

EXPLORE!

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Explore Jamaica

JAMAICA - TRIP CODE JAM

DISCOVERY

Why book this trip?

This trip is an opportunity to discover the real Jamaica, behind the resorts and cruise liners. By staying in smaller accommodation, we take you to the hidden corners of Jamaica, covering almost the entire island circuit as well as some of the inland's beautiful mountainous areas. You'll have plenty of time to swim in blue lagoons, sample delicious food and explore miles of white-sand beaches.

- **Blue Mountains** - See Jamaica's wild side with hikes in the lush forest of the Blue Mountains National Park
- **Coastal beauty** - Relax on Seven Mile Beach and swim in the turquoise waters at Frenchmen's Cove
- **Tasty cuisine** - Try authentic Jamaican Jerk, Rastafarian 'Ital' food and feast on tropical fruits, stews and curries

**INCLUDED MEALS**Breakfast: 9
Lunch: 2**TRIP STAFF**Explore Tour
Leader
Driver(s)**TRANSPORT**

Bus

**ACCOMMODATION**1 nights simple
cabins
8 nights
comfortable hotel**TRIP PACE:**

Relaxed

**GROUP SIZE:**

10 - 16

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Join trip in Kingston

Arrive in Kingston today. Due to the number of evening flights into Kingston, your Leader plans to do the welcome meeting on the morning of day two, and will leave a message in reception with details on timings and everything else that you'll need for the day. There are no activities planned today, so you are free to arrive in Kingston at any time. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you'll need to arrive into Kingston's International Airport (airport code: KIN), approximately a 15 minute drive from our hotel. Should you miss the meeting, your leader will inform you of any essential information as soon as you catch up.

If your flight arrives earlier in the day, you can relax and soak up the Caribbean views and try out a local Red Stripe beer.

**ACCOMMODATION:**

Hotel Four Seasons (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 2 - Visit the Bob Marley Museum; drive to the Blue Mountains

Our day begins with a visit to the Bob Marley museum in Kingston, situated in the colonial house where the legend of reggae lived from 1975. For anyone interested in music, the museum is a great look into the mind and inspiration of one of Jamaica's most famous residents.

After our visit, we drive north out of the city on increasingly winding and unmarked roads, heading upwards into the Blue Mountains. Among coffee lovers, this place is known for its fine (and, when exported, expensive) single-origin coffee, and we'll be stopping at a plantation to see what makes the coffee so impressive and tasty. We then continue to climb into the Blue Mountains National Park to our cabin accommodation at Holywell, where the lush, green countryside is a tranquil contrast to our stay near Kingston. The National Park is enormous, spanning four of Jamaica's parishes and covering the eastern part of the island in breathtaking mountain scenery. There are lots of walking trails around our cabins and nature-lovers will be in their element, with endemic trees, flowers, birds and butterflies to discover. The cabins are simple, with one or two rooms in each, sleeping approximately four people per room, and shared facilities in each cabin. They are the perfect location from which to explore the Blue Mountains.



ACCOMMODATION:
Holywell Cabins (or similar)



Grade: Simple Cabins



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 3 - Hike on nature trails; drive to Port Antonio with a traditional Maroon lunch en route

The morning we will walk on one of the nature trails around our cabins, soaking up the views of the forested mountains. These trails are short, varying from 30 minutes to a couple of hours, and can be steep in parts. This steepness pays off in a variety of ways, from looking up at canopies of Blue Mahoe, Jamaica's national tree, to spotting the Giant Swallowtail, the largest butterfly in the New World and endemic to Jamaica, or hearing the sound of cascading water as a waterfall signals the end of the path.

We combine lunch with a little history lesson as we travel to Charlestown and learn about the story of the Maroons. The Maroon villagers were runaway slaves, who fought against the British from the 17th to 19th centuries. We'll taste traditional Maroon food and experience the drumming, dancing and singing before leaving the mountains and descending to Port Antonio.



ACCOMMODATION:
Bayview Eco Resort (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 4 - Swim at the Blue Lagoon and Frenchmen's Cove

We'll drive to the Blue Lagoon this morning, one of those places where the name really does it justice. The water seems to fluctuate between bright turquoise, royal blue or a deep sapphire colour depending on where the light hits. We'll have chance to swim in this special place before driving just 15 minutes down the coast to Frenchmen's Cove, a gorgeous white-sand beach, sheltered in a secluded cove and backed by lush greenery.

We will be staying in Frenchmen's Cove for lunch. The area around Port Antonio is known for being the home of Jerk - so it's well worth trying a tasty plate of jerk pork or chicken today, washed down with a bottle of Jamaican Red Stripe.

After spending some hours here, we'll return to our hotel.



ACCOMMODATION:
Bayview Eco Resort (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 5 - Optional rafting on the Rio Grande; drive to Montego Bay

This morning there is a chance to raft on the Rio Grande River. Leaving the hotel at 9am we take a short transfer to the banks of the Rio Grande. The rafts are made from bamboo and sits two adults, you can sit back and relax as you don't even have to paddle, your raft captain takes care of that whilst you watch the scenery. The rafting takes approximately two hours and we end at a spot aptly named the Rafter's Rest. If you don't fancy rafting the morning is free to relax at the hotel, departing at around 11:45 to transfer to meet the rafters.

This afternoon we'll drive to Montego Bay, stopping for lunch along the way. We'll arrive in the late afternoon and the rest of the day is free to relax.



ACCOMMODATION:
Deja Resort (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & LUNCH

DAY 6 - Visit a Rasta village and try ital food; drive to Negril

Just outside of Montego Bay is one of the island's many (but dwindling) Rastafari indigenous villages. During our morning visit we'll get to grips with the Rasta lifestyle through learning about their music, lifestyle and spirituality as well as eating a delicious 'ital' lunch. Ital food is closely linked to Rastafari beliefs about vitality and purity - usually vegetarian or vegan, they use plenty of spices and natural ingredients to make delicious dishes.

After lunch we drive around the northwest coast to Negril, a small town with a wide reputation for some of the most beautiful coastline in Jamaica. As well as miles and miles of sandy beach, at one end of Negril we find clusters of high, craggy cliffs, jutting out over the water like spears. Perched high on one of these crags is Rick's Cafe, which we'll be visiting for sunset, one of the best on the island, as well as to watch the daring cliff divers who usually gather here to perfect their daredevil tricks.



ACCOMMODATION:
Merrils Beach Resort (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & LUNCH

DAY 7 - Free day in Negril; relax on 7 Mile beach

Today is free to enjoy everything that Negril has to offer. The long stretch of sand at Seven Mile Beach (in reality, it's closer to five miles!) is perfect for a long walk, or just to swim or relax with a rum punch and a lunch of chicken or curried goat or a quick and tasty Jamaican patty. There are many restaurants and cafes down the length of the beach if you want to get away from the midday sun. Alternatively, if you're interested in getting out on the water, scuba diving, snorkelling or glass-bottomed boat trips are all available.



ACCOMMODATION:
Merrils Beach Resort (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 8 - Taste rum at Appleton Estate Distillery; drive to Treasure Beach

Our drive this morning takes us inland towards the rolling hills of Jamaica's interior, and our first stop at the Appleton Estate Rum Distillery. In a beautiful countryside setting, the estate has been producing rum since the 1700s, and our tour today will show us how the sugar cane is magically transformed into Jamaica's beautiful golden rum. We end the tour at the bar, where we will, of course, be sampling the goods!

After some rum, we'll set off towards Treasure Beach, a low-key community that isn't a regular tourist hot spot. This afternoon is free to explore the village and its beach, or perhaps take a Jamaican cooking class and discover the secret of a true Jerk seasoning, learn to cook steamed fish and bammy (traditional cassava flatbread), or to prepare a lobster dish. Seafood is excellent in Treasure Beach, so it's well worth tasting some of the local lobster or other catch at dinner this evening.



ACCOMMODATION:
Sunset Resort (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 9 - Free day in Treasure Beach; visit the Pelican Bar or go dolphin spotting

There is plenty to explore in Treasure Beach, aside from the coastline itself. Just 1km offshore is the unusual Pelican Bar - a fantastic driftwood construction on a sandbank in the middle of the ocean, the wood all nailed together with a thatched roof plopped on top. Taxi boats are easily found. Alternatively, go dolphin spotting or take a boat 'safari' up the Black River, a swampy river home to the Jamaican crocodile and over 100 species of native bird. For those who prefer to stay on dry land, the local Treasure Beach Women's Group do arts and crafts workshops, giving an interesting insight into Jamaican crafts.



ACCOMMODATION:
Sunset Resort (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE





SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 10 - Drive from Treasure Beach to Kingston airport, where the trip ends

Departing Treasure Beach this morning, we take a three and a half hour drive to Kingston airport, where our trip ends. We will arrive at approximately 10am, and the earliest that your flight can depart is 12.30pm.



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

Trip information

Climate and country information

Jamaica

Climate

Along the coast of Jamaica, temperatures range from 22-31C, dropping inland by a few degrees. The rainiest and most humid months are May-October, and hurricanes can occur between August-October. The dry season is from November to April, although it can rain at any time of year. Up in the Blue Mountains, temperatures sometimes drop to around 10C particularly in the evenings.

Time difference to GMT	Plugs
-5	2 Pin Flat

Religion	Language
Protestantism is the main religion. 1% of Jamaicans identify as Rastafarian.	English

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may

depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Kingston - Trench Town US\$12 plus walking tour US\$18; Tuff Gong Studios US\$20; Reggae and Dancehall classes US\$25

Blue Mountain - Coffee tour US\$25

Portland - Blue Lagoon Boat Excursion US\$25; Rio Grande rafting trips US\$50.

Negril - Scuba diving US\$60 (1 tank) US\$100 (2 tank); Snorkel trip US\$30; Glass Bottom Boat US\$25; Catamaran Sunset Cruise US\$50

Treasure Beach - Dolphin Search with Black River Safari and Pelican Bar US\$65; Pelican Bar US\$40; Jamaican Cooking Class US\$35-50; Art and Craft Experience US\$ 50 (min 5 pers)

Please note several of these options have additional costs for transport to get to and from them which your leader will brief you on.

Clothing

Bring lightweight, informal clothing. A jumper or fleece is advisable for the cooler climates in the Blue Mountains and you'll need a good waterproof jacket all year round or an umbrella. Long sleeved shirts and long trousers give protection against thick forest growth and insects. A swimming costume and sun hat are essential.

Footwear

Comfortable trail boots, plus trainers/sandals for the evening. Water sandals may be useful for swimming in waterfalls and lagoons.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

One main piece and a daypack. You might like to consider bringing a small beach bag for your free day in Negril. Remember, you are expected to carry your own luggage (i.e. on and off transport etc.) so don't overload yourself.

Equipment

Sunblock, insect repellent, a travel towel, sunglasses, sun hat and swim gear are all essential. A torch (with spare batteries and bulb) and filter water bottle are also useful items. You may also wish to bring binoculars for bird watching, and snorkelling equipment.

Tipping

Explore leader

Tipping isn't compulsory, and we work hard to ensure that our leaders all receive a fair wage. However, you might want to recognise a leader that's done a great job or really added to your trip by giving them a

tip. We're often asked about the recommended amount. It's a tricky one, and down to personal preference, but we'd recommend between £15 to £20 per person per week as a guideline

Local crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, your leader may organise a group's tips kitty for included activities and meals and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Accordingly, you should allow US\$ 35, approx. 4'700 Jamaican dollars for group tipping

For all non-included services and meals on your trip please tip independently at your discretion.

Jamaica

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price	Dinner price	Beer price	Water price
££8	££15	££1.50	££0.80

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Jamaican Dollar (JMD)

Recommended Currency For Exchange

You can choose to either change your money in advance or on arrival at the airport. Here you will find both ATMs and Bureau de Change. The exchange rate with the JMD is approximately JMD 170 to the British Pound. We recommend you take some emergency cash in USD and GBP for exchange. Notes should be in good condition otherwise they may not be accepted. Please check on line for up to date information

Where To Exchange

Your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival

ATM Availability

ATMs can be found in the major towns and cities for cash withdrawals in JMD. Always have some cash back up as they are not always reliable

Credit Card Acceptance

Credit card are widely accepted in many shops and restaurants but some may be subject to a service charge

Travellers Cheques

We do not recommend Travellers Cheques.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Bus

Accommodation notes

The Holywell cabins are in an ideal remote location for exploring the Blue Mountains National Park. There are three cabins, of which the largest can accommodate nine people. The configurations of the rooms are all different - they may be three or four person rooms, furnished in a simple style, and there are shared bathrooms in each cabin.

Essential Information

Government Travel Safety Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa and Passport Information

Jamaica: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate. All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related issues with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

USA (If flights transit): you will need to apply for an ESTA if you are transiting the USA as you will have to disembark and clear immigration before re-boarding for the onward flight. Citizens of the UK, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and passport holders from several EU countries can enter the United States without a visa under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) - where you apply for an ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorisation), which applies if you enter the country by sea or by air. This must be done on

line - <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov> no later than 72 hours prior to travel. Travellers who have not registered before their trip are likely to be refused boarding. When completing an application for transit you should enter the words 'In Transit' with your final destination location in the address line. You must have an electronic passport with a digital chip containing biometric information about the passport owner. UK passports which are biometric feature a small gold symbol (camera) at the bottom of the front cover.

If you have visited Libya, Iran, Iraq, Somalia, Sudan, Syria or Yemen since March 2011 or are dual nationals of these countries, you cannot travel with an ESTA. If you are a citizen of a country not included in the VWP you cannot apply for an ESTA. In both cases, you will instead need to apply for a visa from the nearest US Embassy or Consulate. If you are unable to provide a valid visa before boarding flights to the US, or entering via another method, you may not be permitted to travel. For further information please check out the US embassy website. Visa applications - <http://london.usembassy.gov/niv/apply.html>

Canada (in transit): An electronic travel authorisation (ETA) is required by British citizens transiting via Canada. For more information see the official Canadian government website:
<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/eta.asp>

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may be able to apply through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

Transfers

Find out more about [Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions](#) before you book.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The complimentary transfers will be arranged from the Explore designated airport or train station to your trips joining point, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. Generally the airport or station that Explore have selected will be the one that is closest to the town or city where the trip starts, or the one nearest to the joining point. It will be either an airport or train station but not both.

The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. Read more about them [here](#).

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Ability to swim

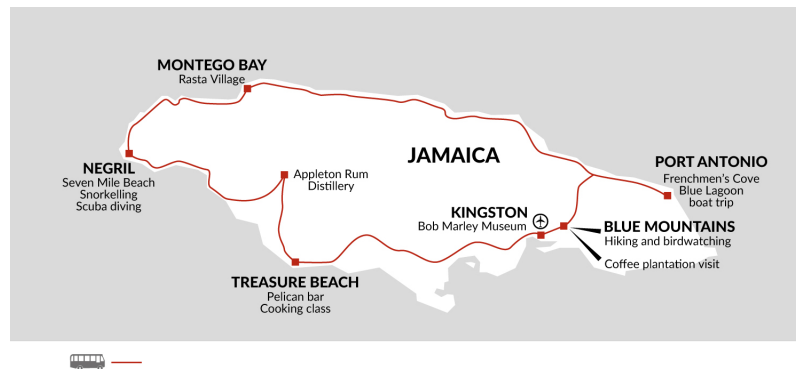
An ability to swim is essential for your safe enjoyment of the water based activities on this trip. If you wish to participate in these activities then we insist that you are able to swim.

Jamaica

Vaccinations

We recommend protection against Tetanus, Infectious Hepatitis, Typhoid and Polio. Please consult your travel clinic for the latest advice on Malaria, Dengue and Zika Virus. Please take preventative measures to avoid mosquito bites - these include mosquito repellent as well as long trousers and long sleeve shirts to cover up when necessary. Please note many countries in Central America, South America and the Caribbean require a yellow fever vaccination certificates if travelling from infected areas. A detailed list of these countries can be found on the NaTHNaC website - <http://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>. Also on the NaTHNaC site there is a list of Countries (and specific areas within a country) which are at risk of infection and a vaccination is therefore recommended. Yellow fever in only recommended for those travelling east of the Andes (Amazon Extension). Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <https://www.explore.co.uk/essential-information/know-before-you-go/travel-health> on Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

Additional Information



Why book this trip

This trip is an opportunity to discover the real Jamaica, behind the resorts and cruise liners. By staying in smaller accommodation including cabins and a homestay, we take you to the hidden corners of Jamaica that many people don't see, as well as visiting the highlights. Covering almost the entire island circuit as well as some of the inland's beautiful mountainous areas, you should come away from this trip with a real understanding of the Jamaican culture and psyche.

Reviews



**AWARD WINNING
EXPLORE LEADERS**



**PRICE GUARANTEE
PROMISE**



**AIRPORT
TRANSFERS**