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Hospitality Jamaica

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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2018



Winter Tourist Season Edition

**SANGSTER INTERNATIONAL
NEARS FIVE MILLIONTH MARK**

**FROM RUSTIC TO COSMETIC –
OCHO RIOS FISHING VILLAGE**

**SPICY HILL BASIC SCHOOL GETS
ROYAL TREAT FROM ROYALTON**



Future food court at the Sangster International Airport

A great year FOR MBJ!

Janet Silvera

Hospitality Jamaica Coordinator

JAMAICA'S SANGSTER International Airport (SIA) has posted growth of 6.07 per cent between January and November 2018, compared to the same period in 2017.

Year to date (YTD), the MBJ Airports Limited-operated facility has processed a total of 4,095,703 passengers in the last 11 months.

Chief executive officer of MBJ, Dr Rafael Echevarne, in response to questions from **Hospitality Jamaica**, said he was excited to be approaching the five million passengers mark, half way into their 30-year concession agreement with the Government of Jamaica.

According to him, "This has been a very exciting year for MBJ as we celebrate our 15th anniversary. We're opening a new chapter in the development of the airport. It has come of age as we approach the five million passenger mark. This means important

developments in terms of growth of the infrastructure, use of technology to gain efficiencies and create a seamless operation to ensure our users experience the best level of service."

Traffic growth for the period was impacted by lower average load factors among some carriers, as well as Caribbean Airlines' drastic reduction in service to Ft Lauderdale from one daily to two weekly, this route, MBJ said, will be discontinued by the airline as at January 8, 2019.

Notwithstanding, MBJ welcomed Nordwind Airlines (Pegas Fly) fortnightly service from Moscow, Russia on October 26, 2018 and Frontier Airlines (2) weekly Raleigh, North Carolina on November 17.

Toronto, Canada is the top performing route to date. However, the airport's largest source market remains the United States with some 69 per cent share of the pie.



Duty Free Retail at Sangster

Top 10 Routes – Performance (YTD)

Fort Lauderdale – Southwest, Jetblue

Baltimore Washington International-Southwest increased to two daily, Spirit – new four weekly

American Airlines remains the number one carrier into the island, with Southwest and Delta following closely behind.

Top 10 Airlines – Market Share (YTD)

The outlook for the airport is promising with Swoop Airlines having two weekly flights out of Hamilton, Ontario, as of December 16; Spirit Airlines will add three weekly flights out of Detroit as of December 20 and four weekly out of Orlando starting February 28, 2019.

Sunwing Airlines will introduce a weekly Buffalo-Detroit as at January 21, 2019 on behalf of Vacation Express; Southwest Airlines will add a schedule St Louis as at March 1, 2019; Thomas Cook Airlines has announced a weekly Manchester flight for May 2019 and LATAM Airlines will fly into the Montego Bay airport three times weekly from Lima, Peru, as of July 1, 2019.

Developments at Sangster International Airport, operated by MBJ Airports Limited

MBJ HAS spent US\$26 million on works to resurface the taxiways, shoulders and ramps at SIA using concrete rather than asphalt to ensure greater durability. That work is almost complete, revealed Sharon Hislop, manager, commercial business development and marketing.

Their chiller system upgrade has been completed and is fully operational; renovation is being done on the check-in areas to modernise the space, and scheduled for completion by end of year. Replacing existing flooring and ceilings are among the things being done, while the expansion and remodelling of the two current public restrooms will commence thereafter.

Hislop pointed out that 20 new kiosks were recently commissioned for the efficient and smooth

processing of arriving passengers, increasing the total kiosks to 30. There are 50 self-service kiosks on departures and passengers can also check in using their smart phones and other devices.

“SIA intends to create, ‘The Irie Airport Experience’. MBJ aims to become a destination in itself by developing products and services that enhance the airport experience that passengers look forward to with professional, fast, attentive, friendly service from the staff of all concessions and agencies,” says Hislop.

The airport operator has gone as far as selecting one of the world’s leading engineering firms in consortium with seven local firms to provide architectural, interior design and engineering services for the terminal expansion.



Redesigned Check-in area (departures)

The objective of the terminal expansion project is to develop the airport terminal into a modern, functional and efficient international facility that will greatly enhance the experience for both passengers and the airport community, and meet growing demands based on forecasted

growth in passenger movement up to 2025, said Hislop.

MBJ, she said, 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 while portraying a

sense of place that incorporates local cultural elements into a modern design.

The SIA connects Jamaica to more than 60 international destinations and is served by 30 airlines and growing.

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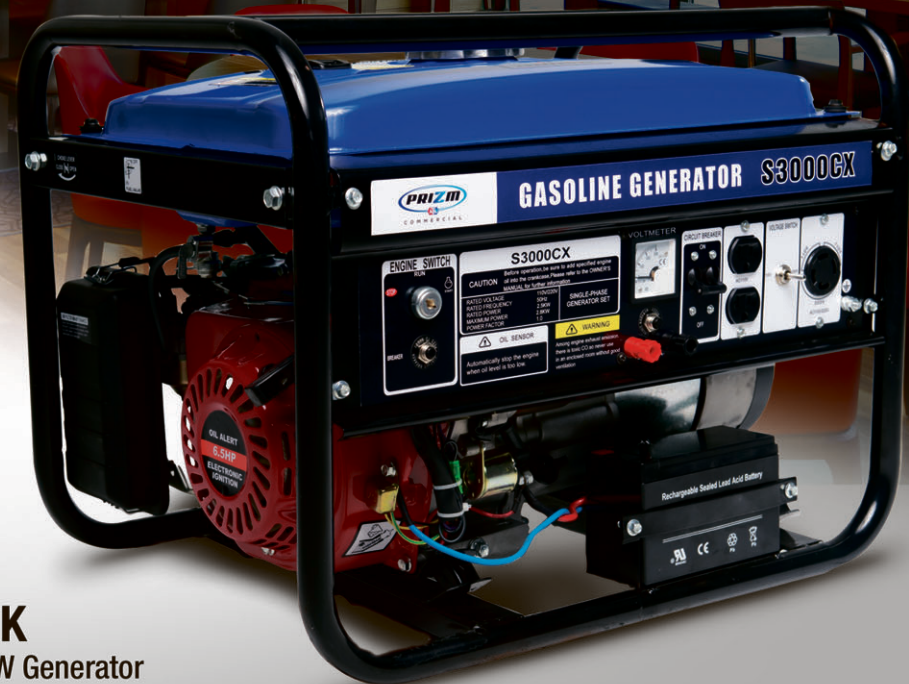
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VISITORS GALORE, but spending low

Paul H. Williams
Hospitality Jamaica Writer

WHEN HOSPITALITY Jamaica visited Ocho Rios, St Ann, last week Wednesday, all the signs of a potentially busy tourist season were all around.

Two massive cruise ships were in port. Transport operators and other service providers were out in their numbers, hoping to get some of the work.

The main street leading into the town centre was overrun with tourists walking to and from their ships. Some were seen heading into shops. The Taj Mahal and Island Village shopping complexes were particularly busy. There was a trickling of guests in the new Ocho Rios Fishing Village. A popular destination seemed to be Mystic Mountain, located just up the road from the port.

There was music coming from bars and eateries. The sounds of steel pans chimed from a shop terrace on Main Street. A lone saxophonist jazzed things up on the deck of Island Village. US dollars were in his box at his feet.

A young and versatile drummer from the tourist Mecca of Montego Bay made people dance and jig to the hypnotic sounds coming from his drums. He said he was in Ochie to make his 'bread'. A jelly coconut vendor was doing good business at \$300 per coconut.

Yet, for some shop owners, business was not good. Bad, they said. Despite the two cruise ships

in port, they said that they were not benefitting from the influx of tourists. And it was not just on that particular day. They said that many cruise tourists are not shoppers, but are, in fact, sightseers. They look, but do not buy.

Some say it is that not that sales are nil but that they are very slow. A female owner looked at her watch while she was speaking with **Hospitality Jamaica**, and said that it was now 12 o'clock and she had not made even a dollar. The ships were in port from early morning to depart late afternoon.

BIASED TREATMENT

Another common complaint from small-business people is that some transport operators are giving preferential treatments to the bigger businesses that can give them more 'commission'. They say that they cannot afford the percentage that the transport operators are demanding from them, so they sit and watch the vehicles with tourists go to places that can afford to pay the operators more.

Despite the mixed fortunes, tourism stakeholders are waiting for the 2018 winter tourist season to kick off this weekend. In speaking with Vana Taylor, president of the St Ann Chamber of Commerce and the fourth vice-president of the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association, about the prospects for the upcoming season for Ocho Rios, she said that they were 'very good', and that she was expecting a



The parking lot of the Taj Mahal shopping complex in Ocho Rios was full of tour buses on Wednesday, December 5.



Painter Michael Clarke says he seldom benefits from the influx of cruise ship passengers to Ocho Rios.



People relaxing on the beach at Margaritaville in Ocho Rios, St Ann, on Wednesday, December 5.

'bumper season', as always, since Ocho Rios had all the attractions and all types of rooms. She also mentioned the frequency of cruise-ship arrivals, "even on Sundays".

In responding to the concerns of the small-business people about being bypassed, she said that a response to that is to develop Seville Heritage Park into a heritage attraction where all the artists and artisans are housed in one place. In this way, they would not be located all over the place and have to pay operators to take tourists to them. This idea she is passionate about and hopes the Government listens.



Carnival Sensation was one of two cruise ships that docked in Ocho Rios, St Ann, on Wednesday, December 5.

Negril small hoteliers confident about the winter tourist season

Janet Silvera
Hospitality Jamaica Coordinator

HOTELIERS AND other tourism-related business operators in Negril say that they are upbeat about the prospects for what seems poised to be a bumper winter tourist season for the resort town.

“The prospects look good. So far, most of my fellow hoteliers are reporting good bookings all the way up until March, so as long as we don’t have any major upset, we should enjoy a good winter season,” operator of the Charela Inn and President of the Negril Chamber of Commerce Daniel Grizzle told **Hospitality Jamaica**.

According to Grizzle, many of the property owners have refurbished their properties, offering

fresh-looking products for the season.

Richard Wallace, operator of the Boardwalk Village, near Rutland Point in the town, had similar sentiments. For him, the projections, so far, are good news as the town recently came out of a very slow period – September and October.

“We are very optimistic about the winter season, hoping that the numbers will be as great as last year,” Wallace stated, adding that indications from his colleague hoteliers were positive.

“We (Boardwalk) have good bookings because there are some periods when we are full, and so we are grateful for that. Like towards the Christmas time, we are fully booked, and then in February again. We are booked, so we are happy for what’s going on, and we just hope that it continues,” Wal-

lace added.

According to Jamaica Tourist Board statistics, in 2015, Negril sold a total of 1,190,791 room nights. This declined to 1,164,881 in 2016. Last year, the figure climbed to a record 1,217,383. Negril is the third largest resort area after Montego Bay and Ocho Rios.

Owner of the Negril Tree House, Gail Jackson also shared the same type of optimism as her colleagues, noting to **Hospitality Jamaica** that the strip of beach parallel to her hotel had replenished itself after experiencing some amount of erosion.

Negril Tree House is located on the popular seven-mile white-sand beach.

“The beach has come back. The beach looks amazing! It is clean. The repeat guests are really coming out to small hotels, and we are very

pleased with that,” she said.

“Bookings are looking fantastic! I can speak for myself because I have invested a lot in renovations. And we have a lot of the boxes checked, where people feel comfortable and we also do some Airbnb bookings,” she added.

On the food and entertainment side, Luddy Saams, proprietor of the Drifters Bar on the Norman Manley Boulevard, said that while he was excited that things were shaping up wonderfully for members in the accommodation sector, the visitors from whom he gets a lot of customer support have not started to make their way to the island as yet.

“So far, they are drifting in. And of course, we rely on a lot of returnees and people that spend their winter months here, and they are not here yet.”

However, so far, he is seeing a lot



Daniel Grizzle

of new faces that have drifted in. “They are first-time visitors, and that is looking pretty positive,” he said, adding that the demographics of the visitors were mixed.

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Hoteliers upbeat and party promoters fearful

PRESIDENT OF the Negril Entertainment Association (NEA) Ryan Morrison says that while operators of establishments such as hoteliers and food entities in Negril are looking towards profiting from a fruitful winter tourist season, party promoters are singing a different tune.

According to Morrison, several loopholes in the Noise Abatement Act have put Negril-based party promoters at a stark disadvantage having their events being shut down even before they have recouped monies expended, due to incessant complaints, in many cases, from neighbours.

He said that the latest party to be closed down was the very popular annual event Different Strokes, following repeated complaints to the Negril police about noise pollution.

“The person who called the police called a total of 49 times. The person said they were going to call every four minutes until it shut off,” Morrison said.

“Some people don’t want the noise; some people want the noise. The Government has to do something. The law does not protect the promoters. Once they hear it and deem it a nuisance, they can get you shut off. Even if it is a permitted



Ryan Morrison

event, as long as I am hearing you, and I deem it to be a nuisance, I can call the police,” he explained.

Morrison says that his organisation plans to resume the pursuit of the establishment of an entertainment zone for Negril, which would solve the problem. He said that an area near the South Negril River was identified more than a year ago for the zone but had fizzled as the NEA had not persisted with that cause.

He said that due to the lack of an entertainment zone, parties in Negril are held at venues that are in the proximity of hotels, dwelling houses, and guest houses,

and so the sounds are highly audible to neighbours.

‘Under the Noise Abatement Act, no person shall on any private

premises or in any public place at any time of day or night operate any device for the amplification of sound in such a manner that it is audible

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THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

Big data's future role in helping understand C'bean tourism

David Jessop

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

OVER THE last few weeks, several Caribbean researchers and academics have raised with me the chaotic state of Caribbean tourism statistics and tourism data.

The issue arose because one researcher producing an important study for a major government reviewing its overall development strategy towards the region, contacted me and others to say that they had been unable to access any statistics from the main regional bodies that hold them.

Then when the individual concerned did manage to do so by a roundabout route, they recognised not just the inconsistencies, but the absence, in several cases, of any explanation as to why significant variations were occurring year-on-year.

What emerged from this and subsequent exchanges with others about Caribbean tourism data were two separate but related trends.

The first was that the paucity of reliable Caribbean-generated information in a significant number of nations meant that objective decision-making by governments or



DAVID JESSOP

the private sector on tourism-related issues, such as competitiveness, taxation, marketing, and investment, was likely to be unreliable.

The second was that external development agencies, including bodies involved in macro-economic analysis of overall Caribbean economic performance, are developing partly out of frustration new ways to accumulate and analyse Caribbean data for regional and international use.

What was striking was evidence that some nations – not Jamaica – were variously subjecting publication

to lengthy bureaucratic scrutiny, handing responsibility to independent agencies, were publishing figures in hard-to-access formats, or were simply avoiding publication at all for reasons of maladministration or political expediency. The situation was, one correspondent noted, even worse when it came to reliable expenditure data.

POOR PERFORMANCE

These are matters of some importance, as there are indications that the region's tourism sector may be performing less well than recent headlines suggest. This month, for example, the **World Tourism Barometer**, produced by the UN's World Tourism Organisation, indicated that overall arrivals into the Caribbean have so far this year fallen by eight per cent.

All of this may be about to change. The growing availability of big data and more sophisticated algorithms now make it possible to produce indicators in much shorter periods of time using consistent information from multiple non-Caribbean data sources.

Since 2015, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has been producing 'A Week on the Beach' largely for internal purposes. This is

an index of the nominal cost of a one-week beach holiday in 18 small and large Caribbean destinations.

Inspired by the 'Big Mac Index', it measures the price of a basket of typical expenditures during a beach holiday based on three-star hotels, taxi fares, beverages, and meals, but does not include air travel costs. Despite some shortcomings, the figures demonstrate that the nominal cost of an average, one-week beach holiday in the Caribbean is consistently higher than on average elsewhere in the world.

The importance of this and its policy implications emerged in a recent webcast, 'A Week on the Beach', led by the Trinidadian economist Marla Dukharan.

What, in outline, this revealed was that on average Caribbean three-star hotel costs more than in almost all other beach destinations; the Caribbean is 30 to 50 per cent more expensive than Central America and Mexico; that the Asia Pacific region was still the cheapest region in the world; the average cost of a week in Cuba is comparable to Central America and significantly lower than in other sample Caribbean countries;

the number of flights rather than airlines positively impact on competitiveness; the number of rooms a destination has may not be significant; and the overall findings were largely consistent over the four-year period surveyed.

The broadcast, which can be seen on YouTube, indicated that at a staff level, the IMF is now working towards developing a more sophisticated understanding of tourism in ways that will eventually allow the findings to be built into future economic models. To achieve this, they intend making more use of 'big data', and are now teaming up with TripAdvisor and others in the industry to utilise their statistics and research to support the development of a more sophisticated analytic process.

The exercise still has shortcomings. For example, a separate methodology is required to value the competitiveness of all-inclusive hotels and cruise ships; an approach is required that can quantify less tangible impacts such as crime; and separate modelling is required to analyse the impact on arrivals of government taxes on aviation.

This new big data-led approach is welcome, particularly if it enables the region and those beyond to understand what is really happening to Caribbean tourism, the likely impact of budgetary decisions, and how the industry relates to wider Caribbean economic performance.

Bartlett notes negatives of casino gaming despite potential

Janet Silvera

Hospitality Jamaica Coordinator

THE MANY negatives associated with casino gambling, including money laundering, have been listed by Tourism Minister Edmund Bartlett as reasons why the Government has taken its time about introducing the activity in Jamaica.

According to Bartlett, being able to understand the negatives is being able to better manage the benefits that will flow from gaming.

The minister was speaking last Friday as he addressed a seminar titled 'Hospitality Industry and Casino Operator's Guide to Managing US Liability Issues from the Caribbean', at Sandals Montego Bay.

While Bartlett indicated that Jamaica's first casino gaming facility will be opened by early 2020, he did not offer details. He also conceded that casino gaming would add a "very lucrative element" to the tourism product, with the potential to add two per cent to the country's gross domestic product.

Despite its revenue potential, Bartlett warned that "any activity that is so driven by the economic return brings with it, by its very nature, many sides".

The minister pointed to the legal, legislative and policy issues that must be put in place to manage casino gaming, to ensure that it functions within the ambit of the law; that 'fairness, honesty and integrity are maintained.'

Bartlett also noted that certain social practices develop from casino gaming because of the wealth that flows from it. As such, he said, "rules of engagement have to be established within the social structure". He said attention must also be paid to the psychological impact of gaming because of its addictive nature, as well as to the possible negative effects on family life.

The tourism minister admitted that Jamaica has not fully embraced casino gaming for, among other things, religious reasons.

He said, "We have shied away from gaming as a structured path of the tourism experience for a long time for a number of reasons. One of which has been the experiences that we have looked at in other



Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett as he opens a seminar on 'Hospitality Industry and Casino Operator's Guide to Managing US Liability Issues from the Caribbean', at Sandals Montego Bay on Friday, December 7. **CONTRIBUTED**

places and we have seen some of the attendant negatives, and we question very much whether or not

we would be able ourselves to manage and be able to deal with the negative impact of it."



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Jamaica cops EIGHT travel awards

JAMAICA TOOK home eight awards at the World Travel Awards' Grand Final Gala Ceremony, held in Lisbon, Portugal, on December 1. Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett as well as chairman of the Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB), John Lynch, were in attendance to accept the awards for the Leading Beach Destination and Leading Cruise Destination.

"We are honoured to once again be recognised as the world's Leading Beach Destination as well as the world's Leading Cruise Destination,"

said Donovan White, director of tourism. "These awards, along with the various tourism partners honoured in Lisbon at the Grand Final Gala, are a testament to the constant renovation, tireless efforts and cross-sector collaboration that have placed our tourism product in an enviable position"

Jamaica was awarded Leading Cruise Destination for the 12th year in a row. Earlier in the year, the JTB was honoured as the Caribbean's Leading Tourist Board at the Caribbean & North America Gala

Ceremony for the World Travel Awards.

A complete list of awards, including those won by tourism partners, is as follows:

- World's Leading Beach Destination (Jamaica)
- World's Leading Cruise Destination (Jamaica)
- World's Leading Luxury Hotel Villa (Fleming Villa at GoldenEye)
- World's Leading Villa Resort (Round Hill Hotel & Villas)
- World's Leading All-Inclusive Company (Sandals Resorts



From left: Edmund Bartlett, minister of tourism, Jamaica, accepts the award for World's Leading Beach Destination from Graham Cooke, founder, World Travel Awards; John Lynch, chairman, Jamaica Tourist Board, shares in the occasion.

International)

- World's Leading Family Resort Operator (Chukka Caribbean Adventures)
- World's Leading Adventure Tour (Chukka Caribbean Adventures)
- World's Leading Caribbean Attraction Company (Island Routes Caribbean)
- World's Leading Adventure Tour Operator (Chukka Caribbean Adventures)

The World Travel Awards was established in 1993 to acknowledge, reward and celebrate excellence across all key sectors of the travel, tourism and hospitality industries. To learn more about the World Travel Awards, go to www.worldtravelawards.com.

For more information about Jamaica, please visit www.visitjamaica.com.

Ja ranks number five among Kayak's top trending destinations

JAMAICA IS one of the top five trending destinations to travel to in January 2019, as designated by international travel website Kayak. In a recent report by Kayak.com, Jamaica landed at number five among the top 10 trending destinations, which included locations such as Palm Springs, Florence, Zurich and New Orleans. This designation underscores the island's popularity as a vacation destination among world travellers.

For its report, travel search engine Kayak looked at flight destinations with the greatest year-over-year increase in searches for the top 100 most searched destinations for travel dates, starting December 25 through December 31 and ending January 1 through January 2, 2019.

"Jamaica's inclusion in Kayak's top trending destinations speaks volumes about our diverse product that tick

the bucket list of world travellers," said Donovan White, Jamaica's director of tourism. "Our food, music and culture are just a few of the things which have attracted millions of visitors to our shores, and our partners have done a great job in promoting this rich diversity."

With the holidays fast approaching, travellers may wish to consider booking Jamaica, as there is so much to see and do in 2019. The destination's allure can be attributed to the warmth of its people, the natural beauty and the sheer adventure that can be experienced. Whether it is a hike to the Blue Mountains, or biking in the hilly terrain, to climbing the 600-foot cascading Dunn's River Falls, or just exploring the massive underground caverns at the Green Grotto Caves.

If the beach is a draw, there are a range of options from which one

can choose. In Montego Bay, visitors can enjoy a relaxing day at the iconic Doctor's Cave Beach, or soak up some sun and fun at Negril's Seven Mile Beach or have some family time at Frenchman's Cove in Port Antonio.

There is no shortage of things to do on the calendar of events. Starting New Year's Day, Carnival festivities get under way in Jamaica with a Sunrise Breakfast Party. Following the January 1 event, other activities will take place across the island leading up to the Road March on April 28, which coincides with Easter.

Another staple on the events calendar is Rebel Salute, which takes place January 18 and 19 in Ocho Rios. The festival is a true cultural immersion with unique Jamaican vegetarian cuisine complementing the authentic Jamaican music and crafts throughout the event.



Royalton management and staff at a Christmas treat for children and educators at Spicy Hill Basic School.

Spicy Hill Basic School gets royal treat from Royalton

THEIR UNLEASHED excitement and exuberant laughter were enough evidence that the children of Spicy Hill Basic School were more than happy for the visit of the group of Royalton staff, who fêted them with gifts and lunch.

The playground was buzzing with the type of cheers as if Santa himself came to town. The CARE team from Royalton was on a mission to bring the spirit of giving, and it's safe to say that that mission was adequately accomplished. The day started with playing on the play-

ground, something that the staff themselves engaged in, reminiscent of their time in those infant years. In the moment, some members of the team may have well forgotten their actual age, judging by their level of engagement with the children on the swings and slides. Nevertheless, it was a time to play, mix and mingle with the innocent angels.

The next segment of the treat was all about food, and more food. Gourmet culinary treats enticed their eyes, eventually filling their bellies. The spread of chicken, hot dogs,



From left: General Manager of Royalton White Sands Daniel Cazarin, principal of Spicy Hill Basic, Angella Williams, and Angelina Anderson, human resource manager, Royalton, proudly showcasing the Sung Wing sign at their Christmas treat.

sandwiches, nuggets, chili and fruits was more than satisfaction; it was a heavenly treat. No meal like that would be complete without cake and ice cream, which did the trick wonderfully. Both students and teachers were appeased, especially the teachers who returned for seconds.

Santa's helpers, in the form of the Royalton team members, had bags of gifts for each and every student. As the little ones queued to receive their presents, their quiet and genuine thank you were rewarding enough to cover the rest of the season. General Manager Daniel Cazarin, played the role of chief Santa, issuing packages to the eager children. There was

more excitement as each one wanted to compare their gift with the other. The team eventually said goodbye after a few hours of bonding with the children. It was a feeling not to be rivalled by any other. Loving is giving, and this is the time to love more and give more.

The school's principal, Angella Williams, and her staff, adequately expressed their sentiments of appreciation but even without this, the reward of giving back was already achieved.

The treat was led by Human Resources Manager Angelina Anderson, Shawn Moses, junior general manager and Cazarin.



Students at the Spicy Hill Basic School enjoying every minute of the Royalton Christmas treat.



Director of Tourism Donovan White addresses the audience at the VIP cocktail reception.



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Novelette Clarke showcases variations of the 'One Love' Jamaican dress to a visitor at the Olde Market Craft Shoppes in Ocho Rios.

ARTISAN CORNER

Novelette Clarke – the next generation of artisans

SOMEWHERE WITHIN the town of the Eight Rivers, Ocho Rios, nestled under towering fern species, is the home of one of Jamaica's artisans, Novelette Clarke, of Colegate, Fern Gully.

"Art is something that is created from one's imagination, and people should appreciate the arts. The time and effort that goes into hand-made items is filled with so much sweat, and passion, in comparison to machines that can be easily destroyed," is the self-taught artist's perspective on the arts.

Her vision comes alive at night with wild ideas that result in the genesis of her crafts today, not by sketches or patterns but through pure, free-handed passion. A passion that only flourishes as time goes by as she improves her craft.

Despite being self-taught, she has taken the opportunity to garner more knowledge and skills through trainings offered by the Tourism Product Development Company in micro, small & medium enterprise management, and Florida Caribbean Cruise Association trainings, concerning marketing and operating a small business, as well as honing her craft techniques.

Raised in a community with its very own craft market to which her mother contributed makes Clarke's success far from farfetched. She is a woman who believes in creating opportunities to generate a mixture of income streams within the areas of hotels farming, teaching, and so on.



Artisan Novelette Clarke sits in her stall at the Olde Craft Market Shoppes in Ocho Rios, honing her skill in crochet.

However, she believes craft is a fulltime job and dedicates the majority of her time to it; everything else she takes on is just a top-up. Clarke boasts several skills, aside from her craft, including being a clerical typist, for which she received training under Fitz-Henley. These additional jobs, however, are proof of her driven nature in never settling, just like her mother. It was also necessary for her to wear so many caps as her mother aged and faced health complications, so the responsibility of maintaining the tradition sat on the shoulders of Novelette, while her sister flourished as a teacher.

However, the journey was nothing Clarke couldn't handle. Specialising in crochet, embroidery and papier-maché is second nature, as

she grew up watching her mother and her craft; but Clarke started in her early 20s. Her mother inspired her most, seeing her touch everything and watch it bloom thereafter was mesmerizing for young Clarke.

Staying true to her belief in never selling the first thing she has ever made, as it provides a constant motivation, her biggest moment was when she made her very own crochet swimsuits. Clarke believes her craft items generally have better market value than many things out there, but like any entrepreneur, she experienced slow days.

However, she does not get discouraged, and will continue to grow and monetise her business and share her passion for the arts selling at the Olde Craft Market Shoppes, Shop No. 6, Ocho Rios.



Happy Holidays

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Another section of the small area reserved for fisherfolk in the Ocho Rios Fishing Village.

From rustic to cosmetic – OCHO RIOS FISHING VILLAGE

FISHING VILLAGES in Jamaica are invariably quaint, rustic spaces where pretentiousness does not thrive. They are as earthy as earthy gets. The scenes and the people therein are real and vibrant. They are places people go to, to get fresh seafood, chill, and connect with nature.

On a busy day, there is so much going on at the same time – canoes leaving and arriving with their catch, buyers flocking fish-laden boats, fishermen making and repairing fish pots, people cleaning and selling fish, birds and dogs competing for scraps, and ‘the devil knows what’.

They are crossroads, confluences, and birthplaces. Many a child was born there, and so were some towns. Many coastal communities in Jamaica sprang up around and evolved from fishing villages, and Ocho Rios in St Ann is one of them. It has grown from a little sleepy fishing village into one of Jamaica’s premier tourist destinations, a popular cruise-ship port.



Another section of the new concrete structures in the Ocho Rios Fishing Village.

And for years, the fishing village located at a spot called Sailors Hole was one of the most vibrant in this tourist town. It was a scene of industry and commerce, replete with shacks, sheds, and booths that sold a variety of things. Music was always blaring. It was a village that

never slept. The vibes were endless. There was always some pot over a fire, and the tantalising aromas of Jamaican food were wafting all over the place. Daily, people flocked the spot to get fresh fish. Hustlers were a staple, and so were the people who trekked there to get a bath

in a pool of ‘therapeutic’ spring water that seeps from under rocks.

This little pool was like a shrine to which people from all over the parish and beyond went to benefit from its ‘healing properties’ or just to take a ‘medz’. It was particularly popular with Rastafarians, and the

positive energy that that space exuded was sometimes overwhelming.

Then, a couple years ago, the laissez-faire, laid-back lifestyle came to a reluctant halt. The authorities and owners of the property pulled the plug and intervened to develop the place. The development is now a reality, and the scents and sounds of the original fishing village are memories etched on the brains of those who once frequented there.

It is still called the Ocho Rios Fishing Village, but it is a cosmetic





The new shops at the Ocho Rios Fishing Village.

refresh of shops that sell mainly food. These concrete structures have replaced the shacks and sheds. The pots always on the fire, the throbbing music, the varieties of natural goods, etc, are gone and washed away by the waves of development.

A section, with its manmade 'groyne', has been reserved for the fisherfolk. It looks absolutely nothing like the hub of activities that it used to be. When Hospitality Jamaica visited recently, there were only a few people buying fish. Some empty boats were idling on the sands of time – a different time.

The water that runs on to the property from Island Village now runs through a stonewall channel along the shops and rushes down to

the sea. The area where it joins the sea is clean and inviting

The aforementioned pool of healing waters is still there but is surrounded by concrete and it is railed off. The sights of people bathing, praying, singing, and holding a 'med', too, have gone. Only their spirits remain. Not one person was around or in it, chilling. Nothing happens there. The fish are alone and are perhaps sad to be.

The property gives access to the Island Village complex and to the beach at Jimmy Buffet Margaritaville. The vistas of cruise ships in the harbour, the beach, and the little section for fishing boats create a nice little portrait, but the charm of the original fishing village is gone, replaced by manmade aesthetics and order.



The little section reserved for fisherfolk at the new Ocho Rios Fishing Village.



The spot where water seeps from under rocks on to the Ocho Rios Fishing Village.



This is the new 'pool' at the Ocho Rios Fishing Village. The spot was once a very popular space because the water that seeps from under rocks is said to have healing properties.

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MBJ hosts 24th Art of Reggae Exhibition and 'trashion' show

MBJ AIRPORTS Limited, operators of Sangster International Airport (SIA), Jamaica's leading gateway to the world, hosted the 24th Art of Reggae Exhibition, a 'Trashion Show', dance and musical performances headlined by Agent Sasco recently.

A culmination of year-long celebrations marking MBJ's 15th anniversary as operator of SIA, featured the Art of Reggae Exhibition, displaying the top 100 selections of the International Reggae Poster contest; a 'trashion' show presenting apparel made from recycled materials and designed by members of the airport staff; and performances by a dance troupe from Edna Manley College, Tennshann Invasion Band, and headliner Agent Sasco, who thrilled fans with back-to-back hits throughout his hour-long set.

The courtyard outside the departure terminal surrounding the new 'I Love Montego Bay' sign was transformed for the soiree with a stage and red carpet and tents displaying the reggae posters.

The proceedings kicked off with the announcement of winners of the School Art Competition, organised jointly by MBJ and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information, which had poster and 3D/mosaic categories at the primary and secondary levels. Cornwall College's piece by Curtis Clennon took the J\$60,000 first-place prize in the high-school poster contest, with St Thomas Technical taking the J\$30,000 second-place prize. Burmar High took first in the High School 3D/Mosaic category, and Green Pond High came in second. Roehampton Primary took first in the primary poster contest, while Sommerton All-Age took second. Independence City Primary came first in the Primary 3D/Mosaic segment while Mona Prep came in second place. The 'trashion' show followed with contestants representing 10 companies operating at Sangster International Airport. Participants included Judith Williams of Relay and Island News operated by Paradies Lagarde, Stanford Hinds of Guardsman Limited, Tanya Taylor of Jamaica Customs Agency, Samantha Williams of AMSTAR, Joan Pennicot of American Airlines, Jermaine Williams of AJAS



Agent Sasco entertains the crowd at the MBJ



First place winner Roehampton Primary accept their certificate.

Limited, Stacy-Ann Blair of World Duty Free, Tameisha Patterson of Express Catering, Kerry-Ann Miller of Virgin Atlantic Airlines and Jamila Myers of Express Catering.

The designer representing Express Catering took first place and walked away with cash prize of J\$50,000, Virgin Atlantic and VIP Attractions tied for second place and was each awarded J\$25,000, while American Airlines was placed third and J\$15,000.

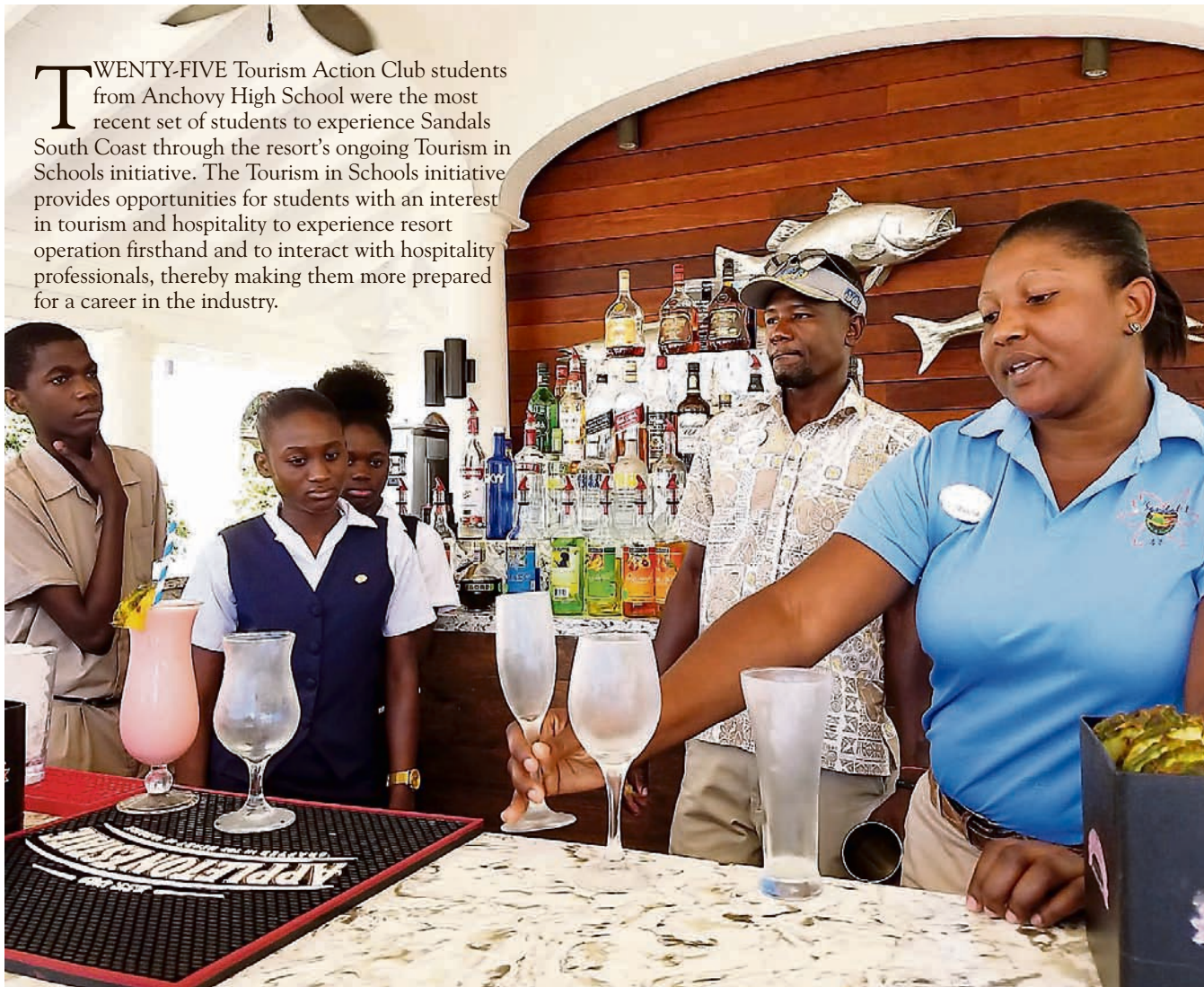
This was the second year in a row MBJ hosted the Art of Reggae Exhibition, founded by the late Michael 'Stylee' Thompson and fellow graphic designer Maria Papaefstathiou to showcase submissions from artists across the globe that pay homage to reggae music and support a vision of building a Reggae Hall of Fame in downtown Kingston, while raising awareness for the Alpha Boys' School, a long-standing incubator of world-class musicianship with many legends among its alumni. A submission from Vinicio Sejas of Bolivia was selected as the winning entry of this year's contest from among 1,060 posters from 582 designers representing 68 nations.



First-place 'trashion' winner, Jamelia Myers of Express Catering.

Hospitality 101 for Anchovy High

TWENTY-FIVE Tourism Action Club students from Anchovy High School were the most recent set of students to experience Sandals South Coast through the resort's ongoing Tourism in Schools initiative. The Tourism in Schools initiative provides opportunities for students with an interest in tourism and hospitality to experience resort operation firsthand and to interact with hospitality professionals, thereby making them more prepared for a career in the industry.



Sandals South Coast Bar Supervisor Cavata Murdock (right) shows students the different types of glasses available at a typical bar and their uses. Looking on is bartender, Hensley Wedderburn (second right).



Twenty-two year old Sandals Management Trainee Carnel Smith (second right) shares useful insight into the hospitality industry with boys from Anchovy High School during Sandals South Coast's most recent Tourism in Schools session.



Anthony Rowe, stewarding manager at Sandals South Coast, brings Tourism Action Club students from Anchovy High School up to speed on the operations of his department during a recent Tourism in Schools session at the resort.

MBJ invests \$37m in automated car park system at Sangster International Airport

MBJ AIRPORTS Limited, operator of Jamaica's leading gateway to the world, is introducing an automated car park system at the Sangster International Airport (SIA).

MBJ is in the process of installing a CAME Parkare automated system at the two entrances and three exits from the public car park at SIA, representing an investment of approximately USD\$300,000 (J\$37 million).

The system will be in place by the end of the year says Commercial and Communications Manager Sharon Hislop.

Customers will be automatically issued a ticket upon entering the car park as they approach the barrier. Tickets should be kept with customers until they are ready to pay and exit. The tickets

carry a time stamp that will allow customers to pay for parking in cash at one of three automated payment locations located in arrivals, departures, and in the car park itself. One of the automated exit lanes will be manned to accept debit- and credit-card payments.

Parking fees will remain unchanged at JMD\$150 per hour for the first three hours, or part thereof, or JMD\$600 for more than three hours and up to 24 hours, with an additional JMD 600 due for each additional 24-hour period, or part thereof, said a media release from MBJ.

The automating access to the car park at the SIA is part of MBJ's broader plan to improve service and operational efficiency for the airport's customers.

"We are pleased to introduce cutting-edge technology from one of the world's leading manufacturers of automated parking systems, making it easier and faster for our customers to enter and exit the car park at Sangster International Airport," commented MBJ Airports CEO Rafael Echevarne. "This upgrade is one of many infrastructure improvements under way at the airport geared towards making the experience enjoyable and seamless for our valued guests," Echevarne added.

CAME Parkare is part of Italy-based CAME Group, a leader in automated access control systems. The company is a specialist in automated parking systems with more than 50 airport parking systems installed across the globe.



CEO of MBJ Airports Limited, Dr Rafael Echevarne.

Bartlett calls for greater harmonisation of tourism and culture

SPEAKING ON the ministerial panel in Istanbul, Turkey, recently, Jamaica's Minister of Tourism, Edmund Bartlett, asserted that tourism was but the marketing of culture as the product visitors consume on their visits to destinations are the cultural assets of the people.

He noted that the harmony of tourism and culture, therefore, is essential for the sustainability of the industry, which is now the fastest-growing economic activity globally, representing 10 per cent of global GDP, employing 1:11 of the global workforce, and 35 per cent of trade in services.

Minister Bartlett further stated that over the past 50 years tourism has grown fiftyfold from 200 million visitors to 1.2 billion and expenditure growing from US\$300 billion to US\$1.3 trillion in 2017. This growth trend is projected to

continue and will reach two billion by 2030, with expenditures of \$2.5 trillion, according to World Travel and Tourism Council.

In addition, some 79 countries have transformed their economic base to tourism, with GDP dependence of 10 per cent and over.

This means that the pressures on cultural products have heightened and the demand for commercialisation of local culture has increased. This, he remarked, while good for economic growth, might be challenging for the preservation and protection of indigenous and authentic cultural patterns.

He warned that the growing tendencies for mass tourism if not carefully planned and structured, with full involvement of all stakeholders, including indigenous people and communities, could lead to the loss of authenticity,

cultural alienation, social tension, and even rejection of tourism.

The minister reflected on the recent incidence in some tourism centres of Europe, where locals are becoming hostile to tourists citing, among other things, the destruction of their way of life as they knew it and the loss of their sense of place.

"Tourism is a people-centred activity and can only exist if the creative intellectual output of the people is harnessed and converted into material values, which then command a price," he proffered.

Consequently, he said that governments and the private sector must collaborate to create a harmony of people and products by providing the legislative and regulatory framework as well as the financial and marketing arrangements to give space for innovation and entrepreneurship.



Edmund Bartlett

He indicated that tourism was driven by small and medium enterprises, which constitute more than 80 per cent of the experiences and passions people travel the world to consume, however, the irony is that these enterprises receive less than 20 per cent of the benefits of tourism according to recent United Nations Environment Programmes reports.

"Something is wrong with that," he asserted, calling for a rebalancing of that anomaly as it is at the heart of the wave of rejection of tourists and tourism in some

countries today. Overtourism, he said is a symptom that we ignore at our peril.

Concluding to much applause, the minister indicated that the cause was not lost as the meeting of UNESCO and United Nations World Tourism Organisation deliberating on this critical matter and offering experience and innovation would set the tone for a new paradigm and, no doubt a new architecture for cultural tourism to create more wealth and prosperity for his people.



Sandals Resorts International celebrates being named World's Leading All Inclusive Company FOR 23 CONSECUTIVE YEARS



Sandals Resorts International is thrilled to have been honoured by the World Travel Awards as the World's Leading All Inclusive Company for 23 consecutive years.

We are pleased to be consistently recognised for our commitment to embracing innovation at every touch point of the all-inclusive experience and for exceeding our guests' expectations by providing the most luxurious experiences at our 19 resorts across seven of the most beautiful islands in the region. Whether it's showcasing our 5 Star Global Gourmet® dining programme, our signature Love Nest® Suites and of course, our stunning destinations, Sandals uses world-wide marketing to promote the region more than any other company. We continue to invest not only in our infrastructure and amenities but also in the Jamaican economy and our Jamaican people.



Jamaica cops EIGHT travel awards

JAMAICA TOOK home eight awards at the World Travel Awards' Grand Final Gala Ceremony, held in Lisbon, Portugal, on December 1. Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett as well as chairman of the Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB), John Lynch, were in attendance to accept the awards for the Leading Beach Destination and Leading Cruise Destination.

"We are honoured to once again be recognised as the world's Leading Beach Destination as well as the world's Leading Cruise Destination,"

said Donovan White, director of tourism. "These awards, along with the various tourism partners honoured in Lisbon at the Grand Final Gala, are a testament to the constant renovation, tireless efforts and cross-sector collaboration that have placed our tourism product in an enviable position"

Jamaica was awarded Leading Cruise Destination for the 12th year in a row. Earlier in the year, the JTB was honoured as the Caribbean's Leading Tourist Board at the Caribbean & North America Gala

Ceremony for the World Travel Awards.

A complete list of awards, including those won by tourism partners, is as follows:

- World's Leading Beach Destination (Jamaica)
- World's Leading Cruise Destination (Jamaica)
- World's Leading Luxury Hotel Villa (Fleming Villa at GoldenEye)
- World's Leading Villa Resort (Round Hill Hotel & Villas)
- World's Leading All-Inclusive Company (Sandals Resorts International)
- World's Leading Family Resort Operator (Chukka Caribbean Brand (Beaches Resorts))
- World's Leading Caribbean Attraction Company (Island Routes Caribbean)
- World's Leading Adventure Tour Operator (Chukka Caribbean Adventures)



From left: Edmund Bartlett, minister of tourism, Jamaica, accepts the award for World's Leading Beach Destination from Graham Cooke, founder, World Travel Awards; John Lynch, chairman, Jamaica Tourist Board, shares in the occasion.

all key sectors of the travel, tourism and hospitality industries. To learn more about the World Travel Awards, go to www.worldtravelawards.com.

For more information about Jamaica, please visit www.visitjamaica.com.

Ja ranks number five among Kayak's top trending destinations

JAMAICA IS one of the top five trending destinations to travel to in January 2019, as designated by international travel website Kayak. In a recent report by Kayak.com, Jamaica landed at number five among the top 10 trending destinations, which included locations such as Palm Springs, Florence, Zurich and New Orleans. This designation underscores the island's popularity as a vacation destination among world travellers.

For its report, travel search engine Kayak looked at flight destinations with the greatest year-over-year increase in searches for the top 100 most searched destinations for travel dates, starting December 25 through December 31 and ending January 1 through January 2, 2019.

"Jamaica's inclusion in Kayak's top trending destinations speaks volumes about our diverse product that tick

the bucket list of world travellers," said Donovan White, Jamaica's director of tourism. "Our food, music and culture are just a few of the things which have attracted millions of visitors to our shores, and our partners have done a great job in promoting this rich diversity."

With the holidays fast approaching, travellers may wish to consider booking Jamaica, as there is so much to see and do in 2019. The destination's allure can be attributed to the warmth of its people, the natural beauty and the sheer adventure that can be experienced. Whether it is a hike to the Blue Mountains, or biking in the hilly terrain, to climbing the 600-foot cascading Dunn's River Falls, or just exploring the massive underground caverns at the Green Grotto Caves.

If the beach is a draw, there are a range of options from which one

can choose. In Montego Bay, visitors can enjoy a relaxing day at the iconic Doctor's Cave Beach, or soak up some sun and fun at Negril's Seven Mile Beach or have some family time at Frenchman's Cove in Port Antonio.

There is no shortage of things to do on the calendar of events. Starting New Year's Day, Carnival festivities get under way in Jamaica with a Sunrise Breakfast Party. Following the January 1 event, other activities will take place across the island leading up to the Road March on April 28, which coincides with Easter.

Another staple on the events calendar is Rebel Salute, which takes place January 18 and 19 in Ocho Rios. The festival is a true cultural immersion with unique Jamaican vegetarian cuisine complementing the authentic Jamaican music and crafts throughout the event.



Royalton management and staff at a Christmas treat for children and educators at Spicy Hill Basic School.

Spicy Hill Basic School gets royal treat from Royalton

THEIR UNLEASHED excitement and exuberant laughter were enough evidence that the children of Spicy Hill Basic School were more than happy for the visit of the group of Royalton staff, who fêted them with gifts and lunch.

The playground was buzzing with the type of cheers as if Santa himself came to town. The CARE team from Royalton was on a mission to bring the spirit of giving, and it's safe to say that that mission was adequately accomplished. The day started with playing on the play-

ground, something that the staff themselves engaged in, reminiscent of their time in those infant years. In the moment, some members of the team may have well forgotten their actual age, judging by their level of engagement with the children on the swings and slides. Nevertheless, it was a time to play, mix and mingle with the innocent angels.

The next segment of the treat was all about food, and more food. Gourmet culinary treats enticed their eyes, eventually filling their bellies. The spread of chicken, hot dogs,



From left: General Manager of Royalton White Sands Daniel Cazarin, principal of Spicy Hill Basic, Angella Williams, and Angelina Anderson, human resource manager, Royalton, proudly showcasing the Sung Wing sign at their Christmas treat.

sandwiches, nuggets, chili and fruits was more than satisfaction; it was a heavenly treat. No meal like that would be complete without cake and ice cream, which did the trick wonderfully. Both students and teachers were appeased, especially the teachers who returned for seconds.

Santa's helpers, in the form of the Royalton team members, had bags of gifts for each and every student. As the little ones queued to receive their presents, their quiet and genuine thank you were rewarding enough to cover the rest of the season. General Manager Daniel Cazarin, played the role of chief Santa, issuing packages to the eager children. There was

more excitement as each one wanted to compare their gift with the other. The team eventually said goodbye after a few hours of bonding with the children. It was a feeling not to be rivalled by any other. Loving is giving, and this is the time to love more and give more.

The school's principal, Angella Williams, and her staff, adequately expressed their sentiments of appreciation but even without this, the reward of giving back was already achieved.

The treat was led by Human Resources Manager Angelina Anderson, Shawn Moses, junior general manager and Cazarin.



Students at the Spicy Hill Basic School enjoying every minute of the Royalton Christmas treat.



Director of Tourism Donovan White addresses the audience at the VIP cocktail reception.