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[JAMAICA](#)

Jamaica is a lush tropical island situated in the Caribbean Sea about 90 miles south of Cuba. It's the third largest island in the Caribbean, stretching 146 miles long by 50 miles wide. It's a popular tourist destination for its beautiful white sandy beaches and many all-inclusive style beach resorts. The tropical climate is generally warm & humid and the mountainous landscape is lush and green. You'll find rugged mountains, waterfalls, caves, jungle and plenty of spectacular coastline. Jamaica's Blue Mountains rise to a 7402-foot elevation and can be capped with light snow at times. Author Ian Fleming, who lived in Jamaica, often used the island as a setting in his James Bond spy novels. Aside from mining and agriculture, tourism is the leading industry in Jamaica. Over 1 million Tourists flock to Jamaica each year. Jamaica's major airports are located in Montego Bay and Kingston (the capital city located in the south).



JAMAICA



The island is rich with history. It was first occupied by the Spanish after Columbus landed on the island in 1494. Jamaica was also part of the British West Indies Colonies until it became an independent island nation in 1962. Both historic influences are visible on the island today. You can visit some of the beautifully restored colonial plantation houses. Once a large exporter of sugar using slave labor, about 90% of Jamaica's population is of African descent. Although the official language is English, it can be difficult at times to understand some of the local slang.

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If you are not familiar with Reggae music and Bob Marley when you get to Jamaica, you will be familiar by the time you leave. Known as the Father of Reggae Music, Bob Marley spread the message of the Rastafari religious movement to the world through his Reggae music before passing away in 1981. You can find abundant Bob Marley memorabilia throughout the island and will see his face printed on many T-shirts as you shop around. You can tour Bob Marley's house and mausoleum at Nine Mile. It's like Jamaica's funky little Graceland.



Certain areas of Jamaica are known for high levels of crime. Most visitors to Jamaica stay away from the capital city of Kingston due to its bad reputation. Remember to simply remain cautious while visiting Jamaica but not overly paranoid. Jamaica is one of the most beautiful and lush of the Caribbean islands, so enjoy it. The locals in the resort areas are generally very friendly and full of smiles. Much of the local population is poor, so they are simply looking to make a buck off tourism. Street vendors can at times be aggressive in their sales approach and it can get irritating after a while as you stroll around town. Learn to just say no politely and smile. It is not uncommon for the locals to offer to sell you Marijuana. Some make their living at it and it is a local custom for many. Cab drivers have been known to run this type of side business. Although it is commonly smoked, Marijuana is not legal and you can subject yourself to crime if you are not careful with your wallet. Stick with the cocktails at the bar. Jamaica can be enjoyable if you stay smart. Wandering around the streets at night is not advised. Enjoy the resorts and other reputable tourist establishments in the evening. Just don't let too much caution keep you from enjoying what Jamaica has to offer. Get out and enjoy some spicy Jerk Chicken and have your hair braided. There are many organized excursions and activities offered by reputable tour operators and you can have your resort arrange for a good taxi service. A good cab driver can make a great tour guide. Go rafting, take a party boat, visit a Voo Doo Museum, or go shopping at the local crafts markets.

With Jamaica's many All-Inclusive resorts you may find very little need to leave your resort property once you have checked in. The major resort areas are situated mainly on the lush north coast and include Montego Bay and Ocho Rios. To the west you'll find the more laid back trendy Negril which is also a major resort area. Montego Bay is the second largest city and is the hub for Jamaica's tourism. Set on a beautiful calm bay, it's ideal for swimming, diving and has fine sandy beaches.



Montego Bay is home to many of Jamaica's finer resorts including the 5-Star Ritz Carlton. Ocho Rios is located about 70 miles east of Montego Bay. Its a popular cruise ship port and is always alive with tourists. Here you'll find the famous 600-foot Dunn's River Falls that cascade down to the sea. Climbing the falls is popular. Negril is situated on the west coast about 50-miles from Montego Bay. Negril has a spectacular 7-mile sandy beach and many top notch all-inclusive resorts. In Negril you can check out the cliff divers at the popular Rick's Café, a local hot spot.



Although there are many quaint old-world style boutique beach hotels in Jamaica, VoyageMonkey recommends going with a well-known all-inclusive resort for your Jamaican vacation. The "all-inclusive" was popularized here and they do a great job at it. They offer, food, drinks, entertainment, water-sports, excitement, pampering and relaxation. You will find

all your needs are taken care of and will want to just hang out and enjoy the treatment. The most popular chains of the all-inclusives in Jamaica are Sandals, Superclubs and Couples.

Sandals has seven resorts in Jamaica at various locations. Resorts include Sandals Dunn's River Villagio, Sandals Grande Ocho Rios, Sandals Inn, Sandals Montego Bay, Sandals Negril, Sandals Royal Caribbean, and Sandals Whitehouse. VoyageMonkey recommends Sandals Negril, Sandals Grande Ocho Rios or Sandals Royal Caribbean. Sandals resorts' all-inclusive program includes all gourmet a la carte restaurant meals, unlimited premium brand drinks, water sports including scuba diving, spa services, and butler service. One feature of Sandals is that you have exchange priveledges at other Sandals resorts including dining and courtesy shuttle service is provided. Airport transfers are included.



Superclubs operates nine resorts that include Superclubs Grand Lido Braco, Grand Lido Negril, Breezes Montego Bay, Breezes Run Away Bay, Hedonism II, Hedonism III, Starfish Trelawny, and Negril Beach Villas. Some Superclubs resorts tend to

be more affordable than Sandals or Couples as they cater to the more budget minded and are more casual style resorts. VoyageMonkey recommends Superclubs Grand Lido Braco or Grand Lido Negril. The Grand Lido resorts & spas are Superclubs flagship luxury brand resorts. The all-inclusive program includes dining, premium drinks, water sports, spa services, entertainment, 24-hour room service and hotel shuttle.



Couples, a couples only resort, has four resort properties that include Couples Ocho Rios, Couples Sans Souci, Couples Negril, and Couples Swept Away. The resorts are excellent for couples seeking a romantic get away. VoyageMonkey recommends Couples Negril or Couples Sans Souci in Ocho Rios. The resorts offer all-inclusive gourmet dining, unlimited premium brand drinks, water sports & scuba, golf, entertainment, daily activities and shuttle service.



Other recommended luxury resorts in Jamaica include the 5-Star Ritz Carlton Golf & Spa Resort Rose Hall (Montego Bay), the 5-Star Iberostar Rose Hall (Montego Bay), and the 4-Star Sunset Jamaica Grande Resort (Ocho Rios).

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