

The Gleaner
Hospitality Jamaica

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WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2018

**JTB hosts
Caribbean
Wedding
Industry Expo**

**Jasmine
Inn, clean
space,
quiet stay**

APPEALING TO
Millennials



Appealing to *millennials*

Beautiful bridesmaids dressed in yellow.

TOM CURTIN, special travel advisor, *Bridal Guide Magazine* has urged players in the Caribbean destination wedding tourism industry to appeal to millennials who are preparing for marriage via digital marketing.

“When you are dealing with couples today, it is instant viral marketing. So it is just keeping an understanding of what’s going on in this millennial mind,” Curtin told wedding planners, travel agents, suppliers, and wedding-related vendors during the Caribbean Wedding Industry Seminar at the Montego

Bay Convention Centre, recently.

Describing the industry as a \$15 billion one, he said that 36 per cent of that money was being spent in the Caribbean on anniversaries, honeymoons, bachelor and engagement parties, and destination weddings.

“One thing I try to tell people about the wedding market is that it is evergreen. On average, 88,000 Americans are saying I do as we speak. They are going to leave the market but guess what? Next week, there are going to be another 88,000, and it never stops. So the more you put your message out on a con-

sistent basis, the better chance you have to capture that presence.”

He urged wedding planners to develop a social strategy, which is properly managed and where the results could be assessed. Millennials, he said, tend not to be interested in posts that seem promotional, and, therefore, it is critical to be authentic as they are influenced by people with credibility based on, among other things, feedback and reviews.

“Use video. Millennials are visually oriented. Videos should feel personal and authentic. Millennials respond to authenticity. As

soon as something feels promotional, they turn it off. Real couples, real experiences, no photos of stock models. They want to see real happy couples in those stories,” he argued.

He recommends that planners who are experts in their field should take specific knowledge and specific products in a specific way and do something that captures attention and become the number-one authority in their area.

“Because whatever that is, there is information out there, and I could find that information by Googling it if I had that particular



A wedding at the Half Moon beach in Rose Hall.



Javed Jackson and his groomsmen doing the 'Dab' at his wedding at Bellefield Great House.

interest.”

He said that a recent survey showed that 67 per cent of couples want a stress-free wedding-planning experience, and 70 per cent choose the Caribbean because of the warm weather.

“They are concerned about pleasure, but then comes beautiful, natural scenery, warm weather, lots to see, lots to do, and that very much speaks to the Caribbean and all the Caribbean has to offer. So you focus on what they want, then you build that up on your site and you start to take that ownership.”

He said that wedding-destination stakeholders ought not to shy away from asking honeymooners to do tes-

timonials as often, couples are very willing to allow their images to be used in the social media promotion of the places they visited while honeymooning.

“Your clients, when they come back, there is nothing wrong with interviewing them and telling their story or asking them to tell their story on your site. Surprisingly, many of them are happy to do that.”

Curtin was among high-profile speakers including Sandals Resorts International’s Marsha Ann Brown and Deputy Director of Tourism Donnie Dawson, who spoke at the seminar.

janet.silvera@gleanerjm.com



Sandals Foundation volunteers send a message of 'keeping communities and coastlines clean' while they themselves clean up sections of the Font Hill coastline for International Coastal Clean-up day last Saturday. Together, the group removed over 230lbs of debris from the area in just under an hour and encouraged passing commuters to keep the area trash free.

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Rose Hall

voted Caribbean's Best Wedding
and Ceremony Venue of the Year



The Aqueduct at Rose Hall, decorated and ready to host a wedding party.

The stunning Rose Hall Great House.

THE EVENT, dubbed the 'Oscars' of the wedding industry and hosted by the Jamaica Tourist Board, was staged at the Hilton Rose Hall Resort and Spa in Montego Bay on Sunday, September 9.

Elated about its latest accolades, Rose Hall Developments Limited's (RHDL) chairman, Michele Rollins, promised that her organisations would never become complacent and will always aim to deliver

an unsurpassed level of service to their clients, "But this award reassures us that we are exceeding our goals, and it's great to be recognised for this at such a prestigious event".

Both properties, Rose Hall Great House and the Aqueduct fall under the ownership of Rose Hall Developments.

For Rollins, the synergy between the various venues and the award-winning resorts located in the Rose

Hall area is constantly being strengthened.

She said Rose Hall Developments was pleased with the recognition from the Caribbean Wedding Industry Awards body and, by extension, the exposure of the exclusive event properties they have to offer to the world.

Rose Hall is home to ancient ruins, panoramic views of the Caribbean Sea, private beaches, tranquil waterfalls, majestic great

houses and fairways of beautifully manicured golf courses.

Now renowned as world-class venues, the properties in their portfolio includes The Cinnamon Hill Great House, The Palms, White Witch Golf Club, and Oceans Edge, which are all backed by superior event management and personalised, first-class service from start to end.

"We're thrilled to have won these two awards and especially

proud that there is not another location in the Caribbean that can compare to the intimacy, service and scenery of Rose Hall for weddings and events. These awards reward the hard work and dedication of our talented team of people, and I would like to personally thank all of them for the contribution they have made that has led to this tremendous achievement," stated Richard Burrows, director of operations.

Grande Spa named finalist in the 2019 World Spa & Wellness Awards

JEWEL GRANDE Montego Bay Resort's Grande Spa has been named as a finalist in the 2019 World Spa & Wellness Awards in the Resort Spa of the Year category for North and South America.

The prestigious award – which will be presented to winners February 24, 2019 – is granted to the top resort and hotel spas around the world based on a thorough and independent judging process in which all spas are assessed by a panel of experienced industry professionals.

World Spa & Wellness produces market-leading conferences, magazines and awards. The organisation recognises the passion, care and excellence that spa professionals and owners put into businesses and offers world recognition to them. The awards are unique as they are judged by the industry, inspiring spas to up their game, ultimately raising standards globally.

No stranger to awards since opening less than a year ago, the Grande Spa was also recently selected as the winner for the Hospitality Elements: Five Star Spa Design category for Travel Weekly's 2018 Magellan Awards.

These awards are some of the most sought after for having the broadest reach in the travel sector and for its panel of 16 of the top industry executives. Travel Weekly is the travel trade's leading business media brand, delivering the latest news, analysis and in-depth coverage of every sector of the industry.

The two-floor Italian villa-inspired Grande Spa is home to the Caribbean's first and only Himalayan Salt Therapy Lounge and Jamaica's first Quartz Therapy Ritual Room. Boasting 30,000 square feet, the spa encompasses 14 treatment rooms, including two private couple's suites and two VIP suites, a relaxation lounge with ocean views, a steam and sauna with outdoor mineral water soaking pools, and an Ayurvedic Treatment Ritual Room with a Shirodhara and detox soaking tub.

With an extensive list of locally inspired spa treatments on the menu, guests can choose from an array of ancient restorative remedies such as the Jamaican Bush Bath, where guests are invited to select herbs from the spa's own in-house garden to add to the treatment, and Rum Runner Ritual, which incorporates local Appleton Estate rum – one of the island's oldest distilleries.

“When conceptualising the Grande Spa, we wanted to infuse state-of-the-art, cutting-edge technology with native Jamaican healing rituals to keep the spa experience truly authentic to the island,” said Grande Spa director Sienna Creasy.

Recently expanding its scope of services, the Grande Spa also caters to guests living with or recovering from cancer, with comfort-oriented massage techniques tailored to each individual's treatment journey.



CONTRIBUTED

Spa director Sienna Creasy takes us through a yoga stretch in the Grande Spa's Himalayan Salt Lounge.

Sandals Montego Bay to welcome leaders of Caribbean and North American travel industry

THE LUXURY resort of Sandals Montego Bay is preparing to host the World Travel Awards (WTA) Caribbean and North America Gala Ceremony 2018.

The event promises to be the most important of the calendar for the Caribbean and North American hospitality industries, with the key players and VIPs from across the two regions scheduled to attend. The evening will also mark the fifth leg of the WTA Grand Tour 2018 – an annual search for the finest travel and tourism organisations in the world, which is celebrating its 25th

anniversary this year.

Sandals Montego Bay is Sandals Resorts' flagship resort. Spanning one of the finest private beaches in Jamaica, this romantic all-inclusive resort offers a wonderful selection of beachfront rooms and suites, with panoramic views of the Caribbean Sea, along with five-star Global Gourmet[®] dining.

Graham Cooke, founder and president of WTA, said: “It is with great anticipation that we return to Jamaica for the fifth time to host our Caribbean & North America Gala Ceremony 2018. I am honoured

that Sandals Montego Bay, the home of the Sandals brand, will form part of our 25th anniversary of identifying and celebrating travel industry excellence. I look forward to joining all our nominees for what promises to be a fabulous night.”

Gebhard Rainer, CEO, Sandals Resorts International, said: “We are incredibly honoured to host the Caribbean & North America Gala Ceremony 2018 at Sandals Montego Bay, especially as we continue to unveil new innovations at our flagship resort.”

He adds: “From luxury suites like

the new oceanfront swim-up suites to its own-over water bar, Sandals Montego Bay has an all-new look and multiple new offerings to deliver an unforgettable experience to guests.”

A limited number of tickets for the ceremony are still available.

ABOUT WORLD TRAVEL AWARDS

WTA was established in 1993 to acknowledge, reward and celebrate excellence across all sectors of the tourism industry.

Today, the WTA brand is recognised globally as the ultimate

hallmark of quality, with winners setting the benchmark to which all others aspire.

Each year, WTA covers the globe with a series of regional gala ceremonies staged to recognise and celebrate individual and collective success within each key geographical region.

WTA gala ceremonies are widely regarded as the best networking opportunities in the travel industry, attended by government and industry leaders, luminaries and international print and broadcast media.



From left: The Rose Hall Development booth was alive with Michelle Parkes, manager, destination relationship; Shantay McLeggon, administrator; Chelsea Singh, destination relationship specialist; and Jodi-Ann Allen-Gordon, destination relationship specialist.



Michelle Sohan (left), lead cake artist, and Michelle Taylor of Taylor and Company Travel at the Caribbean Wedding Industry Expo at the Montego Bay Convention Centre recently.



Jamaica Tourist Board's Michelle Montaque (left) and Maureen Smith at their booth at the Caribbean Wedding Industry Expo at the Montego Bay Convention Centre.

Jamaica Tourist Board hosts Caribbean Wedding Industry Expo

STAGED AS a unique educational and networking event, travel agents, destination wedding specialists and event planners turned out for the Jamaica Tourist Board-hosted Caribbean Wedding Industry Expo recently at the Montego Bay Convention Centre.

The three-day familiarization event was held

specifically to enable participants to not just learn, but experience the magnificence of one of the best locations in the world – Jamaica. They also learned much more about the Caribbean as the perfect destination for weddings, honeymoons and romance.

Hospitality Jamaica brings highlights of the event.



From left: Goddard Catering's executive chef, Daniel Schweizer, converses with the Montego Bay Convention Centre management team of senior event manager Ky-An Henton and Assistant General Manager Karron Benjamin.



Deputy Director of Tourism Donnie Dawson discusses the destination wedding market with Janet Silvera, Hospitality Jamaica coordinator.



FRONTERA

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WINES



FOR ALL KINDS OF PEOPLE AND TASTY MOMENTS





ASHLEY ANGUIN PHOTOS

Mayor of St Ann Michael Belnavis (left) makes a presentation to 23-year veteran Weston Henry.



Kyle Mais, general manager, Jamaica Inn, presents an award to 16-year employee Lorraine Duncan-Davis.



Eric Morrow, managing director, Jamaica Inn, shares lens time with Barbara Marsh, who has worked with the resort for 51 years.

Tucker is longest-serving member at Jamaica Inn

Janet Silvera
Hospitality Jamaica Coordinator

IT WAS a night for Herbert 'Teddy' Tucker, the longest serving member of the Jamaica Inn team and his 76 co-workers, who have given between 10 and 60 years of service to the Ocho Rios resort.

Tucker, who joined the resort at age 16, danced his way to the podium, celebrating what mistress of ceremonies, the affable Donna Haynes, described as "exceptional devotion, impeccable service and charisma", the hallmark of Tucker.

Having earned a bar in his name, 'Teddy' as he is affectionate called, shared the spotlight with Barbara Marsh, who has spent 51 years at the hotel; Edward Earle and Donald Williamson, who, combined, have given 124 years of service in the housekeeping and dining room departments.

Nine persons were recognised for 30 years of service; 14 for 20 years, and 50 for 10 to 20 years.

"What we have here is an amazing and remarkable team of persons," stated General Manager Kyle Mais during the recent 60th Anniversary Long Service Awards Ceremony.

At an event complemented by glitz and glamour, Jamaica Inn's owners, Eric Morrow and his wife Belinda, staged an unforgettable gala event that concluded with a man currently topping the Jamaican charts – Wayne Marshall, who delivered a scintillating performance.

"Our achievement is not by accident. It is the hours of hard work, commitment and excellent service from our devoted staff why we are arguably one of the top hotels in the world," added Mais.

His comments were augmented by Morrow, who took guests down memory lane, lauding the staff who he said stayed true to his family's goals, providing the best guest experience in the process.

He charged the older members of his team to take responsibility for the younger ones, and passing on the knowledge they have garnered over the years.



Jamaica Inn employees who have served for 30-39 years with the Ocho Rios hotel.



Employees of Jamaica Inn, who have served between 10-19 years at the Ocho Rios resort, pose with their plaques and gift certificates at the hotel's 60th anniversary awards ceremony.



Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association's Vana Taylor makes a presentation to Allan Williams.



Custos of St Ann Norma Walters presents an award to Desmond Purrier, who has worked for 38 years at Jamaica Inn.



An exhilarated Herbert 'Teddy' Tucker (centre), the longest-serving member of Jamaica Inn, celebrates with the resort's managing director, Eric Morrow (left), and his wife Belinda during the 60th anniversary awards ceremony.



Jamaica Inn employees who have served between 20 and 29 years.



Jamaica Inn financial controller Evrett Watson (left) presents an award to Donald Williamson, who has worked with the hotel for 47 years.



Front row from left: Tim Croyle, vice-president and general manager of WestJet Vacations, and Minister of Tourism the Hon Edmund Bartlett (right). Back row from left: Philip Rose, Jamaica Tourist Board's regional director, Canada; Cindy Gerhardt, product buyer, WestJet; Dave Cecco, director of product, WestJet Vacations; and Donovan White, director of tourism.



Jamaica's minister of tourism, Edmund Bartlett (right), shares lens time with (from left) Philip Rose, the Jamaica Tourist Board's regional director for Canada; Brenda McInerney, product director, Transat; Donovan White, director of tourism; and Renée Boisvert, vice-president of products, Transat.



Director of Tourism Donovan White (right) engages Nino Montagnese, managing director, Air Canada Vacations (centre), and Dina Bertolo, vice-president of product development at Air Canada Vacations.

Minister of tourism meets with Canadian travel industry leaders

JAMAICA'S MINISTER of Tourism Edmund Bartlett and Director of Tourism Donovan White visited Canada in September for a series of meetings with the country's travel industry leaders. Along with the Jamaica Tourist Board's regional director for Canada, Philip Rose, the team met with airline executives, tour operators, travel media, and influencers.

Reaffirming the strong tourism ties between the two countries, Minister Bartlett said, "I would like to thank our Canadian travel partners and the Canadian travel media for engaging consumers and continuing to promote Jamaica as a

prime destination for Canadians year after year." He continued, "The support that we have received from the Canadian travel network has been invaluable, and we look forward to building on that solid foundation in the months and years ahead."

Director White, who was visiting Canada for the first time in his official capacity, is confident that the bond that Jamaica and Canada share will strengthen with time. "It has been an honour to meet such passionate and knowledgeable experts in the field," said White. "I am delighted that these discussions have provided a truly phenomenal

starting point for future initiatives between Destination Jamaica and our Canadian travel partners."

As a result of the recent visit, Canadian airlines increased their seat capacity to Jamaica for the upcoming winter to meet the high consumer demand. A total of 43,900 more seats has been added over last year, with the growth coming from Sunwing, Air Canada Vacations, Air Transat, and WestJet.

Canadian arrivals to Jamaica continue to rise. Data for November 2017- April 2018 shows that arrivals to the island have increased by 3.5 per cent over the previous year.



From left: Minister of Tourism, Edmund Bartlett, president at Sunwing Stephen Hunter, and Director of Tourism Donovan White following their meeting.

IBEROSTAR

joins International Coastal Clean-up Day activities



Members of the Iberostar Beach Hotel team pose with their bags of plastic refuse after helping to clean the Dump Up Beach Park in Montego Bay last Saturday.



Coordinator for sustainability and corporate social responsibility at Iberostar Beach Hotel, Naseema Mohammed (centre, front row), and members of the human resources department, Shanyque Crewe and Courtney McLean, Ann-Marie Lewis and Stacey-Ann Linton.

SOME 100 Iberostar Rose Hall Beach Resort and Spa employees participated in International Coastal Clean-up (ICC) Day at the popular Dump Up Beach Park in Montego Bay last Saturday.

ICC, which takes place on the third Saturday in September annually, is reportedly the largest one-day volunteer event in the world.

Several other organisations on the island removed plastic refuse, and other debris from 34 of the country's beaches said a statement issued by the Jamaica Environmental Trust (JET) earlier this month.

In fact, JET says that when Jamaica first joined the ICC movement in the mid-1990s, this type of concerted effort was relatively small, and was effected in few locations across the island.

However, in 2008 when JET took the reins, the project gained the support of the Tourism Enhancement Fund (TEF).

Organisations such as Iberostar, which already has a firm commitment to the environment, sees ICC as an important initiative, says Naseema Mohammed, coordinator for sustainability and corporate social responsibility.

According to Mohammed, the Green Globe-certified

organisation is currently undergoing an initiative titled 'Wave of Change', which focuses on coastal health, elimination of plastic and sustainable fishing.

"This is because of the extreme danger our environment is in, specifically our oceans with a heavy presence of plastic and garbage, so this venture was extremely important to us as we do our part to preserve the environment and save our oceans."

She noted that Iberostar will continue to do both beach and land clean-ups as frequently as possible, along with our other environmental initiatives.



Public Relations Manager of Iberostar Beach Hotel Christal Gichie (right) and other members of her team cleaning the Dump Up Beach Park in Montego Bay on International Coastal Clean-Up Day.



Housekeeping Supervisor Dwight Livingston and other members of the Iberostar Beach Hotel team working hard to rid the beach of plastic on International Coastal Clean-Up Day.



Anna Strachan brought 'operatic fervour' to some songs made popular by Miss Lou.



PAUL H. WILLIAMS PHOTOS

From left: Sculptor Basil Watson, Canadian Judge Pamella Appelt, MP Juliet Holness, Prime Minister Andrew Holness, Culture Minister Olivia Grange and Fabian Coverley posing for the crowd shortly after the statue of Miss Lou was unveiled in Gordon Town Square in St Andrew on Friday, September 7.

AROUND JA WITH PAUL H

When **MISS LOU** blocked the road

ALWAYS THE centre of attention, Louise Simone Bennett-Coverley was too versatile to be pushed to the side. Her colourful and effervescent personality catapulted her front and centre of wherever she went. And invariably, the woman, known the world over as Miss Lou, was a riot.

But then the buggie bruk, the horse fall dung, the riots ceased, and Miss Lou went to a deep sleep in the Great Beyond, to rest her tired feet. Yet, whoever thought she would keep quiet was in a dream, for on Friday, September 7, Louise Simone created a scene, the likes of which Gordon Town have never seen.

When it was all over, riot almost bruk out when she brought traffic to a halt from Papine to Gordon Town. On the narrow, curvy road, motorists shouted and blaring their horns, asking what the hell a gwaan. It was the unveiling of Miss Lou's statue in her cherished hometown. Yes, that was what was going on.

Bumper to bumper, people had



'Dis long time gal mi Neva see yuh!'

travelled from country, downtown and uptown to see the Miss Lou majestic monument smack in the heart of Gordon Town. In the middle of the square her image appeared, and will forever be there. Its unveiling would not have been fair, without a fanfare.

And who made Oliver Samuels, the master of the stage, the MC? A

riot himself. Born with a whole heap of feistiness and impatience, how did they combine him with his longtime friend, Miss Lou, and expect the weather in Gordon Town to remain cool?

Miss Lou was not laughing with them – Samuels and Barbara Gloudon. While Samuels told of how Miss Lou got lost in England

because of food. Gloudon recalled, among other things, how Miss Lou called police pon har in Canada for “singing so bad”. All sorts of lion story dem tell pon har. And I wanted to hear some more.

Then came the surprise. The prime minister’s wife, Juliet Holness, inna bandana and white, chatting Patois in style, boxing the Queen’s English outta har own mouth, and when she was done her constituents’ posteriors bounced from the white plastic chairs that sighed, “What a relief.”

They shouted and they roared, for JAH (Juliet Ann Marie Holness) had come, saw and conquered, speaking the people’s language. She was one of them. Yet, her husband was not to be outdone. In response to one of Samuels’ remarks, he said, “Oliver, tek yuh yeye affa mi wife,” and Samuels fled the stage.

And what was wrong with Anna Strachan with her medley of Miss Lou folk songs? Behaving like she alone can sing. Her voice was sweet, mellifluous, if I may, as it soared over the mountains. It was evening time, and the fat lady, not Miss Lou, had nothing over her, and somewhere, somehow Miss Lou was shouting, “Clap har, clap har!”

BUBBLY STYLE

The applause for Faith D’Aguilar, a Miss-Lou-sound-alike, would have been more rousing had she read with Miss Lou’s characteristic bubbly style. Yet, the cheers rose high into the night’s sky as the veil came down from around the mount of the Honourable Louise Simone Bennett-Coverley.

Her arms are outstretched, welcoming the gathering, and her mouth gaping as if she is singing, “*Long time gal mi never see yuh!*” The hills around were joyful together, and the evening breeze caressed her rosy cheeks.

The frenetic photographers jostled for space to get the best shots of Miss Lou in her stylish bandana frock. She was the centre of attention, once more. Where was that uppity, talentless one, the one who made the tablecloth remarks? Somewhere hanging her head in shame? I hoped.

At Miss Lou’s frock tail, all and sundry were beaming with pride, and the ones who put her up recited silently to themselves, “What a joyful thing Miss Mattie, mi feel like mi heart gwine burse .”

It was a thoroughly entertaining evening, but when the formalities were over, and I attempted to leave the space, I had to stand my grounds, and listened to words much more colourful than bandana cloths. There was a traffic jam.

After the bumping and the boring, the cussing, the waiting and the frustrating, I could not help but wonder how, on a night when Miss Lou blocked her hometown square, and the roads leading towards it, did the former custos of St Andrew, Marigold Harding, in her presentation, get to confuse Gordon Town with August Town?



A section of the bumper crowd that turned out to witness the unveiling of a statue of Miss Lou in Gordon Town, St Andrew, on Friday, September 7.



From left: Karen Harriot, Deon Silvera, Ackera Gowie, Oliver Samuels, Barbara Gloudon and Leonie Forbes. The comedy king, the drama queens, and the Festival Queen are happy to see one another.



Nexus Performing Arts Company in a moment of drama at the unveiling of the statue of Miss Lou in Gordon Town, St Andrew.



The Energy Plus Men to Band warming things up for the unveiling of the statue of Miss Lou.



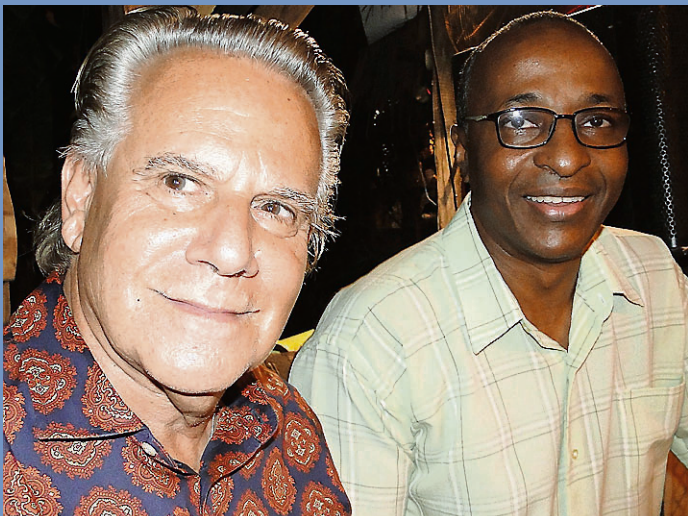
Barbara Gloudon (left) and Culture Minister Olivia Grange look on as Eric Coverley, Miss Lou’s son, makes a presentation.



A guest doing a dancehall number while members of the Manchioneal Cultural Group from Portland look on.



A guest dancing with his daughter during a Saturday-night floor show.



Owner and designer of Great Huts Dr Paul Rhodes (left) and General manager Richard Alexis.



Guests have dinner on the Safari Deck at Great Huts.

Richard Alexis takes years of experience to Great Huts

Paul H. Williams
Hospitality Jamaica Writer

WHEN HOSPITALITY Jamaica spoke with Richard Alexis in mid-August, he was only six weeks on the job as general manager at Great Huts Resorts Paradise on The Edge, located at Boston Bay in Portland, and he was loving it.

He is “rejuvenated” by the eco-friendly, Afrocentric space, exercising more, and loving the happy, laid-back atmosphere at a place where everybody and everything is “important”. He said he had never been on a

property for which people have so much love. “About 15-20 years came off my life since I came to Great Huts. I feel younger,” he revealed.

He had gone to Great Huts from another hospitality property in Portland, a parish that he and his family love. He grew up visiting hotel properties in the west at a time when hotels were where people went for night-time entertainment, including floor shows. He said the Saturday shows at Great Huts remind him of those days.

So, what has Alexis brought to the table at Great Huts? He was born in Jamaica to a

Jamaican mother and Trinidadian father; grew up partially on the Howard University campus, which his parents attended; studied at the University of Miami and Johns Hopkins University; and has a master’s degree in accounting.

In the United States, mainly in his collegiate days, Alexis worked at many fast-food restaurants. He forayed briefly into studying medicine, but his passion was for entrepreneurship. He worked as stockbroker for a year, was general manager at the National Housing Trust in Montego Bay, St James, and operated a food and beverage concession

in a hotel chain for years in Barbados.

He also has a wealth of experience in information technology, customer service, marketing, maintenance, and community relations, all of which he intends to link to achieve his goals. He said he has “a natural knack for inter-relationships between different elements”.

“I am a systems kind of person. I believe in having good systems in place because that allows staff, guests, owners to not worry about certain things. My goal is to set up a proper system to allow Great Huts to grow beyond the vision of the owner/designer Dr Paul Rhodes,” Alexis said.



Jasmine Inn is a 12-room guest house located at 26 Tankerville Avenue in St Andrew.

JASMINE INN, CLEAN SPACE, QUIET STAY

Paul H. Williams

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

WHEN THE mother-and-son team of Neryl Dawn Wilson and Sheldon Silvera wanted a name for their new business venture, they selected 'Jasmine Inn', located at 26 Tankerville Avenue, St Andrew. There was no Jasmine garden, but it sounded nice and flowed well.

Together, they have over 40 years of experience in the hospitality industry, being operators of Pollyanna Banqueters and Caterers located at Stanton Terrace, also in St Andrew. And now, they have ventured into another sector of that busy industry.

Located in a quiet community where vehicular and pedestrian traffic is minimal, Jasmine Inn has on-premises parking and 24-hour security and is an ideal getaway in the city, especially for out-of-town



A series of paintings done by Neryl Dawn Wilson, one of the operators of Jasmine Inn.

business people and guests from other Caribbean countries. Leisure travellers are also welcome into Jasmine's sweet embrace.

"Jasmine is a haven for overseas and out-of-town salespeople not wanting to pay for luxury and frills but needing comfortable and affordable accommodation," Wilson said, "Rooms are clean, air-

conditioned, with WiFi." Other amenities include flat-panel TVs, mini refrigerators, a kitchenette, and premium cable services. A complimentary continental breakfast is also served.

There are four different levels of rooms, at different nightly rates, that can accommodate one to four people, including children. The



A section of a deluxe suite at Jasmine Inn.

economy room has one double bed, while the standard room has a queen-size and a single bed. A kitchenette and a queen-size bed, among are things, in the deluxe room. Four guests, up to two children, may stay in a spacious junior suite, which has two double beds, a full kitchen, and a work desk.

Should a bridal party want somewhere to gather and start taking pictures and making videos before the wedding, they may go to

Jasmine Inn, nestled right at the foot of Beverley Hills. It is less than five minutes away from the National Arena, the National Stadium, and the National Indoor Sports Complex.

In speaking with **Hospitality Jamaica** recently, Wilson said Jasmine Inn is their "stepping stone into the accommodation industry", and since its opening in 2016, business has been "encouraging" for the place with the "pretty name".

Traveller numbers reach new heights

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has announced industry performance statistics for 2017.

Worldwide annual air passenger numbers exceeded four billion for the first time, supported by a broad-based improvement in global economic conditions and lower average airfares. At the same time, airlines connected a record number of cities worldwide, providing regular services to over 20,000 city in 2017, more than double the level of 1995.

Such increases in direct services improve the industry's efficiency by cutting costs and saving time for travellers and shippers alike.

This information is included in the recently released 62nd edition of the World Air Transport Statistics (WATS), the yearbook of the airline industry's performance.

"In 2000, the average citizen flew just once every 43 months. In 2017, the figure was once every 22 months. Flying has never been more accessible. And this is liberating people to explore more of our planet for work, leisure and education. Aviation is the business of freedom," said Alexandre de Juniac, IATA's director general and CEO.

Highlights of the 2017 airline industry performance:

■ **Passenger**
 ■ **System-wide**, airlines carried 4.1 billion passengers on scheduled services, an increase of 7.3 per cent over 2016, representing an additional 280 million trips by air.

Airlines in the Asia-Pacific region once again carried the largest number of passengers. The regional rankings (based on total passengers carried on scheduled services by airlines registered in

that region) are:

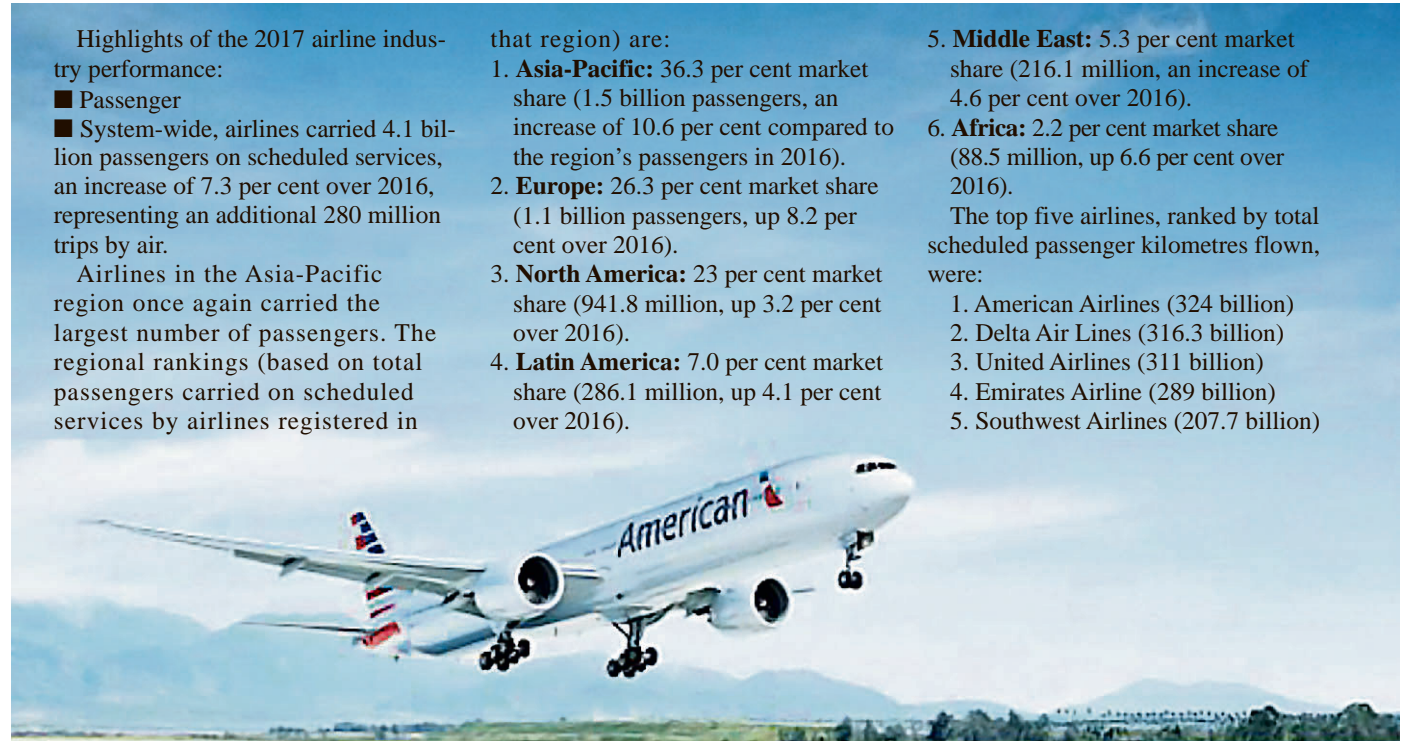
1. **Asia-Pacific:** 36.3 per cent market share (1.5 billion passengers, an increase of 10.6 per cent compared to the region's passengers in 2016).
2. **Europe:** 26.3 per cent market share (1.1 billion passengers, up 8.2 per cent over 2016).
3. **North America:** 23 per cent market share (941.8 million, up 3.2 per cent over 2016).
4. **Latin America:** 7.0 per cent market share (286.1 million, up 4.1 per cent over 2016).

5. **Middle East:** 5.3 per cent market share (216.1 million, an increase of 4.6 per cent over 2016).

6. **Africa:** 2.2 per cent market share (88.5 million, up 6.6 per cent over 2016).

The top five airlines, ranked by total scheduled passenger kilometres flown, were:

1. American Airlines (324 billion)
2. Delta Air Lines (316.3 billion)
3. United Airlines (311 billion)
4. Emirates Airline (289 billion)
5. Southwest Airlines (207.7 billion)



MBJ transforming Sangster Int'l Airport into Jamaican showcase

MBJ AIRPORTS Limited is transforming Sangster International Airport (SIA) into a showcase of Jamaica with the expansion of the departure terminal and commercial area under its new master plan.

The airport operator has selected one of the world's leading engineering firms to develop a new master plan in consortium with

seven local firms. MBJ is focusing on infrastructure improvements that leverage the latest technology while improving the experience for passengers by transforming SIA into a reference for efficiency and service and a bastion of Jamaican culture.

MBJ will be adding 25,800 square feet to the departure terminal to improve service for passengers

and redeveloping the commercial area post-security with an expanded footprint and updated look and feel.

The design theme within the new master plan is being developed to reflect the country's natural beauty, while the commercial area will be developed with a renewed focus on Jamaican specialty products and original handicrafts.

"We will launch a request for

proposals in short order to select retailers to operate concessions at the airport," CEO Rafael Echevarne announced.

Special consideration will be given to those retailers planning to sell Jamaican products and crafts. As part of its support to the local craft industry, MBJ launched the Jamaican Artisan competition in 2017 to discover new talent and

will provide the top three winners a commercial outlet in shops at the airport.

Jamaican products sold at SIA represent some US\$19 million in sales each year.

Already, more than half of the 27 specialty souvenir stores operating at the airport sell Jamaican goods, while six sell items produced in the island exclusively. Duty-free shops at the airport specialise in Jamaican spirits, which account for over 40 per cent of their sales.

The stores themselves are mostly locally owned, with 81 per cent of the businesses operating at SIA held by Jamaicans.



The future food court at the Sangster International Airport.