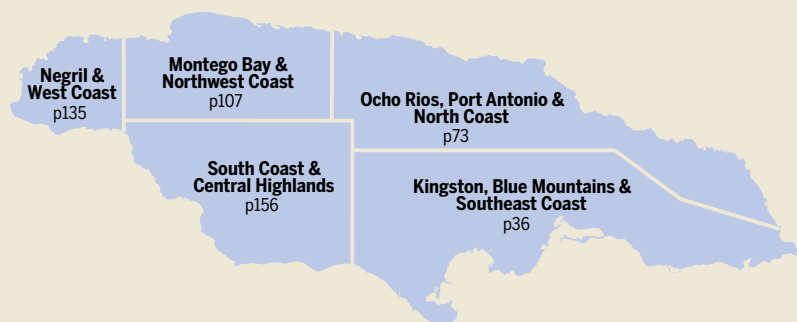




Jamaica



THIS EDITION WRITTEN AND RESEARCHED BY

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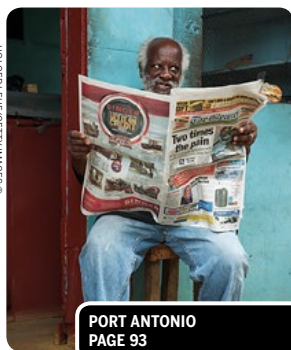
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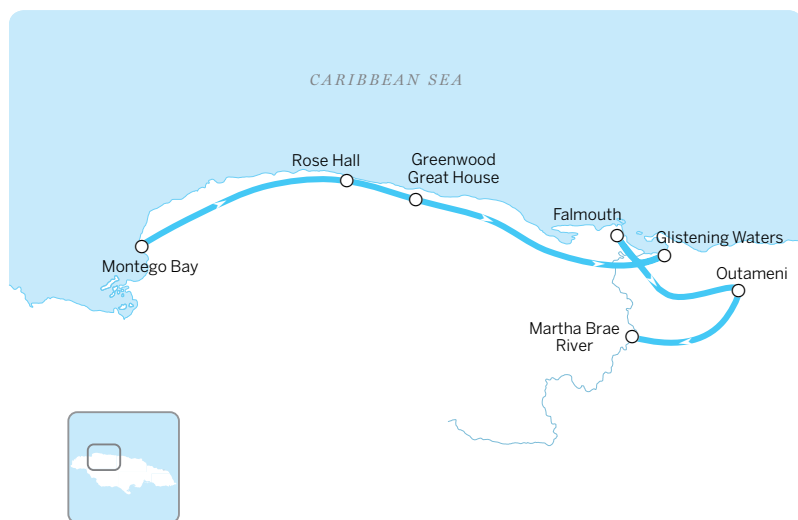
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Itineraries

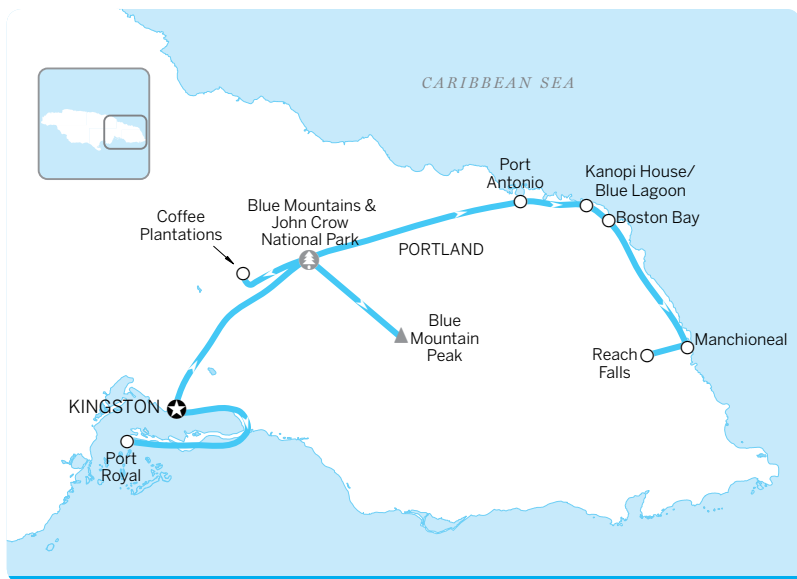


Montego Bay & Around

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 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, finish up with a fine meal on the Hip Strip.

Spend the next morning relaxing on Montego Bay's beaches and maybe enjoy a cold Red Stripe and plate of jerk for lunch, but don't linger too long. 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 faded Georgian buildings. Then catch the incredible cultural show at **Outameni**. Finish this itinerary with a rafting trip down the **Martha Brae River**.



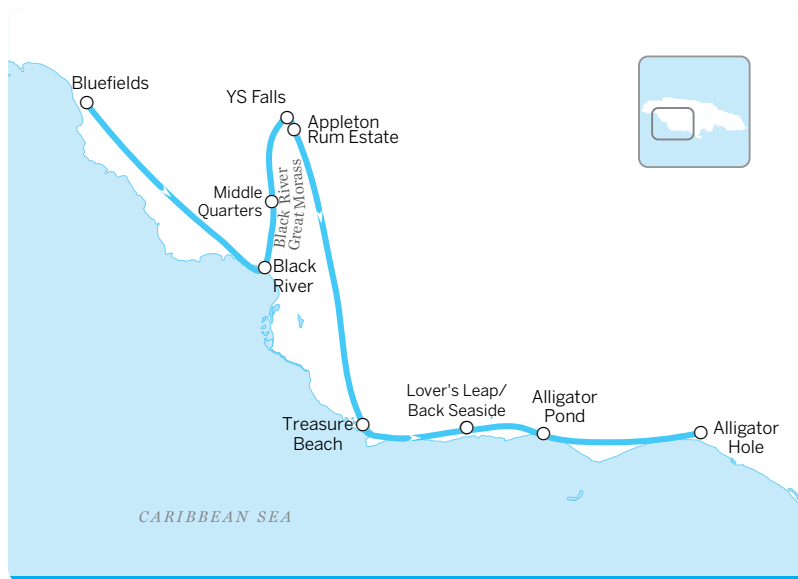
Kingston, Blue Mountains & Portland

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, enjoying Jamaica's best patties and ice-cream while you're there. Afterwards head up to Bob Marley Museum. After hours, enjoy dinner and live music at Red Bones Blues Cafe, segueing elsewhere into a dancehall party and some of the liveliest nightlife 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. 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. 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 one of several **coffee plantations**.

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**, the home of jerk cooking, stop in **Manchioneal**, a terrific base for visiting the sublime **Reach Falls**, one of the best waterfalls on the island.



The Sunny South

Start your trip in **Bluefields**, where you'll find 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 boats 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 visit 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**. 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 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.

1
WEEK

Ocho Rios & the Central Coast

Start this trip in the tourist town of **Ocho Rios**. Give yourself two days to chill out around Ocho Rios, taking full advantage of the tourist menu of activities, especially **Mystic Mountain** and the amazing **Dunn's River Falls**.

Drive along the coast towards **Ora-cabessa** to see sights associated with James Bond author Ian Fleming, such as the lovely hotel of Goldeneye; and **Galina Point** for Noël Coward, whose former estate Firefly is now an excellent museum.

Turning back, head past Ocho Rios before stopping in at St Ann's Bay to see the Columbus and Marcus Garvey monuments, then on to the **Maima Seville Great House & Heritage Park**, which can be explored on horseback.

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**.

1
WEEK

A Taste of Cockpit Country

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

On narrow roads, travel through cane fields to **Windsor**. Check into a 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 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 **Troy**. 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.



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 Franklin, London, Melbourne, Oakland, Beijing and Delhi, 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



Paul Clammer

Coordinating Author; Kingston, Blue Mountains & Southeast Coast; Ocho Rios, Port Antonio & North Coast

Paul Clammer has contributed to more than 25 Lonely Planet guidebooks and worked as a tour guide in countries from Turkey to Morocco. In a previous life he may even have been a molecular biologist.

Having spent a year living in post-earthquake Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Jamaica was always high on his travel list. One of the most important lessons he learned on this research trip was that if you stay out until 4am drinking rum at a dancehall street party in a Kingston ghetto, don't expect to get too many hotel reviews done the next day.

Read more about Paul at:
lonelyplanet.com/members/paulclammer



Brendan Sainsbury

Montego Bay & Northwest Coast; Negril & West Coast; South Coast & Central Highlands

Originally from Hampshire, England, Brendan grew up appreciating Jamaica from his safe European home; coupling a teenage penchant for punk-reggae with a lifelong love of cricket. His curiosity was further piqued while living in London's quintessential Jamaican district, Brixton, during the 1990s. When Lonely Planet came knocking, Brendan jumped at the chance to track 90 miles south from his customary haunt, Cuba to sample Negril's sunsets and Treasure Beach's beautiful languor. He has since developed a healthy appetite for Red Stripe beer, Blue Mountain coffee and saying the words 'yah mon!' at the end of every sentence.

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