

Jamaica

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



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Overview

Jamaica is a mountainous island in the Caribbean Sea, best known worldwide as the birthplace of reggae music and the Rastafari movement. Green interior hills rise sharply from a coastline that mixes famous white-sand beaches with quiet fishing villages. The island has been independent from Britain since 1962, and its food, music, and language remain distinctly its own.

Jamaica suits travelers who want more than a beach chair, although it delivers that well too. Resort towns along the north coast offer all-inclusive comfort and easy swimming, while the Blue Mountains and the south coast reward those who venture inland or off the main tourist strip. Music fans can follow the story of reggae from Kingston's recording studios to the hills where *Bob Marley* grew up.

When to visit

Jamaica is hot and humid all year, and the sea is warm enough for swimming in every month. The driest and most popular months are December to April, the peak season on the north coast. Rain picks up from May. The hurricane season runs from June to November, and September and October are usually the wettest months. The week between Emancipation Day and Independence Day in early August is the island's biggest celebration.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Good	28° / 30°	23° / 21°	Oppressive humidity
February	Good	28° / 30°	23° / 22°	Oppressive humidity · UV 9 (Very high)
March	Good	29° / 31°	23° / 22°	Oppressive humidity · UV 10 (Very high)
April	Fair	30° / 32°	24° / 23°	Oppressive humidity · UV 11 (Extreme)
May	Poor	30° / 32°	25° / 24°	19 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · UV 10 (Very high)
June	Poor	30° / 32°	26° / 25°	18 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · UV 10 (Very high)
July	Poor	31° / 32°	26° / 25°	17 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · UV 10 (Very high)
August	Poor	31° / 32° Feels like 34°	26° / 25°	21 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · UV 11 (Extreme)
September	Poor	30° / 32° Feels like 34°	26° / 25°	23 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · UV 10 (Very high)
October	Poor	30° / 31° Feels like 33°	26° / 25°	24 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · UV 8 (Very high)
November	Fair	29° / 30°	25° / 23°	16 rainy days · Oppressive humidity
December	Good	28° / 30°	24° / 22°	Oppressive humidity

Climate data: NASA POWER (MERRA-2); NASA POWER + Copernicus ERA5-Land and ERA5; NASA POWER + Copernicus ERA5-Land · 1996–2025

Money & payments

The Jamaican dollar (JMD) is the official currency, but US dollars are accepted almost everywhere tourists go — resorts, tour operators, and taxis often quote prices in USD. Carry some JMD cash for route taxis, small local restaurants, and rural markets, where card payment is not always possible.

Currency

CURRENCY	1 JMD	1 JMD
JMD	**0.005631 EUR**	**0.006237 USD**
	1 EUR = 177.6 JMD	1 USD = 160.33 JMD

Cards accepted in major venues

ATMs are common in Kingston, Montego Bay, and other main towns, but scarce in rural areas — withdraw what you need before heading inland. When an ATM or card machine asks you to choose a currency, pick Jamaican dollars: paying in USD usually applies a worse exchange rate.

Typical costs

Rough prices in touristic areas, per person

Hotel (double room, per night) mid-range hotel, double room per night	12,000 – 28,000 JMD €68 – €158
Dinner (mid-range restaurant) two courses at a sit-down restaurant, per person	2,500 – 5,500 JMD €14 – €31
Inexpensive meal jerk stand or local cook shop	600 – 1,200 JMD €3 – €7
Local beer	350 – 600 JMD €2 – €3
Coffee	400 – 800 JMD €2 – €5
Water 500 ml bottle	150 – 300 JMD €1 – €2
Transit ticket route taxi or local bus fare	150 – 250 JMD €1 – €1
Taxi (per km)	150 – 250 JMD €1 – €1

Tipping

Tipping is customary in restaurants and for tour guides, though many all-inclusive resorts already add a service charge to the bill — check before tipping again. Round up taxi fares rather than calculating a percentage. Hotel porters and housekeeping appreciate a small daily cash tip.

Restaurant 10-15% if not already included	Expected
Bar round up	Optional
Taxi round up	Optional
Hotel small daily cash tip for housekeeping/porters	Optional
Tour guide USD 5-10 per day	Expected

Electricity

Jamaica uses Type A/B plugs at roughly 110-120 V / 50 Hz, the same style as North America. Travelers from Europe and most of the rest of the world will need a plug adapter and, for devices that aren't dual-voltage, a voltage converter.

ELECTRICITY



Type A

ELECTRICITY



Type B

116 V · 50 Hz

Language

English is Jamaica's official language, so getting by is easy for most visitors. Everyday conversation between Jamaicans often switches into Jamaican Patois, an English-based Creole with its own rhythm and vocabulary — don't worry if you can't follow it, standard English works everywhere tourists go. Picking up a phrase or two of Patois, like *wah gwaan* (what's going on) or *irie* (all good), is a friendly icebreaker.

Useful phrases

Hello	Wah gwaan
Thank you	Tenk yuh
Yes	Ya mon
No	No, mon
Goodbye	Likkle more
Cheers	Big up!
Help	Mi need help

Staying connected

Prepaid SIM and eSIM plans from Digicel or FLOW, Jamaica's two main carriers, are sold at the airport and in phone shops islandwide; bring your passport, since ID is required to register a SIM. Coverage is strong along the coast and in the main towns, but can thin out in the Blue Mountains and other rural interior roads.

Safety & emergencies

Most visits to Jamaica's resort areas and tourist zones are trouble-free, but petty theft and scams targeting tourists do happen — keep an eye on belongings on beaches and avoid walking alone at night outside well-lit resort and hotel areas. Certain inner-city neighborhoods in Kingston, Montego Bay, and Spanish Town see higher crime and are best avoided by visitors; ask your hotel which areas to skip.

Swim only at beaches with a lifeguard or a visible local crowd, since currents can be strong on parts of the north and west coasts. Buying drugs from unlicensed street vendors is illegal and risky — try Jamaica's legal cannabis products only through a licensed dispensary, and never carry any of it out of the country.

Emergency numbers

POLICE	AMBULANCE	FIRE BRIGADE
911	110	110

Health

Tap water in Kingston and most resort towns is treated, though some travelers prefer bottled water in rural areas or after heavy rain. Pharmacies are easy to find in every town and stock many familiar over-the-counter brands; bring prescription medication in its original packaging.

Mosquito-borne illness risk is low but not zero — use repellent in the evenings, especially away from the coast. No special vaccinations are required for most travelers, though routine vaccines should be up to date, and a yellow fever certificate is needed only if arriving from a country with risk of transmission.

Visas & entry

Citizens of the US, Canada, the UK, most EU countries, and many other nations can enter Jamaica visa-free for stays of up to 30 or 90 days, depending on nationality, with a passport valid for the length of the stay and a return or onward ticket. Travelers from countries without visa-free access need to apply for a visa in advance through a Jamaican embassy or consulate.

> Visa and entry requirements change frequently. Verify current requirements with the official immigration authority or your country's embassy before travel.

Etiquette

Greetings matter — a warm "good morning" or "good afternoon" before starting a conversation, even a quick question to a stranger, is expected and appreciated. Dress is casual almost everywhere, but

swimwear should stay at the beach or pool; cover up when entering shops, churches, or towns.

Photographing people, especially in local neighborhoods, without asking first is considered rude. Bargaining is normal at craft markets and with street vendors, but not in shops with marked prices. Rastafari is a genuine religious and cultural movement, not a costume — treat dreadlocks, the colors, and cannabis use within that context with respect rather than as a photo prop.

Holidays & opening hours

Public holidays can close banks, government offices, and many shops for the day, especially in smaller towns — supermarkets and pharmacies in tourist areas usually stay open. Independence Day (August 6) follows close behind Emancipation Day (August 1), and the stretch between them is one of the biggest celebration periods on the island, with events across the country.

Public holidays

Jan 1	New Year's Day
May 23	Labour Day
Aug 1	Emancipation Day
Aug 6	Independence Day
Oct 16	National Heroes Day
Dec 25	Christmas Day
Dec 26	St. Stephen's Day
movable — Feb/Mar	Ash Wednesday
movable — Mar/Apr	Easter Monday
movable — Mar/Apr	Good Friday

Most shops and businesses keep shorter hours on Sundays, and some close entirely outside the main resort towns.

Getting around

- **By air**: Small domestic carriers fly between Kingston's Tinson Pen Aerodrome (not the international Norman Manley airport) and Montego Bay's Sangster International Airport. Scheduled service has stopped and restarted several times, so check what is running before you plan around it.
- **By coach**: Private coach operators run air-conditioned intercity buses between Kingston, Montego Bay, Ocho Rios, Negril, and other main towns, bookable online in advance.
- **By route taxi**: Shared taxis, recognizable by red license plates, run set routes between and within towns; agree on the fare before getting in, since they rarely use meters.
- **By local bus**: The state-run JUTC network covers greater Kingston; elsewhere, minibuses and route taxis fill the same role.

Jamaica drives on the left, a holdover from British rule — worth knowing before planning a self-drive trip between towns.

Driving

- **Speed limits**: 50 km/h in towns, 80 km/h on rural main roads, up to 110 km/h on the Highway 2000 tollways.
- **Driving side**: Jamaica drives on the left, a legacy of British colonial rule — most rental cars are already set up for it.
- **Key rules**: Seatbelts are mandatory in every seat, and using a handheld phone while driving is illegal — both are actively enforced at police checkpoints.
- **Tolls**: Highway 2000, the tollway linking Kingston, Mandeville, and Ocho Rios, charges per-segment tolls at staffed booths — cash (JMD) and card are both accepted, with no vignette to buy in advance.
- **Parking**: Metered street parking exists in Kingston's and Montego Bay's downtown areas; elsewhere, hotels and attractions have their own free or paid lots.
- **Fuel**: Stations are staffed — an attendant pumps the fuel — and card payment is standard in towns. Ask for "Regular" or "Premium" unleaded, or "Diesel."

URBAN	RURAL	MOTORWAY
50 km/h	80 km/h	110 km/h

PETROL	DIESEL
Regular, Premium	Diesel

Drive on the left

No motorway vignette needed

Highway 2000 toll roads (the Kingston-Ocho Rios and Kingston-Mandeville/Williamsfield corridors) charge per-segment tolls at staffed booths, payable in cash (JMD) or by card — no advance vignette purchase is needed.

Food & drink

Breakfast often means ackee and saltfish with fried dumpling or festival; lunch is the day's main meal for many Jamaicans, taken at a local "cook shop" over stewed or curried meat with rice and peas. Dinner tends to be similar or lighter, and eating out at a casual sit-down restaurant is common in the evenings in tourist towns.

Jerk — chicken or pork marinated in scotch bonnet pepper and allspice, then slow-cooked over pimento wood — is the dish most associated with the island, alongside curry goat, oxtail, and escovitch fish (fried and topped with pickled vegetables). Bammy, a flatbread made from grated cassava, is a common side.

Beef or vegetable patties are the go-to snack, sold everywhere from bakeries to gas stations, often paired with coco bread. Sorrel, a spiced red drink made from hibiscus flowers, appears around Christmas, while Blue Mountain coffee, grown in the hills above Kingston, and Red Stripe beer are the island's best-known exports to try locally.

What to eat & drink

BREAKFAST

Ackee and Saltfish
Jamaica's national dish: sauteed ackee fruit with salted cod, onions, and peppers.

LUNCH

Rice and Peas
Rice cooked with kidney beans or gungo peas in coconut milk, a staple side across the island.

SNACKS & STREET FOOD

Beef Patty · Jamaican patty
Flaky, turmeric-colored pastry filled with spiced ground beef or other fillings.

Festival
Sweet, fried cornmeal dumplings often served alongside fried fish.

Bammy
Flatbread made from grated cassava, traditionally served with fried fish.

DRINKS

Sorrel
A spiced red drink made from sorrel (hibiscus) flowers, traditional at Christmas.

Blue Mountain Coffee
Coffee grown in the cool hills above Kingston, among the most sought-after in the world.

Red Stripe
Jamaica's best-known lager beer.

SIGNATURE DISHES

Jerk Chicken
Chicken marinated in scotch bonnet pepper and allspice, slow-cooked over pimento wood.

Curry Goat
Goat meat stewed in a spiced curry sauce, usually served with rice and peas.

Jamaica – Plan Your Trip

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Where to explore

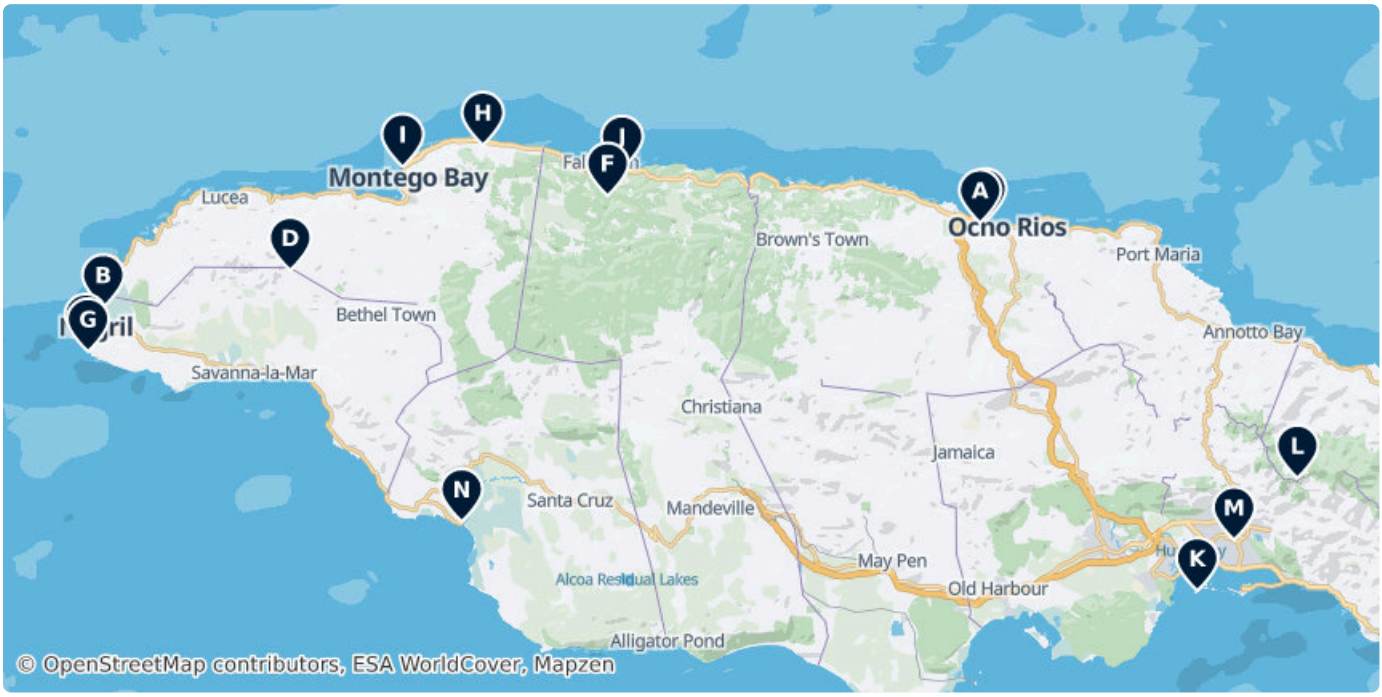
Kingston, the capital, is where reggae was born. Bob Marley Museum and Trench Town Culture Yard trace the music's roots, and the National Gallery of Jamaica covers Jamaican art from the Taino period onward. Kingston is also the gateway to the Blue Mountains, where coffee farms and hiking trails climb into cooler air, and to the 17th-century ruins of Port Royal and Fort Charles on the harbor.

The north coast holds Jamaica's classic resort towns. Montego Bay has the island's main international airport, beaches like Doctors Cave Beach, and the plantation-era Rose Hall Great House (1770). Ocho Rios is built around Dunn's River Falls and Park, a terraced waterfall visitors climb straight through the river, and is also a popular cruise stop. Falmouth, another cruise port, keeps a well-preserved Georgian town center. Negril, on the western tip, is known for Seven Mile Beach and its cliffside sunset bars.

For a quieter trip, Port Antonio on the wetter east coast has the Blue Lagoon and far fewer visitors. Mandeville sits in cool highland hills away from the coast, and Spanish Town preserves the island's Spanish and British colonial capital, before Kingston took over that role.

Jamaica Essentials

Jamaica's diverse geography spans from the 2,256-meter Blue Mountain Peak to the bioluminescent Glistening Waters of the Luminous Lagoon. This collection highlights the terraced limestone of Dunn's River Falls and the historic Georgian architecture of Rose Hall Great House. In Kingston, Port Royal preserves the island's 17th-century maritime history, while Emancipation Park stands as a modern cultural landmark. Coastal highlights include the white sands of Negril's Seven Mile Beach, the rugged Negril Cliffs, and the twenty-one natural cascades found along the Mayfield River.





A Dunn's River Falls and Park

Dunn's River Falls is a famous waterfall near Ocho Rios, Jamaica.

JM (18.41550, -77.13773)

Mo–Su 08:30–16:30

dunnsriverfallsja.com, 1 876 974 5944



B Seven Mile Beach

Pleasure-seekers and sun lovers flock here to enjoy the clear water and great atmosphere.

Jamaica (18.30538, -78.33931)



C Dolphin Cove

Dolphin Cove Jamaica is a marine attraction in Jamaica at which guests can swim and interact with dolphins, sharks, and stingrays in their...

Ocho Rios to Saint Ann's Bay Road, Jamaica (18.41716, -77.13044)

Mo–Su 11:00–17:00

dolphincovejamaica.com, +1 876 974 5335



D Mayfield Falls

Mayfield Falls is a waterfall in Jamaica that comprises twenty one widely spaced small cascades on the Mayfield River, a tributary of the...

Jamaica (18.35355, -78.08301)

mayfieldfalls.com, +1 876 610 8612



E Rick's Cafe

The bar has become legendary due to its spectacular location and breath-taking sunsets. The food is average but the atmosphere well worth it.

West End Road, JMAAA99, Negril, Jamaica (18.25413, -78.36343)

rickscafejamaica.com, +1 876 957 0380

F Martha Brae River

The Martha Brae River is a river of Jamaica. It is located in Trelawny on the north coast of Jamaica, towards the western edge, about 6...

Jamaica (18.45038, -77.64811)

jamaicarafting.com, +1 876 940 6398



G Negril Cliffs

These cliffs were featured in the James Bond movie Thunderball. No wonder - the views are really stunning!

Jamaica (18.24798, -78.36028)



H Rose Hall Great House (1770)

Rose Hall is a Jamaican Georgian plantation house now run as a historic house museum.

Jamaica (18.51635, -77.81922)

rosehall.com, +1 876 767 3425



I Doctors Cave Beach

This stretch of fine sand is said to be the best beach in Montego Bay. If you don't mind busy atmosphere and occasional crowds, go for it.

Saint James, Jamaica (18.48812, -77.92902)

doctorscavebathingclub.com, +1 876 952 2566

J Glistening Waters Luminous Lagoon

If you've never seen any bioluminescent effects, you will love this lagoon. A fascinating experience.

Jamaica (18.48543, -77.62828)

glisteningwaters.com



K Port Royal

Port Royal is a town located at the end of the Palisadoes, at the mouth of Kingston Harbour, in southeastern Jamaica.

Jamaica (17.93667, -76.84013)



L Blue Mountains

The Blue Mountains are the longest mountain range in Jamaica. They include the island's highest point, Blue Mountain Peak, at 2256 m.

Jamaica (18.08336, -76.70306)



M Emancipation Park

Brand new park built to promote the ideas of liberation, democracy and equality. Amazing public space full of greenery, statues and music.

Saint Andrew, Jamaica (18.00284, -76.78968)

emancipationpark.org.jm, +1 876 926 6312



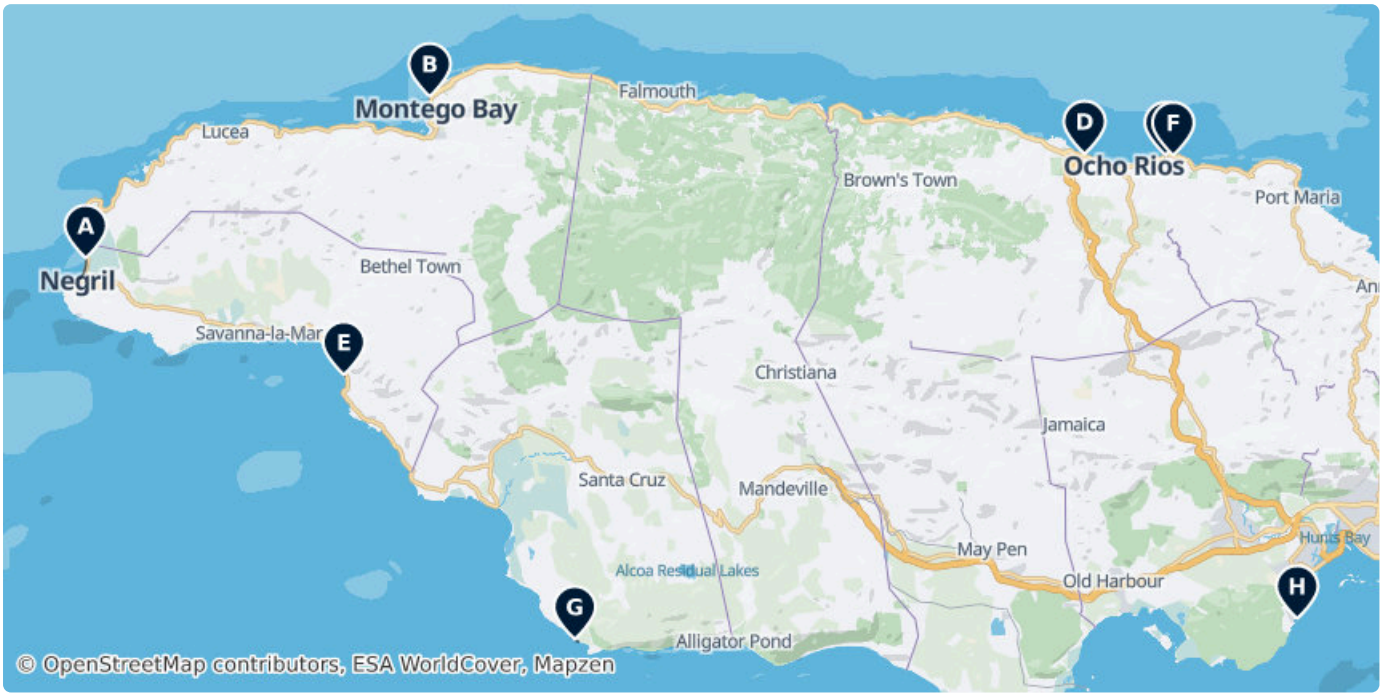
N Black River

Black River is the capital of St. Elizabeth Parish, in southwestern Jamaica.

Jamaica (18.02661, -77.84808)

Best Beaches

Jamaica's coastline features varied terrain, from the seven-mile stretch of white sand in Negril to the mineral-rich waters of Doctors Cave in Montego Bay. This list highlights Crab Key Beach, a filming site for the James Bond movie Dr. No, and the Blue Flag-certified Bluefields Beach. Cultural landmarks include Hellshire Beach, known for its traditional seafood stalls, and the dark-sand fishing shores of Calabash Bay. Snorkeling opportunities are found at the coral reefs near Ocho Rios and the protected waters of the south coast.





A Seven Mile Beach

Pleasure-seekers and sun lovers flock here to enjoy the clear water and great atmosphere.

Jamaica (18.30538, -78.33931)



B Doctors Cave Beach

This stretch of fine sand is said to be the best beach in Montego Bay. If you don't mind busy atmosphere and occasional crowds, go for it.

Saint James, Jamaica (18.48812, -77.92902)

doctorscavebathingclub.com, +1 876 952 2566



C Reggae Beach

Reggae Beach was a 250-acre property which was located in Jamaica, midway between Ocho Rios and Oracabessa.

Jamaica (18.42178, -77.05102)

D Crab Key Beach

Fans of James Bond should definitely pay a visit to the beach where Bond killed Dr. No and blew his island into pieces.

Jamaica (18.42319, -77.14772)

E Bluefields Beach

A secluded paradise listed by the Blue Flag. Snorkelers will be amazed by the variety of underwater life.

Jamaica (18.17320, -78.03138)

Mo–Su 09:00–17:00



F coral reef

Sandy beach and coral reef located near Ocho Rios.

Jamaica (18.42165, -77.04187)

G Callabash Bay Beach

Dark-sand beach and fishing cove located in Treasure Beach on the south coast.

Jamaica (17.87339, -77.75598)

H Hellshire Beach

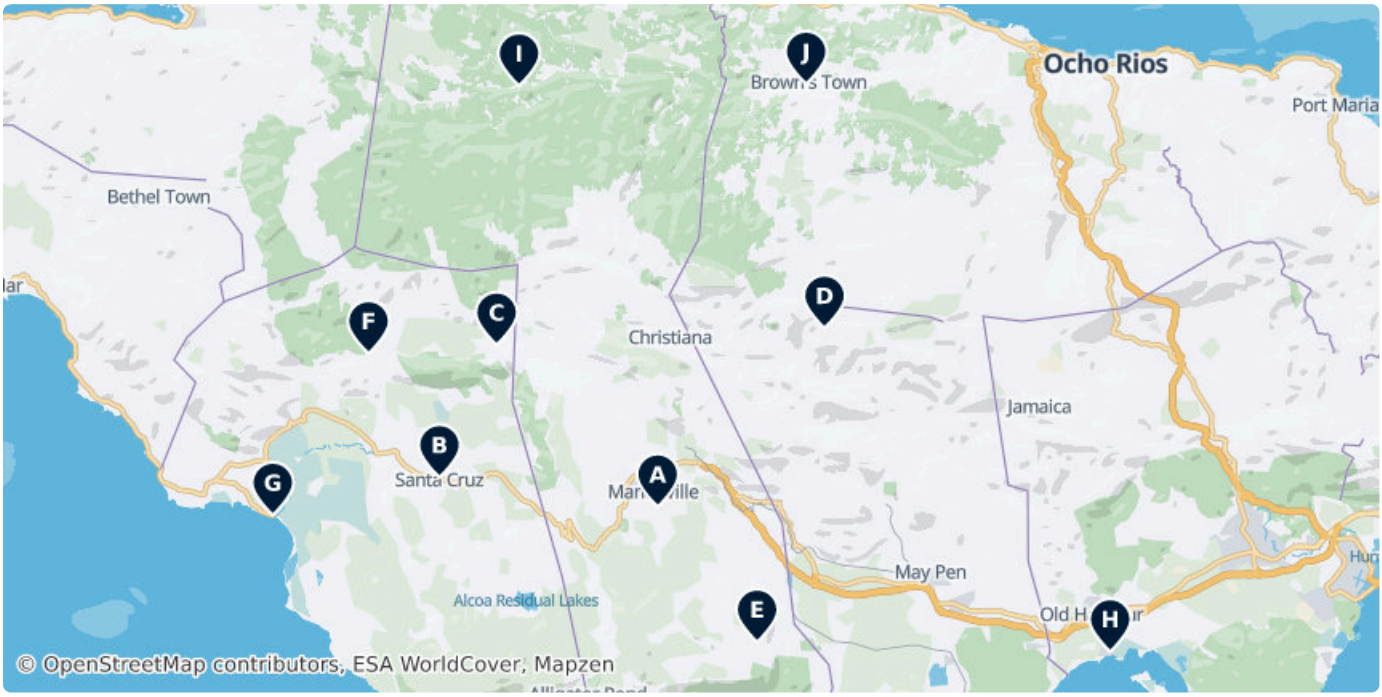
Public beach near Kingston famous for its traditional fried fish and bammy food stalls.

Jamaica (17.89681, -76.89404)

Mo–Su Open 24/7

Historic Churches & Cathedrals

This collection features a cross-section of Jamaica's ecclesiastical heritage, spanning Catholic, Anglican, Baptist, and Methodist traditions. Highlights include the 18th-century St John Parish Church in Black River and the historic St Dorothy's Anglican Church, one of the island's oldest structures. From the prominent Saint Paul of the Cross Cathedral in Mandeville to the abolitionist history tied to Waldensia Baptist Church, these sites showcase diverse architectural styles and the long-standing influence of various Christian denominations on the island's cultural landscape.



A Saint Paul of the Cross Cathedral

The seat of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Mandeville, featuring contemporary ecclesiastical architecture.

Manchester, Jamaica (18.03106, -77.50350)

B Saint Croix Catholic Church

Roman Catholic parish church located in Santa Cruz.

(18.05612, -77.69967)

mandevillediocese.org, +876 966-9659

C Saint Gabriel Catholic Church

Roman Catholic place of worship situated in Balaclava.

Maggotty to Accompong Road, Jamaica (18.16928, -77.64830)

mandevillediocese.org, (876)963-2202

D Saint Benedict Catholic Church

Roman Catholic church serving the community in the Christiana area.

(Unnamed Road), Jamaica (18.18364, -77.35344)

mandevillediocese.org

E Holy Cross Catholic Church

Roman Catholic church located in May Pen.

Jamaica (17.91546, -77.41409)

mandevillediocese.org

F Holy Spirit Catholic Church

Roman Catholic place of worship located in Maggotty.

Ys to maggotty Road, Jamaica (18.16188, -77.76341)

mandevillediocese.org

G St John Parish Church (1770)

An Anglican church in Black River showcasing colonial-era architecture and serving as a historical landmark for the town.

High Street, Jamaica (18.02400, -77.84943)

H St Dorothy's Anglican Church

Dating back to the late 17th century, this is one of Jamaica's oldest Anglican structures, constructed with red brick and housing historic memorial tablets.

(17.90727, -77.09668)

I Waldensia Baptist Church

Historic Baptist church in Trelawny with strong ties to the 19th-century abolitionist movement and missionary William Knibb.

(Unnamed Road), Jamaica (18.39037, -77.62814)

J Wesley Methodist Church

Methodist place of worship located in the historic market town of Brown's Town.

Stand Fast Road, Jamaica (18.39186, -77.36996)

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