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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2018



# GANJA TOURISM

**BIG** potential for small  
business operators

**World Travel  
Awards highlights**

**Lascell Smith sweetens  
hospitality industry**



Two attendees checking out the cannabis skin products that were on display at the CanEx conference in Montego Bay last week.



Ras Iyah V (left) interacts with attendees at his booth at CanEx Jamaica.

# Ganja Tourism big potential for small business operators

SOME KEY stakeholders in Jamaica's fledgling medicinal cannabis industry say the country's micro-entrepreneurs can easily use their world-acclaimed ingenuity to immediately capitalise on, and gain wealth from, cannabis tourism.

The key, they say, is to get themselves familiar with the global industry and tweak and learn from business ideas in countries where marijuana is legal, and apply these to cash in on the opportunities provided by legislation, for marijuana to be cultivated and distributed under licence from the Cannabis Licensing Authority (CLA).

"I think it is tremendous. Jamaica's association with ganja goes back eons and people are craving experiences in life. So the ability to come to Jamaica and get stories and get experiences with folks who've been in the trenches, so to speak, and talk about it from the ground up etc, tourists would

love that. People are craving real-life experiences today more so than just sand, sea and surf. So that's huge," Douglas Gordon, founder of CanEx Jamaica said.

"Now, when you mix that with a medicinal framework, meaning you can come here for health and wellness, spa treatments in which you can just immerse yourself or something that is more spiritually entwined, that is just straight out medical. Those are all huge markets and I think Jamaica is well poised to benefit from it," he added.

Gordon affirmed that it is creativity and not dependence on leadership from Government technocrats which will enable Jamaican small business people to acquire wealth from cannabis tourism. He said opportunities abound for finished products and tours, and by benefits can even accrue from even including restaurant menus.

"Again, it comes back to stop

looking for excuses. I tell people, start empowering yourself; understand what the opportunities are and then go for it," he argued.

"It is difficult for me to say, 'This is what you need to do', because at the end of the day, there is so much opportunity in this. But if you open your eyes and educate yourself, you'll figure out what you want to do; and if you figure out what you want to do, you are gonna be successful," Gordon noted.

## TRIGGER FOR BENEFIT

Triston Thompson, chief opportunity explorer of the Tacaya Group, a cannabis consulting firm, is also of the view that it is creativity and the incorporation of cannabis into micro-entrepreneurs' existing offerings which will be the trigger for them to benefit.

"Cannabis tourism is pretty broad and it really requires some amount of creativity for persons to come up with different ways of how

they can incorporate cannabis into their tourism experience," Thompson explained.

"Creative in the sense that right now, you can cultivate up to five plants per household, and that's pretty much legal. A person can plant these five plants at their facility and they can actually get tourists come and experience those plants, because most of them have never seen the plant before. You can even set up one of those plants on a stand and have people come take pictures with it, have them do a trimming and stuff; spliff-rolling and those kinds of stuff," Thompson said.

He added: "Then, as it relates to experiences like farms and so forth, small farmers don't necessarily have to set up a one-acre farm per se; they can do much smaller versions and create a nice tour experience, whether they want to include like a breadfruit experience with cannabis – whatever it is – they

can get very creative as it relates to tourism."

Ras Iyah V of Rastafari in Inity is one entrepreneur who has capitalised on ganja tourism through the Rastafari Rootzfest, the first legal ganja event to be held in Jamaica. He said the event, which is set for December, will pull even more ganja tourists to Jamaica.

"Tourists have been coming here for decades, especially in Negril because Negril is considered the ganja mecca of the tourism sector. The fact that they have been coming and still come, we use Rastafari RootzFest to get more people to come," he stated.

He noted: "The fact that it is educational, the fact that Jamaica has amended the so-called Dangerous Drugs Act makes it easier for them to come and utilise herb, because they know they won't be locked up for small amounts in their possession".

In former years, he said, he had a thatch hut where he would sell his juices, but he also always had herb. "You don't have to have any big establishment to market herb in Negril. So once you are genuinely concerned about making use of the tourist that come here, from a ganja point of view, it can be done," he said.

# Technology the theme of new-format UNWTO & WTM Ministers' Summit

THE UNWTO & WTM Ministers' Summit, the largest annual gathering of tourism ministers, will take place on Tuesday, November 6, at the leading global event for the travel industry.

A new, improved structure will help spark the debate, ensuring that delegates can fully benefit from listening to leading private-sector leaders and tourism ministers.

The UNWTO & WTM Ministers' Summit will start with a private-sector discussion and debate before the minister panel and other-public sector stakeholders join the discussion.

This will also be the first summit for the UNWTO's new secretary general, Georgia's Zurab Pololikashvili, who took up the position in January.

The summit will address investment opportunities in tourism technology and the need for stronger public-private partnerships in the field; also, how technology can boost competitiveness and sustainability.

User services to come under discussion will



WTM London Senior Director Simon Press.



New UNWTO Secretary General Zurab Pololikashvili.

include online booking systems, social media, mobile apps, chatbots, and smart hotel rooms.

Stakeholders will also consider the implementation of data-driven, decision-making strategies in tourism, specifically in analytics and smart destination management.

The role of technology in helping the tourism sector to meet the aims of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will also be covered.

WTM London Senior Director Simon Press, who will also address the summit, said: "The UNWTO & WTM Ministers' Summit is always a highlight of WTM London and I am delighted that the event will once again host the largest annual gathering of tourism ministers in the world.

"This year's topic is a particularly important one, as technology can help tourism remain a force for good in terms of global connectivity and sustainability.

"We're also excited to introduce a new format for this year, which should bring greater focus to the debate."

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# Tourism Agri-linkages

SENIOR DIRECTOR of Marketing and Special Projects at the Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA), Vaughn Barnaby, says he is anticipating a full roll-out of the Tourism Agri-linkages Exchange (ALEX) online platform by September 2019.

“Since we did the launch in December, we have populated the platform with 240 farmers. We have also included in the platform, processors and exporters. We have built out a call centre staffed by five persons – a coordinator and four agro telemarket brokers – and they have been taking calls from farmers and creating linkage,” Barnaby explained.

“We have also had a second meeting with the hoteliers to present them with where we are at, for them to see what the system can do, so as to get feedback from them,” he said. “We are in what we call the beta-test phase. We are actually testing to see how the system works and if we need to fix any of the operating systems of the platform. So that should take us into December, while we are trying to get all the kinks worked out to ensure that the system is actually



Senior Director of Marketing and Special Projects at the Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA), Vaughn Barnaby (left), provides information to Leethan Grandison (right) about a new variety of papayas at the recent Jamaica Product Exchange (JAPEX) trade show at the Montego Bay Convention Centre in St James. Looking on is RADA's ALEX coordinator, Marsha Johnson.

working properly.”

The ALEX platform, which is sponsored by the Tourism

Enhancement Fund (TEF), was established by the Ministry of Tourism's Linkages Hub in

collaboration with RADA in December 2017, in a bid to facilitate the purchase and exchange of goods and services between farmers and buyers within the hotel industry; to increase the use of local produce in tourism, reduce leakages and curtail importation.

The ALEX platform was born out of the 2015 Tourism Demand Study, in which, among other things, an official of the Ministry of Agriculture stated that larger hotels were less receptive to Jamaican agricultural products.

The official stated that the hotels were reluctant to offer farmers contracts to produce in large quantities, resulting in farmers being exploited by middlemen.

The Tourism Demand Study also quoted representatives of the then Jamaica Manufacturers' Association (JMA), who asserted that a barrier existed between Jamaican producers and foreign-owned entities, which are directed, in many instances, to purchase goods from their respective homeland.

They had also raised concerns about the Government's tourism growth model which provides tax incentives for large, all-inclusive hotels to set up in Jamaica without

binding requirements for them to patronise local goods and services, which as a result contribute to the vulnerability and high leakage rates of the local economy.

Since the establishment of the ALEX system, the greatest demand from hotels on the platform has been for fresh fruits, in particular mangoes, according to RADA's ALEX coordinator, Marsha Johnson. She said sorrel, sweet potatoes for the export trade, peppers, yams and pimento were among the other in-demand items, although these were mainly being requested by exporters and manufacturers.

“We have been getting requests for a lot of fruits. Some of the requests we have been able to fill completely. We have been able to source quite a bit, but we are still seeking on behalf of a lot of the persons that supply the hotels,” she said.

The initial ALEX beta-test phase, according to Barnaby, will run for between six and eight months following which there will be a “wider launch”. He also said discussions are under way with a financial service provider to enable the facilitation of e-commerce on the site, that would allow persons to post items and make complete transactions online.

“We are targeting about 10 per cent of our database, which is about 20,000 farmers. Our current database is 202,000 farmers.

## Smith sweetening the hospitality industry with his honey sachets

SEPTEMBER 2018 was the second year 31-year-old Lascell Smith was attending the Jamaica Product Exchange (JAPEX) Tourism Trade Show, and the young apiculturist seems set to make waves within the tourism industry in a massive way.

Smith, who is chairman and CEO of Las Bee Producers, is about to roll out his sachets of honey, the globally acclaimed, healthy, in-demand alternative to crystal sugar and other processed, refined, or artificial sweeteners.

For Smith, who attended JAPEX 2018 at the behest of the Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA), the positive and excited response to his pioneering product from the hoteliers who visited his booth during the two-day show was overwhelming.

“The engagement was good. A lot of them came here and all they were interested in was the sachet honey – big hotels, hotel chains and small hotels came and were looking, and

are really interested in getting the sachet honey,” Smith said.

He pointed out that his sachet idea is in response to the growing global trend where the tastes and lifestyles of people are changing towards natural foods, and demands being made on hotel chefs for healthier culinary alternatives, coupled with the need of hotel operators to ensure their purchases are cost-effective.

### SUITABLE SWEETENER

“They want to put a more suitable sweetener on their table and honey in sachets is economical because there would be little or no waste regarding that, because it is only one sachet of honey to one cup of tea,” he explained.

“The whole world now is moving health conscious and what they want to do is get a sweetener with more health benefits, so they

are moving away from the sugar and other syrups and so on their tables. And they are really excited about it because instead of putting a bottle of honey on the table and everybody pour from that and cause wastage, persons can just grab a sachet,” Smith stressed.

The sachets, which come in 0.5 ounces, will be packaged and transported to buyers as soon as the deals are finalised, Smith says.

“For persons who are working, rushing out of the house in the mornings, you can take up a sachet of honey, put it in your handbag, and when you go to work you sweeten your tea. So this is an on-the-go and an efficient way of sweetening,” he said.

“Once they give us their commitment that they are interested and will take the product, then we are going to definitely start the production phase of this product, and they can have it on their tables,” he said.

Smith, who is a past student of Clifton All-Age and Rusea's High School in Hanover, grew up in Mt Peace in the parish and has been a beekeeper since he got involved in the Hanover 4-H Club at the age of 14.

In addition to honey, his company produces and distributes other bee-related products, including pollen, propolis, beeswax and royal jelly. He also supplies hive frames, extractors and other apiculture equipment, and offers consultation, training and apiculture management services.



Lascell Smith shows off his display at the Rural Agricultural Development Authority booth at the recent Jamaica Product Exchange Trade Show in Montego Bay.



From left Adrian Harrison (market manager), Andrew McKinley (market manager), Daysis Vargas (business development manager Caribbean), Nuno Sales da Ponte (new director of the Caribbean), Nicola Madden-Greig (director sales and marketing for Hendrickson Hotel Group), Prudence Simpson (director of sales, Jamaica Pegasus), Cesarina Garcia (market associate), Maurice Bryan (reservations and sales manager for Courleigh Hotel) and Tamika Higgins-Baker (new market manager).

## Expedia Group highlights Jamaican mobile demand growth during JAPEX 2018

THE USE of Internet and mobile devices as platforms to shop and purchase travel products is rapidly increasing and has transformed the Jamaican tourism industry, says the Expedia Group.

One of the world's largest travel platforms, Expedia, serves as a valuable actor in the local tourism sector and due to its mobile booking platforms is reporting a spike in mobile demand during January-June 2018, when compared to the previous year, to the following Jamaican destinations:

- Ocho Rios, over 10 per cent growth from US travellers.
- Negril, over 20 per cent growth from US travellers.
- Negril, nearly 40 per cent growth

from Canadian travellers.

■ Kingston, nearly 10 per cent growth from US travellers

The findings were released by the travel company during the Jamaica Product Exchange (JAPEX), which took place September 23-25 at the Montego Bay Convention Centre.

In a media release from the organisation, the company said that its market management team took advantage of this annual event to meet with lodging partners, talk strategy and showcase the latest data findings that are key to travel partner's businesses.

"To better understand the importance of mobile demand in Jamaica and the rest of the Caribbean, the top in-bound mobile demand

penetration markets in the Caribbean were the United States, with almost 90 per cent growth YoY; the United Kingdom, with more than 100 per cent growth YoY; Canada, with almost 150 per cent growth YoY; and Brazil, with more than 70 per cent growth YoY," said Expedia.

The group's strong offering of effective solutions, technology and marketing expertise continue to have a strong impact on Jamaica's tourism growth, said the media release, noting that their objective was to keep seeking opportunities with hotel partners and to demonstrate the added value of partnerships.

Nuno Sales da Ponte, director of market management in the

Caribbean, stated that JAPEX allows the group to meet with their valued Jamaican lodging partners one-on-one, to discuss the latest data reports.

"We've gathered for Jamaica and what's in store for the future in terms of trends, new technology and new strategies," he was quoted as saying in the media release.

Expedia Group also reported that the top in-demand Jamaican markets in the second quarter of 2018 when compared to the same time in 2017 were Montego Bay, Ocho Rios, Negril, Kingston, and Port Antonio. Additionally, the company highlighted that demand for different property star ratings during the same time frame were as

follows: more than 45 per cent for three stars, nearly 40 per cent for four stars, and almost 15 per cent for five stars. Moreover, over 70 per cent of demand generated during this time was for all-inclusive stays on the island.

Expedia Group seeks to continue to support tourism growth in Jamaica and the Caribbean region. By working with Expedia Group, hotels in Jamaica gain exposure to more than 200 websites in 75 countries worldwide in 35 languages, in addition to a myriad of mobile sites and apps, from brands such as Expedia, Hotels.com, Travelocity, Orbitz, Hotwire, Egencia, Expedia Partner Solutions and others, said the media release.

## THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

# CARIBBEAN TOURISM the natural environment for electric vehicles

David Jessop

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

IT MAY sound like science fiction, but the day of the electric-powered plane is coming, and sooner than one might expect.

Although commercial electric-powered flight is still a decade away, the basic power source, the lithium-ion battery, can already enable a modified light aircraft to fly up to about 250 miles. Aviation industry experts suggest that as battery technology advances range and power will increase, enabling 100 seat planes to cover distances of between 400 to 600 miles before having to recharge.

This and the rapid advance of the electric vehicle (EV) have a real relevance to tourism. This is especially the case in small environmentally sensitive destinations such as the Caribbean which, to compete in future, will not only have to find new ways to add value to their brand, but new ways to appeal to more eco-aware generations of travellers.

All-electric vehicles are already coming into use for tourism and transport in parts of the Caribbean.

Cayman Automotive sells EVs in Cayman and to Cuba, where they are used on Cayo Largo, a tourist island to the south of Havana that intends on becoming a fully eco-friendly tourist destination. So great is the potential opportunity in Cuba that the company is reported to be thinking about opening an office soon in Havana that will also sell electric bikes and scooters.

In Barbados, too, the use of EVs is growing. A young dynamic company, Megapower Ltd, is selling and operating EVs. The company imports the all-electric Nissan LEAF, builds and manages solar carports, and is working hard to establish a network of electric vehicle-charging stations strategically located across the island.

### BEST PLACE

Like Cayman Automotive, the company's owners believe that the Caribbean may be the best place in the world for the mass adoption of EVs, as many nations are small in size, have relatively flat terrain, an abundance of solar energy, and every reason to reduce their reliance on imported petroleum products.

Despite this, major obstacles remain. The biggest are the very high import duties on EVs and related equipment, and many governments' reluctance to show the leadership or vision that would enable tourism-dependent nations,

such as those in the Eastern Caribbean, to use them to capture international media attention and visitor imagination.

Although some countries like Cuba and Trinidad are actively encouraging the import of EVs through low import duties, the issue may be one for CARICOM's tourism ministers to take up collectively at a regional level.

In contrast, electric-powered flight is some way off, but is potentially just as relevant to tourism, especially Caribbean inter-island and domestic flights.

Possible for some time and the subject of major development



David Jessop

programmes by both large and small companies in the aviation sector and NASA, electric-powered light aircraft have been flying since 2011. Then a two-seater plane built by engineers at the University of Stuttgart climbed to about 20,000 feet in two minutes flew non-stop for 300 miles, reach-

ing speeds of 142 miles per hour. It burnt no fuel, had zero carbon emissions, and the cost of the energy consumed was, the university said, tens of dollars.

It was a clear indication of a concept that is now being scaled up as battery technology improves.

In a clear indication of viability, the Norwegian government recently declared that all domestic aviation will be electrically powered by 2040, with Wideroe, the country's biggest airline, beginning to replace its Dash 8 aircraft from 2025 on, eventually making a full transition to electric aviation. In addition, the country's airports

operator, Avinor, has been working on its infrastructure electrification plans for the past three years.

The commercial opportunities of electric-powered flight still have to play out. However, there is every reason why the Caribbean should be considering the use of electric vehicles now, starting with their use for tourism and bus services, not least because fuel for transport is the single largest part of much of the region's import bill.

What is required is a Caribbean revolution in transport. The tourism sector, with government support, could begin to show the way.



CONTRIBUTED

A Nissan Leaf electric car being charged.



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Director of Sales at Melia Braco Village Angella Bennett was dangerously hot in this one-piece outfit at the World Travel Awards.



ASHLEY ANGUIN PHOTOS

The Sandals Resorts International team basking after collecting some nine awards at the World Travel Awards Latin America and the Caribbean.



Round Hill Hotel and Villas took home all of two awards, one of them being Caribbean's Leading Villa Resort, and the hotel's managing director, Josef Forstmayr, was on hand to collect them.



Jewel Grande Montego Bay's spa director Sienna Creasy (left) and General Manager Barbara Burton pose with the Caribbean Leading New Resort award.



Spanish Court Hotel's Andres Cope proudly holds the 'Caribbean Leading Business Hotel' award. It was presented to him by master of ceremonies Yendi Phillipps.

President and CEO of the Port Authority of Jamaica, Professor Gordon Shirley (left), and Deputy Chairman of Sandals Resorts International, Adam Stewart, at the World Travel Awards 2018.



Acting General Manager of the Montego Bay Convention Centre, Karron Benjamin, flanked by two World Travel Awards hostesses after collecting the Leading Caribbean Convention Centre prize.

Professor Gordon Shirley (third left), president and CEO, Port Authority of Jamaica, flanked by his team (from left) Hugh Clarke, Skeeter McKenzie, Kim Stiff, Bridget Frazer and Dion Chance after they collected three major awards at the World Travel Awards 2018.



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- 2018 World Travel Awards - Jamaica's Leading Travel Agency
- 2018, 2017 World Travel Awards - Caribbean's Leading Destination Management Company
- 2018, 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014 World Travel Awards - Caribbean's Leading Tour Operator
- 2017 Hospitality Jamaica - Best Destination Management Company
- 2012 University of The West Indies - The Development of Jamaica's Tourism Product

# Jamaica voted Caribbean's Leading Destination at the 25th annual World Travel Awards

*Cruise ports of Montego Bay and Ocho Rios also honoured*

“We’re honoured to be recognised as the best in the region. Each accolade – the Caribbean’s Leading Destination, the Leading Cruise Destination, and the Leading Tourist Board – reaffirms the strength of our tourism product,” said Donovan White, Jamaica’s

director of tourism. “These awards are testament to the collective mission of our partners to promote the best of Destination Jamaica, and together, we celebrate these achievements.”

For more information about Jamaica, please visit [www.visitjamaica.com](http://www.visitjamaica.com).

Director of Tourism Donovan White (center) collects the Caribbean’s Leading Tourist Board award at the 25th annual World Travel Awards Caribbean and North America Gala Ceremony held at Sandals Montego Bay. Jamaica is this year’s Leading Caribbean Destination and Leading Caribbean Cruise Destination.



The tourism team turned out to celebrate the successes of Destination Jamaica at the World Travel Awards Caribbean and North America Gala Ceremony. The smiles tell the story of how happy they are to promote Jamaica’s award-winning tourism product. Celebrating with Donovan White (holding trophies), director of tourism, are (from left) Delano Seiveright, senior communications strategist to the minister of tourism; Lorna Robinson, promotions and events manager, Jamaica Tourist Board; Dr Carey Wallace, executive director, Tourism Enhancement Fund; Jennifer Griffith, permanent secretary, Ministry of Tourism; Godfrey Dyer, chairman, Tourism Enhancement Fund; Odette Dyer, regional manager, Jamaica Tourist Board; Essie Gardner, marketing communications manager, Jamaica Tourist Board; Errol Jones, chief financial officer, Jamaica Tourist Board; John Lynch, chairman, Jamaica Tourist Board; David Dobson, senior director, Technical Services, Ministry of Tourism; and Peter Mullings, head technology and administration, Jamaica Tourist Board.

## Director of Tourism attends World Routes 2018 in China



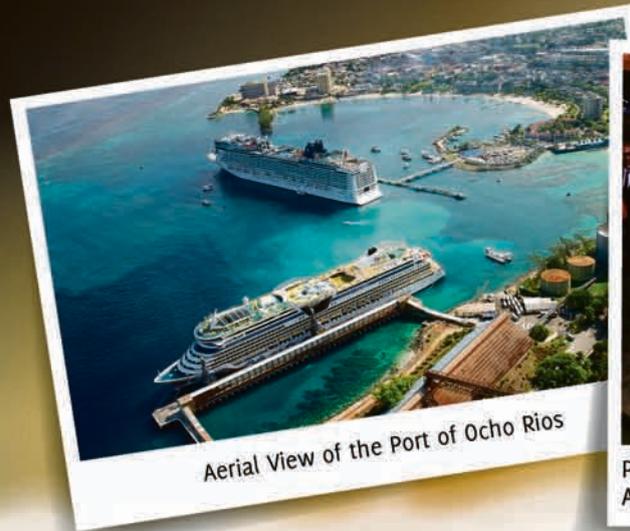
Officials from around the globe participate in World Routes 2018. Jamaica participated in this year’s staging of World Routes as the meeting provided an opportunity to engage senior decision makers from the world’s top aviation organisations to secure new routes and increased airlift to the destination.



Director of Tourism Donovan White met with route-development professionals during World Routes 2018 in Guangzhou, China. With China being one of the fastest-growing aviation markets in the world, the director is continuing Jamaica’s push to grow tourist arrivals from Asia. World Routes, dubbed ‘The Olympics’ and ‘World Expo’ in the civil aviation community, attracted more than 3,500 guests, including airport administrative organisations, governments, and travel agencies from 115 countries – a record high since the first edition in 1995. The event presents an unrivalled platform for route-development professionals to discuss, develop and plan network strategy.

# 3 times

## THE CARIBBEAN'S BEST!



Aerial View of the Port of Ocho Rios



Professor Shirley (centre), President & CEO, the Port Authority flanked by members of his team.



Aerial View of the Port of Montego Bay

### 2018 World Travel Awards – Caribbean & North America: Caribbean's Leading Cruise Destination – Jamaica, Caribbean's Leading Cruise Port – Port of Ocho Rios & Caribbean's Leading Home Port – Port of Montego Bay.

These awards are a testament to our sustained investments in port development and port infrastructure. The Reynolds Pier is currently undergoing expansion works and the new Ocho Rios Fishing Village was recently launched; both will contribute significantly to an improved cruise experience in Ocho Rios. Upgrades are on-going at the Port of Montego Bay, including a new Cruise Ship Terminal and the extension of Berth 2 to accommodate larger ships. A number of new amenities have also been added.

There is a sharp focus on the enhancement of the Jamaican cruise product through continued investment in the resort towns with the upgrading and expansion of local attractions and tours. The PAJ thanks all its stakeholders for their contribution to these successes.



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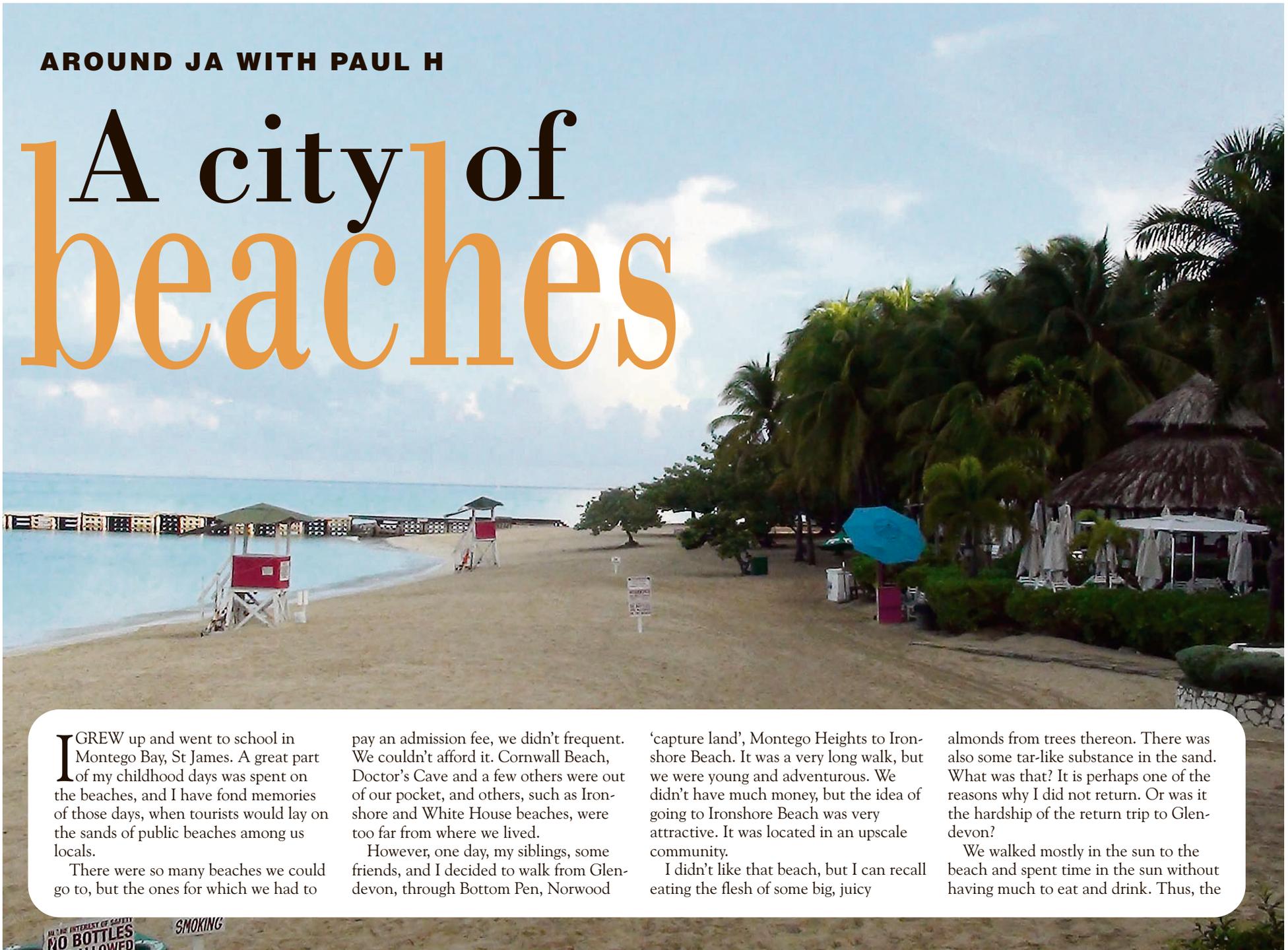
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AROUND JA WITH PAUL H

# A city of beaches



**I** GREW up and went to school in Montego Bay, St James. A great part of my childhood days was spent on the beaches, and I have fond memories of those days, when tourists would lay on the sands of public beaches among us locals.

There were so many beaches we could go to, but the ones for which we had to

pay an admission fee, we didn't frequent. We couldn't afford it. Cornwall Beach, Doctor's Cave and a few others were out of our pocket, and others, such as Ironshore and White House beaches, were too far from where we lived.

However, one day, my siblings, some friends, and I decided to walk from Glen-devon, through Bottom Pen, Norwood

'capture land', Montego Heights to Ironshore Beach. It was a very long walk, but we were young and adventurous. We didn't have much money, but the idea of going to Ironshore Beach was very attractive. It was located in an upscale community.

I didn't like that beach, but I can recall eating the flesh of some big, juicy

almonds from trees thereon. There was also some tar-like substance in the sand. What was that? It is perhaps one of the reasons why I did not return. Or was it the hardship of the return trip to Glen-devon?

We walked mostly in the sun to the beach and spent time in the sun without having much to eat and drink. Thus, the

A section of the world-famous Doctor's Cave Beach in Montego Bay.



One Man Beach in Montego Bay was one of a few that were created by dredging and dumping in the 1970s.



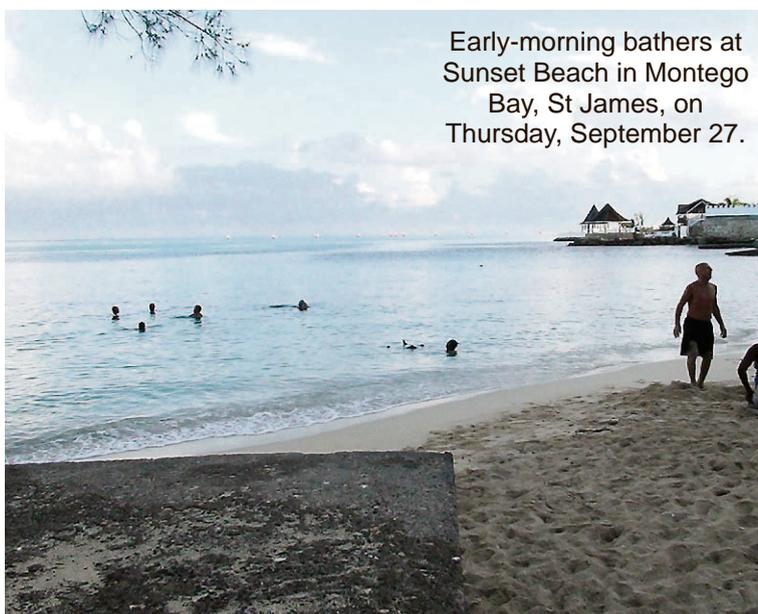
A woman combing Chatham Beach in Montego Bay for shells.



Dump Up Beach in Montego Bay is a spot for exercising and other activities morning, noon and night.



The entrance to Decameron Cornwall Beach in Montego Bay.



Early-morning bathers at Sunset Beach in Montego Bay, St James, on Thursday, September 27.

walk back home in the evening sun was brutal. I was so hungry and thirsty that I was motivated to walk fast. I outwalked many of my companions because whatever food was going to be at home, wanted be the first one to get.

Though there was an entrance fee for Cornwall Beach, we went there a few times. I was fascinated by the nearby old Jewish Cemetery and always wondered why people had built a graveyard upon the sands. And it was from the waters of Cornwall Beach, while a female friend and I were almost drowning, that I saw my life flashing like a movie every time my head emerged from the water. I was only 18.

Chatham Beach, which I grew up knowing as Sunset, was our favourite beach. It is near the airport, so I was fascinated by the airplanes landing and taking off. We would walk from downtown MoBay to Chatham but I remember travelling on the red double-decker buses, the ones still operating in England, a few times.

As hard as I am trying, I cannot recall ever bathing in the waters of what I was told recently is the real Sunset Beach. It has to be one of the smallest bathing beaches in the world and is very popular with early-morning and evening bathers. We always passed it to go to Chatham, now called Dead End and Buccaneer Beach. At night, the stretch between these two beaches is the coolest public hangout spots in all of Jamaica.

And in all of Jamaica, Doctor's Cave Beach is regarded the best. The property was owned in the late 1880s to early 1900s by Dr Alexander McCatty. He allowed his medical colleagues and friends to use his beach, which was accessed through a cave.

In 1906, McCatty donated the property to the town, and from an article written by British osteopath Sir Herbert Barker in the 1920s, people learned about the curative powers of the waters lapping the shore. Thus began tourism as we know it in Montego Bay.

In addition to the natural beaches, there are some man-made ones, especially those constructed by hotels. Dump Up, Walter Fletcher/Aquasol, and Old Hospital beaches, at the beginning/end of the strip (Gloucester Avenue/Kent Avenue), were created in the 1970s when material was dumped into the sea to make land space, forever changing the landscape of the bay.

I remember when the sea was where KFC is, right up to the wall of the parish library. The beach near the library was called Gigi Beach, where my mother would take me for early-morning dips to remove 'nose nawt' from my head. I recall seeing heavy-duty equipment putting huge boulders in place to make groynes.

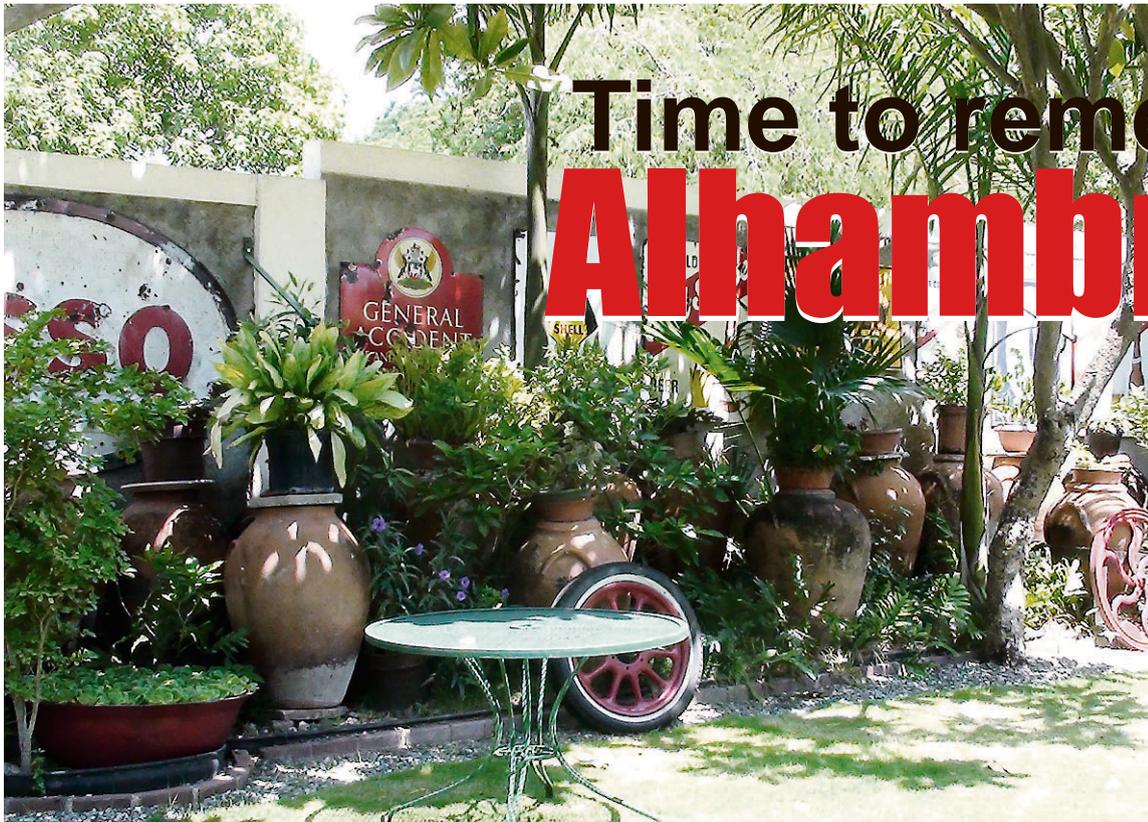
Recently, I revisited some of these spots, and the memories ebbed and flowed as waves upon the sands in the city of beaches.



A section of the Jewish Cemetery in Montego Bay showing the headstones of some members of the Hart family, said to be integral in the development of tourism in the Second City. The cemetery is located close to some of the city's most prominent hotels.



As if Montego Bay needs any more bathing areas, a need 'beach' is under construction along Kent Avenue, part of Montego Bay's Hip Strip.



A section of the collection of earthenware pots.



A section of a suite inside the Alhambra Inn.

### Paul H. Williams

*Hospitality Jamaica Writer*

**A**LHAMBRA INN is a hotel, located at 1 Tucker Avenue, across from the National Stadium in St Andrew. It is known for its catering and restaurant services, hosting of parties, special events, weddings, receptions, meetings, conferences, after-funeral repasts, etc.

It has evolved from its owner Sonia Gray's home-based catering services to a mainly bed-and-breakfast hotel of over 20 rooms at a variety of costs. It offers complementary continental breakfasts and traditional Jamaican brunches. A swimming pool is also on the property.

Built in a quiet neighbourhood en route to and from the Norman Manley International Airport, it is centrally located to the downtown Kingston, Cross Roads, New Kingston and Liguanea shopping districts.

However, what **Hospitality Jamaica** finds most fascinating about the place is its huge collection of objects from the past, perhaps the largest private collection in all of Jamaica. It should be a tourist attraction! It is, in a way, as guests have many things to feast their eyes on.

From a pin to an anchor, literally, you will find among the wide variety of antiques and collectibles. They belong to Gray's husband,



The stories about Brooklax are too-many to tell in one volume.

Trevor Clarke, who is a passionate and unyielding collector of over 40 years. Though he has slowed down his pace somewhat, he is still committed to the collection and preservation of these pieces, in which are embedded the stories of Jamaican lifestyles over the years.

And what happens when you put old things in a modern garden? Magic! And allure. They tug at your senses and sensibilities. How do you see the bright orange petals of a poinciana tree on green grass beside an effervescent fish pond of bright

orange fishes and not feel dizzy?

#### PLACE FOR REFLECTION

And, it is not so much about the aesthetics, but the nostalgia, the sudden recall of personal anecdotes about some of these items. They pull you back in time and force you to reflect.

At Alhambra Inn you go for the shelter, the bed, the relaxation, the food, perhaps, but if you were in Jamaica when these items were current, in vogue, your sojourn there might be filled with memories



A sugar pot converted into a water lily pond.



A cabinet full of miscellaneous pieces from the past.

of when Bata shoes were the things to have on your feet; when certain sparkling beverages were drinks that many people could not afford to buy; when Nugget shoe polish gave the face of many a school and church shoe that extra shine; when Brooklax chocolate laxative was a remedy for constipation.

The metal advertising panels seem to be the most extensive items in the collection. They are everywhere; and more than any other, they are saying much about the tastes and demands of yesteryear. These panels, of various shapes and sizes, have been out of use for decades, yet some are in an excellent state of preservation, in full never-fading colours.

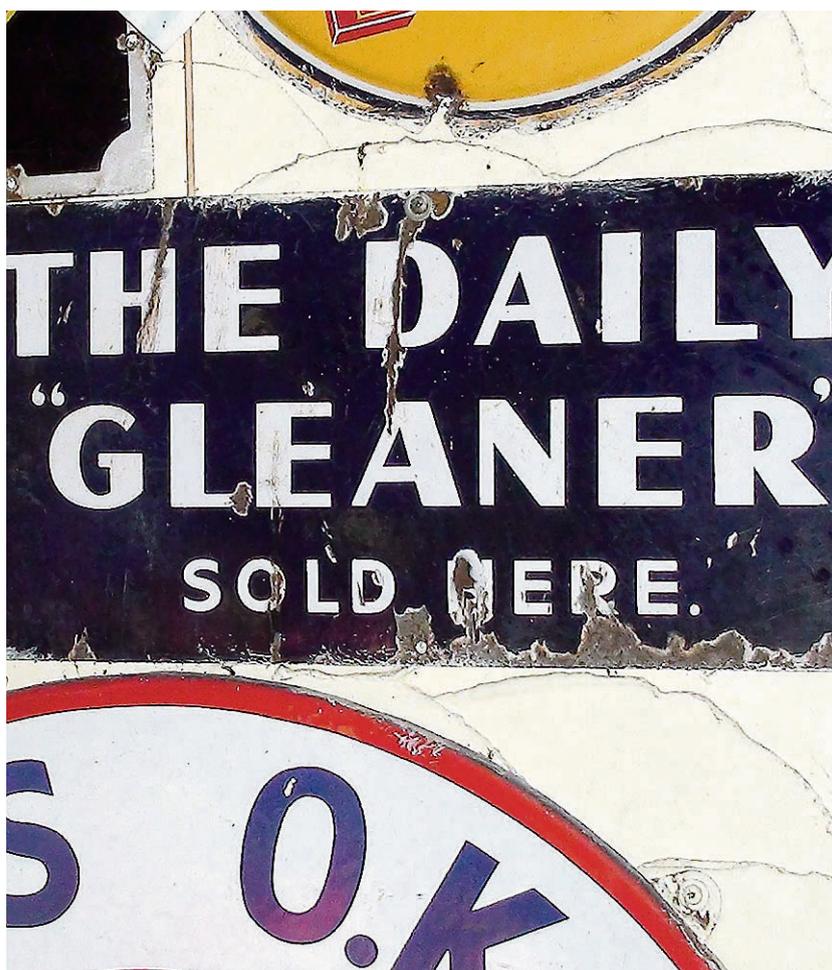
The enamelled pieces might not be as colourful and numerous as the panels, but they are strongly represented, silently telling the narratives of those who used to use them. Should they be tested, DNAs might just be lingering thereon. And imagine a time when every utensil in a house was enamelled, and the time warp that is the cabinet in which pots, plates, bedpans, pewters, goblets, cups, urinals, chamber pots, basins, teapots, pails and kettles are resting, will present them to you.

Rivalling the advertisement panels in terms of numbers are the earthenware vessels, many of which were originally imported from Spain long before they were acquired by Clarke. The name Alhambra Inn itself was influenced by the Alhambra fortress built by the Moors in Granada, Spain. It is one of the most historic places in Spain, dating back as far as the 9<sup>th</sup> century, and is the locale for Hotel Alhambra Palace.

Alhambra is an indelible story in Spain's history, and Alhambra Inn in Jamaica is a great repository of items from Jamaica's social heritage. At Alhambra Inn, it is a time to remember.



These suitcases have long-hung up their travelling shoes.



Remember when it was The Daily Gleaner?



An array of enamelled vessels.

# McKay pleads for tourism ministries to be enablers of sports tourism

**J**ASON MCKAY, promoter of the recent International Sports Kickboxing Association (ISKA) Amateur Members Association World Championship at the Montego Bay Convention Centre, has implored the sports and tourism ministries to be joint enablers for sports tourism to become a meaningful reality.

Jamaica hosted hundreds of officials and competitors at the September 10-15 tournament, which turned out to be a week-long stay in the island for participants and their entourages.

Holder of the ISKA franchise in Jamaica, McKay had similarly promoted the International Taekwon-Do Federation World Cup at the same venue in 2014, bringing an international martial arts world tournament to the Caribbean for the first time.

The ISKA Amateur Members' Association World Championships was well supported, especially by Britain and the United States, both teams dwarfing hosts Jamaica. Britain, in particular, had 167 competitors, and the United States, 60, joining martial artists from elsewhere in Europe.

"I hope this wakes up the Government for them to realise this is the answer for our dead periods in the tourist season.

"I had to work with a sponsorship of US\$17,000 from the Tourist Board. I am sure the tournament generated far more than that for the sector in terms of exposure for the country's tourism product.

"It is hotels, airlines, transport operators, venues, and the economy that benefit from the consumption at every level," McKay pointed out, adding that international sports events deserve support parity afforded major entertainment events.

Meanwhile, Tourism Minister Edmund Bartlett agreed that Jamaica should be bidding to host more international sports events such as the ISKA World Championships on a consistent basis.

"To build sports tourism, it must be more than a wish. It must be every time, but we must first have the capacity, all the various sectors working together," he said.



ASHLEY ANGUIN PHOTO

England's Mark Rymer was defeated by Jamaica's Kenneth Edwards in the Heavy Weight Light Contact category at the 2018 ISKA Amateur World Championship at the Montego Bay Convention Centre on Friday, September 14.

## Record load factor highlights strong August passenger demand

THE INTERNATIONAL Air Transport Association (IATA) announced global passenger traffic data for August 2018 showing that demand (measured in total revenue passenger kilometres, or RPKs) climbed 6.4 per cent compared to the year-ago period.

This was slightly above the 6.1 per cent annual increase for July. August capacity (available seat kilometres or, ASKs) increased by 5.5 per cent, and load factor climbed 0.7 per cent percentage point to 85.3 per cent, which was the highest for any month since at least 1990.

"The industry experienced continued strong traffic growth in August, putting the cap on a very good peak travel season. The all-time record load factor reflects that airlines are maximising the efficiency of their assets at a time of rising fuel prices and other costs that are limiting the opportunities for low-fare stimulation," said Alexandre de Juniac, IATA's Director general and CEO.

August international passenger demand rose 5.6 per cent compared to August 2017, in line with the 5.5 per cent year-over-year growth achieved in July. All regions recorded increases, led by airlines in the Asia-Pacific region.

Capacity climbed 5.1 per cent, and load factor edged up 0.4 percentage point to 85.0 per cent

■ Asia-Pacific airlines' August traffic increased 7.5 per cent compared to the year-ago period, which was an acceleration compared to a 7.2 per cent rise in July. Capacity rose 6.1 per cent and load factor rose 1.1 percentage points to 82.6 per cent. The upward trend in passenger traffic remains very strong, supported by structural changes, including ongoing rises in living standards in the region, as well as more route options for passengers that translate into time savings and, ultimately, stimulate demand.

■ European carriers saw August demand climb 5.1 per cent year-to-year, which was also an increase from the 4.5 per cent growth recorded in July. However, in seasonally adjusted terms, growth has tracked sideways since late spring. Capacity rose 4.5 per cent, and load factor climbed 0.5 percentage point to 88.9 per cent, which was the highest among regions. European demand is being affected by mixed signs on the economy as well as possible disruptions from air traffic control strikes.

■ Middle Eastern carriers posted a 5.4 per cent traffic increase in August, which was a slowdown from 6.2 per

cent in July. Passenger volumes have trended upwards at an eight per cent annualized rate since the start of the year. Capacity increased 6.3 per cent, with load factor slipping 0.7 percentage point to 80.7 per cent.

■ North American airlines' international demand rose 3.7 per cent compared to August a year ago. While this was a slowdown from 4.1 per cent growth recorded in July, it largely reflected developments a year ago rather than any change in the current healthy trend. Capacity rose 3.3 per cent, and load factor grew by 0.4 percentage point to 87.2 per cent.

■ Latin American airlines experienced a 4.8 per cent demand increase in August compared to the same month last year, up from 3.5 per cent annual growth in July. Capacity increased by 6.5 per cent and load factor slid 1.3 percentage points to 81.4 per cent. Year-to-year comparisons are distorted by the hurricane-related disruptions of a year ago, and traffic has largely tracked sideways since April in seasonally adjusted terms.

■ African airlines' traffic climbed 6.8 per cent in August. While this was a slowdown from the 7.4 per cent growth recorded in July, the bigger picture is that demand remains strong, despite an increasingly challenging environment in the continent's largest economies. South Africa slipped back into recession in the second quarter and business confidence in Nigeria has moderated in recent months. Capacity rose 3.8 per cent, and load factor surged 2.2 percentage points to 78.2 per cent.