



Jamaica

☎ +876 / POP 2.68 MILLION

Includes ➔

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Wilkes Seafood (p524)
- ➔ Mi Hungry (p515)
- ➔ Stush in the Bush (p521)
- ➔ Jack Sprat (p540)
- ➔ Houseboat Grill (p531)

Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Katamah Beachfront Resort (p539)
- ➔ Rockhouse (p536)
- ➔ Goldeneye (p522)
- ➔ Neita's Nest (p514)
- ➔ Germaican Hostel (p523)

Why Go?

Jamaica is one of those countries that everyone thinks they know before they arrive, such is the power of its cultural branding. Who hasn't listened to a Bob Marley song, or gawped at the lightning feet of Usain Bolt?

The island is more than just a parade of clichés about dreadlocked Rastas and hot-heeled athletes though. Long white beaches are twinned with steep green mountains; relaxed resorts are contrasted against adrenaline-charged ghettos, the sophistication of the capital Kingston and the charm of fishing villages. Sweet reggae and slack dancehall vie with gospel and the sound of a country mixing up its (very visible) African roots with the opportunities of some 21st-century hustle – all in one of the most beautiful islands in the Caribbean. Jamaica has a complicated national soundtrack, but one that's impossible not to groove along to

When to Go

Dec–Mar High season. Expect sunny, warm days, especially on the coast. There is little rainfall, except in Port Antonio and the northeast. At night it can become chilly, particularly in the mountains.

Apr & May This is a good time to visit; the weather is still pretty dry (again, except in Port Antonio). Rates drop for accommodations, and there are far fewer tourists, especially in the big resorts/cruise ports.

Jun–Nov Low season. There is sporadic heavy rainfall across the island, except the south coast. Heavy storms, including hurricanes, gear up August to October. Many of Jamaica's best festivals happen in midsummer.

Jamaica Highlights

- 1 Rio Grande** (p526)
Drifting on a raft down the Rio Grande past former banana plantations.
- 2 Blue Mountain Peak** (p517)
Setting out before dawn to experience the greatest high in Jamaica.
- 3 Negril** (p534)
Exploring Jamaica's underwater topography with some of the island's best scuba outfits.

- 4 Appleton Rum Estate** (p544)
Delving into the island's largest rum distillery.
- 5 Blue Lagoon** (p524)
Diving through the famous Blue Hole.

- 6 Black River Great Morass** (p541)
Croc-spotting in the mangroves.
- 7 Cockpit Country** (p535)
Hiking, caving and birding in Jamaica's wild interior.

- 8 Bob Marley Museum** (p511)
Delving into the life of Jamaica's revered contemporary hero at his former home and studio.

