breathless Montego Bay provides the perfect setting for guests looking for a mix of relaxation, sophistication, and entertainment on their vacation. Plus, enjoy free flow access to eight bars and ten restaurants with Exchange Privileges, right next door at Secrets Wild Orchid and Secrets St. James! Secrets St. James and Secrets Wild Orchid Montego Bay are adjacent adult-only worlds where groups have the freedom to enjoy the spectacular settings and amenities of both.

Advice for meeting planners?

Relax and enjoy the process! We do all the work to make you look like a Superstar in front of your clients!



HERE'S WHERE WE PLAN TO BE...



IMEX America
Las Vegas, Nevada
October 16-18, 2018

Hosted this year by Sands Expo & Convention Center, IMEX America sets the pace for doing business on an international scale. This remains the largest hosted buyer program in North America for the US Global MICE market and this year we have redesigned booth with the following suppliers participating: Playa Resorts representing Hyatt Ziva/Zilara, Jewel Grande and the Hilton Rose Hall, Iberostar, Half Moon, Melia Braco, Moon Palace Jamaica, AmStar, Chukka, Island Routes, Jamaica Tours Ltd. and the Montego Bay Convention Centre. www.imexamerica.com



RCMA/Aspire
Montego Bay, Jamaica
October 29-November 1, 2018

The Religious Conference Management Association (RCMA) will be hosting its first international regional event in Jamaica for the faith-based planners. This resulted from a JTB planned site visit in 2016 with the executives of RCMA. Hilton Rose Hall Resort & Spa and Montego Bay Convention Center (MBCC) are co-sponsors of the event. Faith-based travel is an important part of Jamaica's outreach to the groups & conventions market and is integral in securing large groups for the Montego Bay Convention Centre.

<https://www.myrhma.org/jamaica/>

EVENTS CALENDAR

Jamaica Food & Drink Festival
October 20-28

For an entire week, Jamaica's cultural capital comes alive with a celebration of the extraordinary where over fifty (50) of the island's best chefs, wine and spirit experts will bring new excitement to your palate with the Jamaica Food & Drink Festival. Seven (7) events at seven iconic locations over nine (9) days make for an unforgettable experience. The Jamaica Food & Drink Festival is modeled after International food festivals such as the South Beach Wine & Food Festival and the Aspen Food & Wine Festival. www.jafoodanddrink.com



Collection MoDA
November 17-18

The MoDA series of events is a platform designed to foster the development of emerging talent in the creative industries in the Caribbean. The MoDA model moves creatives from concept to business, through business seminars, a fashion showcase, and a curated buyers market - catering to local and international wholesale buyers and individual consumers. Last year, the events saw over 3,000 guests attending the series which strives towards becoming the premier event in the Caribbean for creative talent. www.thecollectionmoda.com



APPLICATION FOR WAIVER OF DUTIES/BOND:

Should you wish to make your event even more special by including material and equipment brought from abroad – such as gifts, trophies, etc– you will need to apply to the Ministry of Finance for a waiver of customs duties and bonds. The Jamaica Tourist Board Groups and Conventions Department will be happy to help you through this process. Your application must be received no fewer than 20 working days before the date of shipment and travel.

For more information, please contact groups@visitjamaica.com.

TAX DEDUCTION STATUS

U.S. Public Law 96-608 and Jamaica's Exemption

On December 16, 1981, the U.S. Senate passed a protocol to the Income Tax Treaty with Jamaica. According to the protocol, expenses incurred by a citizen or resident of the United States in connection with attendance at a convention, seminar or similar meeting held in Jamaica shall be deductible for the purpose of taxation in the United States to the same extent as if the convention, seminar or similar meeting were held in the United States.

Contact us anytime for information, direction or planning. We're here to help!

MEET THE JAMAICA TOURIST BOARD GROUPS & CONVENTIONS TEAM

The Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) Groups & Conventions Team is committed to helping you with all aspects of your meeting, convention or incentive program. As your partner, the JTB not only promises to make your event pleasurable and memorable, we will also provide a host of services designed to ensure every stage of the planning process and all aspects of the visit go well.

Contact

John Woolcock / Margaret Clarke

Groups & Conventions

Jamaica Tourist Board

Phone: 1-800-294-7687

Email: groups@visitjamaica.com

www.visitjamaica.com

The Jamaica Tourist Board offices are located in Kingston, Montego Bay, Miami, Toronto and London.

Representative offices are located in Düsseldorf, Barcelona, Rome, Amsterdam and Tokyo.

For details on upcoming special events, attractions and accommodations in Jamaica go to the JTB's Web site at www.visitjamaica.com, or call the Jamaica Tourist Board at 1-800-JAMAICA (1-800-526-2422).

Meet You in Jamaica! Jamaica – Home of All Right!

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