



**THE BEAT**

**JAMAICA**

**HEARTBEAT** OF THE  
WORLD

# GREETINGS FROM DONNIE DAWSON

Dear Friends,

This is my first opportunity to wish you all a Happy, Healthy and Safe 2021!

As we begin the new year, there are encouraging signs that 2021 will be a much brighter year than 2020. We are all hoping that very soon we will be able to get back to our normal activities which of course includes travel.

Jamaica like many other tourist destinations continues to maintain visitor arrivals, despite the global fallout. The visitors we are receiving is as a result of the strong support from you our dedicated Jamaica Travel Specialists. As a destination, we have implemented strict protocols to maintain a safe environment, not only for our visitors, but also for the ladies & gentlemen who work in our tourism industry.

Last year the JTB's buzz word was "Engagement" and our mandate was to keep the 42K sellers of travel engaged with the destination through creative ideas ... there were treasure hunts, cooking demos, mixology demonstrations etc. We also maintained a strong schedule of webinars and towards the end of the year resumed conducting fam trips once it was safe to do so.

Our goal is to increase our visibility in 2021...and as soon as it's safe you will be seeing our Business Development Managers in person. We have a very aggressive schedule of fam trips planned as we need to get you down to the island. We also have an expanded scheduled of webinars and want to hear from you as to content for webinars.

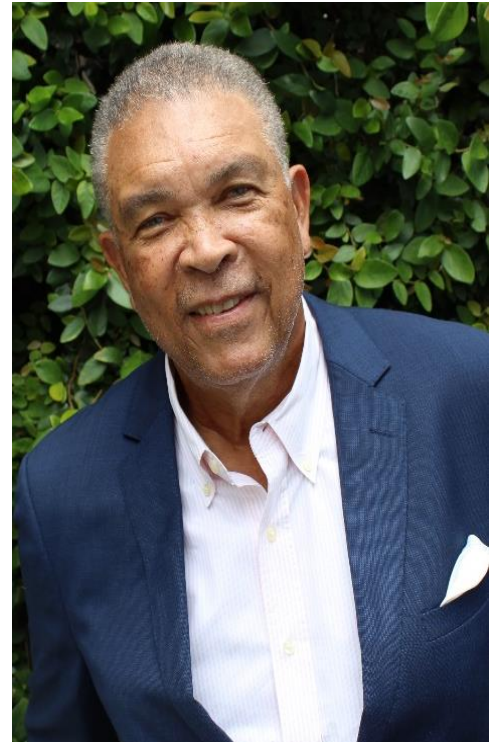
Yes, my friends this year promises hope, and here's hoping we can get back to normal living very soon.

Until then, stay safe and all the best.

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any questions at 1-800-JAMAICA.

One Love,

Donnie Dawson  
Deputy Director of Tourism, The Americas  
Jamaica Tourist Board





# WHAT'S IRIE

## Travel Agent FAM Trip To Jamaica

The Jamaica Tourist Board resumed its series of travel agent fams in November to ensure that travel specialists were equipped to share updates on the destination with their clients and boost business. Travel specialists have reported an increase in enquiries during the Fall and expressed confidence that interest will remain high for Jamaica during the Winter.

The small, intimate fams which included up to eight travel agents and one JTB representative began in the Southeast with Tamara Christie-Johnson visiting Negril and Montego Bay where they were hosted by Riu Palace Tropical Bay Negril & Secrets Wild Orchid Resort. This was soon followed by agents from the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic and Midwest where Matthew Blake, Victoria Harper, Kirk White and Sean-Pierre Webster served as hosts. Partner hotels included Grand Palladium, Secrets Wild Orchid, Hyata Ziva/Zilara, Couples Tower Isle, Moon Palace, and RIU Reggae.

Jamaica's Director of Tourism Donovan White admits that the Board is very encouraged by the increased interest in the destination and hope this is an indication of the trend going forward. He sees the series as important pointing out that travel specialists play a key role in the JTB's marketing and promotion efforts and adds that Jamaica is always happy to host them on-island so they can experience, all that the destination has to offer.in-person.

The travel agent fam series culminates in January.



## Ocean Eden Bay Set To Open In May 2021

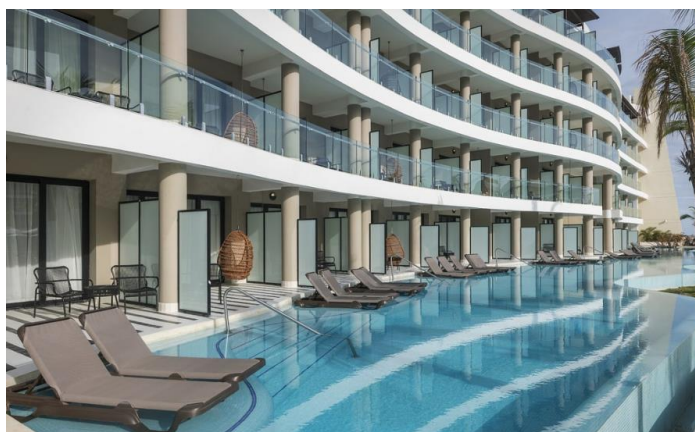
Jamaica is set to welcome an increased investment by H10 hotels with the planned opening of "Ocean Eden Bay" a luxe adults-only 5-star resort in May 2021. With 444 plush Junior Suites, Swim up, RoofTop and Master Suites, it will be the second biggest investment by H10 hotels in Jamaica.

Ocean Eden Bay will boast the first dining theatre *Senses*; which will offer a dinner show with live entertainment, in addition to luxury dining restaurants such as "Blue Moon" featuring a classic French cuisine, a Steakhouse among others. Guests staying at Ocean Eden Bay will also have complete access to the neighboring Ocean Coral Spring with another 10 dining options.

Among the features of the new property will be gorgeously designed spacious Junior suites with plush leather, soft textures, warm Caribbean tones and five-star amenities and fixtures. The elegantly designed resort will comprise an expansive adult-only pool area, swim up bars and large jacuzzi tubs and a picturesque beach with white sands and turquoise water.

Ocean Eden Bay will be the 2021 luxury paradise for adults as the 24-hour all-inclusive is expected to offer unmatched amenities and services with a warm and friendly caring Jamaican staff.

Feel free to take advantage of early booking offers with rates of up to 55% in savings.





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### Virtual Winter Sales Call Blitz

The JTB has begun its series of virtual winter sales blitz for the Northeast and Midwest markets. The series which begins in January will continue through March and is designed to update agents on the product. Reach out to your respective Business Development Managers with questions.

#### Northeast

Date	State
January 26 - 27	Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island
February 9 - 11	New York City (covering all 5 boroughs namely: Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, Bronx and Staten Island)
February 15 - 17	Suffolk County, NY
February 23 - 24	New Jersey

See schedule and register at: <https://www.visitjamaica.com/usa/northeast-sales-calls-blitz/>

#### Midwest

Date	Time	State
Tuesday, January 26	10:00 am – 12:30 pm CST	Minnesota
Thursday, January 28	10:00 am – 12:30 pm CST	North Dakota & South Dakota
Tuesday, February 2	10:00 am – 12:30 pm CST	Missouri

For schedule and to register, click: <https://www.visitjamaica.com/usa/digital-door-knocks/>

### Jamaica Bridal Expo



Jamaica continues to be a leader in destination weddings in the region. Studies show that more than one in three Caribbean destination weddings takes place in Jamaica. The Jamaica Bridal Expo was created as a means of showcasing what the island has to offer and brings together the best Jamaican wedding professionals all under one roof. This Expo offers wedding professionals and destination brides the opportunity to meet face to face with hotel wedding planners, and service providers in Jamaica for the Bridal market. However, due to the pandemic, this year's event will be held virtually on February 4, 2021. To learn more, go to:

[www.jamaicabridalexpo.com](http://www.jamaicabridalexpo.com)

Event organizers have promised an exciting day of activities and presentations and you're invited to register and get some inside tips about the Jamaican Destination Wedding Industry at

<https://jamaicabridalexpo.xpopromobile.com>.

# MEET THE PEOPLE

*In this issue, we speak with Amy Wooster of Destination Fun Travel in Louisburg, Kansas. Amy is a Leisure Travel Specialist and since becoming a Jamaica Travel Specialist has consistently reported her bookings. In this interview, Amy shares what she loves about her job and why she enjoys selling Jamaica.*

## How long have you been working in travel?

I have been in the industry for 4 years.

## How did you become involved in travel & tourism?

I worked in health care and loved to travel. I told my travel agent "I want to do this when I grow up." She gave me a chance and I jumped!

## What do you enjoy most about being a travel specialist?

I am a nurturer. I love helping clients with every step of the travel process. I treat every client as if they are my own family and ensure their experience is the best I can offer. My satisfaction is greatest when a client sends me a photo (sometimes even during their travels) or a note to let me know how much they love the trip.



## Tell us about how you got to where you are today.

My success as an agent is due to the support I receive from many people: my coworkers and agency owner at Destination Fun Travel, my family, friends and awesome clients, and the travel agent community. I have never met so many peers willing to assist others and who truly enjoy watching fellow agents grow. The travel agent community has been so uplifting and amazing during the pandemic, it has literally brought me to tears at times to see such kindness in the face of adversity. I am a huge advocate of continuing education, so I seek every opportunity to learn from client follow ups after trips, supplier and resort webinars, site visits, and personal travel.

## When did you begin selling Jamaica and why?

Jamaica is the first place I traveled outside of the US. I have had a strong fascination with Jamaica ever since then (I was still a teenager) and fell completely in love with Jamaica. I have sold Jamaica from day 1, literally even before I became an agent, and will continue. No island or experience has ever compared to Jamaica! From the gorgeous beaches, the welcoming people of Jamaica, the incredible cuisine, to the beauty of the island...I have never felt so content in my soul as when I am in Jamaica.

# MEET THE PEOPLE

## **What's your most memorable Jamaican experience, to date?**

Every single trip to Jamaica is unforgettable. My favorite trip, so far, was watching my family and friends experience Jamaica for the first time one Christmas. The excitement on their faces the first time they saw that 7-mile beach in Negril (and then the wonder in their eyes while snorkeling right off the beach) was priceless.

## **The current crisis will force sellers of travel to adapt. What do you believe that will look like?**

The travel industry is resilient. Agents have hope and believe in the safety protocols in place for travelers. I believe the industry and resorts may change, but for the better because they will continue with the renewed safety practices and attention to every detail.

## **How have you been coping during the pandemic?**

The pandemic has been a challenge to everyone in every industry and country. I kept faith throughout these months that as a whole, the world will come out of this far better than before. I believe people will treasure each experience more and appreciate even the smallest details of life and travel. Change happens and is sometimes difficult, but change is necessary for growth.

## **What do you miss most about Jamaica?**

I miss the Jamaican people and the peace in my soul...that feeling of being home with my first breath of air in Jamaica.

## **What was the highlight of your recent FAM trip?**

My recent FAM trip was incredible! I loved being back in Jamaica and was so impressed with the current safety protocols. Sean-Pierre Webster is an incredible storyteller, an endless depth of knowledge regarding Jamaica and tourism, and the best advocate for Jamaica I could ever encounter. I feel like his in-depth information about not just resorts and tourism, but the island and its people, history, industry, and local lore made this FAM the best I have ever had. I feel like I really learned more about the culture and the "why" of how things work than I thought possible.

## **What's the first thing you will do on your next visit to Jamaica?**

The first thing I will do when I return to Jamaica is take a deep breath, smile, and show as much appreciation as I am able to EVERY person I meet. I will say a prayer of thanks, grab a Red Stripe, and hit the beach!

## **My Fave 5**

**Jamaican Vacation Area:** Negril  
**Resort Area:** Montego Bay  
**Chill Out Spot:** Under a Palapa on the Beach  
**Jamaican Dish:** Mackerel Rundown  
**Jamaican Expression:** Wah Gwaan

# CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR ANNIVERSARY MILESTONE



In this issue, we pause to say thanks and show our appreciation to Andrea Chase, Inside Sales Representative at the Jamaica Tourist Board who is celebrating two decades of service having started back in January 2001 as an employee in the Chicago Regional Office.

Many of you know her as Andi, and for those who don't, you will get to know her as such after that first encounter and easily be drawn to her warm and engaging personality and her endearing smile.

Currently, based in Miami, she serves as Inside Sales Rep. providing administrative support to the Business Development Officers in the Southeast USA filling in whenever and wherever needed. Her duties include making arrangements for consumer and trade shows, fam trips, etc. and overall responsibility for moderating the Jamaica Travel Specialist Facebook Group Page.

So what keeps her going after all these years? "I enjoy the interaction and opportunities to provide assistance. This includes consumers I meet at events or who call the office seeking information and advice, as well as our travel advisors and industry partners who are so essential to our work of promoting Jamaica's tourism product," Chase notes.

Having had her start in the JTB's regional office in Chicago, she credits the late Clive Taffe, her first mentor for imparting a wealth of knowledge. Andi fondly remembers her early days in the Windy City.

"I am grateful to colleagues like John Woolcock and especially Philip Rose who unreservedly welcomed me into the JTB family. In a cold, windy city previously unknown to me, this acceptance and warmth cemented the beginnings of my love for this extraordinary industry which is the lifeblood of our island."

Regional Director Philip Rose, in congratulating Andi on this milestone, admits that working with her since the early days in Chicago has always been a pleasure and he's confident that the future will be better.

For Andi, the past two decades with the JTB has been memorable, however, it has been difficult for her to single out any one special moment. "There are just too many. I thoroughly enjoy the opportunities I get to visit Jamaica, whether officially or privately. No two visits are alike. There is always a new addition to the tourism product to explore, experience and enjoy," Chase states.

Andi's passion for promoting Jamaica is unparalleled and we thank her for her dedication. Congratulations on your 20th anniversary!