

The Gleaner
Hospitality Jamaica

KEEPING YOU CONNECTED TO THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2019

JU'S ED B

'Long
Walk to
Freedom'
concert
weekend



RETIRED SPECIAL
CONSTABLES SAY
THANKS TO FDR
FOR HOSTING TREAT

10 WOMEN
ROTARY



Buju's impact

Upcoming concert drives increase in hotel and Airbnb bookings

Janet Silvera
Hospitality Jamaica Coordinator

KINGSTON HOTELS are booked solid, and the majority of Airbnb operators in the capital city are reporting brisk reservations for the upcoming Buju Banton Long Walk to Freedom concert weekend.

Checks made with the Terra Nova All-Suite Hotel, Altamont Court, and several home-sharing operators show the period March 15 to 18 as fully booked. Hotels such as The Jamaica Pegasus, Knutsford Court, and the Courtleigh still have a few rooms available.

“Following the announcement of the Buju concert, hotel bookings have increased for the weekend of March 15,” Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association (JHTA) area chapter chair Christopher Jarrett told **Hospitality Jamaica**.

His statements were bolstered by Kimberly Lawson of the Kingston Airbnb group, which has close to



The loft at 99, an Airbnb apartment in Kingston.

1,000 members.

“It’s an amazing opportunity for all Kingston hosts, especially those in close proximity to the venue,” Lawson noted, adding that as soon

as the March 16 concert date was announced, persons were booking their places and even reselling their packages.

Lawson explained that some of



Buju Banton

the members have been offering packages to include rooms, VIP tickets and transportation.

Excited about the prospects, Jarrett, who is also operator of the Altamont Court Hotel, said the association has always been excited about and interested in supporting and endorsing events in and

around Kingston, so they look forward to concert.

“And although it happens to be the night before the annual Kingston City Run, which features our inaugural marathon, we feel that the two can coexist in harmony.”

He said that Kingston is still able to facilitate the numbers since some



of the pie is being eaten up by Airbnb.

“Events generally result in more heads in beds for the city, particularly if the event has an international reach,” he stated.

According to Jarrett, The ISSA Boys and Girls’ Champs and carnival are two events he said that tend to fill every hotel in Kingston for the period up to and including those events.

“There are others that to a lesser extent are contributors Kingston City Marathon is positioned now to be one of those.”

According to Lawson, the Airbnb properties that have been booked so far were able to leverage their pricing mechanism. “as guests were willing to pay higher prices”.

Many of the bookings, she said, are coming from the UK, the USA, and other Caribbean nations, such as the Cayman Islands.

Another Kingston host who responded to **Hospitality Jamaica’s** queries said the Buju impact has been incredible. “Some 20 properties that I host for are booked, and one popular website overbooked us by five bookings, which I did not know was possible. However, they explained it was a glitch in the system.”

Solid Agency, the company staging the event, has also confirmed that fans from across the globe have already booked their flights since the December announcement.

LONG WALK TO FREEDOM TOUR – THE JAMAICAN EDITION

With less than two months before Mark ‘Buju Banton’ Myrie



Chris Jarrett

takes the stage, the event is being described as the most anticipated performance of the decade, if not in Jamaica’s musical history.

The Long Walk to Freedom tour rolls out at the National Stadium in St Andrew courtesy of Gargamel Music and Boom Energy Drink, in association with Solid Agency and Rockers Island Entertainment, on Saturday, March 16, 2019.

Gates open at 4 p.m., and show-time is 8 p.m. There will be no tickets on sale at the venue, said a media release by the organisers, who have also advised that while the event’s main focus will be to provide Buju, or the ‘Gargamel’, as

he is also known, with a platform to thank and celebrate with his fans, he will also return to performing with a number of friends, artistes he has worked with throughout his career.

The event, they say, promises a true experience of dancehall and reggae at their peak and all in one night.

“The line-up is, in one word, incredible, said Solid Agency’s Sharon Burke, who said she has been fielding phone calls every three seconds as it concerns the show, tickets, bookings, music, and just information on the beloved artiste.

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The bathroom at 99, an Airbnb apartment in Kingston.

FROM FREEDOM TO HEROISM

the Emancipation Park statues

Paul H. Williams
Hospitality Jamaica

LAURA FACEY'S statues at the entrance to St Andrew's Emancipation Park have been stirring up a range of emotions, from scorn to joy, since unveiled in July 2003. The nudity and the size of the body parts are the triggers.

And since June last year, when patrons stepped away from the nakedness and the controversy, they now enter the 'corridor of heroes', who are not dressed in their 'birthday suits', but are bronze, 'clothed' busts, created by sculptor Basil Watson, which are mounted above bronze plaques that briefly explain why they are national heroes and heroine.

Jamaica's journey from slavery to freedom is the essence of this "chronological corridor in honour of Jamaican national heroes, highlighting their significant contribution to nation-building from the days of slavery through



Basil Watson's bronze bust of National Hero Paul Bogle inside Emancipation Park in St Andrew.

Emancipation to Independence", the Rotary Club of Kingston says on a mounted plaque. It was their 2018 national project.

Queen Nanny, the lone woman represented, led the Windward Maroons to victory over the British. Her indomitable spirit and application of guerilla war strategies are credited for wearing down the resolve of the British.

JOURNEY TO EMANCIPATION

Nearly 100 years after Nanny's victory, Baptist deacon Samuel Sharpe planned Jamaica's first industrial strike. He instructed the enslaved not to return to work after the Christmas holidays of 1831 if they had not been paid for their labour. The uprising and the brutal response by the authorities sped up the anti-slavery movement. Emancipation came seven years later in 1838.

Twenty-seven years after Emancipation, Paul Bogle of Stony Gut in St Thomas and his associate, George William Gordon, were executed for the role they played in the 1865 Morant Bay uprising. Bogle and Gordon were social justice activists who highlighted the plight of poor people in immediate post-Emancipation Jamaica.

Marcus Mosiah Garvey from St Ann's Bay was also fired up by the inequality and injustice that black people in Jamaica were facing. In the first half of the 20th century, our first national hero created and sustained a movement for the uplifting of black people the world over.

Jamaica's first Chief Minister and first Prime Minister Alexander Bustamante and Jamaica's second Chief Minister and first Premier



Basil Watson's bronze bust of National Hero Marcus Garvey inside Emancipation Park in St Andrew.



Basil Watson's bronze bust of National Hero Alexander Bustamante inside Emancipation Park in St Andrew.

Norman Manley are widely regarded as the founding fathers of modern Jamaica. Their busts will spend eternity at the western end of the corridor.

At the unveiling of the busts last year, held under the patronage of Culture Minister Olivia Grange, she said, among other things, "Every visitor from now on will be able to walk through this corridor of our history."



Sandals South Coast General Manager Adrian Whitehead (right) holds court with Inside Sales Manager at Air Canada Vacations, Christine Maddock and radio host Mark Kinsman from KISS 99.3 during the Sandals Canadian Winter Sizzle radio remotes at his resort over the last two weeks.

Over two million tune in to Sandals Canadian Winter Sizzle

LAST YEAR, Canada surpassed the United States in additional airlift to Jamaica, with some 42,000 new air seats added for the winter tourist season.

While the Jamaican Government remains keen in its pursuit of additional airlift from key markets, Sandals Resorts International is doing its part to keep those visitor numbers trending upwards with its 12th annual Sandals Canadian Winter Sizzle, a six-month-promotion with two weeks of multi-station radio remotes at Sandals South Coast geared at boosting Canadian visitor arrivals to Jamaica.

The Sandals Canadian Winter Sizzle promotion continues to be the single largest Canadian radio promotion for Sandals Resorts.

"The Canadian market is a very important one for Jamaica, and the Sandals Canadian Winter Sizzle solidifies our company's commitment to expanding the reach of our tourism product," said Adrian Whitehead, general manager at Sandals South Coast.

This year, 24 radio stations from across Canada will conduct on-air promotions during the fall-winter period. The promotion, which started in October 2018, will run

until March 2019 and represents CAD\$2.2 million in airtime. All promotions include a full week of live remotes from Sandals South Coast during prime radio slots, with a combined listenership of 2.1 million Canadians.

ASTRONOMICAL FEEDBACK

For Marcy Mailloux, promotions director at Kiss 104.5 in Vancouver, this was the radio station's first time participating in the Sandals Canadian Winter Sizzle promotion.

"For our promotion, which ran from October to December, we had our morning show hosts, Kevin and Sonia, give away four trips to Sandals South Coast during their game show Kevin & Sonia's Couples Academy, and the feedback has been astronomical," said Mailloux. "Outside of a promotion we did once with Ellen DeGeneres, this has been the most popular promotion for our station [ever]. Apparently, a lot of Canadians want to come to Jamaica."

Mailloux also noted that the overall experience at Sandals South Coast has been amazing as well as the level of service and that she herself and her team were certainly looking forward to coming back.



Basil Watson's bronze bust of National Heroine Nanny of the Maroons inside Emancipation Park in St Andrew.



Basil Watson's bronze bust of National Hero Samuel Sharpe inside Emancipation Park in St Andrew.

Use tourism to build sustainable coffee sector – Bartlett

MINISTER OF Tourism Edmund Bartlett says the ministry's Tourism Linkages Network intends to leverage public-private partnerships to build out a framework to stimulate entrepreneurship in the coffee sector and related industries.

"Coffee has the potential to become a commodity that can change communities through linkages with tourism. This is particularly important, as our coffee farmers continue to experience challenges due to shrinking international markets and low prices," the tourism minister said.

He was giving the main address at the press launch for the second annual Jamaica Blue Mountain Coffee Festival last Tuesday at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel, New Kingston. This year's festival will take place March 1-3 at Newcastle in St Andrew.

Describing tourism and coffee as two of Jamaica's most important economic industries, Minister Bartlett said the build-out will be done through the Tourism Linkages' five networks: gastronomy; health and wellness; shopping; knowledge; and sports and entertainment.

He advocated using 100 per cent of the coffee berry to do so, instead of the 20 per cent now used in coffee production. It will include the development of an entire cottage industry around the supply of spa products to a growing health and wellness sector, as well as building out the retail market for coffee by-products.

"The coffee festival is one such offering. Yet, while Jamaican Blue Mountain coffee is our value proposition, we must work together to build a sustainable coffee sector with a multiplier effect that creates more jobs, businesses and revenue for rural communities and beyond," Minister Bartlett told the large gathering of tourism and coffee stakeholders.

In his address, Minister of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries, Audley Shaw said we must use the opportunity at events



From left: Juliet Holness, MP, St Andrew East Rural; Nicola Madden-Grieg, chairperson, Gastronomy Network; and Edmund Bartlett, minister of tourism, are all smiles while enjoying freshly brewed coffee at the launch of the Jamaica Blue Mountain Coffee Festival at The Jamaica Pegasus hotel on January 15.



BARTLETT

like the festival "to not just talk about a revival, but put in clear, specific, unambiguous strategies and plans to revive the Blue Mountain coffee industry in Jamaica."

Declaring that we must market real Jamaican coffee, Minister Shaw said, "We want to see more of our farmers increase their productivity and produce more of all Jamaican coffee varieties, including high mountain coffee, which can then be blended with the Blue Mountain coffee so that we can have a totally Jamaican coffee

brand. Jamaican coffee must be the gold standard. We do not want the Jamaican brand to be watered down or bastardised."

Meanwhile, Member of Parliament for East Rural St Andrew, Juliet Holness, promised her unwavering support to the festival, which is providing additional income and building entrepreneurship in the Blue Mountain coffee communities.

Acting director general of the Jamaica Agricultural Commodities Authority (JACRA), Gusland McCook, lauded the festival for providing another avenue to create awareness around Jamaican coffee in general and Blue Mountain coffee in particular, which will help to attract not only consumers, but also investors.

Last year's inaugural Jamaica Blue Mountain Coffee Festival saw some 1,000 patrons, 37 booth holders and 64 farmers participating in a three-day event.

The festival, which showcases Jamaica's rich tradition of coffee production in the Blue Mountain region, is an initiative of the Tourism Linkages Network, a division of the Tourism Enhancement Fund.



Tourism Minister Edmund Bartlett (centre) and Director of Tourism Donovan White (left) share a light moment with chief marketing officer of the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA), Matt Cooper, following a press briefing at the ministry's New Kingston office on January 16. During the briefing, the ministry gave an update on the 37th Caribbean Travel Marketplace being hosted in Jamaica later this month, which will welcome 140 buyers. The event is produced by the CHTA with assistance from the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association.

Caribbean Travel Marketplace to expect 140 buyers

TOURISM MINISTER, Edmund Bartlett says the 37th Caribbean Travel Marketplace (CTM) being hosted in Jamaica later this month will welcome 140 buyers – the largest number since 2012.

Speaking at a media briefing recently at the Ministry of Tourism's, New Kingston office, the minister said, "We have, to date, 140 buyers from companies seeking to purchase rooms, which is very important to us."

The Caribbean Travel Marketplace is the Caribbean's largest marketing event, and is being staged at the Montego Bay Convention Centre from Tuesday, January 29, through to Thursday, January 31.

"We are excited about these three days of active trading, with the larger number of buyers meeting with our suppliers here in the Caribbean and, hopefully, to drive the Caribbean tourism activities to another level. The projections for growth in the Caribbean is 2.5 per cent, with Jamaica and the Dominican Republic leading in terms of expected volume of growth, and the CTM is the centre which enable this growth to happen," said Minister Bartlett.

The event is produced by the Caribbean Hotel and Tourist Association (CHTA) and brings together hotel and destination representatives; wholesalers and tour operators; online travel agencies; meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions (MICE) planners;

and members of the media for several days of business meetings, including a busy programme of thousands of pre-scheduled appointments. For this year's staging, the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association will be integral to coordinating the event with the CHTA.

MAJOR REPRESENTATION

The minister noted that the event will also have major representation from China and India, which represents the two largest potential travel countries.

"The truth is that today, China is the largest outbound destination in the world. The impact of Chinese tourism to the Caribbean could be a huge game changer. India and China together will represent more than 40 per cent of global tourism by 2030.

"We are expecting about 20 tour operators and media from China and about six from India. This is critical as it will bring in a new dynamic into the marketplace, as it is a new demographic," said Minister Bartlett.

Hundreds of regional and local tourism stakeholders are expected to converge at the Montego Bay Convention Centre to engage with industry peers and promote travel to the region. This will include delegates from at least 24 Caribbean destinations.

"We are hoping that a number of contracts will be signed and that the world will see the best Jamaica has to offer," said the minister.

PHOTOS BY CARL GILCHRIST
A section of the audience rooting for The Green as the band performs

Bright Side Festival *Sparkles* at Jewel Paradise Cove



Lead singer of The Green, Caleb Keolanui.

Carl Gilchrist
Gleaner Writer

FOR THE fourth consecutive January, Island Gigs booked out the Jewel Paradise Cove hotel in Runaway Bay, St Ann, for their all-inclusive beach party 'Bright Side Festival', bringing in the crowd to enjoy the exciting performances of the acts booked.

Spread over five days, this year the festival featured America's number one reggae band, the California-based Reblution, along with The Green, a reggae band from Hawaii, Jamaica's own Raging Fyah, with new lead singer Odean 'Journey' Ricketts, and DJ Mackle.

All three bands and MC performed three full sets over the five-day period, giving sparkling performances that delighted the throng of faithful reggae fans who flew hundreds of miles to see them perform in beautiful Jamaica.

"The festival has been amazing," Reblution's vocalist Eric Rachmany told **Hospitality Jamaica**.

Outside of the performance, Rachmany expressed his love for the Jamaican culture, stating: "I feel like we got to explore as much as we are able to get out of the resort, but it's amazing, I love the culture here. We went to Nine Miles today; last time I was here I was in Port Antonio and I love being there. It's been great, we hope to get out more and really explore more of Jamaica instead of being confined to the resort."



Eric Rachmany, lead vocalist with Reblution, performing with the band

Rachmany also hinted that Reblution may perform at Rebel Salute reggae festival next year.

General Manager at Jewels Barbara Burton was delighted to have the concert series at the hotel for yet another year.

"We are proud to be the host of this big music event for the past four years," said Burton.

"It's perfect timing. It is a time when guests from North America and all over the world, who reside in cold countries, want sun, sea and great music, and food and service, so we are really excited that this will continue based on the feedback that we've been getting from Island Gigs, who are the organisers, and the fans themselves."



From left: General Manager Richard Alexis makes a presentation to Most Supportive Employee, Jeneava Marshall, while Vivene Levison and Dr Paul Rhodes look on.



Bartender Andre Martin (right) pours some wine for the artist Mazola (left), while General Manager Richard Alexis looks on.

Great Huts Resorts honours four employees

Paul H. Williams
Gleaner Writer

FOR THE first time in its 18-year-old operations, Great Huts Resort Paradise on the Edge has publicly recognised some staff members for their sterling contribution to the operations of this Afro-centric, eco-friendly boutique hotel located at Boston in Portland.

In a brief ceremony on the evening of Saturday, January 5, four employees were given certificates and other incentives by Dr Paul Rhodes, owner and designer of Great Huts; Vivene Levison, managing partner; and Richard Alexis, general manager.

Marcel Fuller, maintenance manager, copped the Best Team Spirit award. The Most Improved Employee is housekeeper Sheldon Anderson, while Jeneava Marshall, compliance manager, was recognised for being The Most Supportive Employee. The Employee of the Year award was served up to bartender Andre Martin, a seven-year veteran at Great Huts.

In speaking with **Hospitality Jamaica** about this professional



From left: Lesline Orr, Dr Paul Rhodes, Sheldon Anderson (Most Improved Employee) and Vivene Levison.

achievement, Martin said he felt "more than overwhelmed" and that it is an upgrade for his résumé. "I feel grateful to know that Great Huts acknowledged my work and skills. I am thankful and grateful to

the guests," he said. Martin said he felt he got the award perhaps because of the positive feedback about his services, which includes "good customer service and good hospitality"

which is what he seeks to give as soon as he steps on to the property. Excellent service is important to him, he said, because guests travel hundreds of miles to find a home away from home, and that is the



From left: Happy Great Huts employees Marcell Fuller, Best Team Spirit awardee; Anna-Kay Lewis, waitress, and Andre Martin, Employee of the Year.

first thing he thinks of. "To travel so far and to spend so much money, he cannot get 'joke' service. I have to create a good memory."

Martin, who won a free stay at Eden Gardens in St Andrew, was also promoted to the role of 'guest orientation leader'.

Levison, with whom **Hospitality Jamaica** also spoke about the awards, said, "In our commitment to advance the mission of Great Huts, we are so very proud to celebrate the hard work, efforts and spirit of our staff at our first awards ceremony. As we strive to become a leading eco-resort boutique experience in the Caribbean, our team members make it possible to create and recreate our special and magical experience every day. What a great honour to celebrate this and award these staff members for their outstanding achievements."



PHOTOS BY ASHLEY ANGUIN

From left: High Commissioner of Canada to Jamaica Laurie Peters and Counsel General to Thailand Thalia Lyn having the time of their lives at Couples Tower Isle's 41st-anniversary party on Saturday night in Ocho Rios.



Couples Sans Souci guests took to the dance floor during a stellar performance by Tammi T, Stanryck, and Klyve.



Texans Morris and Loyce Roberts



Mesmerised by the music and the instructional moves, these party people were just that and more.



Above: Entertainment coordinators at Couples Sans Souci keeping their guests entertained.

Couples celebration!

Guests enjoy Couple Sans Souci and Tower Isle anniversary fête

Janet Silvera
Hospitality Jamaica Coordinator

THE TALENTED 'Tammi T', her brother, 'Klyve', and singing sensation Stanryck took guests and staff at Couples Sans Souci down memory lane in what was tagged 'Nostalgia' at the resort's 13th anniversary celebration last Friday night in Ocho Rios.

It has been thirteen years since the name Couples was added to the distinguished property, but the hotel has been accommodating guests for over 50 years. Some of those same guests flew into the

island for the annual event, rubbing shoulders with a number of travel agents who were becoming familiar with the offerings at the resort.

Culminating with fireworks at the close of an exciting evening, the Couples group continued its tradition of celebrations on the Saturday night at Couples Tower Isle's 41st anniversary.

At the sister property, which is the flagship, tribute was paid to Asia, showing that continent's rich culture in gastronomy, music, dress, and décor.

Hospitality Jamaica brings you highlights of the two nights of festivity.



PHOTO BY JANET SILVERA

Above: The food and beverage team at Couples Sans Souci had a lot to be proud of having delivered on a first-class gastronomic experience.



From left: Couples Sans Souci Diamond Sinclair shares lens time with visiting travel agents Marnie Savic and Desiree Rolle.

Right: Couples Resorts' number one selling agent in Canada, Pauline Blacoe (right), shares lens time with Amy Wood of Romantic Planet Vacations and Wayde Salmon of Gateway Getaways.



Left: Guests of Couples Tower Isle enjoying the musical vibrations that reverberated throughout the hotels.



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JTB announces biggest ‘FAM’ incentive for 2019

Travel agents have chance to win familiarisation trips

UK TRAVEL agents selling holidays to Jamaica will have the chance of winning one of 50 places on the Jamaica Tourist Board’s (JTB) FAM trips, taking place in April, May, June, September and October 2019 on the ‘Sell It & See It’ trade campaign.

The Familiarisation (FAM) trips will give agents the opportunity to experience the destination intimately so that they can share with their customers.

To participate, agents simply need to make any booking to Jamaica, log on to www.jamaicarewards.co.uk and register their booking for the chance to win a place as part of the prize draw. The first winners will be announced in March 2019 and the other winners revealed throughout the year.

The JTB will also be hosting several agent training events throughout 2019 in the UK. Agents can access these sessions via

the online portal (www.jamaicarewards.co.uk), face-to-face at regional events with key partners, and at the hugely popular Jamaica Travel Market, the destination’s business-to-business tradeshow. More can be found through the online portal.

Torrance Lewis, district sales manager, JTB, said “supporting our valued travel agent partners throughout 2019 is a huge priority for us as a destination. This is one sure way to spread the word on what Jamaica has to offer UK holidaymakers, through empowering our agents. And what better way to equip them with the latest destination updates than by having them experience the offerings first-hand. We are encouraging all of our agent partners to log their bookings for the chance to win one of the coveted spaces on one of the FAM trips later this year.”

Jamaica Tourist Board, Bank of Nova Scotia sign MOU for upcoming CHTA Caribbean Travel Marketplace



‘Signed, sealed and delivered’ is what Perrin Gayle (left, back), senior vice-president, corporate and commercial banking, Bank of Nova Scotia Jamaica, and Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett (right, back) seem to say as they oversee the signing of a memorandum of understanding between David Noel (left, front), CEO, Bank of Nova Scotia, and Donovan White, director of tourism at the Jamaica Tourist Board. The partnership, valued at J\$7.2 million is in support of the soon-to-be-held CHTA Caribbean Travel Marketplace travel trade show at the Montego Bay Convention Centre from January 29-31. The show is one of the most important tourist industry events in the region and is a platform for local tourism players to discuss existing contracts and develop packages and contracts for future business. As host of the trade show, Destination Jamaica has the exceptional opportunity to showcase her award-winning tourism product to the thousands of delegates who are expected to attend.

Ja’s diverse culinary offering featured on UK’s ITV series

FOLLOW THE footsteps of Jamaica-born UK Chef Ainsley Harriott in his latest Caribbean kitchen series filmed in Jamaica.

In his latest Ainsley Harriott’s ‘Caribbean Kitchen’ series, the United Kingdom’s favourite television chef heads back to his Jamaican roots to uncover the best kept secrets and most loved classics of the ultimate island food adventure.

Destination Jamaica will appear in the first and second episodes of the 10-part series of Ainsley Harriott’s ‘Caribbean Kitchen’, which airs weekly on Sundays at 11:30 a.m., starting on January 20 on ITV1.

In partnership with the Jamaica Tourist Board, Harriott begins his journey on the south eastern coast of the island, where his father grew up in Kingston, before travelling across the island to Ocho Rios. In the two episodes filmed on the island, Harriott visits the local markets, samples local delicacies, and speaks with local chefs who have inspired him to create four delicious Jamaican recipes.

Below is a sneak peek of Harriott’s culinary activities that feature in his latest series.

THE BLUE MOUNTAIN EXPERIENCE

Considered one of the most sought-after coffees in the world, Jamaica’s famed Blue Mountain coffee is grown on the majestic Blue Mountains range, Jamaica’s highest mountain standing at 7,402 feet. Travellers can embark on a trail up the Blue Mountains, where they will visit historic coffee plantations – including Wallendorf Coffee Works and Clifton Mount – and learn how some of the world’s most expensive coffee is grown, harvested, roasted and ground. Guests will end the tour with spectacular views from the top of the mountain and, of course, a cup of the world’s most sought-after coffee! For more information visit: www.islandoutpost.com.

STUSH IN THE BUSH

Located in the breathtaking hills above Ocho Rios, Stush in the Bush is home to the self-sustainable farm of Lisa and Chris Binns, who welcome visitors to their home for a unique dining experience. From farm to table, visitors will experience four or seven courses of Jamaican delights fresh from the couple’s organic farm. Guests will leave enlightened after learning about the history of Jamaica’s culinary offerings having tasted the tropical fruits and vegetables first hand on a tour of the farm.

To book, visit: www.stushinthebush.com.

SCOTCHIES JERK EXPERIENCE

Jerk has gained popularity around the world in recent years and is a favourite of Ainsley. Visitors can experience the authentic taste of Jamaica’s iconic dish at one of the three Scotchies restaurants located on the island. A favourite among the locals, Scotchies is an ideal introduction to jerk cuisine.

With the food roasted on either pimento or sweet wood under corrugated iron in the outdoor kitchen, guests can enjoy the mouthwatering aromas. The menu boasts wraps, jerk wings, ribs and a slew of sides. Scotchies restaurants can be found in Montego Bay and Drax Hall.

Denise Wedderburn: *It's all about the* **PASSION**



Wedderburn's specialty in handmade jewellery boasts stones of various sizes, shapes and colours to create unique earrings and necklaces.

FOR DENISE Wedderburn, who grew up in the 1960s, the production of arts and crafts was not an accepted profession in her family. Originally from Kingston, Wedderburn grew up in a family of teachers and readers, educated individuals who worked in professional environments.

She had a big family and her mother was always creatively inclined, as she took on occupations such as hairdressing, baking, sewing and even made crocheted hand pieces. Although her mother had these skills, more was always expected of young Wedderburn, even though she always felt drawn to craft creation.

When she attended the Wolmer's High School for Girls, she remembers that she always found interest in the arts and history subjects offered. "Back then, they were training girls to be young ladies," she commented, when asked about her courses in school. She specifically remembered an Italian exchange teacher who came to teach her art and craft; so she knew that she had a passion for the arts from very early. At the age of 14, Wedderburn and her sisters left Jamaica with their mother and moved to New York. Despite her affinity for the arts, she knew her family would not approve of that as a profession, so she applied for a scholarship, which she received, and went to a Vanier College C.E.G.E.T in Montreal, Canada, where she pursued the liberal arts.

Deciding to do something in the traditional professions, Wedderburn sought to become a lawyer, but 'you have to have the mind of a criminal to be a lawyer', so she later attended Columbia University in New York, where she studied political science and government. Equipped with her degree, she came back to Jamaica and worked in the Michael Manley administration as political appointee (to be distinguished from a civil servant) in the then ministries of Mobilisation and of Youth.

This, however, was not her



Artisan Denise Wedderburn proudly poses in front of her range of crafts, including jewellery, basketry and more.



Wedderburn is truly passionate about her craft and finds joy in every piece she makes. Here, she's working on a clay piece with star cut-outs.

passion and by the 1980s, Wedderburn packed up and went back to New York. There she worked in the stock market, but as

a side job she got to partially pursue her true passion, because she owned a small boutique where she got to sell clothing and a few of her

hand-painted pieces.

A little was just not enough for Wedderburn, because, after a few years, she packed up her bags yet again and came back to Jamaica. She moved to Treasure Beach in St Elizabeth because she just loved the community and its beauty. She is now a volunteer with the Treasure Beach woman's group.

In a small shop owned by the group, Wedderburn sells her hand-crafted pieces and finally gets to enjoy her passion. Her skills range from hand-painted bags and clothing, touch-screen painting and her speciality, jewellery making.

DENISE'S INSPIRATION

Each of her pieces is different, as she uses genuine materials such as silver, copper, quartz, paper beads and crystals. She takes inspiration from African practices and a few techniques she got from Jewellery TV. "No one taught me. I learned through experimenting and testing

out things that I liked and other people seemed to like them, too."

She also subconsciously continued her family tradition of teaching, as she teaches members of the women's group and the community how to make crafts, because she believes strongly in passing on that knowledge.

It took many years and steps to get to this point in her life, but Wedderburn always knew what she was passionate about. When asked if she would give up her craft if offered money, her response was instant. "No. It's not about the money; it's about the passion; my hands just have to do it. Sometimes when I wake, I just have the urge to make jewellery and before I've noticed, it's the next day."

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PHOTOS BY JANET SILVERA

Seven of the 10 awardees pose alongside president of the Rotary Club of Negril, Ramon Bremmer. From left are Karen McKenzie, Claudia Gardner, Catherine Tapping, Teleith Drummond, Laurette Nelson Barrie, Sophie Grizzle Roumel and Gail Jackson-Brooks.



Coordinator and membership chairperson for the Rotary Club of Negril, Angela Haye (centre), is flanked by fellow Rotarian Sabine Bolenius (right) and her mother Christine Bolenius.

Ten community heroines honoured by Rotary Club

TEN WOMEN from the parishes of Hanover and Westmoreland were recognised for outstanding contribution in economic and community development at the Rotary Club of Negril's inaugural Community Service Awards recently, held at Sunset Manor in the 'Capital of Casual'.

According to coordinator of the programme and membership chairperson for the club, Angela Haye, "The event was part of the 14-year-old service club's strategic goals to honour persons deemed unsung community heroes in the areas of economic and community development.

"Awardees would have demonstrated consistent and sustainable efforts that seek to improve the economic well-being and quality of life for communities in education, farming volunteerism, social interventions, healthy lifestyles, sports, media, and creating job opportunities," Haye said.

"One of our strategic goals is to honour hard-working women, and we specifically targeted women because we have a lot of unsung



President of the Rotary Club of Negril, Ramon Bremmer, poses with emcee of the event and past president of the Rotary Club of Savanna-la-Mar, Dionne Meyler.



From left: Negril Chamber of Commerce Director Nola Stair; Rotarian Michelle St John of the Alberta Rotary Club in Canada; Past President of the Rotary Club of Negril Elaine Bradley; and Len Brossart, also of Alberta, were a happy bunch at the event.

heroes in the community and we really wanted to put it forward and let persons know that we are here to build goodwill and we are here to build better friendships throughout our respective communities," she added.

Among the awardees were Negril hoteliers Gail Jackson-Brooks of Negril Tree House; Susan Brown of Catch-a-Falling-Star; Pansy Rayson of the Rayon Hotel; and Sophie Grizzle Roumel, co-proprietor of Charela Inn. All four were lauded for their philanthropic work within Negril and its outlying communities.

Retired probation officer and justice of the peace, Telieth Drummond, was praised for her work in community volunteerism and lauded for her work with the Theodora House organisation, which supports at-risk youth, as well as other community-based organisations.

From Hanover, journalist Claudia

Gardner was lauded for her work in initiating sustainable-development initiatives within that parish spanning agriculture, HIV/AIDS prevention, youth football, and environmental conservation, as well as for using her journalistic skills to effect social change.

Principal of the Mt Airy Primary and Infant School in Westmoreland, Karen McKenzie, was awarded for her role in the development of education in the parish and was described as a tireless champion for students with learning disabilities at the school, which is the 2018 TVJ Junior Schools' Challenge Quiz champion.

Retired nurse Laurette Nelson Barrie, who was hailed as a champion for the Whitehall community in Negril, has worked hard to establish parenting, and homework support programmes, among others, to uplift depressed

areas within that region.

Her counterpart, 91-year-old Catherine Tapping, a retired educator, was also honoured for her many years of work in community education and in developing the community of Westland Mountain in Negril, which, as a result, saw the exit of unsavoury characters from the community and the maintenance of law and order, which has resulted in the area being one of Negril's safest places to live.

Debbie Lighthouse of the Negril Spay and Neuter Clinic was awarded for her work in rescuing and assisting animals within the resort town and its environs after visiting the island and seeing the plight of unwanted animals more than a decade ago. Lighthouse, has for many years, run a shelter and operated the weekly free clinic on Negril's West End, which is the only one of its kind in western Jamaica.



Past President of the Rotary Club of Negril Ken Cooney and wife Joan enjoyed themselves at the event.



Principal of Mt Airy Primary and Infant School Karen McKenzie and husband Marlon were among the Westmorelites who turned out to the Rotary Club of Negril's Community Service Awards recently.

AROUND JA WITH PAUL H

Scenic St Elizabeth

The ancient buildings
at the entrance of
Munro College at
Malvern, St Elizabeth.



IN THE Most recent issue of **Hospitality Jamaica**, I wrote about the beautiful, jagged rocks of Boston in Portland.

Today, I move from east to west – to St Bess.

Although it has many places of interests and attractions, St Elizabeth is more known as the ‘bread basket’ of the country. It produces a significant amount of fruits, vegetables and ground provision.

Yet, for me, St Elizabeth is not about the attractions, and fruits and vegetables. It has some of the most mesmerising vistas in the country. The views of the mountains, and from the mountains, are awesome and recently I got another chance to see some of them.

From the flatlands, the Santa Cruz Mountains range rises 723 feet at its highest point at Malvern, and runs for several miles. From the districts on the flat, the giant windmills at Wigton Wind Warm at Malvern seem to be waving from over yonder, as if to say, come hither.

And should you go, you travel along winding, narrow roads that take you up into clear, fresh air. As the descent is made, the view becomes breathtaking, almost enchanting. You have to experience it to feel it. It is almost indescribable.

From Malvern and other parts of the Santa Cruz Mountains, the view of the Pedro Plain sprawls right to the sea at Treasure Beach and other coastal districts. The juxtaposed



A view of farming plots in south St Elizabeth from Malvern, St Elizabeth.



A windmill at Wigton, Malvern, St Elizabeth.

farm plots create a huge mosaic of various shades of green and brown, and the Great Pond dazzled under the sun. The Great Pedro Bluff juts into the sea, looking like an island at points.

The windmills that seemed to be beckoning to me when I was on the flats looking up yonder, were more spectacular up front and closer. They are massive structures that seem to touch the clouds. They themselves have inadvertently become some sort of attraction, having people travelling up the mountains just to see them.

From mountainside to mountainside, the views of the Santa Cruz Mountains, from the Don Figuerero Mountains, near the border with Manchester change throughout the day. From where I saw them in the hilly and rugged

district of Lincoln, they might look hazy, dreamlike, bright, then shadowy. And the skylines, especially at sunset? Beyond words.

From Top Hill, the escarpment known the world over as Lovers' Leap can be seen rising way above the sea. The place got its name, it is said, from the story of the enslaved lovers who, rather than submit to the wishes of their master, jumped over the mountainside to their death. The spot is at Yardley Chase, and the view of the sheer drop of the slope might not be for the fainthearted.

There are many such breath-stopping and jaw-dropping views in St Elizabeth, a place caught up between plains and mountain ranges. You go not just to full your gut, but also to feast your eyes and be mesmerised.



A view of Lover's Leap from Top Hill, St Elizabeth.



The Santa Cruz Mountains in St Elizabeth, in the background, from Lincoln in Manchester.



A bauxite plant in south St Elizabeth from Lincoln in Manchester.

World Travel Awards to recognise travel industry at Sandals MoBay

THE NEWEST and hottest resort in Jamaica, Sandals Montego Bay, is hosting the World Travel Awards (WTA) Caribbean and North America Gala Ceremony 2019 on Monday, January 28.

The gala ceremony will be the premier gathering of the Caribbean and North American hospitality industry, with the key players and VIPs from across the two regions scheduled to attend. The evening will also mark the opening leg of the WTA Grand Tour 2019 – an annual search for the finest travel and tourism organisations in the world.

Graham Cooke, founder of WTA, says: “We are delighted to return to Jamaica for the sixth time for our Caribbean & North America Gala Ceremony 2019. I am honoured that Sandals Montego Bay, the home of the Sandals brand, will host the opening leg of our 26th annual Grand Tour celebrating travel industry excellence. I look forward to joining



The new overwater bar Latitudes at Sandals Montego Bay.

all our nominees for what promises to be a fabulous night.”

The red-carpet evening will take place on

the eve of the 37th edition of Caribbean Travel Marketplace, which will be held at the Montego Bay Convention Centre from

January 29-31, 2019.

The reimagined and renovated Sandals Montego Bay now boasts a new lobby area and main bar, all new luxurious beachfront & oceanfront swim-up Butler Suites, an over-the-water serenity wedding chapel, Latitudes overwater bar, a high-tech conference centre, and even more

five-star global gourmet dining options, such as a new Jerk Shack, Butch’s Steak and Seafood, and Soy Sushi Bar.

Gordon ‘Butch’ Stewart, chairman, Sandals Resorts International, says: “We are thrilled to be hosting the World Travel Awards here at the all-new Sandals Montego Bay. Across the entire Sandals brand, we’re innovating at every touchpoint of the all-inclusive experience to continue exceeding guests’ expectations, and I look forward to sharing all that’s good and new for 2019 across all our resorts.”

Retired special constables say thanks to FDR for hosting treat

SEVERAL FORMER members of the Island Special Constabulary Force (ISCF) who are now members of an association, are today saying thanks to the Franklyn D Resort (FDR) in Runaway Bay, St

Ann, for hosting them recently for their annual social.

The group is also expressing gratitude to the Public Sector Employees Co-operative Credit Union, which sponsored the treat



Some of the retired special constables who spent a fabulous day at FDR recently.



Kelly-Ann Dixon, marketing and communications manager, Public Sector Employees Co-operative Credit Union, and Rankin Clarke, exchange pleasantries at FDR.

for the third year.

Rankin Clarke, who spoke on behalf of the group that numbered 16, was predictably happy for a day of relaxation for yet another year at FDR.

“The team enjoyed the day and the warm hospitality at FDR,” Clarke told **Hospitality Jamaica**.

“Our members are retirees from the ISCF and thank God, through the credit union, we can enjoy the day with our brothers and sisters. We’re thankful to God that we are not saying goodbye but we’re

enjoying fellowship with one another. It was a good day, a blessed day, and a day of thanksgiving.”

For her part, Trishawana Davidson, FDR’s assistant sales manager, welcomed the group with opened arms, expressing great pleasure in hosting the retired police officers.

“They are a part of the FDR family and we truly appreciate their patronage over the years,” she stated.

Meanwhile, Kelly-Ann Dixon,

marketing and communications manager of the Public Sector Employees Co-operative Credit Union, sponsors of the treat, was on hand to ensure that the retired ‘specials’ were well taken care of.

There were no ifs or but, the staff at FDR pulled out all stops to ensure that the retirees were comfortable and happy throughout the day. All facilities were opened to the former civil servants, but most of them preferred to just enjoy the excellent cuisine and to relax by the pool.