



Kingston & Around

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Best Places to Eat

- » Andy's (p56)
- » Red Bones Blues Café (p57)
- » Gloria's Top Spot (p70)
- » Patrice's Restaurant (p56)
- » Prendy's On The Beach (p72)

Best Places to Stay

- » Spanish Court Hotel (p54)
- » City View Hotel (p54)
- » Moon Hill (p54)
- » Jamnesia Surf Camp (p66)
- » Morgan's Harbour Hotel (p70)

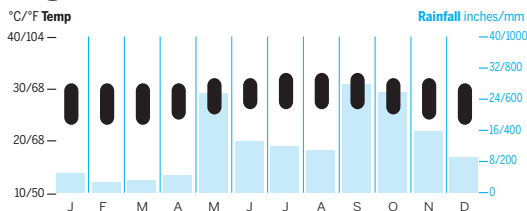
Why Go?

Jamaica's one true city, Kingston is something of an island within the island. It is Jamaica undiluted and unadulterated, its brisk business pace and chaotic traffic contrasting sharply with the timeless languor of resorts and villages elsewhere on the island. Justly proud for having been the launching pad for some of the world's most electrifying music, the city by no means trades on its past reputation; spirited clubs and riotous street-system parties attest to the fact that the beat is still alive and bumping. Kingston's cosmopolitan makeup has given rise to fine international dining but its dynamic galleries and museums remain unapologetically Jamaican.

The capital's proximity to the atmospheric historical ruins and grit of Spanish Town, the original capital, and the faded glory of Port Royal – one-time raucous pirate capital turned laid-back village awaft with the scent of frying fish – makes Kingston an ideal base for exploring eastern Jamaica.

When to Go

Kingston



Feb Carnival consisting of a week-long party involving soca music, parades and paint throwing.

Nov-Apr Best time for sightseeing; in December the island's choice lineup of stars appears at Sting.

Dec-Mar & Jul-Sep Best time for surfing (there are no waves outside those seasons).

Essential Eating

Visiting the culinary capital of Jamaica demands that you sample at least some of its specialties. Patties with beef, chicken, shrimp and lobster make a great snack, while jerk chicken and pork are a spicy, smoky taste explosion. Curry goat and oxtail and beans are flavorful, filling mains come with rice and peas (beans) and let's not forget the fish – steamed, stewed, fried or escoveitched. Vegetarians will love I-tal vegetable dishes and superb fresh fruit juices. Finish off with sweet potato pudding – a rich, bricklike delight.

STREET PARTY ETIQUETTE

If you attend one of Kingston's famous street parties, you'd do well to follow the locals' lead.

What to wear Batty riders (tight shorts) and figure-hugging tops are de rigueur for ladies, while guys should don jeans, 'puss boots,' clean shirts (pink and baby blue are perfectly manly), bandannas (sometimes worn in the style of Eastern European babushkas) and gold bling. Bring a spare rag for mopping your sweaty brow.

What to do Raise your hand in the air in a mock gun salute and shout 'Bullet, bullet!' or 'Brap, brap, brap!' to signify approval of a particular song. Grind and 'wine' with the best of them and do not show hesitation or fear. Guys may wish to form a dance crew to battle rival dance crews.

What to drink Vendors are always on hand with Red Stripes, rum or fish 'tea.'

Top Five Sound Systems

- » Passa Passa (p60), still the biggest Downtown street party that brings Uptown and Downtown together.
- » Weddy Weddy Wednesdays (p60) is Uptown's favorite street jam, put on by legendary local DJ, Stone Love.
- » Oldies Night (p60), held in the fishing village of Rae Town, attracts a mellow older crowd with a mix of Gregory Isaacs, Horace Andy, John Holt and Bob Marley.
- » Bounty Sundays (p62), a weekly favorite held in an outdoor club hosted by Bounty Killer, one of the biggest names in dancehall.
- » Street Vybz (p61), a street party with an edgy vibe re-created in an indoor setting and presided over by Vybz Cartel.

AT A GLANCE

Currency Jamaican dollars (J\$), US dollars (US\$)

Language English, patois

Money ATMs all over; banks open Monday to Friday

Visas Not required for citizens of the EU, Australia or US

Fast Facts

- » **Population** 780,000
- » **Emergency** ☎110
- » **Side of road to drive on** Left

Set Your Budget

- » **Budget hotel room** J\$3825
- » **Two-course evening meal** J\$1700
- » **Bob Marley Museum admission** J\$1000
- » **Beer** J\$180
- » **Bus fare in Kingston** J\$80

Resources

- » **Jamaica Tourist Board** (www.visitjamaica.com) Introduction to the island's attractions.
- » **Jamaicans** (www.jamaincans.com) Jamaican culture, cookery, news, blogs and tourist information.
- » **Jamaica Heritage Trust** (www.jnht.com) Detailed info on heritage sites and attractions in Kingston and islandwide.
- » **Yard Flex** (www.yardflex.com) News, culture, fashion, dancehall lyrics, message boards and much more.