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THIS EDITION WRITTEN AND RESEARCHED BY

**Adam Karlin**  
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# Jamaica

CARIBBEAN  
SEA

78°W

**Windsor Caves**  
Rappel into these  
cathedral-like caverns (p183)

**Montego Bay**  
Jam to reggae's  
biggest celebration (p145)

**Negril**  
Splash around with  
hawksbill turtles (p188)

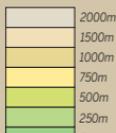


**Appleton Rum Estate**  
Beware the overproof;  
it's intimidating (p226)

**Treasure Beach**  
Gather with the  
international literati (p237)

**Alligator Pond**  
Enjoy Jamaica's  
seafood by the beach (p244)

## ELEVATION



78°W

18°N



0 50 km  
0 30 miles

**Blue Mountain Peak**  
Feel exhilarated at Jamaica's best sunrise (p88)

**Blue Lagoon**  
Dive through the famous Blue Hole (p101)

**Firefly**  
Redefine historical opulence and elegance (p132)

**Reach Falls**  
Slide down these fantastic cascades (p107)

**Port Royal**  
Follow in pirate Henry Morgan's footsteps (p68)

**Kingston**  
Dance till dawn at a pumping street jam (p39)

**Rio Grande**  
Pole through tranquil riverine jungle (p108)

CARIBBEAN SEA

Jamaica Channel

18°N

77°W

77°W

# itineraries

*Whether you've got six days or 60, these itineraries provide a starting point for the trip of a lifetime. Want more inspiration? Head online to [lonelyplanet.com/thorntree](http://lonelyplanet.com/thorntree) to chat with other travelers.*



One week

## Montego Bay & Around

Start in **Montego Bay**, the gateway to Jamaica for about 80% of international travelers. Hit **Doctor's Cave Beach** for water sports and head downtown to historic **Sam Sharpe Sq.** taking in the historic architecture and the hustle of a real Jamaican city. Are you exhausted by all that energy, or did it invigorate you? Either way, we recommend treating yourself to a fine meal on the Hip Strip afterwards; how about **Native**?

You can spend the next morning relaxing on Montego Bay's beaches and sampling more food, but we don't recommend lingering too long here. Heading east from MoBay you'll find two great houses: the more (in)famous **Rose Hall** and the more authentic **Greenwood Great House**. We recommend the latter. Grab lunch on the north coast and relax on the beach before taking a nighttime boating expedition at **Glistening Waters**.

The next day give yourself a crash course in Jamaican history with a walking tour of **Falmouth** and its crumbling Georgian buildings. Then catch the incredible cultural show at **Outameni**. Finish this itinerary with a rafting trip down the **Martha Brae River**.



Three Weeks

## Kingston, Blue Mountains & Portland

Touch down in **Kingston** for three days of sightseeing, excellent food and rip-roaring nightlife. Don't miss the **National Gallery**. Take in historic **Devon House** and lunch at one of Jamaica's famous restaurants; there's plenty to pick from, but we recommend **Red Bones Blues Cafe**. Whether or not you're a reggae fan, there's much to see at the **Bob Marley Museum**. After hours, enjoy some of the liveliest **night-life** in the Caribbean. For a captivating day trip, visit **Port Royal**, the earthquake-shattered former haunt of pirates and privateers.

Those hills looming over the city are calling, so slip into the **Blue Mountains**. Pamper your mind and body at **Strawberry Hill**, one of Jamaica's most excellent hotels, or spend the night in an economical hut perched on the side of a mountain. Enjoy the breathtaking scenery and crisp mountain air from hiking trails in **Blue Mountains-John Crow National Park**. The main event here is making an early-morning ascent of **Blue Mountain Peak**, Jamaica's highest mountain, from where you can see Cuba if the day is clear enough. If you are truly adventurous, whiz down from the highlands on a **bicycle tour**; if such a trip seems like a bit too much, enjoy a pleasant day seeing how the Caribbean's most prized coffee rises from bean to brewery at the **Old Tavern Coffee Estate**.

Descend from the Blue Mountains to **Portland parish**, on the prettiest stretch of the north coast. Walk the atmospheric streets of **Port Antonio**, taking lodging in one of the many intimate spots to the east of town or within the port's atmospheric historic district. East of Port Antonio, you'll find appealing communities with stellar beaches and attractive places to stay.

You can explore this terrific stretch of coast quickly or slowly, but it lends itself to some lingering. In the course of, say, five days you could go diving in the **Blue Lagoon** and stay at gorgeous **Kanopi House**, take a visit to **Boston Bay**, where you can sample the excellent surfing and jerk, stop in **Manchineal**, a terrific base for visiting **Reach Falls**, and while away the rest of your trip in quiet **Long Bay**.



## Three Weeks The Sunny South

Start your trip in **Bluefields**, where you'll find comfortable guesthouses, some exceptional stretches of beach and the **mausoleum of reggae star Peter Tosh**. We recommend shacking up in one of the local Rasta-run homestays, where you can begin to slip into the laid-back rhythms of the south coast.

Linger at this quiet fishing beach for a day or three, then continue on to **Black River**, a sleepy port town with lovely historic buildings and vintage hotels. This is the gateway for boat travel into the mangrove swamps of the **Black River Great Morass**, a gorgeous wetlands where crocodile sightings are common. A trip up the river will take up a day of your time; afterwards you can stay at excellent, value-for-money **Idlers Rest Beach Hotel** or the **Ashton Great House**.

In the morning head north to **Middle Quarters** for an unforgettable lunch of pepper shrimp at a crossroads eatery and an afternoon at the lovely **YS Falls**. Wet your whistle at the **Appleton Rum Estate**, then head south to **Treasure Beach**. Check into a hospitable guesthouse, idiosyncratic boutique hotel or luxurious villa and stay awhile in the welcoming embrace of this tight-knit community (folks seem to easily lose a month here). Be sure to take a boat trip to one of the planet's coolest watering holes, the **Pelican Bar**, perched on stilts on a sandbar 1km out to sea.

From Treasure Beach, visit **Lover's Leap** for an astonishing view of the coastlands. You could spend a day here walking around the sweet pastureland of **Back Seaside**. Continue along the coast to the fishing village of **Alligator Pond**. Far from packaged tourism, here you can enjoy traditional village life and unspoiled scenery at its best. You'll also enjoy a delicious seafood feast at a truly extraordinary beachside restaurant, **Little Ochie**.

If you have your own car, preferably a 4WD, and are a confident driver, head east from Alligator Pond on the 'lonely road.' This really is an isolated stretch of road, but you'll find wild, empty beaches here and, after many potholes, **Alligator Hole**, a small preserve where manatees can be spotted.

## CARIBBEAN SEA



## One week Ocho Rios to Runaway Bay

We'll start this trip from the anchor of tourism on the north central coast: **Ocho Rios**. There's a lot to see around 'Ochi' itself, from history (**St Ann's Bay**, where Christopher Columbus was marooned for a year) to kitschy tourism activities like **Mystic Mountain**, where you can bobsled in Jamaica a la *Cool Runnings*. Give yourself two days to chill out around Ocho Rios, taking full advantage of the tourist menu of activities, and don't forget to head up **Dunn's River Falls**.

Head west to see the **Maima Seville Great House & Heritage Park**, which really ought to be explored on horseback. Nearby in St Ann's Bay you can stop to take a peek at the **Columbus** and **Marcus Garvey monuments**.

Continue your westward expansion to Priory, where you'll want to stop by **Chukka Cove Farm**, where, instead of bobsled rides (done that), you can get pulled around by a dog sled.

Now head to Runaway Bay, where you can eat well, sleep well and base yourself for an exploration of the awesome **Green Grotto Caves** before continuing on to Discovery Bay and the simple charms of **Puerto Seco Beach**.

## One week The Central Coast

Start in Montego Bay and travel east to **Duncans**, making sure to stop in the atmospheric (and inaccurately named) **Sober Robin** pub. Afterwards you should head to **Rio Bueno** and spend the evening at the highly idiosyncratic hotel-art gallery that is the **Hotel Rio Bueno**. The next day, ask around for a guide to take you into the ghost-town countryside of the **Dornoch Riverhead**. If the thought of treading near ghosts scares you, head to **Braco Stables** instead and canter through the surf.

Now head east toward Ocho Rios and turn south to head through dramatic **Fern Gully**. After this slight detour, return to the coast and continue eastbound towards the towns of Oracabessa and Galina. If this all seems like a long distance, keep in mind it is only a 1½-hour/80km drive back to Duncans, where this tour began! Anyways, head east to see sights associated with a couple of famous British authors: Ian Fleming, who claims the lovely hotel of **Goldeneye**, and Noël Coward, whose former estate **Firefly** is now an excellent museum.



## One Week Go West, Young Traveler

Let your hair down – or get it braided – in **Negril** for a few days, until you've had your fill of peach-colored sunsets and rockin' reggae. Make sure to split your time between the smooth sands of the main beach and the coral cliffs and small guesthouses of the **West End**. You'd also do well to take a trip to **Roaring River Park** near Savanna-la-Mar for a day of incredible scenery and soaking in turquoise mineral pools.

Head east and try to book yourself a grand dinner at the **Round Hill Hotel** in Hopewell (if you've got a lot of cash to spare, stay here for an exquisite luxury experience). Afterwards, head into the western interior, giving yourself time to go rafting in the pretty town of **Lethe** and explore friendly villages like **Anchovy** and **Seaford Town**. There are numerous small farms and adventure-tour groups operating out here, and by all means, you can avail yourself of their services, but much of the joy of traveling here lays in soaking up the scenery. You'd be best served by your own car, though.

## One Week A Taste of Cockpit Country

From Montego Bay, head out to the **Good Hope Estate**, a beautiful great house and working plantation. Enjoy horseback riding, lunch on the terrace and tremendous views.

On narrow roads, travel through cane fields on your way to **Windsor**. Check into a modest lodge and wake to the sound of birds, then head off to explore **Windsor Caves** with a Rastafarian guide, or pay a visit to the **Windsor Great House** to learn about its environmental protection and bird-banding efforts.

Get ready for some challenging but rewarding **hiking**. From Windsor or Albert Town, you can hire a guide and walk the old military trail connecting Windsor (in the north) with Troy (in the south)...but be ready for some gnarly trails.

Exhausted and exhilarated, head east to Clark's Town, then **Albert Town**. This part of the journey is made for soaking up the scenery. Continue south and make sure to stop at **Accompong**, where you can meet Jamaica's remaining Maroons (descendants of escaped slaves).

It's possible to get around on this tour via route taxi, but you'll get the most out of it by renting a 4WD vehicle.



## OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Melbourne, London and Oakland, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

## OUR WRITERS



### Adam Karlin

**Coordinating Author, Plan Your Trip, Port Antonio & Northeast Coast, Montego Bay & Northwest Coast, Negril & West Coast, Jamaica Today, Music, Natural Jamaica, Food & Drink, Survival Guide** Adam Karlin has always covered the edges of the Caribbean for Lonely Planet – Miami, New Orleans, the Florida Keys – and he jumped at the chance to travel deep into the heart of the region. In Jamaica he barreled down mountain roads on crazy taxis, watched a silly amount of

beautiful sunsets, traded many stories for more shots of overproof rum, tasted some truly sublime jerk and turned 30. Adam has worked on over two dozen guidebooks for Lonely Planet.

Read more about Adam at:  
[lonelyplanet.com/members/adamkarlin](http://lonelyplanet.com/members/adamkarlin)



### Anna Kaminski

**Kingston & Around, Blue Mountains & Southeast Coast, Ocho Rios & North Coast, History, Jamaican Life** The Caribbean first captured Anna's imagination when she studied the history and literature of the region at the University of Warwick and joined the Caribbean Riddims Society for the raucous parties and the great food. She'd spent a year studying in Puerto Rico and island-hopping in the Leeward Islands before finally coming to Jamaica in 2006, where she

was thrown in the deep end by an NGO in Downtown Kingston. She spent five months becoming intimately acquainted with the city's ghettos and prisons while penning articles for the *Caribbean Times* on the shortcomings of the Jamaican justice system. Anna often finds herself hurtling along Jamaica's potholed roads in search of food; a connoisseur of Jamaican cuisine, she is prepared to travel great distances for that perfect piece of jerk pork.

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