

The Gleaner
Hospitality Jamaica

KEEPING YOU CONNECTED TO THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2017

CARIBBEAN TRAVEL
MARKETPLACE

STILL ON FOR

SAN JUAN



Caribbean Travel Marketplace still on for San Juan

CHTA voices confidence in Puerto Rico readiness by January and urges industry support

PUERTO RICO will host the Caribbean's largest tourism marketing event in San Juan from January 30 to February 1, 2018, as officials work rapidly to prepare hotels and meeting facilities impacted by the recent hurricanes.

"In rolling out a re-energized Caribbean Travel Marketplace, we look forward to showing the world how the courage, determination and hard work of the Puerto Rican people and tourism industry have prevailed in view of the challenges they are currently facing," said Frank Comito, director general and CEO of the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA).

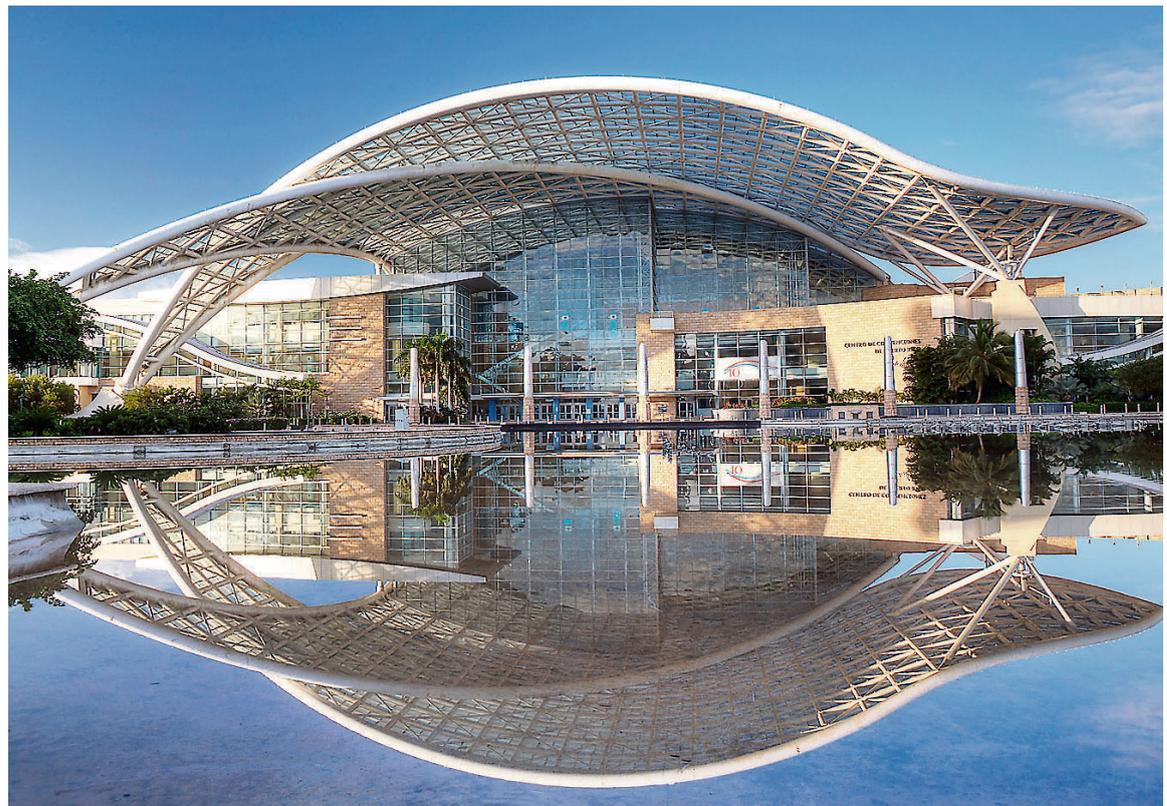
Comito said the Puerto Rican people's resilience in rebuilding communities and getting their tourism and hospitality sector up and running is inspiring. "It is important for the entire Caribbean region, our industry's travel partners and those who book travel to the Caribbean to show their support. Already, most of the region's tourism industry is open for business and we anticipate that by the end of the year, most of the hotels in Puerto Rico will be welcoming guests, as will a growing number of hotels from the other impacted destinations," he noted.



Karolin Troubetzkoy at the recent State of the Tourism Industry Conference in Grenada.

Marketplace is produced by CHTA in collaboration with the Puerto Rico Convention Center District Authority, the Puerto Rico Tourism Company, and the Puerto Rico Hotel and Tourism Association.

CHTA President Karolin Troubetzkoy said Caribbean hoteliers, destination representatives and industry stakeholders who rely on doing business with the region will have a unique opportunity to learn



Puerto Rico Convention Centre.

about the region's diverse offerings, new products, improvements and upgrades, and niche market opportunities. "Marketplace also connects people, renewing business relationships and establishing new contacts," she said.

Troubetzkoy also commended the people of Puerto Rico and other affected destinations. "Faced with so much adversity, our people have exhibited tenacity, bravery and dedication in helping their brothers and sisters rebuild their lives, while committing to welcoming visitors back to their shores," she commented.

Omar Marrero, executive director of the Puerto Rico Convention Center District Authority, thanked CHTA and the wider Caribbean for showing solidarity with the territory during this challenging period, declaring,



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Cocoo La Palm's Andria Brown (left) and William Vassell caters to the needs of Apple Leisure Group's Gineen Gallow at Caribbean Travel Marketplace 2017 in The Bahamas.



Deja Resort's Shari Edwards and Robin Russell (right) doing business with Shri Lildharrie at Caribbean Travel Marketplace 2017 in The Bahamas.



From left: SuperClub's Gwenn Feliciano, Muna Issa and Zein Nakash at Caribbean Travel Marketplace 2017 in The Bahamas.

"¡Nosotros estaremos listos! (We will be ready!) We look forward to welcoming our Caribbean family and our national and international partners to our island – come and do business, that's the best way to help us rebound in the new year."

Marrero is also the executive director of the Puerto Rico Ports Authority and the Puerto Rico Public-Private Partnerships Authority.

The Puerto Rico Convention Center will see a dynamic array of



PHOTOS BY JANET SILVERA

The Aimbridge Hospitality Group team at Caribbean Marketplace 2017 in The Bahamas.



Sea Gardens Resort's Tricia-Ann Bicarie (left) and BookIt.com's Moya Johnson.



Tropical Tours' Maria Fray (left) and Sophie Chauvea share lens time with the Jamaica Tourist Board's Gregory Shervington.

meetings between hotel and destination representatives, online travel agents, tour operators and MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions) planners, with a busy programme of thousands of prescheduled appointments. Marketplace 2018 will also see a wider range of suppliers eager

to promote their new contributions to this fast-growing sector. "In addition to the traditional partners and Marketplace participants, we want to stimulate and maintain these fresh connections to ensure current and future suppliers can remain abreast of the expanding needs of tourism at the



From left: Island Route's David Shields, Jamaica Inn's Kyle Mais, Amstar's Richard Bourke and Spanish Court's Christopher Issa at Caribbean Travel Marketplace 2017 in The Bahamas.



From left: Director of Tourism Paul Pennicook; regional director for Canada, Philip Rose; deputy director in charge of the Americas, Donnie Dawson; and Zein Nakash of SuperClubs at Caribbean Travel Marketplace 2017 in The Bahamas.

region's largest and longest-running marketing event. Our team at CHTA is constantly adjusting to a changing and competitive travel environment so we can exceed delegates' expectations," Troubetzkoy said.

In 2017, Caribbean Travel Marketplace, hosted by The Bahamas, attracted 114 buyer companies from 20 countries. More than 1,100 delegates from 31 countries participated in more than 10,000 prescheduled appointments.

The event opens on the evening of Tuesday, January 30, preceded by educational sessions earlier in the day. For more information, visit www.chtamarketplace.com or call +1 305 443-3040. Details about registration can be found at www.chtamarketplace.com/registration-fees.



Holiday Inn's Patrick Flemming has the attention of two buyers at his booth at Caribbean Travel Marketplace at Caribbean Travel Marketplace 2017 in The Bahamas.

Montego Bay Convention Centre a catalyst for tourism growth

THE MONTEGO Bay Convention Centre (MBCC) was the main deciding factor for the location of the Jamaica Classic, the newest of the US College Basketball Early Season Tournaments, which will be held in Montego Bay from November 17-19, 2017.

The tournament will see seven universities, including Florida State University, Colorado State University, Fordham University, Tulane University, University of Hartford, University of Ohio and LIU Brooklyn, travel to Montego Bay to compete for the inaugural championship.

According to Jacob Ridenhour of the New York-based Van Wagner Sports and Entertainment Group (VWSE), whose vision it was to establish the Jamaica Classic Basketball Tournament, “The Montego Bay Convention Centre had a number of positives. It had the capacity and requisite facilities to accommodate the tournament, it is in close proximity to several high-end hotels, and beaches, to provide the sun, sand, sea experience and not least, I was impressed by the professionalism of the management team.”

TOP CONVENTION DESTINATION

The MBCC, built as a state-of-the-art multi-purpose facility, is realising its potential to meet local tourist-related conference events, consumer shows, indoor sports events and entertainment events for both local and international markets. Dittie Guise, general manager of the SMG-managed facility, noted



Montego Bay Convention Centre.

that the location of the Jamaica Classic is testament to the fact that the centre has met its objective of positioning Jamaica as the foremost convention destination in the Caribbean and thus bringing in thousands of visitors to Montego Bay annually.

“We are pulling out all the stops to ensure the seamless execution of this event. We have acquired a NCAA Division 1

regulation standard size basketball court suitable for Varsity intercollegiate men’s and women’s basketball. The Jamaica Classic Tournament will be staged inside Exhibition Halls A and B. The facility will be fully equipped with the requisite audiovisual equipment, (and will have) ample parking and catering facilities to match the needs of sporting events,” shared Guise.

Jacob Ridenhour explained that this would be a boon for Montego Bay’s tourist industry, considering that this type of event attracts hundreds to thousands of visitors to any location in which it is staged. “This is a proven model of over 32 years in some places. These tournaments have been held in The Bahamas; Cancun; Mexico; Puerto Rico; Hawaii; and St Thomas, US Virgin Islands. Local annual economic impact will grow to be huge. Hawaii brings in US\$17 million, Bahamas brings in US\$10 million while St Thomas regularly earns over US\$2 million,” he stated.

In exposure alone, the Jamaica Classic will be putting millions of eyes on Jamaica. All of the games on Friday the 17th and Sunday the 19th will be broadcast on television via CBS Sport Network, reaching 60 million households in the US alone while being streamed worldwide at CBSSports.com.

Ridenhour emphasised that while the Jamaica Classic is a basketball event, it is not being targeted only at sports fans, but at the public at large. “We see this as an entertainment event which uses basketball as the vehicle to bring people to the island to enjoy themselves and to bring out Jamaicans to enjoy a fast-growing entertainment and sporting option at the highest levels,” he said.

UNWTO global conference to host exposition on ‘smart destinations’

TOURISM MINISTER Edmund Bartlett has disclosed that an exposition on ‘Smart Tourism Destinations’ will be mounted at the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Government of Jamaica, World Bank Group and Inter-American Development Bank global conference.

The event, which will focus on ‘Jobs and Inclusive Growth: Partnerships for Sustainable Tourism’, is scheduled to take place at the Montego Bay Convention Centre from November 27 to 29.

“The expo will showcase several major technology entities, particularly those involved in disruptive business and technology models that will demonstrate how

technology is impacting tourism to create seamless visitor experiences,” the minister revealed.

Smart destinations are an extension of the concept of smart cities to tourism areas. The model is based on the use of technologies to improve efficiency and customer service in destinations by providing quick and personalised responses to the needs of tourists, tourism firms and the government.

Bartlett pointed out that the transformative power of tourism will be demonstrated during the conference. “We want to give the world a vision of the Jamaican destination as one that has tourism firmly embedded in its DNA, underpinning the growth potential and projections for our country.”

The tourism minister said that UNWTO conference will also be a catalyst for development of the global and Caribbean tourism industry. “Day one will be dedicated to the future of tourism in the Caribbean, focusing on climate change and exploring recovery strategies in the wake of the impact of hurricanes Irma and Maria on states in the region.”

He made those disclosures during the recent signing of sponsorship agreements for the conference by Red Stripe and the Jewel and Rose Hall Resorts, at the Kingston offices of the Ministry of Tourism on October 20.

Red Stripe will partner in all aspects of entertainment for the



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Minister of Tourism Ed Bartlett (right), area director of marketing and communications, Jewel Resorts and Rose Hall Resort, Charmaine Deane (centre), and permanent secretary in the Ministry of Tourism, Jennifer Griffiths, share a moment after the signing of a sponsorship agreement with the hotels for the upcoming conference.

conference, including the welcome reception. In addition, the Jewel Grande in Montego Bay

will be one of the signature hotels to host VIPs and the prime minister’s luncheon.

42 years at JAMAICA GRANDE

*My job takes care of my family,
says Vincent Rhule*

Carl Gilchrist
Hospitality Jamaica Writer

IN 1975, when the Intercontinental Hotel opened in Ocho Rios, Vincent Augustus Rhule was one of the workers who gained employment at the new resort.

He had been working at a guest house as a gardener and pool attendant when the secretary at the property got a job at the newly opened hotel, and, knowing the quality of work Rhule and the other staff members had delivered over the year, decided to seek openings for them. She succeeded.

Forty-two years later, Rhule has been honoured by the management at Moon Palace Jamaica Grande for his years of service to the property.

Through the ownership and name changes of the two individual properties – Intercontinental, Americana, Sheraton, Mallards Beach Hyatt, to the merger between Sheraton and Americana to create Renaissance Jamaica Grande, then Sunset Jamaica Grande, to the current Moon Palace Jamaica Grande Rhule ruled his domain. His work ethic kept him employed despite the changes.

In fact, in the 42 years, Rhule has kept the lobby at Moon Palace Jamaica Grande spanking clean.

The father of two is appreciative of the job, especially because it has

allowed him to take care of his family.

“I have a daughter and a son and I treat them to the best of my ability because I sent them to a good school, and the job is what puts food on the table. The job is what takes care of them, and they’re satisfied.”

Now that they are grown, Rhule said with a chuckle that he is a free man.

“We try to live a respectable life, a clean life. We don’t try to put ourselves in worries. We don’t mix with people who we know can put you apart. So we just live a clean life, and that’s why they keep me over there (the hotel) until now.”

He laughed again, this time more heartily and longer.

RESPECTED BY MANAGEMENT

Respect and honesty are also factors that play a huge part in successive employers giving Rhule, a resident of Lancewood in Exchange, Ocho Rios, a job.

“Over the years, I’ve been working at that place. I’m respected by management. Management is management, so you respect management. I get a lot of respect. Nobody treats me with impunity. Everybody always say, ‘Mr Rhule, everything is ok?’ from the first owners in 1975 to the present one. I never sit in HR manager (office) charged for anything. So now I’m an



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Vincent Rhule (second left) with Managing Director Clifton Reader (left) and other members of the Moon Palace management team.

old man (he’s a happy 67-year-old!) I try to live up higher and higher.

“If you make it rough, it will always be rough, but I try to be quiet. I try to be honest, and that’s my career over the years.”

Rhule warns that the main reason people lose their jobs is because of dishonesty. “If I’m not supposed to drink a Pepsi, why should I drink a Pepsi? When

management ketch me and I lose my job it’s my fault. I can’t blame management.”

Rhule’s work ethic has seen him picking up several awards over the years and completing several courses relevant to his job.

“You have a lot of people who try to put up to higher standards. I like to clean the floor. I like to do things, and I do a good job, so I’ve

been recognised by what I’ve done over the years. Up to now, I’m still (being) recognised.”

This latest recognition took place recently at Moon Palace when Managing Director Clifton Reader and other members of the management team paid tribute to Rhule at a luncheon in his honour, along with a framed poem from the Palace Foundation.



Vincent Rhule

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The solo traveller and the Caribbean

David Jessop

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

ONE OF the odder experiences in my past was when, while sitting on a beach in Barbados, a young American visitor appeared from nowhere and asked if I was vacationing on my own. As it happened, I was quietly spending a Sunday alone before a week of political interviews.

His surprising response was to beckon over a small assorted group of women and men, who, like me, were in their 20s. He had gathered them together from elsewhere on the beach, and all were vacationing alone, staying at different hotels, and had not met each other before.

To this day, I have no idea why he was doing this – he disappeared after introducing us to each other, and we all had a fun afternoon and evening – but it was, in retrospect, an interesting idea; and a near example of quite how many people then, and more so today, choose to travel alone to the Caribbean.

In recent weeks, the issue of solo travel – which has many



DAVID JESSOP

forms – has become the focus of a number of articles in the travel trade press and mainstream media. This is in part because an award-judging panel for a Toronto-based company, Solo Travellers, did not give one to the cruise industry because of the premium prices charged to passengers taking a cabin alone.

Although the cruise industry hit back with senior executives saying that single cabins sold more quickly than others and represented good value, the publicity brought to wider attention a complex and growing industry segment.

Solo travellers, at one end of the spectrum, are individuals who arrange everything for themselves, and who want to completely immerse themselves in the authenticity of where they are visiting. They come from all age groups, might use Airbnb, but tend to make spur-of-the-moment decisions on travel and accommodation. They are often well off and financially independent. There is also a rapidly growing category of individuals who use very personal tour operators that create small communities of like-minded individual travellers who want to share experiences, and make new friends. There are also individuals, often older, who – for example,

have been widowed or divorced – want the social and travel experience of a cruise or a beach vacation.

The consequence is that individual travel has become a growing but little-recognised industry category.

This should not be surprising as single people now make up the majority of the US population. Moreover, statistics suggest that in 2015, some 15 per cent of all UK vacationers travelled alone, and that many solo travellers are not single and later return with others.

CONCERNS AND MOTIVATIONS

More recently, Crimson Hexagon, a data-based analytics company that mines social media conversations to provide insights into consumer thinking, undertook detailed research into solo travellers' principal concerns and motivations.

Their findings suggest: joy was a major driver, but safety was a major concern; that the travel industry and destinations only had a limited recognition of the solo travel market; that women were considered to be more at risk than men from travelling alone, despite their research showing that 58 per cent of solo travel involved women above 35; and that the principal driver is claiming personal freedom and empowerment, sometimes against the wishes of a partner.

If evidence is needed about the nature of demand, one only has to search online for 'solo travel'. From the large numbers of companies and on-line commentary, it is evident and that there are now many small travel companies offering sophisticated and flexible products in the Caribbean and elsewhere, with pricing structures dedicated to individuals.

What this suggests is that while couples, families and groups will remain the largest buyers of Caribbean travel and hospitality, and tour operators, the cruise lines and hotels will market their product accordingly, solo travel has become mainstream. It represents a unique if quite complex market segment that deserves greater consideration by destinations and an industry that too often relies on standard business models.



IATA and ACI launch NEXTT

THE INTERNATIONAL Air Transport Association (IATA) in collaboration with Airports Council International (ACI), has launched the New Experience in Travel and Technologies (NEXTT) initiative.

In light of the projected doubling of air travel demand by 2036, new on-ground concepts are, and increasingly will be required to optimise the use of emerging technologies, processes and design developments. NEXTT aims to

help deliver this future by developing a common vision to enhance the on-ground transport experience, guide industry investments and help governments improve the regulatory framework. "We will not be able to handle

the growth or evolving customer expectations with our current processes, installations and ways of doing business. And accommodating growth with ever-bigger airports will be increasingly difficult, if not impossible. NEXTT will address these challenges. Working with our airport partners, we will explore the important changes in technology and processes to enhance the

customer experience. And we will ask some fundamental questions about what really needs to happen at the airport and what can be done off-site," said Alexandre de Juniac, IATA's director general and CEO.

"NEXTT will seek to provide a seamless journey by exploring

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Hospitality students host INTERNATIONAL CUISINE DAY



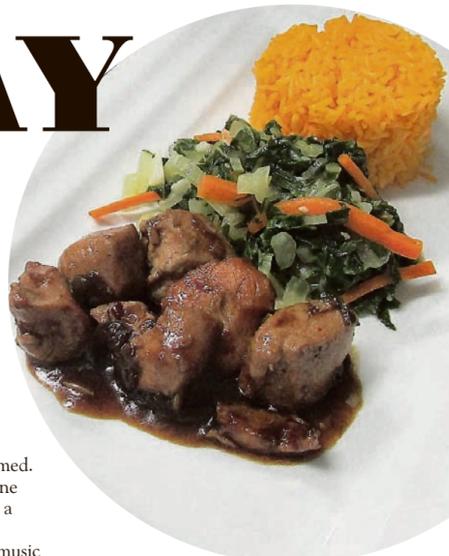
From left: Mekealia Burey, team leader; Rayanne Clarke, assistant head of schools; and Witcliffe Doyley, international cuisine lecturer.

Paul H. Williams
Hospitality Jamaica Writer

OUTSIDE WAS wet from the morning rain. The sky was overcast. Things looked gloomy. Yet, inside the setting was cosy and colourful, almost festive.

Green tablecloths were contrasted against big, red bows wrapped around white-covered chairs. Golden platters stood out among the silver cutlery, and from crystal glasses red napkins mushroomed. In the centre of each table, white pine cones were mounted. It seemed like a prelude to Christmas.

In the background, instrumental music from the East complemented the mood in the room from which anxious final-year students of the School of Tourism,



Hospitality and Entertainment Management went to and fro. It was their big moment, International Cuisine Day, at the 20 Camp Road, St Andrew, Excelsior Community College campus, and nothing should go wrong.

As part of the requirements of their international cuisine core course, they were to manage a restaurant, preparing and serving three- or four-course meals for at least 40 guests. They were to use herbs; spices and seasoning that give a particular taste to the food.

And it seemed like they did get the requisite number of guests, whose palates were comforted by Mediterranean food, which is the focus of the course, thus the red, white and green theme.

Red, white and green are the national colours of Italy, a Mediterranean country.

When asked why the emphasis on Mediterranean cuisine, lecturer of the course, Witcliffe Doyley, told

Hospitality Jamaica, "It's very, very popular ... it's pretty much in demand in the hotels ... it's pretty much what is requested throughout the Caribbean."

In terms of evaluation, the students were assessed for the taste of the food, demonstration of technical skills, team work, management, and guest services and satisfaction. What, then, was the lecturer's thought up to when Hospitality Jamaica spoke with him? "Our students seem to be getting the technical aspects correctly. However, there seems to be the need for more of this sort of experience so that they can improve their best practices," Doyley, an experienced professional chef himself, said.

Team leader for the kitchen staff, Mekealia Burey said, as always, there was room for improvement. She believed the team did well, bearing in mind the limited time and resources that they had to work with. As leader, there was additional pressure on her, she said.

"I didn't mind it because it gave me the experience and exposure I needed. It pushed me to know what I am capable of, and it pushed me out of my comfort zone," Burey told Hospitality Jamaica, which gave the students an A for presentation and taste.



PAUL H. WILLIAMS PHOTOS

Above: A section of the 'restaurant' where final-year School of Tourism Hospitality and Entertainment Management students at Excelsior Community College hosted International Cuisine Day, recently.

Left: International cuisine prepared by final-year students in the School of Tourism Hospitality and Entertainment Management at Excelsior Community College.



Toni-Ann McFarlane introducing the menu to a guest.

TPDCo launches updated Heritage Map of Jamaica

THE TOURISM Product Development Company Limited (TPDCo) recently launched an updated Heritage Map of Jamaica at the Falmouth Heritage Expo in Water Square, Trelawny.

The new map includes a more comprehensive selection of information to suit the varying interests of visitors and locals, including natural sites, which highlight rivers, beaches and waterfalls; and material sites, which detail historic sites across the island.

The Heritage Map, an initiative of TPDCo, was first created in 1997 to help locals and visitors to navigate their way around the island. It includes historical information and heritage sites across the island. This is the third time the map has been updated.

The first of its kind in Jamaica, the island is also the only Caribbean country to undertake such an initiative.

Speaking at the launch event, Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett highlighted the importance of heritage for individual and national development. According to him, "The direct impact that the country's heritage has on the tourism sector through the authentic experience it offers for visitors is boundless. Heritage is not just a historic note; it is a definition of who you are and how you came to be."

BENEFICIAL TO TOURISM SECTOR

Dr Andrew Spencer, executive director of TPDCo, in his address to the audience, expressed his confidence in the map to contribute to the growth of the tourism sector. "The Heritage Map is not only timely, but accurate and comprehensive. It will not only benefit international tourists who contribute to a large portion of our country's economy, but our locals who are also invited to utilise the map," he said.

The data collection component of the map was conducted by TPDCo's interns, who are graduates of the History and Archaeological Department at the University of the West Indies, Mona. The interns were directed by TPDCo's urban planner during their search for information.

Organisations such as the Forestry Department were instrumental in providing information on the forestry reserves that have been plotted on the map. The National Environment and Planning Agency, through their Geographic information systems team, assisted with the plotting of points on the map and provided information on the protected areas that can be found across the island. The Jamaica National Heritage Trust verified the



CONTRIBUTED

Dr Andrew Spencer (left), TPDCo executive director, presents an updated Heritage Map of Jamaica to Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett. The Heritage Map will serve as an informational tool for visitors and locals who wish to visit heritage sites across the island and explore the hidden gems the country has to offer. The launch took place at the Falmouth Heritage Expo in Water Square, Trelawny, on Wednesday, October 18.

sites included on the map.

The next phase of the map will include the creation of mobile application, which will allow for even greater interaction, whereby users will be able to search for places they wish to visit, view images, get directions and make bookings.

JTB hosts successful travel show in London

FROM SEPTEMBER 28-29, 2017, Jamaican supplier companies from the accommodation, attraction and ground transportation sectors held business-to-business meetings with key buyers from the travel and hospitality industry in Europe for Jamaica Tourist Board's (JTB) Jamaica Travel Market travel show.



During the two days, the Jamaican representatives negotiated partnerships with approximately 40 British, Irish



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett (fourth left) and Elizabeth Fox (second right), Jamaica Tourist Board's regional director – UK and Northern Europe share a moment with the winners at the Jamaica Travel Market awards gala. From left: Jade Semple (Barrhead Travel); Michala Burton (Virgin Holidays); Antonia Bouka (TUI); Laverne Walker (Sackville Travel); Sophie Van den Driessche (TUI); Hannah Butler (Expedia); Rikki Partridge (British Airways Holidays); Helen Edwards from Essential Detail, collecting the award for Scott Dunn; and David Whetherson (British Airways Holidays).

and Nordic tour operators, along with 20 travel agent specialists at the LutonHoo Hotel Golf & Spa in London.

The buyers had keen interest in Jamaica's tourism product and

were impressed with the continued improvement in the offerings. Staged ahead of the upcoming winter tourist season, it is expected that these negotiations will result in increased arrivals out of the European market.

Jamaica Travel Market also provided the opportunity for the JTB to celebrate the companies whose promotion of the destination resulted in significant business for Jamaica. The companies were recognised at an awards gala.



Mureen James (left) and Peter Grace of Hyatt Ziva and Hyatt Zilara meeting with buyers at the recently concluded Jamaica Travel Market held in London. The business-to-business travel show was put on by the Jamaica Tourist Board.



Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett (second left) presents Rikki Partridge (left) and David Whetherson (second right) of British Airways Holidays with the award for being the United Kingdom tour operator with the largest growth in selling Destination Jamaica. Elizabeth Fox, Jamaica Tourist Board's regional director – United Kingdom/Northern Europe also shares in the presentation.

American Airlines resumes non-stop service from LA to Ja this winter

THIS WINTER, American Airlines will resume its non-stop service from Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) to Montego Bay's Sangster International Airport (MBJ). Beginning November 10, weekly non-stop service will return on Fridays departing LAX at 10:59 p.m., arriving MBJ at 7:46 a.m. on Saturday. The return flight departs MBJ at 9 a.m. on Saturday, arriving LAX at 12:51 p.m.

From December 15, 2017 to January 7, 2018, the service will increase to three days

per week (Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays), and will return to the Friday only schedule from January 8 to April 30, 2018.

American Airlines launched the non-stop service from Los Angeles to Montego Bay in December 2015 in response to an increased demand from travellers on the West Coast. The aircraft will be a Boeing 738 with 160 seats.

"We look forward to again welcoming our West Coast travellers for the winter season

in the Home of All Right," said Donnie Dawson, Jamaica's acting director of tourism. "The service will also provide connections to Jamaica through Los Angeles from other American Airlines gateway cities globally."

Montego Bay's Sangster International Airport was voted the Caribbean's leading airport for the ninth consecutive year by World Travel Awards this year. A year-round vacation destination where visitors

can enjoy white-sand beaches, Jamaica has turquoise waters, thrilling adventures, breathtaking scenery, world-renowned cuisine, music, culture and more. From cosy villas to all-inclusive resorts and world-class attractions, Jamaica has something for everyone.

For more information on Jamaica, visit www.visitjamaica.com. For a complete schedule of service offered by American Airlines to Jamaica, visit www.aa.com.

Jamaica continues to experience tourism growth

VISITOR ARRIVALS to Jamaica continue to be at a record high since the start of the year, reinforcing that the tourism sector is on a firm growth trajectory. The Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) reported that summer arrival figures are up from almost every major market in the Americas:

MARKET	JUNE		JULY		AUGUST	
	ARRIVALS	%INCREASE	ARRIVALS	%INCREASE	ARRIVALS	%INCREASE
United States	156,664	6.5%	178,432	8.6%	130,421	16.7%
Canada	21,080	17.9%	26,773	3.0%	24,099	3.0%
Latin America	2,652	37.5%	3,152	35.2%	2,619	-1.6%

“We have set the goal of five per cent increase for 2017, and the Jamaica Tourist Board has not only delivered, but exceeded expectations,” said Edmund Bartlett, minister of tourism. “We will remain vigilant in ensuring that the tourism sector drives growth and provide a boost to the Jamaican economy. Due to these remarkable results, we head into the winter season with great optimism.”

Due to Jamaica’s tourism boom, the island is seeing both an expansion of existing

hotels and new developments across the island, resulting in a significant increase in room stock. The destination is poised to obtain the 15,000 additional rooms projected by 2021, which will continue to propel growth for the sector with an increase in both arrivals and earnings.

“One of the key factors contributing to the growth seen this year is due to aggressive marketing,” added Donnie Dawson, Jamaica’s acting director of tourism. “Our



DAWSON

global teams continue to work with our partners in the marketplace on promotional initiatives, including sales blitzes and



BARTLETT

heightened public relations activities as we seek to increase our share in our main source markets, while opening up new doors.”

Overall, Jamaica’s stopover visitor arrivals are showing a nearly 10 per cent increase for the summer months when compared to the previous year.

All set for award-winning Reggae Marathon, Half-Marathon and 10K event

THE 2017 staging of Reggae Marathon, Half-Marathon and 10K is set for Saturday, December 2 in Negril.

In making the announcement at a media launch last week at the Alhambra Inn, race director Alfred ‘Frano’ Francis noted that last year’s staging of the annual sporting event by the Jamdammers Running Club of Kingston received the most recognition from runners and walkers over the 16 years of staging.

In addition, there were accolades from international professional sporting magazines and associations as being a calendar event of high international standards.

“We are very pleased to advise that to date, runners and walkers from over 32 countries have registered to participate on December 2, and we are looking forward to an even more outstanding staging,” Francis said.

He noted that the 2017 Reggae Marathon, Half-Marathon and 10K has been chosen as the culminating race in the successful national Jamaica Moves Corporate Challenge, led by the Ministry of Health.

“This choice by the ministry validates all our previous efforts to



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Reggae Marathon, Half-Marathon & 10K race director, Alfred ‘Frano’ Francis (left) presents Dr Christopher Tufton, minister of health, with his Reggae Marathon bag for the December 2 event in Negril. The presentation was made on Tuesday, October 24 at the launch of the 2017 staging, held at Alhambra Inn Hotel, Kingston. In the background is Diane Ellis, sponsorship director, Reggae Marathon, Half-Marathon and 10K.

have corporate Jamaica use the event as a platform to build a healthy workforce, while increasing productivity through camaraderie and team building at

the workplace, thereby reducing the pressure on the island’s health system,” Francis noted.

He announced plans to move the staging of the annual event in

2018 to a Sunday, instead of the usual Saturday race day.

“We took the decision to host next year’s sporting event on Sunday, December 2, to ease the

effect of the road closure in Negril and also to allow more persons to attend by giving those who have to work up to Friday the opportunity to arrive in Negril on the Saturday”, he said.

The event’s world-renowned Pasty Party is back at the Swept Away Sports Complex this year. Also, runners and the general public can enjoy the sounds of the award-winning reggae band Raging Fyah at the Beach Bash Victory Party at Long Bay Beach Park on December 2.

Reggae Marathon’s charity partner is The Heart Foundation of Jamaica and the event continues to encourage runners and walkers to raise funds for the organisation through participation in the event. In addition, the donation of six computers to the winning schools in the 10K High Schools Championship is ongoing.

Francis also announced that as of this year, the event will each year award the Chairman’s Trophy in honour of the late Barclay Ewart to the winning hotel team in the 10K event. He also revealed that no Jamaican has been able to break the event’s race record in all race events of the marathon, half-marathon and 10K and the Jamdammers Running Club’s offer to double the prize money of any Jamaican breaking those records still stands.

CHTA shares 'One Caribbean Family' initiative with South Florida Diaspora

Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) president, Karolin Troubetzkoy, told Caribbean-American residents in South Florida that the response to the trade association's recently launched One Caribbean Family initiative has been extremely encouraging.

The initiative allows hotels across the region to help those who have been adversely affected by Hurricanes Irma and Maria, while also highlighting that more than 70 per cent of Caribbean destinations have not been affected and are ready to welcome visitors as usual.

Speaking earlier this month to veteran Caribbean-American broadcaster Pat Montague on WAVS 1170 AM radio in South Florida, Troubetzkoy, who operates two hotels in St Lucia (Anse Chastanet and Jade Mountain), said that the response to the initiative augurs well for the future of Caribbean unity and cooperation.

"We are very pleased with the response not just by the hotels, but also by large companies like tour operators, travel agents,

and travel advisers. Everybody wants to play a role and make a pledge. I love the fact that we are all coming together as a family ... because there's so much that needs to be done right now," she said, adding that in the long term, schools and training institutes would need to be rebuilt and jobs created.

She explained that in the past, when destinations were affected by storms CHTA asked member hotels to provide auction packages, but with the enormity of devastation following the September storms, the association felt that more needed to be done.

TRY TO GIVE BACK

"Those of us that are open for business are going to benefit from business that was meant for other islands, so we should try to give back," she asserted. She encouraged hotels to make a pledge for new bookings, which would go towards the Caribbean Tourism Recovery Fund.

Following the hurricanes, she said, CHTA also realised that much of the world did not really understand the geography of the

region, so the association launched www.caribbeantravelupdate.com to convey that more than 70 per cent of the Caribbean was still open for business.

Troubetzkoy believes that it is important to remind travellers that many islands were not in the path of the hurricanes, and are absolutely welcoming tourists. "Visiting the Caribbean is one of the best ways to support our region's economy, especially when we have some countries and territories in the midst of hurricane recovery." The tourism leader wants assistance with helping the world understand that the Caribbean encompasses about a million square miles and more than 7,000 islands.

Troubetzkoy has also called on the Caribbean Diaspora to rally around the One Caribbean Family movement and to continue making contributions to help the region rebound.

Hotels and tourism trade partners interested in participating in the campaign should complete the pledge form at <https://chtaforms.weebly.com/one->



KAROLIN TROUBETZKOY

caribbean-family-form.html. Participating hotels and trade partners will be showcased online and through a public relations and social media campaign.

Donations are tax deductible where applicable and can also be made directly online at www.tourismcares.org/caribbean or by check payable to Caribbean Tourism Recovery Fund c/o Tourism Cares, 20 Vernon St, Norwood, MA 02062, USA, or by donating securities. Questions may be addressed to vanessa@caribbeanhotelandtourism.com.

Deadline extended for free tourism training programme

THE TOURISM Product Development Company Limited (TPDCO) has extended the deadline for the Jamaica Centre of Tourism Innovation (JCTI) three-month tourism-certification programmes.

The new deadline is this Friday, November 3.

According to programme coordinator, Carol Rose Brown, "The recruitment period is being extended to facilitate the widest cross section of participants. Recent graduates are being encouraged to contact TPDCO at 968-3441 or 968-8894 to participate in this exciting opportunity".

The JCTI programmes are open to tertiary-level graduates with degrees or NVQJ Level Four or Five certification in hospitality/hospitality management and culinary arts. It is an initiative of TPDCO, which was created to increase access to graduates in hospitality, tourism, and culinary



Carol Rose Brown

arts to supervisory and management jobs in tourism. The programme includes a partnership with American Hotel and Lodging Educational Institute

and the American Culinary Federation.

The JCTI training programmes will include hands-on, work, and industry experience; curriculum guides and materials; and facilitate dialogue between hotels and students. The programmes, which will operate on a full-time basis, will also equip participants with the skills necessary to function in roles such as hospitality supervisor, culinarian, and certified sous chef, among others, and will come at no cost to successful applicants.

Applicants must be under 30 years old and reside in Kingston, Ocho Rios, or Montego Bay. Proof of address is required upon submission of applications.

Applications may be sent no later than Friday, November 3, to certificationprogramme-jcti@tpdco.org.

NEXTT

CONTINUED FROM 6

increased off-site processing options; reducing or even eliminating queues; more efficiently using space and resources through enhanced deployments of artificial intelligence and robotics; and vastly improving data sharing between stakeholders. The goal of NEXTT is finding potential ways to integrate systems and improve operations in the most secure, effective and sustainable manner for the benefit of passengers and the industry," said Angela Gittens, director general, ACI World.

Specifically, NEXTT will investigate how passengers, cargo, baggage and aircraft move through the complete travel journey with a focus on change in three areas:

SS off-airport activities: NEXTT will explore the possibilities of transferring on-site processes off-site, such as security processing and baggage check and drop-off, to streamline the airport experience.

SS advanced processing

technology: NEXTT will investigate how advanced processing technology, such as tracking and identification technology, automation and robotics, can improve safety, security, the customer experience and operational efficiency.

SS interactive decision-making: NEXTT will promote the better use of data, predictive modelling and artificial intelligence to facilitate real-time decision-making, a key element in improving the passenger experience and optimising operational efficiency.

IATA and ACI will work with their respective members, and other associations, service providers, engineering firms and manufacturers. Through the collaborative approach, NEXTT aims to align the visions for the future passenger and cargo journey. A number of key airports, including Amsterdam Airport Schiphol, Bangalore International Airport, Dubai International, Heathrow Airport and Shenzhen Airport (Group) Co Ltd, are already actively involved in a number of projects which explore NEXTT concepts.

Hoteliers to benefit from ATL's new Prizm line

THE TOURISM and hospitality sector will benefit from big savings following the expansion of Appliance Traders Limited's (ATL) signature product line, Prizm, to now include commercial products.

The exquisitely designed econo-line is expected to meet the demand at affordable price points of small to medium enterprises (SMEs) as well as larger entities, including hotels, villas, grocers, laundromats, and restaurants. The commercial refrigerator line was the first to hit the market followed by commercial washers and dryers, generators, inverter air conditioners, and minibars.

The Prizm commercial merchandise is intricately designed to complement ATL's eco-friendly, energy-efficient philosophy without any compromise to performance or affordability. "We pooled our team's technical expertise with extensive research and visits to top overseas manufacturers so that we could engineer high-quality appliances that would maintain the ATL standard and still be economical options for our clients," said ATL's Managing Director Danville Walker.

The almost 50-year-old company has had a firm stake in energy-efficiency solutions and posits that its extended Prizm line will serve both start-ups and expansions in going green and saving some 'green'.

"Running a business is undoubtedly a costly outfit, for example, a hotel or villa will see a spike in operational costs over the winter season as tourists come to escape the cold. The right commercial products – washers, dryers, refrigerators, air conditioners, generators, etc in key operational departments such as the lobby, the kitchen, guest rooms all play a part in optimum property management and maximising profits," stated Walker.

VALUE FOR MONEY

The Prizm line expansion, he continued, is "a niche fit for the operators who are seeking value for money and convenience; the start up – which has less disposable income, but needs quality products; or the successful business owner, who wants to cut operational costs, but still have a solid, trusted product. Prizm is a brand we stand behind with full warranty, and we are pleased to be able to share our expertise as



CONTRIBUTED

Danville Walker, managing director, ATL, at the Prizm launch event.

it will equip small investors and operators with the necessary tools to generate the most value from their business and properties and will also assist in their thrust to build Brand Jamaica."

Prizm could also potentially have greater implications as a regional brand within the tourism sector. Due to its commitment to performance and affordability, the brand is expected to transcend local businesses as an economically viable option for hotel chains throughout the region. ATL has already proven itself fit to take on the task of serving the Caribbean. Its brands already exist in approximately 25 hotels throughout the Caribbean via its parent company, Sandals Resorts International, and with the launch of the Prizm line, this could see growth over the

next two years.

The Prizm line of commercial refrigerators will boast minimized and integrated intelligent control, temperature control, and self-testing capabilities. The transparent surface of the display cases has also been optimised, allowing for clearer external views and energy savings by limiting cold-air loss.

The commercial washers and dryers offer child safety and emergency features, three dispensers, a digital and manual interface, and both boast cutting-edge material for added durability. The Prizm commercial generators and air conditioners are also designed for optimum performance and durability, with the use of premium material, and complemented by innovative technology.

FCCA chairman endorses UNWTO Conference

The Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) has announced its endorsement of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation's (UNWTO) global conference to be held in Jamaica in November.

Adam Goldstein, who is the FCCA's executive committee chairman and current president and COO of Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd, gave the endorsement to Tourism Minister Edmund Bartlett during a private meeting between presidents and CEOs of FCCA member lines and ministers of tourism on October 25 in Mérida, Mexico.

During the meeting, the group also discussed strategies to drive year-round traffic to the region, the creation of more employment opportunities, and the development of strategic partnerships.

Bartlett lauded the endorsement, that he noted, strengthens the expected impact the conference will have on the development of tourism industries across the globe.

MOST IMPORTANT CONFERENCE

"This event will perhaps be the single most important conference in our country's history. This endorsement by FCCA strengthens our efforts to coordinate an international road map which will foster collaborative relationships for more inclusive economic and social development of countries across the world via tourism," said Bartlett.

He also received support for the staging of the conference from Grenada's Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation, Dr Yolande Bain-Horsford, who is expected to participate in the conference.

In his capacity as chairman of the newly formed Caribbean Tourism Recovery Group Secretariat and coordinator of the UNWTO Disaster Recovery Working Group for the Affected States in the Caribbean, the minister used the opportunity to share his intentions of creating a tourism-rehabilitation plan for Caribbean islands devastated by recent hurricanes at the upcoming conference.

"Caribbean states are very dependent on tourism to sustain their economies. So with the assistance of the UNWTO, CHTA, CTO, and WTTC, as well as ministers of the region, we are working on creating a strategy to strengthen the sector's resilience to the effects of climate change and natural disasters, thus making it more sustainable. We will unveil this plan of action during our upcoming UNWTO global conference in Montego Bay in November," he said.

The event will bring together world leaders from the tourism industry, along with governments, donors, and international development and finance organisations to design and coordinate an international road map and foster collaborative relationships for inclusive economic and social development via tourism.



PHOTOS BY PAUL H. WILLIAMS

Gilberto Sanchez (second left), front desk clerk/resident DJ and owner David Scott (third left) hanging out with guests at Reggae Hostel, 8 Burlington Avenue, St Andrew.

Reggae hostel Low-cost 'IRIE' HOSPITALITY

Paul H. Williams
Hospitality Jamaica Writer

HOSTEL ACCOMMODATION is not common in Jamaica's hospitality industry, but one brand that has been offering such to rave reviews is Reggae Hostel, located at 8 Burlington Avenue in St Andrew and Main Street in Ocho Rios, St Ann.

The chain offers shared rooms at both locations for travellers existing on low-cost budgets. Dormitories with bunk beds, therefore, are the main types of accommodation. However, there are 16 double-occupancy private rooms in Reggae Hostel Ocho Rios, where it is centrally located in the busy town. There is also a courtyard, a terrace bar and a communal kitchen.

The Burlington Avenue unit, too, has a bar and a communal kitchen, and an outdoor lounge. There is



Front desk clerks at Reggae Hostel in Ocho Rios, St Ann, Princess Greenland and Sotomayor Mundle.

bed space for at least 38 guests. A long, colourful 'peace wall' loudly announces the positive feedback of

those who had laid their weary heads upon Reggae Hostel's beds over the years. Ocho Rios, too, has



Inside a private room at Reggae Hostel in Ocho Rios, St Ann.

a peace wall. And while breakfast is included in the costs, guests are free to prepare their own meals.

The idea to start a hostel in St Andrew came about in 2011 when marketer David Scott noticed that there were many young Japanese tourists frequenting the Eastwood Park area of St Andrew. After enquiring, Scott learned that these backpackers were staying regularly in two guest houses in the area.

And the money they were spending for accommodation was not bad, he thought to himself.

Scott has a property at 8 Burlington Avenue, but no education, training, and professional experience in hospitality. Yet, the thought of earning money by providing guest house accommodations for these travellers popped up. However, he was not initially excited about setting up the guest house



A section of the 'peace wall' at Reggae Hostel, 8 Burlington Avenue, St Andrew.



A section of a dorm at Reggae Hostel in Ocho Rios, St Ann.

because of the great amount of adjustment he would have to make to the property.

So he decided to work with the limited resources he had. A hostel, affordable communal living, he

said, it would be. He thought it was a good idea, which marinated, and led him to invest in some bunk beds. His background in marketing was to be a big plus, but he had no "real data" about hostelling. And



Andreas Chavanne of Basel, Switzerland, relaxing in the courtyard at Reggae Hostel in Ocho Rios, St Ann.

since the area was a hub of reggae, he decided to call the business Reggae Hostel.

Scott then moved to the property to "immerse" himself into what was going on there. "I wanted to experience what they were experiencing. I wanted to focus on delivering best experiences," he said.

Three days after posting Reggae Hostel on Hostelworld.com, a young Australian world traveller named Michael turned up at Burlington Avenue unexpectedly. Scott was surprised, but he rose to the occasion, and 'tucked' in his first guest. In retrospect, Scott said, "He was the best possible guest we could have started with." The man also turned out to be someone who taught Scott much about Jamaica. Two days after his arrival, three more guests turned up, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Now, after six years, the man with a vision is still blazing the hostel hospitality trail in Jamaica, and the brand has been recognised for its services with the bulk of the awards going to the Ocho Rios unit. They include Hostelworld.com 13th Annual Hostel Awards' Best Hostel in Jamaica; Booking.com's 2015 and 2016 Guest Review Award; [tripadvisor](http://tripadvisor.com)'s 2017 Certificate of Excellence, and the 2016 [tripadvisor](http://tripadvisor.com) Travellers' Choice Destination Award.

At Reggae Hostel, where the motto is 'Chill, Vibe, Connect', "you are not home, but you are home," Burlington Avenue team leader Nikei Watson told Hospitality Jamaica.

Expansion of the brand is under



Holding the fort at Reggae Hostel, 8 Burlington Avenue, St Andrew are Gilberto Sanchez, Nikki Watson and David Scott.



People chilling out at the bar at Reggae Hostel, 8 Burlington Avenue, St Andrew.

full consideration as satisfied guests are asking for branches in other resort towns. Montego Bay in St James is slated to be the next locale of Reggae Hostel, which, Scott said, "has defined the hostel industry here" in Jamaica.

"We are pleased to say we have inspired a lot of people to go along, as well ... We are happy that we have shown other people a way to earn and contribute to this important part of tourism," Scott said.

Voting Opens Now

Select the 'best of the best' in tourism

- Best Family Resort
- Best Street Food
- Best Destination Management Company
- Best All-inclusive Under 300 Rooms
- Best All-inclusive Over 300 Rooms • Best Small Hotel/Bed & Breakfast
- Best Eco-Sustainable Resort
- Best Business Hotel • Best European Plan Resort • Best Boutique Resort • Best in Cuisine • Best in Entertainment • Most Authentic Jamaican attraction • Best Purveyor
- Best Nightlife Experience



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October 25*