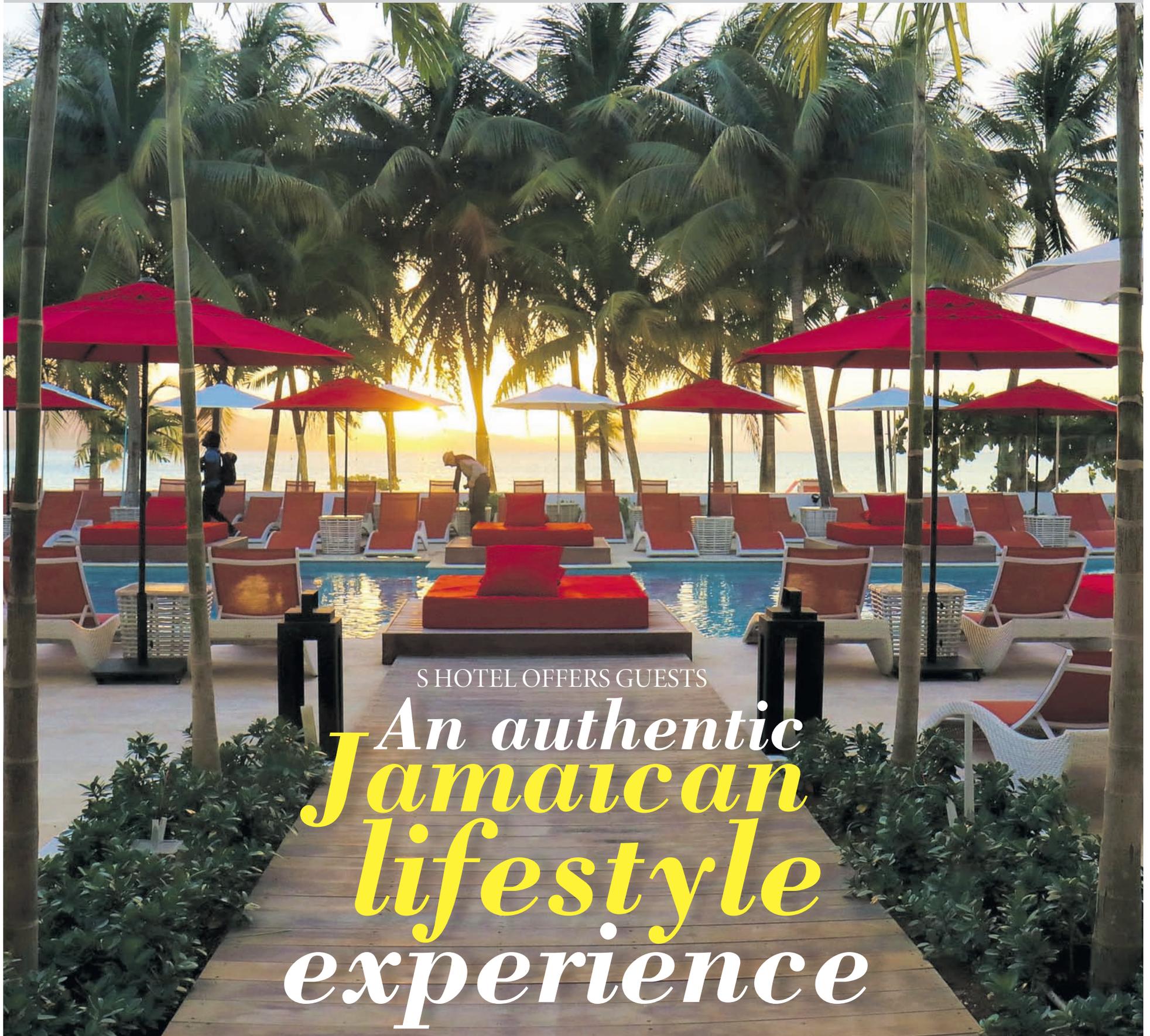


The Greater
Hospitality Jamaica

KEEPING YOU CONNECTED TO THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2019



S HOTEL OFFERS GUESTS

*An authentic
Jamaican
lifestyle
experience*

Christopher Thomas' Caribbean Travel Marketplace was a success

Jewel and Hilton Resorts partnership with Rebel Salute, a match made in heaven

Guests expect sophisticated and free connectivity

Montego Bay's newest resort, S Hotel, offers guests

Junior Suite
balcony view

AN AUTHENTIC JAMAICAN-LIFESTYLE EXPERIENCE



OVERLOOKING THE famed world-famous Doctor's Cave Beach, Montego Bay's newest resort, the S Hotel, threw its doors open two weekends ago, bringing what could easily be tagged the revival of the Jimmy Cliff Boulevard (formerly the Hip Strip).

Obviously, a name change has not removed the hip in the strip. What the name Jimmy Cliff has brought with it is the rich culture of the Jamaican music, which can be found at the new Usain Bolt Tracks and Records, the new Coral Cliff, and the long-standing entertainment complex, Margaritaville.

In fact, there is no other boulevard in the tourism capital painted with so many iconic buildings that played passage to the birth of tourism in the city of Montego Bay.

On Sunday, January 27, the 120-room S Hotel Jamaica was opened officially by both Governor General Sir Patrick Allen and Prime Minister Andrew Holness.

The second hotel project from Jamaican



Room detailed with Bob Marley turntable

entrepreneur Chris Issa, owner of the newly created Crissa Hotels. The term Crissa is a derivative of the Jamaican patois word, 'Kriss', meaning 'excellent.' The group includes Kingston's ever-popular Spanish Court Hotel, the Spanish Court Worthington event venue in Kingston, and Tracks & Records in Montego Bay, Usain Bolt's

restaurant franchise.

ATMOSPHERE/VIBE

S Hotel is poised as the ultimate trendsetting hotspot in Jamaica, putting the resort city of Montego Bay back on the map among international travellers. Buzzing bars, a high-spirited pool scene, Sky Deck, an international restaurant, a spa and elevated design throughout the property and guest rooms evoke a discrete urban sophistication and a laid-back resort lifestyle.

S Hotel offers guests an authentic Jamaican lifestyle experience interweaving local island food, music, art, and entertainment into every facet of the guest's stay.

DESIGN & ROOM CONCEPTS

Award-winning, luxury-design firm Antrobus Ramirez oversaw the interior design. Jamaican historical





A Jamaican pastime game is among the cultural items that can be found in a room at the S Hotel.

and cultural design references are woven into the atmosphere, with a modern interpretation of details and finishes.

Rooms feature sleek interiors with an overarching monochromatic theme. Room categories range from The Essentials to the signature Spa Suites with oversized wicker-wrapped soaking tubs. The top category, Sky Suite, features 20-foot ceilings while the Presidential Suite features three bedrooms and a living-dining room.

SERVICES & AMENITIES

The S Hotel offers the attention and service of a luxury property and the intimacy and personalisation of a boutique hotel. The scene-worthy main pool, lets guests take centre stage framed by white sand and dotted with cabanas, loungers, and a sleek wood deck. The Irie Baths and Spa embraces Jamaican heritage and a holistic approach to wellness with subterranean plunge pools reminiscent of ancient baths, featuring Natura Bissé Skincare line and



Sky deck balcony at the S Hotel.

locally sourced products.

The Sky Deck, exclusive to Sky Club Suite guests, boasts a rooftop location with a glass-enclosed pool with cabanas and loungers and a bar serving modern cocktails and a decadent tapas menu.

S Hotel offers flexible meeting and event spaces and services, providing a combination of intimate settings for corporate meetings and training, unforgettable weddings, and other special events.

The concierge offers curated tours/excursions encouraging

guests to go off-property to explore the real Jamaica.

FOOD & BEVERAGE

Food and Beverage are fresh, local, sustainable, and most important, Jamaican.

Rock Steady will be open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner and

features artisanal Jamaican and international cuisine. Verde, with its green furnishing, features fresh locally driven buffet offerings.

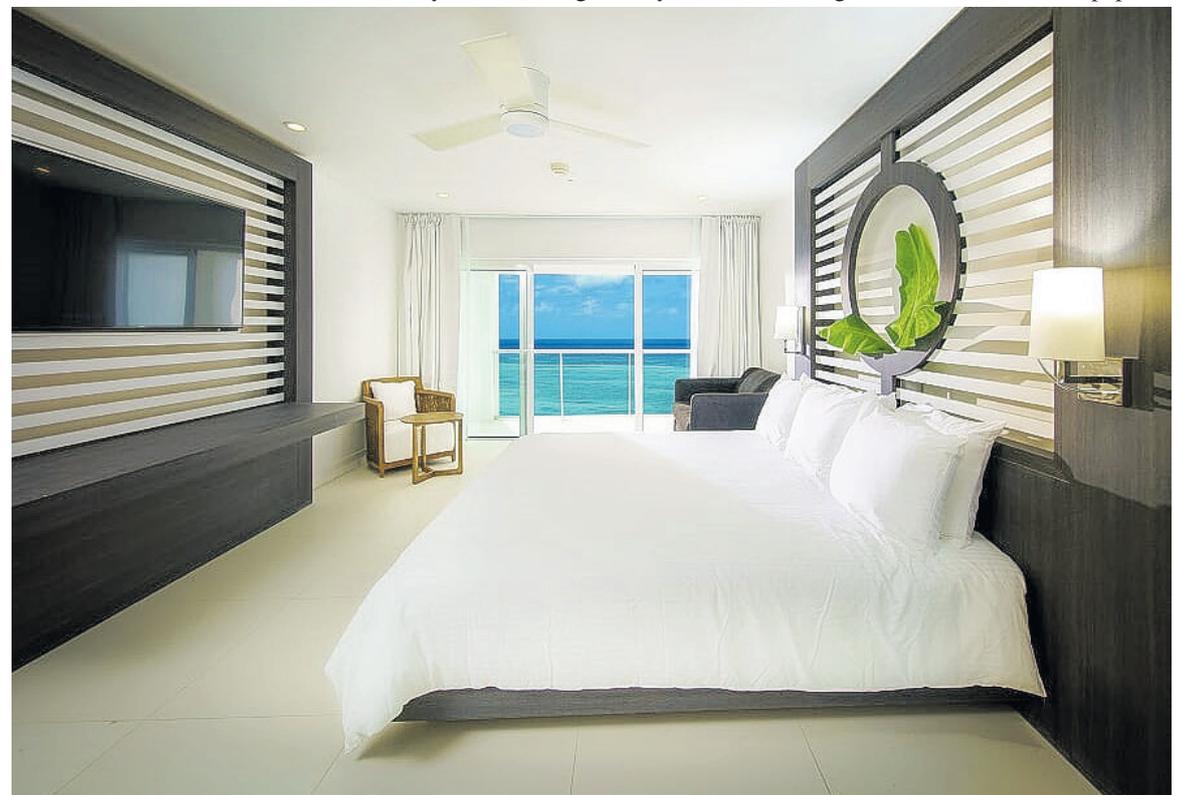
The Pool Bar & Grill offers inventive crafted cocktails and straight-up classics, with an all-day menu serving healthy snacks,

made-to-order sandwiches, salads, and grilled specialties.

The Ska Café provides all-day specialty coffee, fresh juices, and light bites. It has indoor and outdoor seating and a library with an international array of magazines, books, and newspapers.



Ocean View Spa Suite Bath



Sky Club Ocean View Spa Suite at S Hotel.



St Ann Municipal Council councillors take time out to smile for the camera.



From left: Robert Bryan, Grizzly's Entertainment; Charmaine Deane, area director of marketing/communications; and Tony Rebel.

Reggae festival Rebel Salute attracts **THOUSANDS**

JEWEL AND Hilton Resorts again sponsored the two-day reggae festival Rebel Salute, which was staged on January 18 and 19 in Richmond, St Ann.

Hospitality Jamaica brings highlights of the launch of the event at Jewel Dunn's River on the eve of the festival, which attracted thousands of visitors to Jamaica.



Tony Rebel is thrilled to receive the Keys to the Jewel Resorts, St Ann and Hilton Rose Hall.



Jewel Dunn's River and Hilton Rose Hall team members hang in attendance at the Rebel Salute launch.



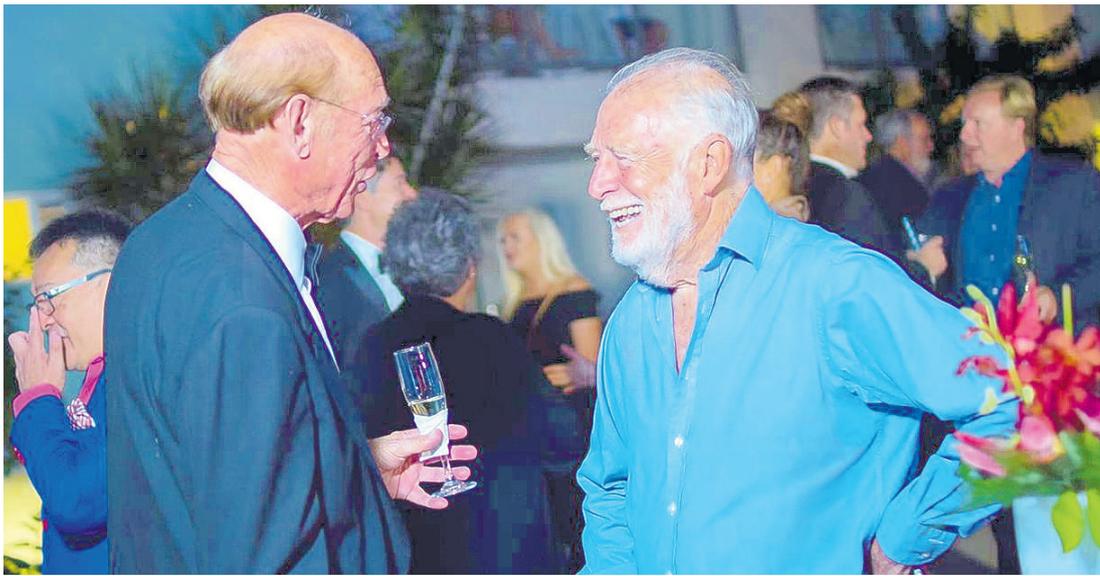
From left: Ricardo Foreman, entertainment manager, Hilton Rose Hall, poses with St Ann Development Company's Farrah Blake and Dallas Dickenson.



Mayor of St Ann Municipal Corporation, Councillor Michael Belnavis addressing the audience at the launch.



Queen Ifrica and Oral Heaven, area director of sales, Jewel Resorts and Hilton Rose Hall.



Island Outpost's Chris Blackwell (right) converses with Island Car Rentals' Michael Campbell.

Island Records founder Chris Blackwell honoured at World Travel Awards

THE MUSIC and hospitality pioneer, Chris Blackwell, has been honoured at a star-studded gala ceremony in Montego Bay. The founder of Island Records and Island Outpost was acknowledged with the 'Lifetime Achievement Award' at the World Travel Awards (WTA) Caribbean and North America Gala Ceremony 2019.

The red-carpet evening, which was hosted at Sandals Montego Bay, marked the opening leg of the WTA Grand Tour 2019 – an annual search for the finest travel and tourism organisations in the world.

Winners at the ceremony included the paradise island of St Lucia, which collected the Caribbean's Leading Honeymoon Destination award, whilst Las Vegas fended off stiff competition to emerge as North America's Leading Destination. Jamaica was named Caribbean's Leading Beach Destination and Caribbean's Leading Tourist Board'.

Guests at the gala event enjoyed entertainment from the acclaimed queen of British soul, Beverley Knight, and the Grammy-nominated reggae vocalist, Etana. The event took place on the eve of the 37th edition of Caribbean Travel Marketplace.

Graham Cooke, founder of



President of the Jamaica Hotel & Tourist Association, Omar Robinson (left), congratulates Go! Jamaica Travel's Dave Chin Tung.

WTA, said: "What an incredible evening it has been here at the magnificent Sandals Montego Bay, the home of the Sandals brand, to mark the opening of our 26th annual grandtour. We have had the privilege of recognising the region's leading destinations, hotels, resorts, airlines and travel providers; and my congratulations to each of them."

In the hospitality sector, winners included Tobago's Coco Reef Resort & Spa ('Caribbean's Leading Hotel), Marriott Hotels (North America's Leading Hotel Brand) and Conrad New York (North America's Leading Hotel). The beachside refinement of Rosewood Baha Mar,

Bahamas, was acknowledged with the award for Caribbean's Leading New Resort. The relentless drive to innovate helped Sandals to lift the title of Caribbean's Leading Hotel Brand.

In the aviation sector, Caribbean Airlines was named Caribbean's Leading Airline, whilst Sangster International Airport, Jamaica walked off as the 'Caribbean's Leading Airport' and Air Canada was voted North America's Leading Airline.

Jamaica's top travel agency, Go! Jamaica Travel, copped three awards and was named number one in the Caribbean and Jamaica.

Chatrani named 2019 Hotelier of the Year

SUNIL CHATRANI, chief executive officer and executive director of Elegant Hotels Group, is the Caribbean's 2019 Hotelier of the Year.

The Guyana-born, Barbados-based hotelier received the top honour at the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association's (CHTA) 37th annual Caribbean Travel Marketplace, staged in Montego Bay last week.

Chatrani has worked in hotel operations for more than 20 years and currently presides over Elegant's operations of seven hotels and resorts in Barbados, including Crystal Cove Hotel, Turtle Beach Resort, Waves Hotel and Spa, The House, Colony Club Hotel, Tamarind and Treasure Beach Hotel. The group also includes the acclaimed Daphne's Restaurant on Barbados' west coast, sister eatery to Daphne's Restaurant in London.

The exceptional hotelier joined Elegant Hotels Group in 2010, and, under his leadership, the group recently signed its first management contract in Antigua (with Hodges Bay Resort & Spa) as well as a sales and marketing agreement with The Landings Resort and Spa in St Lucia.

"It is very overwhelming. The truth is, all of us in the industry work very hard on a daily basis, and so many other hoteliers are deserving of this," said an elated Chatrani, who thanked the team at Elegant Hotels and his family for their support.

Chatrani's winning developmental strategy builds the profitability of each property with a focused three-step programme: Refurbish, Reposition, Reprice. This strategy promotes continuous investment and improvement.

In addition to day-to-day maintenance and regular refurbishment, Chatrani also manages a central fund for financing larger projects each

year. He believes that this, as well as the group's outstanding training and service programs, generates tangible improvements in the guest experience at the Elegant Hotels Group properties.

TRUE SUCCESS STORY

"Sunil is a true Caribbean success story," opined Frank Comito, CHTA's CEO and director general. "His professional accomplishments have been outstanding, and his commitment to staff and community development is nothing short of exemplary."

Chatrani was chairman of the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association from 2014 to 2016. During the first part of his tenure, he ensured that agreements which helped all hotels finalise access to duty-free concessions were legislated.

He is currently chairman of the Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc. (BTMI) and the Barbados Tourism Product Authority (BTPA).

Caribbean Travel Marketplace 2019 is produced by CHTA in collaboration with co-hosts the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association, Jamaica's Tourist Board and Jamaica Ministry of Tourism. It is the leading event in the Caribbean tourism industry where delegates from Caribbean countries meet with buyers from more than 20 markets.

This year's host sponsors were Appleton Estate Rum Experience, Interval International, Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association, Jamaica Tourist Board, Jamaica's Ministry of Tourism, JetBlue Vacations, MasterCard, Sandals and Scotiabank. Platinum sponsors included SSSeven Pillars: Marketing on Demand, Adara, AMResorts, Figment Design, Marketplace Excellence, OBMI, Sojern, STR, TravelClick, Travelzoo, and the United States Virgin Islands.

Hotelier Sunil Chatrani (centre) receives his award from CHTA's Director General, Frank Comito (left), and CHTA President Patricia Affonso-Dass.



Hospiten Group marks 50th anniversary with celebrations for staff

SPAIN-BASED GROUP has 5,000-strong workforce, over 1,200 beds, and attends some 1,700,000 patients each year

The Hospiten Group, which is an acknowledged leader in state-of-the-art private health-care, will be marking its 50th anniversary in 2019 with a series of activities that will, among other things, see its dedicated staff being recognised for their unwavering service.

Founded in 1969 in Puerto de la Cruz in the Canary Islands, Spain, the Hospiten Group has since grown into a workforce that is 5,000 strong with over 1,200 beds while attending to 1,700,000 patients each year.

Hospiten has long spread its wings outside the borders of Spain, where it is listed as being among the top five leaders in private

hospital management. It now also operates in Jamaica, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and Panama, primarily in tourist resort areas.

Apart from recognising its employees, Hospiten will mark 50 years of operation in 2019 by reinforcing its social commitment to the most vulnerable groups and the organising of themed talks and conferences that will address subjects of medical interest. All activities will come under the theme 'Hospiten, We Improve for Your Health'.

President of the Hospiten Group, Dr Pedro Luis Cobiella, has disclosed that a major focus of the private healthcare group is to consolidate its expansion in Latin America. The Spain-based company has also begun to examine business opportunities in the

Middle East.

"Among other objectives, Hospiten will focus investment on the acquisition of state-of-the-art technology for its centres, in addition to renovating and extending its facilities," said Cobiella.

He continued, "After 50 years of working to improve people's health, I do not want to miss the opportunity to express our gratitude for the dedication and daily work of all our medical specialists and nursing staff."

"I also want to thank all those who have been part of this project and have contributed to Hospiten now being synonymous with quality and international prestige, and to all the patients who choose us and trust us year after year, allowing us to grow",

Cobiella added.

And as it looks to expand, Cobiella cited that Hospiten closed 2018 with a turnover of €335 million. "These economic data are encouraging and reinforce our commitment to providing medical-hospital services of the highest quality in different parts of the world," he said.

In Madrid, the group-owned MD Anderson Cancer Centre Madrid, specialises exclusively in cancer treatment. It is regarded as one of the most prestigious cancer centres in Spain. It is also an affiliate of The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Centre Houston, a leader in cutting edge advancement in the prevention, early diagnosis, and treatment of the disease.

THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

Guests expect sophisticated and free connectivity



David Jessop

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

SOME YEARS ago, I stayed in a globally branded hotel on Jamaica's north coast. It claimed to have free Wi-Fi in every room and in its public areas. While this may have been true, the boast said nothing about the bandwidth or the property's ability to deal with the level of demand at peak occupancy.

The problem was that I, and many others, were there for a major industry conference as were hundreds of vacationing families. It meant that connectivity was virtually non-existent other than between 1 a.m. and 5 a.m., causing me to take a taxi to a nearby property late at night to beg their help so that I could meet a deadline.

It is something I have never forgotten, and ever since, I have avoided staying at the hotel in question even if offered as conference accommodation. Subsequently, I decided to avoid the chain completely as in some of

its city centre properties in North America, the cost of one day's Wi-Fi access was absurd.

I mention this as almost all travellers, whether on vacation or on business, now expect free high-speed broadband, seamless connectivity, carry at least two devices, and are of the opinion that any hotel that cannot provide a stable service at peak times should think twice about whether they have any future in the hospitality industry.

There are, of course, some wonderful exceptions in Jamaica and elsewhere in the region. These are, the hotels where guests specifically go to escape being connected, but for the most part, visitors want to feel able to communicate at will with friends and family and know what is going on in the wider world.

Connectivity relates directly to competitiveness as Cuba has just recognised. In recent months, both the country's president and Tourism minister have said that as a matter of government priority, the



DAVID JESSOP

digital transformation of tourism is essential and that its state directed industry would address the poor quality or absence of Wi-Fi in most Cuban hotel rooms and in many public areas.

The reality is that both digital technology for hotels and customers' requirements are changing rapidly, with the number of millennial travellers, the most connected generation ever, expected to make up around 50 per cent of all guests by 2020.

Recently, telecoms industry

studies have shown that hotels globally will have little option other than to respond, whether to improve in-house efficiency or to meet guest demand.

At its most obvious, the requirement expected of every property will be to constantly upgrade bandwidth. The trend is for travellers to arrive with ever more devices, which they wish to connect so that their ability to stream movies and play games is uninterrupted, creating a never-ending battle that all hotels will be expected to respond to.

Experts also suggest that guests increasingly will prefer to have their room key on their mobile device and will want the option to check in using self-service automation. While this may not be for everyone, the suggestion is that hotels should develop in-property apps for every guest as these offer huge efficiencies and better guest service. Such apps on a mobile device would be able to offer, for example, ordering room service

and beverages from anywhere on a property, requests to make up rooms, advice from housekeeping on when laundry is ready for delivery, a direct link to concierge services, and simplify checking out.

It is also suggested that hotels offer tech-enabled meeting spaces and ballrooms. Just as important as enabling business meetings using the latest video conferencing facilities, connectivity will enable service enhancements, with clients determining when they can accept an interruption to their meeting by catering staff. More interestingly, perhaps, companies such as the Canadian telecoms company Mitel speak about the growing demand for advanced technology in ballrooms and event spaces so that those not able to be present can join remotely occasions like wedding celebrations.

What it and other companies like them make clear is that the tech revolution is central to future destination and hotel competitiveness and guest satisfaction.

Sandals providing opportunities for youth

EACH YEAR, over 100 young Jamaicans from more than 10 local tertiary institutions receive invaluable hands-on training and experience through Sandals Resorts International's (SRI) robust internship programme.

The job-placement initiative, which dates back to the company's earliest years, is a continuation of the resort company's commitment to investing in young people by providing opportunities for exposure and growth. For a number of youngsters who go on to secure full time employment with the resort chain, the internship marks the start of an exciting professional journey.

According to Marion Weinbeer-Holding, SRI's group internship coordinator, the programme offers tremendous opportunities for personal and professional advancement. "We have been able to permanently hire multiple interns over the years who have distinguished themselves during their time with us. We are the only company in the hospitality industry in the Caribbean that offers this opportunity to so many students, allowing them to explore different departments and apply the theoretical knowledge they gained in the universities in daily operations," she said.

"This enables them not only to fulfil the school requirements, but they also receive a stipend and personalised training and development. It is indeed very satisfying to give so many budding hospitality professionals a jump-start for their future career," she continued.

Sherece Brown, now the training coordinator at Beaches Negril, knows this all too well, having started her journey with the company as an intern. She shared, "The past two years have been an amazing experience for me. I've been able to join and contribute to the team here at Beaches Negril, and I owe it all to the opportunity I received through my internship."

Kahadeesha Warsop, a sales executive also employed at Beaches Negril, echoed similar sentiments. She said, "Unlike internships I'd done in the past, I felt like I was being prepared for a career right away. It was a very hands-on and intense experience, but I very quickly learned accountability and how

'I believe that the training and exposure I received through my training equipped me with skills I'll be able to use throughout my life.'

to function effectively as part of a team. I interned at Sandals Grande St Lucia in St Lucia and I was hired at Beaches Negril just two days after returning to Jamaica. I believe that the training and exposure I received through my training equipped me with skills I'll be able to use throughout my life."

Sandals Resorts International's Deputy Chairman, Adam Stewart, reiterated the company's belief in the value of its internship programmes. He said, "Many jobseekers are expected to have experience despite the fact that they are young graduates and have never had the opportunity to work. Internship programmes such as ours seek to address that issue by allowing interns to walk away with real-world experience to show prospective employers that they have valuable skills which can benefit any organisation. Additionally, a number of our interns do end up receiving full-time employment with us."

Stewart added, "The internship programme has long been a tradition at Sandals, and we therefore join Minister Floyd Green in calling for more companies to offer internship programmes to our youth."

Kahadeesha Warsop, a sales executive at Beaches Negril, is living proof of the impact Sandals' internship programme has had on the lives of many young people.

Warsop joined the company as an intern and managed to secure full-time employment after performing impressively during her tenure. She is among hundreds of Sandals employees whose journeys began through the internship programme.



Lady Allen

ISSA Trust Foundation welcomes Her Excellency the Most Hon Lady Allen as patron

THE ISSA Trust Foundation, the non-profit organisation founded by Couples Resorts in 2005 and headed by Chairman Paul Issa and President & CEO Diane Pollard, is pleased to announce the appointment of Her Excellency, Lady Allen as patron.

Lady Allen joins her husband, His Excellency Sir Patrick Allen, governor general of Jamaica, who has acted in this capacity since 2011.

Lady Allen began nursing training at the Northern Caribbean University's (NCU) Nursing Department while serving as the institution's dean of women. She migrated to the USA with her family and completed the Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing at the Andrews University, Berrien Spring, Michigan, and later served in several senior positions at healthcare facilities in Michigan.

Between 2002 and 2007, she joined the faculty of NCU, where she served as lecturer in the Department of Nursing and later as the university's human resource director.

A passionate advocate for children and the elderly, Lady Allen now works with teens and young adults in several state-run juvenile facilities and children's homes. Once per week, she visits the Bustamante Hospital for Children and reads for the children. She was also instrumental in the establishment of the play and learning stimulation room for patients at the hospital.

Pollard stated, "We are thankful for Her Excellency Lady Allen's acceptance as patron of the foundation. She is extremely driven and works tirelessly with compassion and commitment to make a difference for our youth. Over the years, Lady Allen has attended our vision and medical missions, spending time mentoring children and educators."

'She is extremely driven and works tirelessly with compassion and commitment to make a difference for our youth.'

Caribbean Travel Marketplace 2019

A BUSTLING SUCCESS

Christopher Thomas
Hospitality Jamaica Writer
WESTERN BUREAU:

THE MONTEGO Bay Convention Centre in Rose Hall, St James, was the scene of vibrant activity as business operators and delegates from some 19 countries in the Caribbean came together recently for the hosting of the Caribbean Travel Marketplace 2019 trade show.

Patrons were kept busy throughout the three-day show as they perused over 250 business booths set up in the convention centre's auditorium, and the traders were likewise fully engaged in making connections with prospective international partners.

The exhibition, which was put on by the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association, included local Jamaican showcases and displays from other Caribbean countries, to include Barbados, Grenada, St Lucia, and even as far away as the US Virgin Islands.

Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association President Omar Robinson, who was on hand to witness the bustling activity at the trade show, hailed the event as a tremendous success.

"The event has been wonderful and it's been successful, with the addition of new buyers from China and India,



The Montego Bay Convention Centre auditorium was in full swing with the hosting of the Caribbean Travel Marketplace 2019 trade show from Tuesday, January 29, to Thursday, January 31.



Kendal Jackasal (right), acting general manager of Radisson Grenada Beach Resort in Grenada, and Arleen Redhead, sales manager for Radisson, share their pitch with a visitor to their display booth.

and we have a whole contingent from Latin America, which is a growing market for us," said Robinson. "Based

on the feedback from both the hoteliers and tour operators, it's been an overall success."

Shelly-Ann Fung-King, chief executive officer of VIP Attractions, which is based in New Kingston, was ecstatic about how the event had sparked the interest of potential foreign investors in her company's offerings.

"We've had lots of visitors to our booth, and we've had quite a few people that have expressed an interest, who've done their research and know about our product, and they've expressed how much they love it and want to partner with us. The interest we've got from the Latin American group, as well as even the Chinese, is phenomenal thus far," said Fung-King.



Omar Robinson (centre), president of the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association (JHTA), chatting with JHTA reps Delwin Rochester and Rachel Stormes while walking the floor at the trade show.



Jacqui McDermott (centre), sales and marketing manager of the Barbados-based Ocean Hotels, speaking with two prospective clients at her organisation's booth.



Charles Maynard (left), general manager of the Belle Mont Farm Resort in St Kitts and Nevis, guides a prospective client through his company's brochures.



Kaylia Harrison (left), senior sales manager for AM Resorts, and Jovanni Davis (centre), sales manager for AM Resorts, guide a visitor to their display booth through their company's offerings.



From left: Shelly-Ann Fung-King, chief executive officer of VIP Attractions, together with her team members, Kim Barker, public relations and marketing officer; Nicholas Watson, head of international sales; and Allison Callam, head of sales for Jamaica.



Candice McCalla (right), digital marketer for Travellers Negril Jamaica, and Kenya Wagstaffe, general manager's executive assistant at Travellers Negril Jamaica, are all smiles as they speak with a prospective client.



The Gleaner/Power 106's very own Shauna Fung-Yee (centre) stands together with Lorne Charles (left), general manager of Marigot Beach Club and Dive Resort in St Lucia, and Chelsea Florent, Marigot Beach Club's marketing manager.



Dr Wykeham McNeill (left), former minister of tourism, chats with Robert Hendricks, chief executive officer and president of Caribbean World Enterprises, while attending the trade show.

Ja racks up most accolades at 26th Annual World Travel Awards

THE JAMAICA took home a total of 24 awards at the 26th Annual World Travel Awards during the Caribbean and North America Gala Ceremony, which recently took place at Sandals Montego Bay. Amongst the coveted awards bestowed were the Leading Caribbean Destination, Leading Caribbean Cruise Destination and, for the 13th year in a row, the Caribbean's Leading Tourist Board.

"We are proud and excited to kick off 2019 with such an impressive showing at the World Travel Awards," said Donovan White, Jamaica's director of tourism. "These awards reaffirm Jamaica's commitment in human capital and assures that our visitors from around the globe can expect only the very best service and experience when visiting the destination."

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

- Caribbean's Leading Destination (Jamaica)
- Caribbean's Leading Cruise Destination (Jamaica)
- Caribbean's Leading Tourist Board (Jamaica Tourist Board)
- Caribbean's Leading Adventure Tour Operator (Island Routes Caribbean Adventures)
- Caribbean's Leading Adventure Tourist Attraction (Dolphin Cove)
- Caribbean's Leading Airport (Sangster International Airport, Jamaica)



Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett (second left) and Director of Tourism Donovan White (right) accepted the Caribbean's Leading Tourist Board award at the 26th Annual World Travel Awards during the Caribbean and North America Gala Ceremony, held at Sandals Montego Bay.

- Caribbean's Leading Airport Lounge (Club MoBay @ Sangster International Airport, Jamaica)
- Caribbean's Leading Boutique Hotel (Rockhouse Hotel)
- Caribbean's Leading Boutique Resort (GoldenEye)
- Caribbean's Leading Conference Hotel (Half Moon)
- Caribbean's Leading Cruise Port (Ocho Rios)
- Caribbean's Leading Destination Management Company (GO! Jamaica Travel)
- Caribbean's Leading

- Entertainment Venue (Margaritaville Caribbean)
- Caribbean's Leading Honeymoon Resort (Sandals South Coast)
- Caribbean's Leading Hotel Brand (Sandals Resorts International)
- Caribbean's Leading Hotel Residences (The Tryall Club)
- Caribbean's Leading Independent Car Rental Company (Island Car Rentals)
- Caribbean's Leading Luxury All-Suite Resort (Jamaica Inn)
- Caribbean's Leading Luxury Hotel Villa (Fleming Villa @ GoldenEye)
- Caribbean's Leading Luxury Resort (Meliá Braco Village)
- Caribbean's Leading Meetings & Conference Centre (Montego Bay Convention Centre)
- Caribbean's Leading Tour Operator (GO! Jamaica Travel)
- Caribbean's Leading Villa Resort (Round Hill Hotel & Villas)

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.

Jamaica Tourist Board awarded the 2018 Destination of the Year

DESTINATION JAMAICA has been awarded the 2018 Destination of the Year by Classic Vacations. The island was chosen because of its strong and consistent support of Classic Vacations, through collaborating with marketing and product development, to help to build awareness for the destination and drive sales towards Classic's luxury FIT leisure market and Groups.

"The Jamaica Tourist Board's (JTB) willingness to participate and test a variety of marketing initiatives offered by Classic Vacations has resulted in greater visibility for the Jamaica brand and hotels," said Lori

Smith, director of global marketing, classic Vacations.

In 2018, Classic Vacations hosted its first Groups Advisory Board in Jamaica, bringing together a select group of top-selling travel advisers focusing on destination weddings and other types of group business. The JTB's Donnie Dawson, deputy director of sales, provided selling tips and offered support. "We attribute our year-on-year growth in Jamaica to the solid and long-lasting partnership with the Jamaica Tourist Board," added Smith.



Donnie Dawson (third from left), deputy director of Tourism, Sales, Jamaica Tourist Board, is flanked by members of his JTB team and industry stakeholders after collecting the 2018 Destination of the Year Award from Classic Vacations.



2019, 2018
World Travel Awards
 Jamaica's Leading Travel Agency

2019, 2018, 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014
World Travel Awards
 Caribbean's Leading Tour Operator

2019, 2018, 2017 World Travel Awards
 Caribbean's Leading Destination Management Company

2017 Hospitality Jamaica
 Best Destination Management Company

2012 University of The West Indies
 The Development of Jamaica's Tourism Product

Thank You!

to all our clients and well-wishers who have made us #1 in Jamaica and the Caribbean as:



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Artisan village to be established soon in Falmouth

Prospective shopkeeper in the Artisan Village Falmouth, Dana Baugh, displays her ceramic pieces.

Paul H. Williams
Hospitality Jamaica Writer

FALMOUTH, THE capital of Trelawny, a parish named after Edward Trelawney, governor of Jamaica from 1738 to 1751, has a very solid place in Jamaica’s colourful history. It once had the busiest commercial port in Jamaica and its own historical narratives are nothing short of intriguing.

And soon, people from here and abroad will be travelling to this north coast town of Georgian buildings to hear some, if not all, of these stories in the artisan village. To be established at the port of Falmouth, the historic Hampden Wharves, the heritage site will house many of Jamaica’s artisans.

“The artisan village seeks to sell a cultural experience and not just a craft village where you just go in and purchase things and come right out,” Robynn Lee, project administrator at the Tourism Enhancement Fund (TEF) told **Hospitality Jamaica**. She said it is a chance to put on show what Jamaica was and how much it has grown.

Falling under the direction of the Jamaica Centre of Tourism



Robynn Lee of the Tourism Enhancement Fund says the artisan village in Falmouth will be an opportunity to put on show what Jamaica was and how much it has grown.

Innovation (JCTI), it is an initiative of the TEF, an agency of the Ministry of Tourism, to “highlight the rich history and wealth of Falmouth”. This artisan village will be themed to tell the stories of old and new Falmouth,” the TEF said.

BACK IN TIME

The space will be set up to look like old-time Falmouth, to take patrons back in time. And in that village there will be restaurants owned by the villagers, and not by big franchises. There will also be authentic Jamaican entertainment, and people to tell the stories of Falmouth.

Importantly, the artisans in the village will be producing and marketing handmade items made from material sourced locally, nothing mass-produced and imported. “We are attempting to bring high-quality artisans into the tourism value chain,” Carol Rose Brown, director of the JCTI, told **Hospitality Jamaica**.

Over 40 shops will be opened to locals and visitors, Brown also said, creating opportunities for small, medium and even micro-size enterprises. Invitations to prospective shop-keepers will be opened soon.



Basket weaver Omar ‘Sheldon’ Daley is a prospective shop-keeper in the proposed Artisan Village in Falmouth. **PHOTOS BY AFREE KAN**



Rennae Johnson-Tjeertes of Pure Chocolate Ltd and artist Lennox Coke are also among the prospective business operators in the Artisan Village Falmouth.

'Teach us'

Colombia wants to follow Jamaica's tourism lead

Paul H. Williams

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

YEARS AGO when people heard Colombia, the name of the South America country, they had images of mass homicides, mysterious disappearances, kidnappings, illicit drug-running, displacement of people, and social chaos. The homicide rate was approximately 30,000 people per year.

But today, much of that has changed, especially in the advancement of domestic tourism, and credit is being given to Álvaro Uribe Vélez, who was president from 2002-2010.

At the Second Global Conference on Jobs and Inclusive Growth: Small and Medium Tourism Enterprises held inside the Montego Bay Conference Centre in St James on Tuesday, January 29, among other things, President Veléz, the keynote speaker, was introduced as the best president that Colombia ever had.

He had transformed a country where domestic and international tourism was all but dead, where the number of hotel rooms rose from 80,000 in 2002 to 200,000 in 2010, and where the number of visitors jumped from 500,000 in 2002 to six million in 2018.

Veléz is no longer in power, but he is still active in the transformation of tourism in Colombia, especially small and medium tourism enterprises (SMTEs), and wants to



Former President of Colombia Álvaro Uribe Veléz addressing the opening session.



Minister of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries Audley Shaw addressing the opening session of the 2nd Global Conference on Jobs and Inclusive Growth: Small and Medium Tourism Enterprises at the Montego Bay Conference Centre on Tuesday, January 29.



From right: Minister of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries Audley Shaw listens as Tourism Minister Edmund Bartlett makes a point. From left: Olivia Grange, minister of culture, gender, entertainment and sport; Nestor Mendez, OAS assistant general-secretary; and Jaime Alberto Cabal, deputy secretary general of the World Tourism Organisation. PHOTOS BY AREE KAN

partner with Jamaica in the development of that sector. This collaboration with Jamaica, he said, is very important in developing SMTEs in Colombia.

He said, "For someone as Colombian as I am, it is very difficult to speak on tourism in Jamaica, because Jamaica has been a great leader in this very important activity." In the realm of tourism, Veléz said Colombians have to be the students and Jamaica the teacher.

He said Simon Bolivar, the great South American liberator, found Jamaica to be an inspiring place, and, "Now," he said, "We have to come here to learn from you on how to promote tourism in Colombia."

In concluding his address, while facing Tourism Minister Bartlett, Culture Minister

Olivia Grange and Commerce Minister Audley Shaw, President Veléz said, "You have done a great job, and I will come in one year hence, to see what you are doing to promote small and medium tourism enterprises, and what other examples I have to take back to my country."

Other speakers at the conference, held under the auspices of Jamaica's Ministry of Tourism and the World Tourism Organization, were Edmund Bartlett, minister of tourism; Audley Shaw, minister of industry, commerce, agriculture and fisheries; Jaime Cabal, deputy secretary-general of the United Nations World Tourism Organization; and Nestor Mendez, assistant secretary general of the Organization of American States.

CHTA president hails Caribbean diversity

PRESIDENT OF the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA), Patricia Affonso-Dass, hailed the diversity of the region, it's incredible natural beauty and people as core strengths as she called for the Caribbean to be better known as the most welcoming region in the world.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the just-concluded 37th annual Caribbean Travel Marketplace, the Caribbean's largest tourism marketing event, in Montego Bay, the Barbados-based hotelier said it was time to change the way the world references the region, "from the most tourism-dependent in the world to the world's most desirable, most tolerant and inclusive, most welcoming, most hospitable, most facilitative and investment-friendly, and most environmentally sensitive region in the world".

Speaking on behalf of the region's pre-eminent private-sector trade association and its 33 national hotel and tourism associations, the president



CHTA President Patricia Affonso-Dass addressing Caribbean Travel Marketplace delegates at the opening ceremony. At left is CHTA's Director General and CEO Frank Comito.

said CTM was hosting the largest group of buyers in its history from the widest number of countries.

Some 60 new buyer companies out of approximately 145 have joined the conference this year, and CHTA welcomed the largest contingent of Chinese travel buyers to date, along with new buyer companies from Argentina, Brazil,

Canada, Colombia, India, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Poland, Puerto Rico, St Vincent & the Grenadines, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States, she told the gathering.

"Our relationship with you, our buyer partners, and your active engagement in promoting and selling our region is

integral to the sustainability of our economies and, by extension, the livelihood of our people; and I would like to encourage you to get more actively engaged with the association," she implored.

CORE STRENGTH

"The diversity of buyers attending Marketplace from around the world, ironically, reflects the diversity of our Caribbean offerings – a united region with an incredible array of offerings with their own distinct natural beauty, history and culture. This is one of our core strengths," she added.

Pointing to the region's people, she wants the Caribbean to be known as a region where genuine service is delivered by "regionally proud, highly trained professionals who understand the critical importance of their role and their importance to the success, sustainability and economic viability of the region".

Affonso-Dass, who has championed the theme 'people

development', even prior to assuming the role of president last year, asserted that the people of the region are "our most important asset and our most marketable commodity".

In a world that often appears dominated by divisiveness, fear and uncertainty, the CHTA president's dream is for the Caribbean region "to continue to stand strong and united, to be synonymous with a genuine welcome, an authentic experience and excellent service delivered with soul and pride."

She told the 1,000 delegates attending the opening reception that "more and more of our customers are telling us that what they are seeking is a personal connection with our people, a genuine experience, and an opportunity to feel that their being here makes a positive difference. Our responsibility is to ensure that our people have the right training, real opportunities for development, and a chance to derive the greatest value for themselves and their families from the industry in which they work".

AROUND JA WITH PAUL H

Raining on Jamaica's parade?

NO WAY!

CARIBBEAN TRAVEL Marketplace (CTM) is the biggest event on the Caribbean tourism marketing calendar. This year, from January 29 to 31, it was held at the Montego Bay Convention Centre in St James, the parish where I was born, grew up, and frolicked on the beaches.

And since I did not know if I would ever get the chance to attend such an event overseas, I made every effort to attend this time around. Thanks to everybody who made my attendance possible. They know themselves.

Travelling from Kingston, the first day started out well. I had to divide my time between two places, including the venue, where I went first, as there was the opening of a conference I wanted to be present at. On my departure from the venue to the next stop, it was raining. Nothing to worry about, I thought. But I was so wrong.

When my next mission was accomplished about 4 p.m., tons of water was pouring down from the skies. My pickup vehicle did not turn up. Luckily, my next stop was on the same stretch, but the rain was just too much. A route taxi was the only option, and I reached my accommodation partially wet. There, it was time for the rain to put on some more watery display.

There was water at my room entrance. I put my bags down, went inside to get out of those clingy, wet clothes. I stepped outside with a towel around my waist to get my luggage. Then, I heard a slam.

RAINING LIKE CRAZY

The key was on the bed inside. It was raining like crazy. I am locked out, and I had another function to attend at the conference centre. The story of how I got to the front desk cannot be told on these pages, but I went, got another key, and walked back in the rain.

I hurriedly got dressed and went to the front for a shuttle pickup. After waiting for an hour with no sign of the transport, I heard that there was a serious accident in the rain on the



Lorne Charles (left) and Chelsea Florent stand beside a poster of St Lucia's famous Gros Piton. PHOTOS BY AFREE KAN



Glenroy Boatswain of True Blue Bay Boutique Resort is putting on his Grenadian charm.

way to the venue, and traffic was at a standstill. And so it was.

But I could not stand still. I tried to find out what was going on. Only bits and pieces of information were coming in. Then, after three hours of waiting, I embraced the fact that I would not be going

anywhere. I went to find comfort in food, and I had a feast. Then someone called to say the function was moved from the outdoors. The show was on.

The rain continued throughout the night, threatening to pour more water on Jamaica's parade. The



The Jamaican pushcart made its presence felt.



From left: Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett and Dr Wykham McNeill, opposition spokesman on tourism, look at boxes of Jamaican confectionery from RSS Natural Delites.

entire Caribbean came to Jamaica and that was how the weather welcomed them. But, it could not stop the Marketplace, and what a great three days it was.

I thoroughly enjoyed walking up and down, talking with people from all over the Caribbean, and beyond. I have never been in a place with so many Caribbean people at the same time. They were here to show what they had to offer in the Caribbean travel market, and Jamaica has much more.

At one point on the second day, I saw a half-Chinese-looking youngster with a group of Chinese visitors. He looks like he is in his teens. Smiling, I felt moved to say, "Why are you not in school? This is an event for working adults."

He laughed. He was over 21. And yes, he's half-black, half-Chinese. It turned out that he is a UWI student who was the interpreter for that Chinese delegation. He also speaks Japanese. Big up, Calvin Wong. I was so proud of him. It was further revealed that that was the first time he had been to Montego Bay.

There were many stories, and questions. And my camera, legs and brain were very tired by the end of the second day – the first full day of buying and selling. In fact, my 100 per cent full battery simply died just before I left the venue with a bag of complimentary pens and promotional literature, and a heart bursting with pride.

I arrived early on the third day because I had to leave to a certain obligation in Kingston. After a quick look around, more chats, and more



The official touring party at the recently held Caribbean Travel Marketplace at the Montego Bay Conference Centre. From left: Dr Wykham McNeill, Opposition spokesman on tourism; Patricia Affonso-Dass, president of the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association; Tourism Minister Edmund Bartlett; Dave Bahlman, Adara's vice-president of destination media – travel and tourism; Frank J Comito, CEO and director general of the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association; Donovan White, Jamaica's director of tourism; Scotiabank's Carlene Lyn; David Noel, Scotiabank Jamaica's president and CEO; and Camille Needham, executive director, Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association. Stopping: Omar Robinson, Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association president; and Hugh Riley, general secretary of the Caribbean Tourism Organisation.

pictures, I bade Montego Bay and the Caribbean goodbye.

From the look of things, it was a well-organised and well-attended event. Everybody who had a hand

in it must be commended fervently. The Caribbean was on show in Jamaica and we did not disappoint, despite the watery threat on the first day.



Calvin Wong, a UWI Mona campus student, was the interpreter for this Chinese delegation.



Lunch on Wednesday, January 30, was sponsored by St Maarten/ St Martin.



People doing business in a section of the Jamaica Tourist Board's space at Caribbean Travel Marketplace at the Montego Bay Conference Centre on Wednesday, January 30.

JAMAICAN TALENT CONTINUES TO SHINE AT SANDALS-HOSTED WORLD CLASS EVENTS

The talent of Jamaicans continued to be on full display as Sandals Montego Bay hosted the World Travel Awards' (WTA) Caribbean and North American Gala Ceremony on Monday, January 28, 2019 and the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Associations' (CHTA) Caribbean Travel Marketplace farewell beach party on January 31, 2019.

Sandals is pleased to continue working with Jamaica's most talented musicians and event planners to bring both spectacular events to life while showcasing our people.

HUGE THANK YOU to **Yendi Phillips** and **Rohan "Quite" Perry** for expertly hosting the World Travel Awards and **John Swaby Entertainment** and **Frances Mais** and **Audia White** of **An Affair to Remember** for providing excellent production and décor services, respectively, for both events.

We are appreciative of the remarkable talents of Grammy-nominated performer **Etana** and her background vocalists

Tammy T and **Kyvlle**, **Beverley Knight**, the amazing **Agent Sasco**, **ZJ Sparks**, **DJ Bambino**, our very own Disc Jocks **DJ Bryan**, **DJ Marlon** and **DJ Muffla**, Sandals Ochi Beach Resort's outstanding Entertainment Coordinator, **Shelly-Dean Bartley**, saxophonists **Fitzroy Minnott** and **Rushaun Lee**, vocalists **Marsha Kennedy** and **Tarique Burger** and pianist **Joshua Clarke** who combined provided stellar entertainment to over 2000 international and local guests at both events. Thank you also to **Dwight Findley** and **Woopydoo Entertainment** for providing stilt walkers and **Soul Dynamics** for providing acrobats, jugglers and circus acts for the CHTA's beach party.

We also wish to highlight our partners Main Event Entertainment Group, Innovative Signs and Appleton Estate.

Sandals is proud to continue highlighting the immense talent and diversity of our Jamaican people and illustrating just how much can be achieved when the linkages between the tourism and entertainment industries continue to be celebrated.



Rushaun Lee proved himself to be a master saxophonist as he entertained guests at the recent event.



In their usual fine style, the team from An Affair to Remember pulled out all the stops to ensure guests were wowed by the décor.



Former Miss Jamaica and First Runner Up in the Miss Universe Pageant, Yendi Phillips, brought her signature style and grace as she hosted the Gala Ceremony at Sandals Montego Bay.



Comedian and social media influencer, Rohan Perry, more popularly known as 'Quite Perry' was in top form as he joined Yendi Phillips to host the Gala.



Shelly-Dean Bartley, entertainment coordinator at Sandals Ochi Beach Resort wowed all in attendance at the World Travel Awards' Gala with her powerhouse vocals and commanding stage presence.



Beverley Knight thrilled the audience with her soulful performances at the recently held WTA Gala.



Grammy-nominated artist Etana's performance was certainly among the most talked-about of the WTA Gala.



Agent Sasco listens keenly as the audience sings along to his hits at the CHTA's recent beach party.



These agile acrobats from Soul Dynamics definitely had the attention of partygoers at Caribbean Travel Marketplace's farewell beach party.

