

The Gleaner
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2014

10th
HOSPITALITY
JAMAICA
ANNIVERSARY



Jamaica's **Best**

COORDINATOR'S NOTE

Thanks for your unwavering support

TWO WEEKS ago, we recognised Jamaica's best in the hospitality sector at our 10th Anniversary Gala and Awards ceremony at the Montego Bay Convention Centre.

Approximately 300 tourism stakeholders attended the inaugural event, which, at the end of an exciting evening, recognised the 60-year-old Half Moon Hotel with two distinguished awards, Best European Plan (EP) Hotel and Best Eco/Sustainable Resort.

We were very excited to showcase a non-all-inclusive resort, owing to the fact, Jamaica has become known as an all-inclusive destination. At **Hospitality Jamaica**, we can attest that it is Jamaica's rich diversity that has sustained it over the years.

Visitors are looking for an experience that offers diversity, and this country can boast that it has several different types of resorts.

Iberostar Grand in Montego Bay emerged Jamaica's Best All-inclusive. No one in this country could possibly argue otherwise. This was what one person who nominated the Iberostar Grand had to say:

"Since its inception, the management of Iberostar Resort has trained its staff to deliver only excellent service. Should there



SILVERA

be an error or disappointment, corrective measures are taken immediately. Attention to details and cleanliness are always observed.

Customer relationship is top of mind and they never fail to acknowledge each person. Guests keep returning based on my experience and interaction. This is an

excellent product, and I take great pleasure in recommending Iberostar."

For the first time in the history of the publication, we also selected to recognise a Hospitality Personality of the Year in honour of the late Ken Kennedy, the man whose idea it was to introduce a tourism-trade publication to the industry.

Dr Cecil Cornwall, founder of the accredited Western Hospitality Institute, copped this coveted award. Three other men of substance, Sandals Resort International's Brian Roper, who came very close to copping the award, Tryall Club's Sam James and Dolphin Cove's Stafford Burrowes were short-listed for this prestigious award.

RIU Montego Bay was named Jamaica's Best Entertainment Resort; Best in Cuisine is Round Hill Hotel and Villas; Best Small Hotel – Rondel Village; and Best Convention Facility, the Montego Bay Convention Centre.

The island's Best Attraction is Mystic Mountains; Best Purveyor – Rainforest Seafoods; and Best Transportation – Island Car Rentals.

The winners were selected by a panel of judges, without any input from the coordinator of this publication.

We thank these judges wholeheartedly.

The team was led by chairman of the Jamaica Tourist Board, Dennis Morrison, and included Dr David Lowe, chief revenue officer, Caribbean Producers Jamaica; Sandra Scott, deputy director of tourism; Lennie Little-White, executive chairman, Mediamix; James Samuels, former Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association president; Dr Carol Archer, director, The Gleaner Company; Saundie Saunders, assistant to the managing director, Power 106-FM; and Audrey Hinchcliffe, CEO, Manpower Maintenance.

The **Hospitality Jamaica** 10th Anniversary awards could not have happened without the expertise and support of our sponsors, mainly, collaborating sponsor, Jamaica Tourist Board; Dittie Guise and her team at the Montego Bay Convention Centre; Jamaica Broilers; CPJ, Rainforest Seafoods, Tai Flora Luxe, John Swaby Entertainment, Exclusive Holidays, Jamaica Audio Visual Company, Di Foto Shoppe, Jackie Jackson and David Cadogan.

We thank you, our readers, for your unwavering support.

Team Pegasus was out in its numbers to collect several awards at the recently concluded Taste of Jamaica Competition held at the Montego Bay Convention Centre. The Pegasus team copped three gold, five silver and seven bronze medals and received four trophies and one special award.

Pegasus executive chef, Mark Cole (right), celebrates the moment with his team following the prize-giving ceremony.



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Abe Issa – Mr Jamaica

Barbara Makeda Blake Hannah
Contributor

ABE ISSA is one of the Jamaican pioneers who influenced the growth of the country from colonialism into Independence from the 1950s to the 1970s.

His dynamic work in tourism earned him the title The Father of Jamaican Tourism for his ownership and management of Kingston's landmark Myrtle Bank Hotel, for his courageous building of the Tower Isle Hotel that developed Ocho Rios and expanded into the Couples hotel chain, and for his service as chairman of the first Jamaica Tourist Board. Many Jamaicans have been credited with starting the Jamaican tourism industry, but none can claim it more accurately than Abe Issa.

In his time, Abe Issa would not only excel as a hotelier, but as a businessman whose firsts include the opening of Jamaica's first supermarket (Hi-Lo Cross Roads); first shopping plazas (Tropical and Liguanea Plazas); the opening of Caymanas Park horse racing track and thereafter, the creation of the New Kingston business district on lands that had housed Knutsford Park race track. Issa was the first chairman of the Jamaica Development Bank, chairman of Air Jamaica and a director of the Urban Development Corporation Waterfront development, doing all this while developing his hotel interests into the Couples brand and SuperClubs hotel chains now operated by his children and grandchildren.

Abe Issa was born in Jamaica to Palestinian merchants from Bethlehem – who were on their way from the 1893 World Fair in Chicago, selling religious icons of the Holy Land and planned to continue – on to South America looking for a better life. Abe's father Elias took a friend's advice to take their goods to Jamaica and he decided to stay. "My great grandfather and grandfather were peddlers – not poverty stricken," says his youngest son Paul, "but

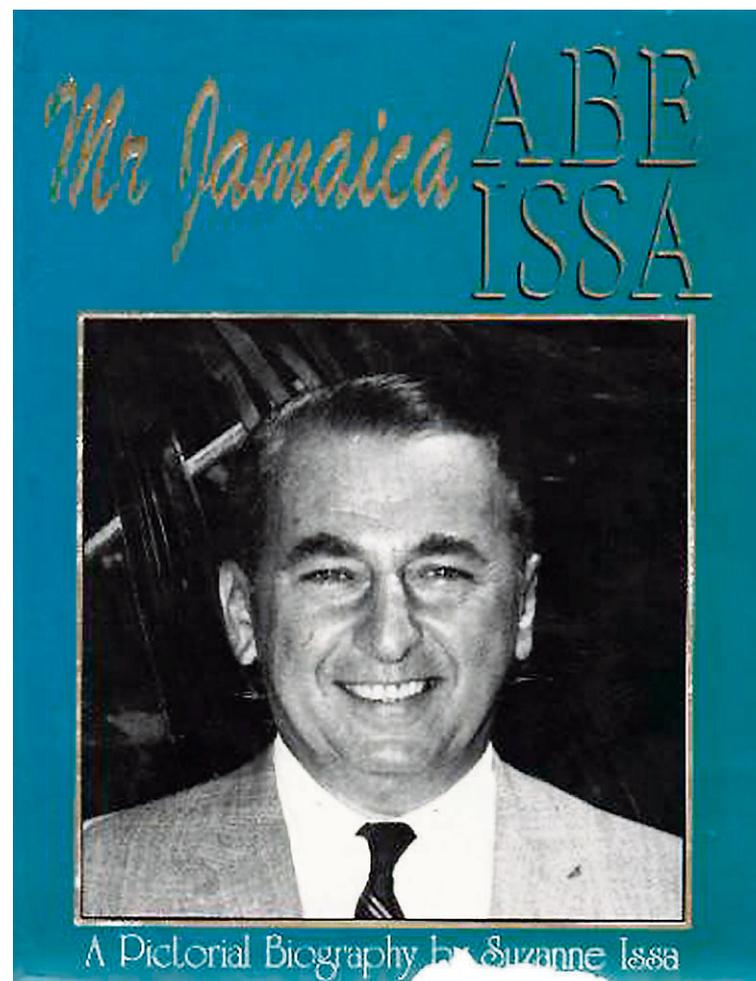
“ My grandfather Elias worked very hard and created a very successful wholesale dry-goods business, but my father was born with some kind of special spark that made him different from all the people around him. ”

certainly humble. My grandfather Elias worked very hard and created a very successful wholesale dry-goods business. But my father was born with some kind of special spark that made him different from all the people around him.”

Born in the Rae Town neighbourhood in 1905, Abe was an exemplary student and athlete at St George's College in Kingston. Returning to Jamaica after graduating *Summa Cum Laude* from Holy Cross College in the US, he plunged into the family business and along with his brother Joe, helped run the wholesale enterprise and open the family's first retail store – Issa's of King Street – in 1930. Later on they would open the Motor Sales franchise for Chrysler, Mercedes Benz and Wolsley motor cars, and the New Yorker Shirt Factory, among many other businesses.

Abe transformed the family wholesale business into Issa's, the famous retail King Street store, using the new medium of advertising to ensure Issa's became and remained the city's top shop for Jamaicans seeking the best clothes, shoes, household goods and toys. Abe would stand at the door and welcome shoppers, never forgetting the names of regulars and ensuring that his staff gave impeccable service. The Issa family built three other stores on King Street and later purchased the equally famous Nathans store next door, completing Issa's position as Kingston's leading retail company.

By 1942, Abe Issa's work as a leading businessman supporting

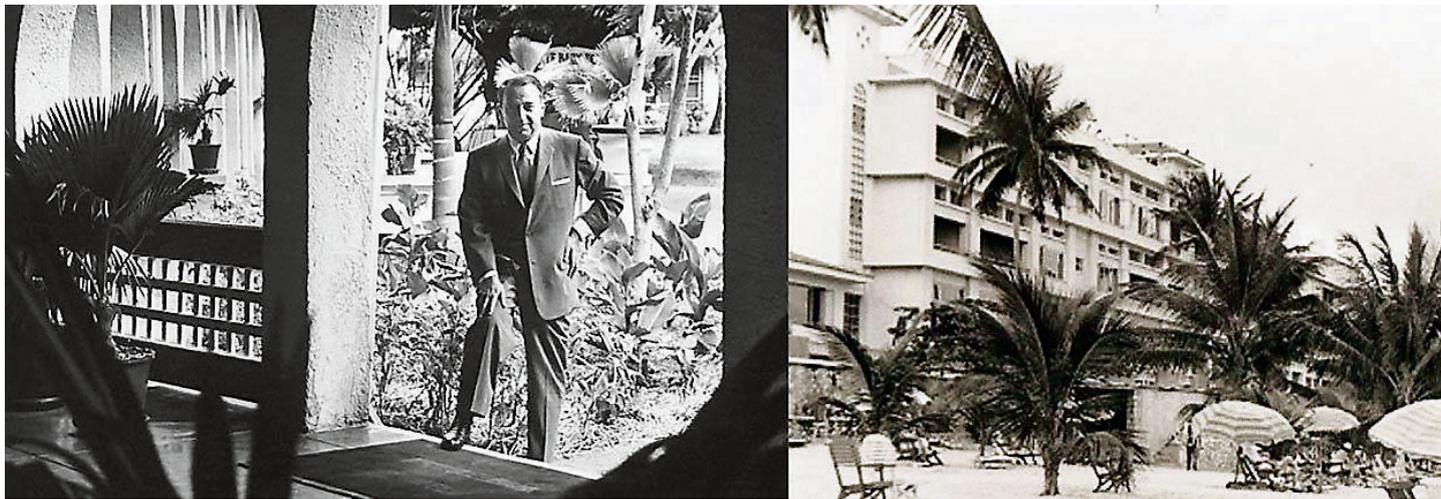


PLEASE SEE **ISSA**, 4 **ABE ISSA**

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This is no surprise to us as we have always
selected you as our top hotel in the Caribbean.



ABE ISSA

ISSA

CONTINUED FROM 3

schools, sports and charities earned him a Man of the Year cover of the **SPOTLIGHT Magazine**. In 1943, his confidence led him to launch the Jamaica Democratic Party whose manifesto proposed laws safeguarding women's rights for equal pay, equal opportunity, widowhood and child maintenance benefits and formation of a permanent Women's Commission. The party was not successful in winning seats, but Issa's commitment to Jamaica was clear.

In 1943, the United Fruit Company decided to sell the Myrtle Bank Hotel, the famous harbour-front landmark which was the stopping place for all important visitors. Abe Issa negotiated the purchase and the family made its first entry into the hotel business. Abe promoted the hotel by staging lavish balls, beauty contests and musical concerts, some featuring his Issa store employees, Charles Hyatt and Reggie Carter, both then just starting on theatrical careers. Famous Hollywood movie stars like Errol Flynn, Joan Crawford, Ann Miller and Linda Darnell, British royalty, Prime Minister Winston Churchill, US presidential candidates, as well as author Ian Fleming (then employed by British Intelligence), were among the most famous guests of Myrtle Bank, making the hotel the centre of Kingston's social life.

THE TOWER ISLE HOTEL OPENS

The interest by Myrtle Bank Hotel guests to see the fabulous white sand beaches of the North Coast gave Abe Issa the idea to embark on his largest adventure, the building

of the Tower Isle Hotel on a remote stretch of beach outside the fishing village of Ocho Rios. As quoted in the extensive biography written by daughter, Suzanne Issa, Abe said: "People thought I was crazy. They said I was bound to lose my shirt. How could anyone in their right mind build an 80-room hotel in the wilderness that was then the North Coast?"

But he went ahead anyway and in 1949, the Tower Isle Hotel opened to huge success, becoming the first resort to open all year round and sparking a new wave of hotel building, heralding what was called The Golden Age of Tourism. Guests Jane Russell, Lena Horne, and Debbie Reynolds are some of the many millionaires, movie stars, celebrities, sports heroes and political leaders who can be seen today in framed photos decorating the cocktail bar of the Tower Isle, now the flagship hotel of the Couples Resorts.

“ I don't think that many people nowadays remember him. The contribution he made seems to be forgotten, as there is little that keeps his name alive. But he was such an illustrious Jamaican that his story should be remembered to inform the next generation of Jamaican tourism entrepreneurs, because it is inspirational. ”



Convincing the political leadership that the development of air travel gave Jamaica the opportunity to make tourism an industry Jamaica could excel at, he led the start-up of the Jamaica Tourist Board and headed it from 1955 to 1963. With a 20-member board representing various sectors of the tourism industry, Abe launched a series of advertising campaigns that were pitched to potential visitors, as well as to ensure the native population was aware that 'TOURISM MATTERS TO YOU' – his most famous slogan that recognised tourism's potential to become the lifeblood of the Jamaican economy.

Travelling the world, Abe Issa virtually put Jamaica on the world tourist market, becoming known on the travel circuit as Mr Jamaica. The world was his market and he promoted Jamaica

“ People thought I was crazy. They said I was bound to lose my shirt. How could anyone in their right mind build an 80-room hotel in the wilderness that was then the North Coast? ”

as part of the promotion of his hotel. There followed a decade of growth for Jamaica's tourism industry with the highest recorded growth rate of 32 per cent in the year 1956 with income of £8,000,000 from 161,000 visitors and 3,600 beds. He threw his marketing skills into improving the tourism product, copying Florida by introducing water skiing exhibitions and the sport among Jamaica's attractions. Issa also introduced the idea of having photographers take pictures of guests and send them to their hometown newspapers, where publication of idyllic beach scenes was more likely than in the nationals.

ISSA HAILED AS A PATRIOTIC VISIONARY

Elected president of the Caribbean Tourist Association in 1959, Abe Issa's prominence as Jamaica's tourism leader expanded across the region and with Issa at the helm, the Caribbean – and Jamaica – made a strong international impact in world tourism.

Abe continued lending his management skills to the development of Jamaica, serving as a director of the Jamaica Industrial Development Corporation and the Jamaica Development Bank, granting government loans to developers of tourism, housing and industry.

In 1980, Abe Issa was awarded the Order of Jamaica "... in recognition of his pioneering role in the development of the tourism industry in Jamaica and his consistent involvement over four decades in promoting tourism as an integral part of Jamaican development". Son Paul Issa, one of several family members keeping Abe's pioneering work alive today, says with regret, "I don't think that many people nowadays remember him. The contribution he made seems to be forgotten, as there is little that keeps his name alive. But he was such an illustrious Jamaican that his story should be remembered to inform the next generation of Jamaican tourism entrepreneurs, because it is inspirational."

THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

A decade of change

HOTELS AND tourism facilities in Jamaica and the rest of the Caribbean have come a long way in the last 10 years. So much so that a time traveller from the early 1990s, let alone one from any prior decade, would be surprised at what they might see and experience.

This is particularly the case in relation to Jamaica's North Coast, but also to an extent in Kingston as well.

This is largely because successive governments working with investors have recognised the central place that tourism has in the economy and the consequential need to improve airports, roads, cruise ship ports and terminals and other tourism-related infrastructure, if visitor numbers are to increase and their contribution to the economy is to grow. Equally as important has been the acceptance by both the industry and government that new investments were required in hotels and attractions; that the overall product experience needed to be improved; that better branding and promotion using new media was required; that traditional feeder markets were not enough to enable long-term growth; and that airlift and promotional activity was required in new locations like Scandinavia, Russia and Brazil.

The clearest demonstration of how successful this policy has been is in the visible and dramatic changes that have taken place on the island's North Coast over the last 10 years.

Whether it is the renovation, extension and remodelling of the Sangster International, reportedly now the busiest in the Caribbean, or the more welcoming approach taken by its immigration and customs officers, the visitor arrival and departure experience has improved dramatically. Although there is still more to be done for those who take taxis, a drive eastwards towards Ocho Rios demonstrates how fundamental the product improvement has been. Whether it is the highway itself,

the Spanish hotels, the convention centre, the cruise port development at Falmouth, new attractions, or careful upgrades to beautiful historic properties like Half Moon, Jamaica and the industry have recognised and delivered change in a way that many other destinations in the region have not.

Moreover, the last decade has also seen dramatic improvements at the Norman Manley International airport in the shape of new modern business hotels being constructed in Kingston and the appearance of aspirational upscale properties such as GoldenEye on Oracabessa Bay.

The consequence is that not only is the island better prepared for the significant changes that are taking place in the way that travellers have come to view destinations, but Jamaica is coming to be seen as a 'hot' destination among higher spending North American and European visitors.

That said, there is much more to be done.

According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTTC), investment in the Caribbean tourism sector will continue to increase. In a category that includes hotels, attractions and infrastructural upgrades or other projects that support the industry, the WTTTC recently reported that it expects capital investment in the region's product tourism to rise by 5.5 per cent in 2014 from the US\$6 billion recorded in 2013 and then by 3.5 per cent per annum to US\$8.9 billion by 2024.

Against this background, the challenge for Jamaica is to assess the changing nature of demand, accept that the profile of visitors is changing radically, that they want much more than sun and beaches, and then to encourage newer facilities and investors that relate to longer-term market trends.

At one end of the spectrum, this probably means more upscale hotels with international branding and possibly casinos, and at the other, to focus on wellness, spa

facilities and relaxation in smaller upscale boutique hotels. It suggests the need to find a way to finance the upgrading of some of the island's tired older hotels, and it means encouraging greater investment in attractions, nature reserves, tourist railways, rural experiences, and paradoxically upscale shopping. It also suggests the need for a stronger debate about

“ The clearest demonstration of how successful this policy has been is in the visible and dramatic changes that have taken place on the island's North Coast over the last 10 years. ”

vernacular tourism: tourists' ability to experience and feel the real Jamaica in careful ways and in

small numbers that involve those in parts of the island where visitors are rare.



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HALF MOON RESORT

The Gleaner's managing director, Christopher Barnes (left), presents the Jamaica Best EP award to an elated Aram Zerunian, the general manager of Half Moon during The Gleaner's Hospitality Jamaica 10th anniversary awards, held at Montrgo Bay Convention Centre on October 25.



Jamaica's Best EP Hotel

Karrie Williams

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

OFTEN REFERRED to as the hotel *par excellence* on Jamaica's tourism landscape, the Half Moon, A Rock Resort certainly lived up to its reputation, being the sole hotel to take home two historic awards at the recent **Hospitality Jamaica 10th Anniversary Awards** gala.

Half Moon copped the award for Best European Plan (EP) Hotel, beating out the Round Hill Hotel and Jamaica Inn, who were the other two finalists. The resort also won for Best Eco/Sustainable Hotel at the awards ceremony which was held at the Montego Bay Convention Centre on October 25.

Though not new to accolades for its first-class hospitality service and amenities, Aram Zerunian, Half Moon's general manager, said that being honoured by **Hospitality Jamaica**, the only publication of its kind on the island, is truly a crowning moment for the resort, as this validates **Hospitality Jamaica's** commitment locally to service excellence.

"We are honoured to have been recognised as the Best EP resort in Jamaica. This affirms the work we have invested to continuously improve our product and the quality service

offered by the 800 men and women who work at Half Moon," Zerunian told **Hospitality Jamaica**.

But what does it mean to be awarded best EP Hotel? By definition, EP simply means that guest rates are based entirely on the room charge and no meals are included. Therefore, guests who choose to eat at an EP resort must pay for their meals separately. Not that this is something that would be the least bit problematic for the guests staying at the Half Moon. The resort offers a choice of four top-class restaurants, along with a number of bars which provide additional dining options.

DELECTABLE MEALS

Guests can choose from a combination of casual, *al fresco* and fine dining options at the Half Moon, where delectable meals are cooked up by a team of internationally trained and talented executive chefs, each specialising in a different cuisine.

All restaurants at Half Moon are located on the resort's exclusive beachfront compound, with the exception of the fine dining, Sugar Mill, which is situated on Half Moon's golf course and offers an international cuisine. The other restaurants

“Ninety per cent of Half Moon's restaurants produce is Jamaican
“We believe in supporting local farmers as we are convinced that we can only be as successful as the community within which we operate.”

are Sea Grape Terrace, which offers *al fresco* dining and a mixture of both local and international cuisine; Pepperpot, featuring exclusive local cuisine in a casual dining environment; and Il Giardino, which brings the flavours of Italy to life in an atmosphere of casual elegance.

Guests can also enjoy private dining in

their luxurious villas provided by the resort's assigned cooks and butlers.

Despite Half Moon's award-winning appeal, the resort has remained quintessentially Jamaican, as most of the products used in its restaurants are locally grown. Diandra Shand, marketing manager of the resort, told **Hospitality Jamaica** that supporting local farmers was a deliberate initiative taken to foster the well-being of community members.

"Ninety per cent of Half Moon's restaurants' produce is Jamaican," Shand said. "We believe in supporting local farmers as we are convinced that we can only be as successful as the community within which we operate."

The Half Moon resort sits on a sprawling 400-acre estate, boarded by the Caribbean Sea. Its repertoire of guests include three generations of the British royal family, namely Queen Elizabeth II, who visited twice; Prince Charles, who also visited twice; and most recently Prince Harry, who stayed at the resort in 2012.

A host of other celebrities, including Sheryl Lee Ralph, Tyler Perry, Eddie Murphy and Will Smith have also made this multi-award winning resort their favourite playground in Jamaica.



EAT. DRINK. CELEBRATE.

After the grand launch at the Jamaica Pegasus and the flurry of media activity, the time for the island's most anticipated dining out event is drawing nigh! There are tongues wagging everywhere, as Jamaicans review the tantalizing menus being offered by the island's restaurants. But it's not just the food that I am excited about, it's the cocktails! When did we get BOLD enough to have authentic French VSOP brandy being served up on the menus? Not to mention the FRESH fruity flavours from Finnish vodka cocktails?

This years event promises to be such a treat,
as we enjoy the fine foods and drinks that the chefs and bartenders have prepared for us to eat.

So why bother going to just one,
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Photography provided courtesy of Infuzion Inc.



Jamaica's Best All-Inclusive

Karrie Williams

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

THE LUXURIOUS Iberostar Grand, located in Rose Hall, St James, recently proved it was a leader in the local hospitality sector, copping the award for Best All-Inclusive at **The Gleaner's Hospitality Jamaica 10th Anniversary Awards** celebration.

Leading its counterparts in the industry, the hotel won over rival finalists Sandals Royal Caribbean, Jewel Dunn's River and Riu Tropical Bay to take home the prestigious award from the hospitality publication at an extravagant gala ceremony, held at the Montego Bay Convention Centre on October 25.

"We are aware that this award would not be possible without the unwavering support of our valued team members in product delivery. We are also truly honoured to be the winner in this category. Special thanks to the organisers, judges and everyone who voted for the Iberostar Grand Hotel Rose Hall," Philipp Hofer, director of operations, told **Hospitality Jamaica**.

The Iberostar Grand is in fact a paradise for discerning travellers. Sitting on approximately four acres of pristine beachfront lands, this hotel is a mixture of modern elegance and natural scenery. Its buildings are all constructed in the latest architectural designs,



A suite at the Iberostar Grand.

concierge service is provided for everyone.

In addition, there is delicious cuisine to suit almost every palate, offered through four specialty restaurants serving Japanese, Italian, and local cuisine. Dining options vary among casual or fine dining. And there is 24-hour room service available to guests for their own private dining pleasure.

Marketing manager of the hotel, Tamika Higgins-Baker, could not help but gush to **Hospitality Jamaica** about the hotel's standard of quality service.

"The ladies and gentlemen that work at Iberostar Grand Hotel Rose Hall go above and beyond the call of duty in ensuring a great experience for all visitors. Our amazing facilities are sure to please anyone in search of the world's finest vacation experience, where we are designed to pamper like never before," she said.

Guests will also be pleased that the Iberostar Grand has Wi-Fi throughout its property.

reflecting absolute style and grandeur.

A host of carefully landscaped flowers and palm trees forms the basis for its natural appeal. And to complement its 295 all-suite guest rooms, the hotel provides a dazzling list of amenities to further enhance a vacation experience.

There are a total of four

swimming pools, one of which includes a swim-up bar; along with three additional bars. And when it comes to pampering of their guests, this adults-only hotel is second to none. To say guests are treated as major celebrities is only putting it mildly. Whereas some hotels opt for guests to be independent, at the Iberostar, personalised butler and

The Management and Staff of



Western Hospitality Institute

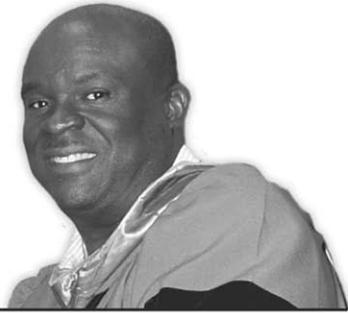
wish to congratulate our

Founding President & CEO

DR. CECIL CORNWALL

for having won

The Gleaner's Hospitality Jamaica HOSPITALITY PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR AWARD



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- ❖ Our Students Producing The Top Tourism Research Proposals (2011 & 2012) at the UTECH/University of Delaware -USA, International Student Inaugural International Tourism Research Conference & Competition

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CECIL CORNWALL

Tourism Personality of the Year

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES, building bridges of success, **The Gleaner's Hospitality Jamaica** Hospitality Personality of the Year, Dr Cecil Cornwall, selflessly continues to raise the bar of Jamaican tourism product.

Dr Cornwall's life revolves around a passion to get youngsters who have been marginalised by society and make them well-rounded professionals in Jamaica's tourism industry.

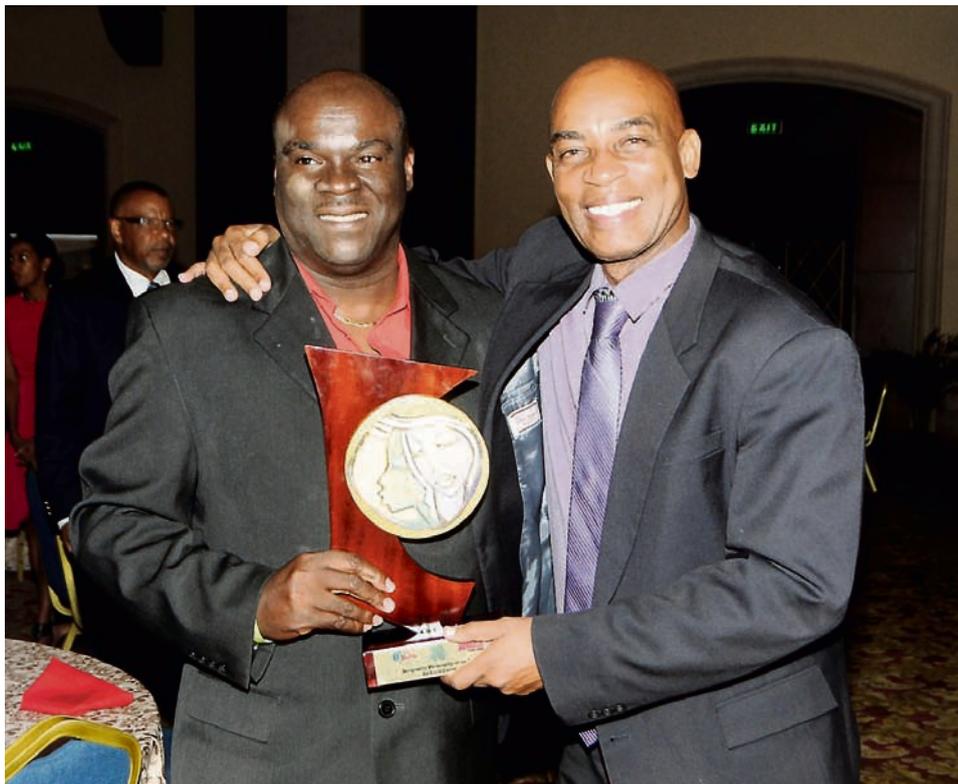
He has been living, breathing and exuding this passion for more than two decades, starting at the Western School of Cake Decorating, Pastry Making and International & Creative Cooking in September 1988. Cornwall single-handedly taught the foundation courses of cooking, baking and cake decorating, based on the skills he learnt at the St Elizabeth Technical High School and on the job.

"The idea came as result of relocating to Montego Bay where I found need for an institution, and skills in the areas of cooking and cake decoration," Cornwall said. "It was an opportunity and an indelible impact to community."

The institution, which started off at the Montego Bay High School, offered short training courses and was welcomed by the community. "I am indebted to Mrs Barbara Smith, former principal of Montego Bay High,



Hospitality Personality of the Year, Dr Cecil Cornwall (right), accepts the Ken Kennedy Award from Director of Tourism Paul Pennicook.



Dr Cecil Cornwall (left) displays his Hospitality Personality of the Year award while posing for the camera with Sandals Resorts International's Ian Spencer.

who gave me encouragement regardless of the obstacles that we faced," he said.

OPENING DOORS

As he was addressing a need, Cornwall opened doors of his institution to all those who did not have the required qualifications to get them a tertiary education. It is his belief that to build an effective, trained and qualified workforce, one needs proper vision and mentoring.

"I am targeting 60 per cent of the students who have been marginalised," Cornwall said with passion and conviction in his voice.

And the greatest testimonial and satisfaction, he said, came from Dr Carolyn Hayle, who said, "Western Hospitality Institute (WHI) needs to be commended for the fact that it has taken so many at-risk youth off the streets."

Cornwall, though modest about his achievements, said that he continues to work towards providing quality hospitality education and takes pride in the fact that WHI is the only private institution in Jamaica offering such training.

But this road to success has not been a bed of roses as he struggles to keep the institution

afloat. "The major challenge is finance," Cornwall informed. "Last year, we had to write off \$6 millions as bad debt, as students could not pay their tuition."

"Though the Government recognises and appreciates our endeavours, we are not getting enough encouragement and help from them," he said. "We are giving service of educating the country, but have struggled financially for the last 20 years, that is disheartening and a cause of concern."

"We are striving to give quality education," he said, "All we are looking is for a place to house the institution."

But the roadblocks have given Cornwall, who was awarded the Power 106 Radio Pioneer Business Leader of the Week in November 2008, the conviction and fire to build WHI from strength to strength; the institution has now expanded to Mandeville and Ocho Rios, which will be starting off later in the month.

On National Heroes Day, Dr Cornwall was awarded the Sam Sharpe Award by the St James Parish Council, and days later the **Hospitality Jamaica 10th Anniversary, Hospitality Personality of the Year** award.

Jamaica's Best Small Hotel

Claudia Gardner

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

NEGRI'S RONDEL Village kept the Capital of Casual in the spotlight at the Gleaner's Hospitality Jamaica's 10th Anniversary Award's at the Montego Bay Convention Centre on October 25, copping top honours as Jamaica's Best Small Hotel.

A still-beaming owner, Carolyn Wright, said the award, which is now prominently displayed at the resort's front desk, was a crowning moment for the resort. She said the award came as a surprise on the night of the event and added that the property's staff members were crucial to its success over the years.

"First thing I did Monday morning when I came in was put something on the website (about the award) and sent out thank yous to all who had supported us," she said during an interview with **Hospitality Jamaica** at the resort on Tuesday. "We knew we were nominated, but we didn't know we had won. Recognition is always good."

Approximately 40 per cent of the Norman Manley Boulevard-based hotel's guests are repeaters, a testament to the quality of service offered there.

"I would say it's probably the hands-on approach," co-owner John Wright said. "One of the things that we have is that it is a family business and all the members of the family actually work in the business. We don't just oversee; we actually physically work. We try to ensure that we deliver what we advertise, so that we have a good guest relationship; good repeat business."

"The guests are always able to meet the owners – which is a big plus – and often we have dinner with them, so they know us personally. We take a lot of their

comments seriously; we ask them what can we do better; what they think we could do to improve, and we take those on board and we carry out the improvements and each time they return, they see something new. We continuously upgrade," he added.

The family-run boutique hotel is no stranger to awards, though, having copped the EXIM Bank/Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association Small Hotel of the Year Award in June 2008, the Ministry



A Rondel Village beachfront villa living room.



A whirlpool bath at Rondel Village.

of Tourism's Achievement Award for Environmental Stewardship in 2000. In 2011, co-owner Carolyn Wright was awarded the National Commercial Bank's Women in Business Award, where she copped both regional and national awards.

The hotel has also been bestowed with the TripAdvisor Certificate of excellence for three consecutive years (2012-2014); as well as the Travellife Silver Award for 2013 to 2015 for practising sustainable tourism; and the Expedia award Insiders Select 2014, where it was ranked eighth of more than 600 top hotels of its

kind in the world.

Rondel Village's facilities include a restaurant and bar, two swimming pools, an internet café, two Jacuzzis and a spa and salon. In addition, the services available include room service offers.

Rondel offers spacious one, two and three-bedroom villas, each with its own kitchens and private whirlpool spas; beachfront rooms, garden rooms and superior rooms. It also has on site a full-service spa offering massage therapy, facial treatments, body treatments, wedding packages, beauty salon services, a heated plunge pool and a sauna.



Director of Tourism Paul Pennicook poses with winners of the Best Small Hotel Award Carolyn Wright and her brother, John Wright, of Rondel Village in Negril.



A bedroom at Rondel Village.

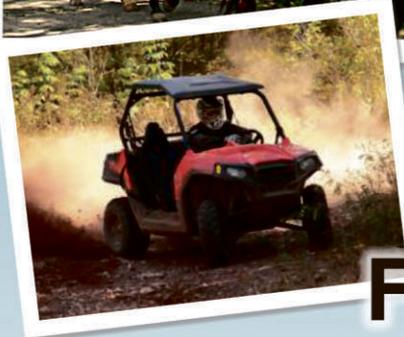
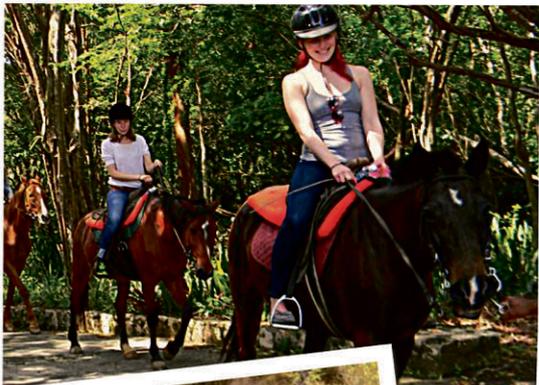
PROSPECT

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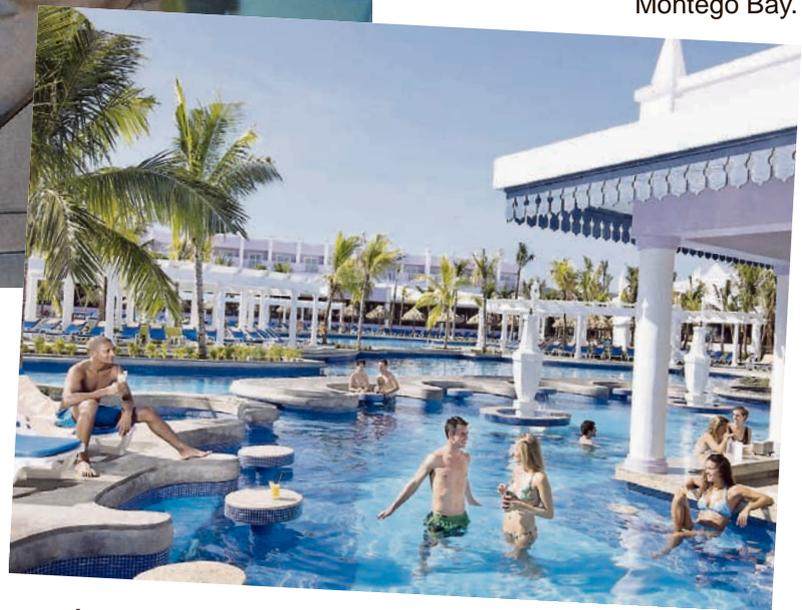


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RIU Montego Bay's director of sales, Angella Gray-Bennett (centre), and general manager, Frank Sonderr (right), accept the Best in Entertainment award at the Hospitality Jamaica Awards from Dr David Lowe, chief revenue officer, Caribbean Producers Jamaica.

BELOW: Riu Montego Bay.



Jamaica's Best Entertainment Resort

Adrian Frater
Hospitality Jamaica Writer

WHILE MOST visitors are lured to Jamaica by the beautiful advertising brochure showcasing sea, sand and sun on arrival, it is almost a given that they will invariably be captured by the island's exotic cultural heritage, which is primarily displayed through entertainment, especially music.

One property that has captured the essence of displaying this delectable taste of Jamaica's rich culture is Riu Montego Bay, one of the many luxurious Spanish hotels that have taken root in the island. It was, therefore, no surprise when the property copped the coveted Best Entertainment award at the recent **Gleaner Hospitality Jamaica 10th Anniversary Awards Gala**.

Held in collaboration with the Jamaica Tourist Board, the award has been described as a big honour for the company, said the resort chain's director of sales, Angella Gray-Bennett, "especially for the

whole entertainment staff at RIU hotels in Jamaica and all over the world. Our goal is to entertain our customers the best way possible and this award proves that we are doing just that".

According to Gray-Bennett, winning the **Hospitality Jamaica** award was not by chance, but was the end product of the due diligence which is put into planning what is offered to visitors, backed up by the meticulous training of the entertainment staff, which is 95 per cent Jamaican.

"In planning our entertainment programmes, we do 100 per cent of the necessary steps to provide the greatest satisfaction of our guests, for example: we study each destination we are based, what kind of guests we have, their ages and nationalities, among other pertinent information," noted Gray-Bennett. "Once we have all this information, we create a specific entertainment programme and then we are able to supply the required product."

Cognisant of Jamaica's rich cultural heritage which has

“ In planning our entertainment programmes, we do 100 per cent of the necessary steps to provide the greatest satisfaction of our guests, for example: we study each destination we are based, what kind of guests we have, their ages and nationalities, among other pertinent information. ”

spawned the growth and global power of iconic musical superstars like Bob Marley, Jimmy Cliff and Burning Spear, Riu Montego ensures that guests are exposed to the island's rich entertainment tradition through its various stages of evolution.

"We know about the richness of the culture of Jamaica, so we try to adapt it to our entertainment programmes with classes of local dance, staging shows with folk and musical history of Jamaica, groups of mento, local reggae bands and

singers," the director of sales noted. "Our entertainment package is based on three different programmes held at various times between morning, afternoon and evening. The first programme is focused on sports, the second is 100 per cent recreational, and the third relates to socio-cultural topics."

"We all put these into practice based on local and/or theme nights/shows (theatre, pool, beach and/or terrace), to the delight of adults and children," she added.

While Riu Montego Bay's Spanish roots remain obvious, when it comes to entertainment, the Jamaican flavour is quite solid, thanks to the vast number of locals on the entertainment staff.

"Our entertainment staff is 95 per cent local and the training is based on RIU official standards ... our training is in-house and everything is monitored directly by our entertainment director," stated Gray-Bennett.

One asset of Riu Montego Bay's entertainment is its much-vaunted mammoth state-of-the-art amphitheatre, which is arguably the biggest and best in the local hospitality sector.

"To work in an amphitheatre of these features gives our team a lot of freedom to develop better shows, but above all, is much better for our guests because they can enjoy a better view of the stage," noted Gray-Bennett.

A photograph of the Sugar Mill Restaurant at night. The restaurant is a stone building with a thatched roof, surrounded by lush tropical vegetation. The interior is visible through an open doorway, showing a dining table with white linens, glassware, and a candelabra. The exterior is also set with several round tables with white tablecloths and blue chairs, each with a glass of wine. The scene is illuminated by warm, ambient lighting, including a large candelabra and several smaller lights.

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ROUND HILL HOTEL

Best in Cuisine

ROUND HILL Hotel and Villas is continuing to expand its culinary programme with the unveiling of a new farm-to-table menu and a See, Touch and Taste Programme.

The ever-expanding on-property organic vegetable garden is producing more bounty supporting the menus of Executive Chef Martin Maginley.

The farm-to-table menu is available for guests to experience at The Grill restaurant every Thursday and Sunday night. Round Hill is taking the farm-to-table dinner to the next level, using only the freshest local ingredients. "Everything on the farm-to-table menu comes directly from the on-property garden or farmers in the community, including all aspects of the meal – from the meat to herbs and dressings for salads," said Maginley. "Small changes such as retiring balsamic vinaigrettes from the menu and replacing them with savoury herb vinaigrettes make a big difference. Overall, we are providing lighter meals, but with more flavours from the garden."

Highlights from the farm-to-table menu include Chigwell Farms jerked chicken,

guava-glazed slow-roasted rosemary pork loin from farmer Theodore Williams, steamed Pedro Banks snapper in parchment paper and home-made Scotch bonnet ice cream.

The Touch and Taste Programme allows its guests to pick vegetables directly from the on-property garden, which the chef then prepares as their next meal. Chef Maginley encourages guests to have a personal interaction with all the chefs on property, and the See, Touch and Taste Programme is one way to achieve hands-on interaction with both the culinary team and the food.

ABOUT THE GRILL AT ROUND HILL

The Grill at Round Hill is situated just above the main bar and terrace of Round Hill, offering beautiful ocean views and cool breezes. The decor is in keeping with the classic Round Hill aesthetic of relaxed luxury. With consulting direction from long-time resident Ralph Lauren, the whitewashed, simple decor is accented with local Jamaican art, adding a touch of the local and historic to the new restaurant space. The Grill features the only indoor pimento wood-fired

grill in Jamaica. The wood imparts a touch of smoky richness and is used in a mixture of torched wood for earthy flavour and sweet wood to round out the finish. The kitchen is open, allowing guests a glimpse of the live-action grill.

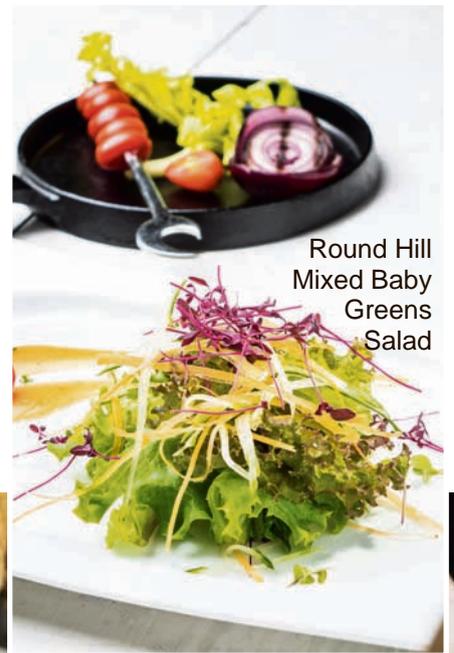
SUSTAINABLE LOCAL SOURCING

The philosophy of the food at Round Hill is simple, locally produced and sustainable. The focus is on sustainably grown and organic products. Much of the produce is sourced from the area surrounding Round Hill, or from the resort's very own organic garden. Peak growing seasons are November and December, and the menu currently features garden-grown Bibb lettuce, arugula, pole beans, cherry tomatoes, herbs including basil, thyme and mint, and other seasonal items.

Seafood and meat is as fresh and as local as possible, sourced from the Caribbean and nearby waters or farms in Jamaica. The most common fresh offerings are snapper, grouper, mahi mahi and local fresh Caribbean spiny lobster.



Round Hill Kebab



Round Hill Mixed Baby Greens Salad



Round Hill Jerk Chicken



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- High Tea • Catamaran • 4X4 Safari • Something for everyone!

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CHUKKA It's
 Time
 To Play!



MYSTIC MOUNTAIN

Where adventure and adrenaline rule

Karrie Williams

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

FOR THOSE seeking adventure in its most exhilarating form, the Mystic Mountain, located in Ocho Rios, St Ann, is the place of choice.

Situated on a 700-foot mountain top overlooking the Ocho Rios

seaside and pier, this attraction offers a world of fun in pristine surroundings, where its infrastructure is carefully built so as to leave minimum footprints on the environment.

It therefore came as little surprise that the Mystic Mountain was recently awarded Jamaica's Best



Guests enjoy an exhilarating ride on the Mystic Mountain water slide.

The Mystic Mountain restaurant offers delectable dining in a comfortable environment.



Attraction at the inaugural Gleaner Hospitality Jamaica 10th Anniversary Awards Gala, held at the Montego Bay Convention Centre. And there is no one happier than managing director, Max Patchen, who has witnessed the attraction grow in strength over the years.

"We are very proud and blessed to have won the award. It is a great achievement for the staff of Mystic Mountain to win this award, it speaks to their hard work and dedication that they bring to work every day," a delighted Patchen told **Hospitality Jamaica**.

So what exactly does the Mystic Mountain offer? The simple answer is everything, provided you have a love for adventure. In fact, the fun starts on arrival by way of getting to the mountain top, which is facilitated via a Sky Explorer. This aerial tram gives a thrilling ride from the base of the mountain, riding high above the tree tops, all the while experiencing breathtaking views of the Ocho Rios coastline. Cameras are positioned along the journey to capture the exciting moments of the ride.

At the top of the mountain is the Mystic Pavilion, where all other rides and attractions are housed. Once there, guests can treat themselves to a canopy joyride all the way back down to the bottom of the mountain. Done from 40 feet in the air, canyoning takes you on an exhilarating journey, gliding through the forest at high speed. Those new to canyoning need not be perturbed as expert guides are on hand to offer full support.

Of course, no experience of the Mystic Mountain can be complete without going on the unique and exciting Jamaica Bobsled ride. This entails a series of high-speed twists and turns through the mountain, giving the ultimate adrenaline rush. This ride also has cameras strategically positioned throughout the forest to capture the electrifying moments.

The Mystic Mountain also caters to those who prefer to have a softer

adventure experience. Other attractions including a water slide, ending into an infinity pool, provides the perfect amusement for both adults and children. There is also a newly built hummingbird garden which offers guests the unique experience of being up close and personal with Jamaica's national bird. Guests may also find touring the property enjoyable via a series of nature trails that come with informative story boards depicting Jamaica's cultural heritage, posted along their route.

A three-storey building replicating a Jamaican 19th Century railway station houses the Mystic Mountain restaurant, which opens daily and specialises in a mixture of local and international cuisine. There is also a gift shop which stocks a wide selection of unique hand crafted artefacts and Jamaica branded clothing items.

Rondel Village NEGRIL...

A fascinating beach front resort

RONDEL VILLAGE RECEIVES HOSPITALITY JAMAICA AWARD FOR BEST SMALL/ BOUTIQUE HOTEL



PRIVACY...TRANQUILITY...ROMANCE

The hotel was recognised nationally for their outstanding contribution to the Tourism sector. It is indeed an honour to have been selected for this prestigious award and we wish to thank our entire team at Rondel Village for their consistent dedication. We would also like to thank our guests, tour operators, travel agents and other business partners for their ongoing support of our hotel. We sincerely appreciate the recognition as we continue in our efforts to strive for excellence.

Take a journey to Jamaica's West Coast...NEGRIL

Rondel Village offers elegant accommodations amid lush tropical gardens. Family owned and operated exclusive hotel on Negril Beach with 56 rooms including unique octagonal shaped deluxe villas equipped with kitchens and private whirlpool spas, spacious beachside rooms and new garden rooms opposite the beach, bar, restaurant and new spa.

Facilities & Amenities include:

- Rondel Restaurant and Bar
- The Village Spa & Salon
- Wireless Internet/Internet café
- Air conditioning
- Two swimming pools
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- Hair dryers
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- Cable TV
- Refrigerator
- Two Jacuzzis

Enjoy the incomparable experience that is Rondel Village

CONTACT:

Rondel Village

Phone: 876-957-4413, Fax: 876-957-4915

Email: info@rondelvillage.com

Website: www.rondelvillage.com



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Congratulations Montego Bay Convention Centre ! - Voted Jamaica's Best Convention Facility



MBCC Board, SMG and The Urban Development Corporation
 Congratulates
 The Montego Bay Convention Centre
 On Winning The :
 2014 Hospitality Jamaica Award
 For Jamaica's Best Convention Facility



AN **SMG** MANAGED FACILITY



MONTEGO BAY CONVENTION CENTRE

Mark Titus

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

STILL BASKING in the glory of receiving the inaugural **Hospitality Jamaica Best Convention Facility Award** at **The Gleaner's Hospitality Jamaica 10th Anniversary Awards** held recently, Desmond Malcolm, general manager of the Urban Development Company (UDC) and Dittie Guise of the Montego Bay Convention Centre (MBCC) believe such recognition will serve as a catalyst for the facility to become the Caribbean's premier destination for meetings and conventions.

The prestigious award ceremony, held in collaboration with the Jamaica Tourist Board on October 25, saw players in the industry being recognised and rewarded for their contribution to tourism.

"The **Hospitality Jamaica Award** is one of the most prestigious titles in Jamaica, and we are truly honoured to receive this accolade. I am especially pleased that this recognition is based on our clients' feedback." Guise said of the recognition to her team, "I want to acknowledge the MBCC team for their tireless efforts in creating truly world-class customer experiences."

"We constantly strive to exceed our clients' expectations, and earning this kind of recognition makes all the hard work worthwhile." She continues, "These awards demonstrate our commitment to world-class standards in the management and operation of the Montego Bay Convention Centre."

MOMENT OF PRIDE

The MBCC was ranked as Jamaica's top convention facility over highly rated locations at the St Andrew-based Jamaica Pegasus hotel and the Half Moon Conference Centre in Montego Bay and complements MBCC's existing international World Travel Awards recognition as the Caribbean's Leading Meetings & Conference Centre for three consecutive years.

"We are delighted to receive the award, and this is indeed a moment of great pride for the Montego Bay Convention Centre. With the growing MICE (meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions) tourism sector in Jamaica, this award will further strengthen our efforts to position MBCC and Jamaica as the convention capital of the



The picturesque Montego Bay Convention Centre.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS



Nordia Craig (left), business development and marketing manager, presents the Best Convention Facility award to Desmond Malcolm, general manager the Urban Development Corporation and Dittie Guise, general manager, Montego Bay Convention Centre.

Caribbean," said Malcolm, whose organisation owns the facility.

Opened in April 2011, the MBCC features more than 50,000 square feet of exhibition space, more than 20,000 square feet for banquets, and more than 11,000 square feet of meeting space. Exhibition space can be divided into two halls, accommodating 4,000 people theatre-style. The flexible meeting space can be divided into nine meeting rooms, with the largest accommodating up to 700.

The picturesque Montego Bay landmark is a mere 15-minute drive from the city's international airport and was constructed in proximity to five major hotels, on approximately 9.3 hectares of land strategically positioned between the Half Moon Golf Course and Rose Hall Great House.

Some of the features on offer at the MBCC include event management, exhibitions, catering, special events packages, promotion – public relations and marketing support, technology and wedding packages.

The Convention Centre's 24-hour security system is second to none and with a 500-vehicle capacity parking lot and expertly manages vehicular traffic throughout the complex.



RAINFOREST SEAFOODS

Best Purveyor

Karrie Williams

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

THERE was a time, not so long ago, when Jamaicans could only purchase fish and other seafood products directly from local fishermen. However, that has now changed with the advent of Rainforest Seafoods, which supplies the region with fish and other exotic marine products.

Today, Rainforest Seafoods, headed by their innovative founder and chief executive officer, Brian Jardim, is the largest supplier of seafood products in the Caribbean. The company boasts a large number of retail outlets that supply local households and hotels with over 400 categories of quality products.

The company's primary packaging and distribution centre is headquartered in Montego Freeport in the tourism capital, Montego Bay, where its technologically advanced seafood processing plant and warehouse are said to be the best in the region.

VALUE-ADDED PRODUCTS

In line with this standard, Rainforest Seafoods also recently added a new 30,000-square foot, state-of-the-art processing plant in Kingston. This new facility is certified under the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point food-safety management system and is able to produce value-added products through smoking, brining, battering and breading, among other processing techniques.

The company's stellar contribution to the hospitality sector was recently solidified when it copped the coveted **Gleaner Hospitality Jamaica Best Purveyor** award, beating out its neighbour, Caribbean Producers Jamaica Limited.

"As you can imagine, we are absolutely delighted to have received this award," Bethany Young, public relations officer at Rainforest Seafoods told **Hospitality Jamaica**. "We work really hard and we strive for excellence in serving our customers in the hospitality sector, so we are grateful to **The Gleaner, Hospitality Jamaica** and



The Rainforest Seafoods compound.



Brian Jardim, CEO, Rainforest Seafoods.



The Rainforest Seafoods team (from left), Latoya Lindo, Bethany Young, Roger Lyn, Sashan Morris and Subrena Khama.

in particular, Janet Silvera, for this recognition."

"Moving forward, we want to continue to build relationships in the hospitality sector and we look forward to continue to improve our products and services," she added.

Fish, shrimp, conch, lobster, salt fish and pickled mackerel, which are all Jamaican favourites, are

among the delicacies coming out of Rainforest Seafoods. Recently, the company broke new ground when they started to supply the predatory lionfish, answering a directive by the Government to lessen the lionfish population.

Though the company sources its products from several countries including Asia, Chile and Canada,

they also depend on the home waters of the Caribbean for a large proportion of their supplies, including lobster, which is sourced primarily in Jamaican waters. Jamaican lobster is rated amongst the best tasting in the world.

Rainforest Seafoods offers custom-branded products for retail sale for select customers. In addition to its

retail outlets, the company's products can also be found in several supermarkets throughout the island.

The company has also ventured into other products including a variety of burgers and seasonings. They also operate three local restaurants which serve local cuisine with a blend of international choices.

Jamaica's Best Eco/Sustainable Resort



Chic outdoor dining at Half Moon.



Hotel Manager at Half Moon Shernett Crichton (right) accepts the Best Eco/Sustainable Tourism award from Gleaner Company Limited director, Winston Dear (left), while general manager, Aram Zerunian (second left), and Conroy Thompson share in the occasion.

Claudia Gardner

Hospitality Jamaica Writer:

MONTEGO BAY'S Half Moon has been long known for its environmental stewardship and sustainable tourism practices.

It therefore came as no surprise that it was nominated for, and later announced as, Jamaica's Best Eco/Sustainable Hotel at **The Gleaner's Hospitality Jamaica's 10th Anniversary** awards on October 25.

Over the years, the 400-acre property, which is now in its 60th year of operation, has dedicated much of its efforts and resources to integrating and adopting green initiatives within its operations, so much so that it has been recognition by Green Globe International, the world's premier environmental benchmarking and certification programme six years in a row.

All of Half Moon's departments are involved in the property's environmental preservation process. Among the initiatives which have been implemented by the property are a recycling/reuse programme in which old beach towels are converted to wash rags for cleaning and another where old linen is sent to the property's upholstery shop to



A bar at the Half Moon Resort.

make stuffed toys for its Anancy Children's Village.

In addition, from the administrative offices, shredded paper is used as padding for the transporting of craft items by guests back to their homeland, and are also sold to local funeral homes. Wood chips from the furniture shop is used by the Equestrian Centre as horse bedding, in land-

scaping and to make toys for local children's homes, while horse manure is used as fertiliser at the plant nursery.

RECYCLING ALL ROUND

From the kitchens of Half Moon, waste cooking oil is used in the manufacturing of poultry feed and waste auto oil in the manufacturing of bio-diesel. Old batteries are also

not left out of the equation, and are sent off property for recycling.

With respect to energy consumption, Half Moon recently recorded an approximately five per cent decrease in this area due primarily to a property-wide replacing of high-wattage light bulbs with low-energy bulbs. It also saved on potable water, using 130,000 gal-

lons a day of treated waste water to provide irrigation for the property.

The resort's guests are deeply involved in the property's green thrust. They are able to contribute to these programmes through conservation efforts with respect to water, electricity and chemical use. Under the Guest Dollar Donation Programme, its visitors have contributed more than \$8 million to environmental initiatives at the Montego Bay Marine Park Trust. Under the Pack for a Purpose Programme, guests are able to contribute school supplies to the neighbouring Barrett Town All-Age School.

Newly-weds are also encouraged to plant a seedling as well as donate their floral arrangements to local hospitals. Half Moon facilitates volunteerism programmes, allowing group participants to contribute to local charitable organisations either by donations or through hands-on work.

Half Moon also contributes tremendously to local agriculture with approximately 90 per cent of Half Moon's food being supplied by local providers. The wider Montego Bay community is also served through outreach programmes, including environmental projects such as an annual symposium and poster competition in recognition of Earth Day.

Congratulations Hospitality Jamaica on your 10th Anniversary



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ISLAND CAR RENTALS



Jamaica's Best Transportation

ISLAND CAR Rentals is the largest car rental company in Jamaica. The company serves its clients from a network of convenient locations islandwide. Its main branch and reservations centre is located in Kingston.

Additionally, Island Car Rentals has in-terminal facilities at both of the island's international airports – Norman Manley, in Kingston and Sangster International in Montego Bay.

The company, which began operations in April 1973, was named Best in Transportation by **The Gleaner's** tourism-trade publication at its inaugural 10th anniversary awards at the Montego Bay Convention Centre on October 25.

Having grown to a fleet exceeding 800 vehicles, this comes as no surprise to the organisation which boasts of having the best rates in the island with a wide variety of vehicles to chose from.

Not only a car rental company, Island Car Rentals rents buses and



operates as a destination management company.

"We rent buses, light commercial vehicles and provide islandwide tours. We also give a range of options to clients who do not wish to drive themselves. They can always take advantage of other ground transportation services. These include private

transfers which are prompt pick-ups without undue delay (using either a spacious sedan or 14- or 25-seater buses depending on the numbers in the group); day trips, again utilising our fleet of 14 or 25-seater buses, and executive chauffeur service with luxury super-saloon models," said the organisation which services both

locals and tourists.

With the overriding objective of providing quality service at uncompromising high standards, Island Car Rentals stays committed to assuring each and every client that it comes into contact with is taken care of.

Island offers the following services:

PRIVATE TRANSFERS

One-way or return, this is a great option if you would rather have the convenience and flexibility of having prearranged transport whether it is to or from any of the two international airports or between points anywhere on the island. Island Car Rentals caters to large or small groups as well as individuals.

CUSTOMISED TOURS

Visit popular attractions or go off the beaten track. Set your own itinerary and pace and we will take

you there. Tours can be arranged for any number of persons or even a lone sightseer.

VEHICLE AND DRIVER SERVICE

This service includes regular vehicle and driver service as well as VIP chauffeur services. Available for short or extended periods.

DAY TRIPS

Ideal for fun days, outings and other types of excursions where the driver stays with the group.

24-HOUR EMERGENCY ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE

You can always count on getting a personal response, not an automated machine, when you call at any time of day or night. We will come to you anywhere on the island. Toll-free access available. This service is free and is unmatched by any other local car rental company.



Where Great Taste
and Good Health
Go Together.
Naturally.

Make the most of your Round Hill getaway,
from enjoying haute cuisine featuring
the finest local ingredients to having a
transformative spa treatment. Escape to
understated elegance, in a Ralph Lauren-
designed oceanfront guest room, a private
villa suite or a luxury villa with a dedicated
staff. Do what comes naturally.

Visit Round Hill.



Happy 10th Anniversary Hospitality Jamaica



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TPDCo launches Tourism Essay Competition

IN A bid to stimulate discussion around issues affecting the tourism industry, the Tourism Product Development Company Ltd (TPDCo) will stage its 2014 Tourism Essay Competition. Among the objectives of the competition are to increase awareness of the importance of the industry to national development, encourage participation in the discussion of the issues affecting the industry; enhance the academic component of the school curriculum through collaboration with the Ministry of Education, improve the

attitudes of the target group to our domestic and international visitors while developing a service culture and to promote the all-inclusiveness of the industry.

The competition is now open to Jamaican nationals and there are two categories: a junior category for students between the ages of 13) and 17 and a category for seniors between the ages of 18 and 25.

According to executive director of the TPDCo, Dennis Hickey, "This competition is expected to stimulate youngsters not only in the

resort areas, but across Jamaica to think about the value of the industry, the importance of ensuring that our visitors have a great experience, see what value they can add to the industry and encourage families to discover Jamaica while vacationing at home in order to sample our product and retain well-needed foreign exchange."

EXCITING PRIZES

Industry players have been very generous in providing exciting



HICKEY

prizes which will give winners a chance to see some of what Jamaica has to offer as a vacation destination and to be a tourist in their own country. The prizes include family weekends from the Hilton Rose Hall Resort and Spa, Sunset Beach Resort Spa and Water Park, Beaches Resort, Iberostar Hotel, Jewel Runaway Bay, Grand Palladium, as well as a weekend for two at RIU Ocho Rios, a day pass for a family of four at Grand Bahia Principe and a day spent shadowing the general manager of that property.

Prizes have also been provided by some of the most exciting attractions across Jamaica – Chukka Adventures; Dolphin Cove; Mystic Mountain Adventure Tours; Black River Safari; YS Falls; Prospect Outback Adventures; Green Grotto Caves and Dunn's River Falls.

The Gleaner Company and ZIP 103-FM have also thrown their support behind the competition. There will also be individual cash prizes, winning plaques and a cash prize of \$50,000 for the winning school's hospitality programme.

The questions selected focus on important tourism-related issues, as follows:

For the juniors: 'Staycations allow us to explore the diversity of Jamaica's natural and cultural heritage. Why is it important for Jamaicans to experience the Jamaican tourism product?' For the seniors: 'Sometimes visitors feel harassed when interacting with providers of goods and services. How can we ensure that visitors have great experiences while conducting business?'

Persons wishing to enter the competition must fill out an entry form; send it along with proof of age and their essay to tpdcoessay@tpdco.org or contact 979-7987-8 or 968-3441, 968-8894 for further information. Entry forms are available online at

www.tpdco.org or at any of our offices in Kingston, Montego Bay, Ocho Rios and Mandeville. Essays will be judged on organisation and grammar, creativity, content, research, facts and analysis and must be submitted by latest November 21. The competition is endorsed by the Ministry of Education.

enter the **TOURISM ESSAY COMPETITION 2014** AND WIN BIG PRIZES

MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND ENTERTAINMENT
TOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT CO. LTD
TPDCo

All you have to do is write an essay on one of the following topics (in no less than 360 and no more than 500 words):

SENIORS 18-25
Sometimes visitors feel harassed when interacting with providers of goods and services – How can we ensure that visitors have great experiences while conducting business?

1st Prize
Weekend for family of 4 at Hilton Rose Hall Cash \$25,000.00 Sky Explorer & Bobsled Tour- Mystic Mountain Rain Forest Adventures for 2, Plaque, Wet & Dirty Tour from Prospect Adventure Tours for two

2nd Prize
Weekend for family of 4 Iberostar, Cash \$15,000.00 Segway & camel ride for 2 - Prospect Outback Adventures Admission for 4, to YS Falls and Chukka Caribbean YS Zipline Adventure for 2

3rd Prize
Day pass family of 4 at Bahia Principe & "Spend a Day" with the GM Cash \$10,000.00 Prospect Tours - Time Travelers Outback Adventure for two

JUNIORS 13-17
Staycations allow us to explore the diversity of Jamaica's natural and cultural heritage. Why is it important for Jamaicans to experience the Jamaican tourism product?

1st Prize
Weekend for family of 4, at Sunset Beach Resort & Spa, Sky Explorer & Bobsled Tour - Mystic Mountain Rain Forest Adventures for family of 4 and Cash \$25,000.00, Plaque, Dolphin Cove Admission and swim with dolphins for two, J Charles Swaby's - Black River Safari tour for 6

2nd Prize
Weekend for 4 at Beaches, Cash \$15,000.00, Dolphin Cove Admission & Dolphin Kiss for 2, Admission for 4, to YS Falls and Chukka Caribbean YS Zipline Adventure for 2

3rd Prize
Weekend for family of 4 Jewel Resort & Spa, Cash \$10,000.00, Admission to Dolphin Cove and admission for a family of 5 to Green Grotto Caves

Teacher's Prize-Weekend for 2 at Riu Resorts

SCHOOL PRIZE \$50,000.00 FOR - SCHOOL HOSPITALITY PROGRAMME AND DUNNS RIVER FALLS ADMISSION FOR 6 FOR ALL WINNERS

SUBMIT YOUR NAME, SCHOOL IF APPLICABLE, PROOF OF AGE, TELEPHONE NUMBER, EMAIL ADDRESS AND DOUBLE SPACED, TYPE WRITTEN ESSAY TO tourismessay@tpdco.org BY **NOVEMBER 21, 2014**. PLEASE CONTACT 979-7987-8 OR 968-3441 FOR MORE DETAILS

Winning essays will be published in the Gleaner's Youth Link magazine. Winners will be selected based on: Organization & Grammar; Creativity; Content; Research, Facts & Analysis. TPDCo reserves the right to confirm information in the essay and amend accordingly for publication.

The TPDCo Tourism Essay Competition is endorsed by the Ministry of Education.

Seminar to focus on boosting tourism's impact

AN IMPRESSIVE cadre of local, regional and international tourism stakeholders will converge in Montego Bay this month to share ideas, examine best practices and discuss strategies for advancing tourism at the Tourism Outlook Seminar 2014.

The annual Tourism Outlook Seminar will take place from November 20 to 21 at the Montego Bay Convention Centre, St James under the theme, Tourism: Enhancing Social and Economic Impact. The two-day forum will be hosted by the Ministry of Tourism and Entertainment, the Jamaica Tourist Board and the Tourism Enhancement Fund in association with the United Nations World Tourism Organisation.

Preparations are in high gear for the greatly anticipated event, which will feature contributions from several local, regional and international experts. It will focus on areas such as enhancing tourism linkages for social and economic impact, crisis management, creating resonance in the vacation experience, developing the local memorabilia sector, and opportunities for partnership with the entertainment and creative industries.

Registration for the seminar is already open. Persons are being encouraged to register online and access additional information at www.visitjamaica.com/tourismseminar.

JAMAICA

TOURIST BOARD

Congratulates

**HOSPITALITY
JAMAICA**

on 10 outstanding years of service
to destination Jamaica.

Kudos to all 11 Awardees on being
selected the "Best" in their category.
The awards are well deserved.



JAMAICA
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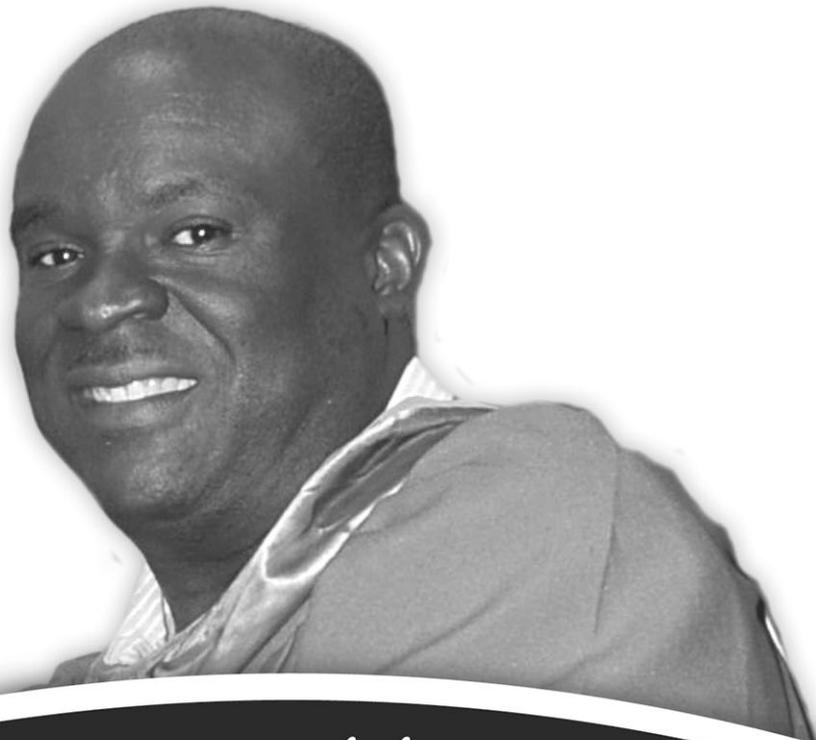


The Ministry of Education

congratulates

Dr. Cecil Cornwall

Chairman, Career Advancement Programme (CAP)
Technical Working Committee



on receiving

**The Gleaner's Hospitality Jamaica
Hospitality Personality
of the Year Award**



A travel agent (left) was one of the lucky winners at the event. She is shown receiving a complimentary stay from Maurice Bryan, sales and reservation manager at The Courleigh Hotel and Suites and The Knutsford Court Hotel. Racquel Queensborough, a Jamaica Tourist Board, Canada representative, shares in the presentation.

JTB focuses on bridal market in Canada

DESTINATION JAMAICA will be on show during Canada's upcoming 2015 season of wedding shows. The Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) in Canada will participate in 10 consumer bridal shows, exposing nearly 100,000 brides and grooms to information about Jamaica as a choice wedding and honeymoon destination.

Thanks to the diversity of options and rich cultural experiences offered on the island, Jamaica continues to be ranked one of the top places for weddings and honeymoons, having been selected Favourite Honeymoon Destination by Canadian travel agents. The JTB also offers an online concierge service, 'Wendy', which helps couples when planning their dream destination wedding on the island.

MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE

"Jamaica's distinct flavours and island vibe ensure that couples have a memorable experience that will last a lifetime," said Paul Pennicook, Jamaica's director of tourism. "Our hotels offer unparalleled wedding planning services and experiences that continue to promote the island's reputation as one of the top places for weddings and honeymoons." He added, "Destination Jamaica ticks

all the desired boxes for the discerning bride and groom. Add to that our year-round tropical weather and unmatched sceneries that offer the couples fantastic diversity as they embark on their new journey."

Upcoming 2015 Canadian Bridal Shows:

1. Let's Get Married Bridal Show, January 3-4, Montreal, 10,000 consumers
2. Canada's Bridal Show, January 3-5, Toronto, 18,000 consumers
3. The Wedding Fair, January 11-12, Vancouver, 5,000 consumers
4. Bingeman Wedding Trends Bridal Show, January 11-12, Kitchener, 8,000 consumers
5. Total Wedding Show, January 16-18, Toronto, 12,000 consumers
6. National Bridal Show, January 23-25, Toronto, 12,000 consumers
7. National Bridal Show, January 24-25, Burlington, 3,000 consumers
8. Perfect Wedding Show, February 8, Mississauga, 1,500 consumers
9. Suhaag Wedding Show, TBC February, Toronto, 15,000 consumers
10. Romantic Planet Destination Wedding Show, March 6, Toronto, 400 consumers.

- Contributed



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Good food, friendly people, and family fun at SeaGarden Beach Resort! Enjoy an all-inclusive family resort in Montego Bay at a fantastic price. All-inclusive means that meals, snacks, beverages, taxes and gratuities are included in one low rate. Complimentary wifi is available throughout the resort. At SeaGarden Beach Resort, kids sharing the room, stay for free**. Book now and save!

Local Toll Free 1.888.429.5015

*All rates are per person, per night, based on a minimum stay of two nights or more in a standard guest room, double occupancy, only valid for residents of Jamaica, and is subject to availability. Single occupancy rates start at US\$149. The double occupancy rate of US \$169 applies to a limited selection of standard rooms for the month of November 2014 and is subject to availability. Blackout periods may apply. Upgraded accommodations and adding a guest to the room are options that will incur an additional cost. **The "Kids Free" promotion is available to Jamaican residents during the month of November 2014 and applies to children under the age of 12 sharing the room with two or more adults. This promotion is available on new bookings only and can be discontinued at any time. This offer cannot be combined with any other discounts and is non-transferable.

EXCLUSIVE OFFER*
FOR ONE MONTH ONLY
 Jamaican residents rate starting from **US \$84**
PER PERSON, PER NIGHT
KIDS STAY FREE!
 NOVEMBER 2014



Our sincere thanks to the sponsors of our inaugural

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Saturday, October 25, 2014

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