



Kingston

Discover the allure of Jamaica's trendsetting, culture-rich capital city. A vibrant **art scene**, thriving **waterfront** and diverse **culinary landscape** make Kingston an exciting destination.

BY JANEEN JOHNSON

The city has been riding the wave of a financial boom. In 2019, Jamaica Stock Exchange attracted international attention when Bloomberg hailed Jamaica as "Home of the World's Best-Performing Stock Market." New high-rise buildings and luxury car dealerships like Porsche, Audi and BMW are visible signs of the economic prosperity.

A growing number of new business hotels are raising the city's profile as a prime destination for corporate travellers. June 2019 saw the opening of the 220-room AC Marriott Kingston Hotel. The energy efficient lodging is equipped with electric car-charging stations and a 600-person capacity event space.

Courtyard by Marriott Kingston overlooks Emancipation Park, one of the city's finest recreational spaces. The private media pods and modern meeting facilities make it an attractive option for business travellers.

The R Hotel is Kingston's first extended corporate stay hotel. Rooms are outfitted with kitchenettes and modern amenities appropriate for those on longer trips.



From top: Sean Murray; Courtesy of AC Hotel Kingston



STAY COOL: Properties in Kingston, like the AC Hotel, exude the kind of soulful vibe that has come to characterise the city around the world.



ROOM WITH A VIEW: The Blue Mountains are scenic and incredibly productive.



REGAL FARE: Kingston has established itself as the culinary capital in a very competitive field.

But it's not all business at the Spanish Court Hotel. The chic décor and cabana pool bar make it perfect for romantic getaways, and their Rojo Restaurant is lauded for its international gourmet fare.

Epicureans will delight in Kingston's cosmopolitan dining experience. The food scene is blossoming with

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*It promises world-class experiences
 with an authentic Jamaican flavour.*

internationally inspired cuisine, food trucks and festivals. Jamaica Food and Drink Festival is a week-long celebration of fine foods and spirits.

Heritage site Devon House is the island's first gastronomy centre. Most famous for its ice cream, the landmark

attraction houses eateries like The Steak House and Opa Greek Restaurant, as well.

The Blue Mountain Culinary Trail is comprised of 15 restaurants and attractions scattered across the coffee farming region. Experience the panoramic views with delectable cuisine at EITS Café or Blue Ridge Restaurant. Strawberry Hill Hotel delivers a fine-dining experience served with the best sunset views the city has to offer.

The Culinary Trail also encompasses coffee farm tours at Craighton Estate, Mavis Bank Coffee Factory and Old Tavern Coffee Estate. Learn cultivation processes and trade secrets; then sample one of the world's best coffees. Clifton Mount Estate offers the ultimate seed-to-cup experience through its coffee franchise, Café Blue.

You can catch a view of the coffee farms whilst on an outing with Blue Mountain Bicycle Tours. The cycling tour incorporates scenic mountain views, along with secret waterfalls and a delicious Jamaican brunch.

Kingston's vibrant creative industry spans multiple genres. Visitors can experience Jamaican culture through dance, theatre, visual arts and music. In 2015, Kingston became a designated UNESCO Creative City of Music, a testament to its



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FOR THE WIN: Keep it casual and social. Kingston has a wealth of options for diners.

Calendar of Events

January

Carnival in Jamaica Series Begins
Jamaica Junior Theatre

February

Bob Marley Celebrations
Reggae Month
Xaymaca
Sagcor Sigma Corporate Run
Jamaica Rum Festival

March

Jamaica Blue Mountain
Coffee Festival
Kingston City Marathon
ISSA Boys and Girls Championship
Earth Hour Concert

April

Actor Boy Awards
International Jazz Day
Expo Jamaica
Carnival in Jamaica Series Closes

May

Liguanea Art Festival
Jamaica International Invitational
Athletic Meet (JIIM)
Jamaica Observer Table Talk Food
Awards

June

Racers Grand Prix
Jamaica Food, Beverage, Hospitality
Expo
Chicken 5k & 7k Run
Miss Universe Jamaica

July

International Reggae Day
58th Season of Dance
Miss Jamaica World
Pali-Pro Surf Contest
The Seville Emancipation Jubilee

August

Jamaica Festival Queen
Coronations
Jamaica Festival
SPF Weekend

October

Peter Tosh Birthday Celebration
Jamaica Food & Drink Festival

November

Restaurant Week
Collection MODA

December

Kingston Music Week
Harbour Fest and Fireworks

influence on global music. The birthplace of reggae, dancehall and ska, Kingston has the most recording studios per square capita in the world.

Visit the Bob Marley Museum for an insightful glimpse into the Reggae icon's life. For the complete Marley Experience, also see the Tuff Gong Studio and his Trench Town home.

The Peter Tosh Museum highlights the music and legacy of a founding member of The Wailers. Tosh was a prolific writer and talented musician whose accomplishments were often overshadowed by his political activism.

The National Gallery is the largest public art museum in the English-speaking Caribbean. Exhibits feature major works of emerging and established Jamaican artists. On the last Sunday of the month, the gallery hosts activities ranging from live performances to short films.

This coincides with the Kingston Creative Art Walk. The walk incorporates the activities at the National Gallery, as well as other events in the area. Expect

craft markets, architectural tours and anything celebrating the arts. Kingston Creative is a movement dedicated to promoting the city as the creative capital of the Caribbean.

The murals at Fleet Street in Parade Gardens attract many international visitors, too. Life Yard, a grassroots organisation spearheads art and agriculture based projects to boost eco-tourism in the once marginalised community. The organisation has recently launched Empress Circle, a female empowerment program.

Tapestry Collection by Hilton will debut its first Caribbean hotel on the booming Waterfront. The ROK Hotel will feature a restaurant, bar and café, further elevating the downtown dining experience.

Based at the University of the West Indies (UWI) Mona campus, 138 Student Living provides short-term rental to promote what they have branded as "Urban Tourism." Stay includes transportation, meals and a range of tours.



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CULTURE CAPITAL: From museums and murals to music videos being filmed, Kingston has an unstoppable artistic vibe.

“One of our many goals, is the establishing of our niche product both locally and overseas,” says Floyd Brown, 138’s Business Development Manager. “Especially [for] growing markets in Asia and Eastern Europe.”

Since the development of the Victoria Pier, Kingston’s Waterfront has become one of the hottest spots in the city. The pier houses a suite of eateries including Ribbiz, Gloria’s Seafood and Devon House I-Scream.

Jamaica was the only Caribbean country with a UNESCO World Heritage List nomination in 2019. Port Royal was submitted for consideration as a cultural site. The quiet fishing village was once a flourishing port and hotspot for pirates. An earthquake in 1692 destroyed four of five major forts. Over 30 acres of the town was submerged under water. Today, you can explore the historic town and tour Fort Charles, the only remaining fort there. Check out the museum with its displays of recovered artefacts.

Enjoy oceanfront dining at the Grand Port Royal Hotel. Next door at Y-Knot Bar you can catch a fishing boat to Lime Cay, a popular beach spot for Kingstonians. Plans are in motion for

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cruise ship arrivals in the historic town. Kingston has the best nightlife on the island, from street parties to trendy bars and clubs that stay open until 5 a.m. Cru Bar, Regency Bar and Reggae Mill are a few top spots. For live music, check out Janga’s Sound Bar, The Haven at Hillcrest or The Pallet. Sunday nights at Dub Club on Skyline Drive are a hit with Roots Reggae lovers.

Mas Camp is a popular venue for 90s dance parties and soca fetes during the carnival season. Concerts and All Inclusive parties pull large crowds especially when international recording artistes are featured. For information on upcoming events visit topeventsinjamaica.com.

The Edward Seaga Highway connects the city to the island’s North Coast. Kingston is within a 3-hour drive from Montego Bay and only 90 minutes from Ocho Rios. Knutsford Express provides a convenient and reliable bus service from both cities. Explore the town at your own pace by renting a car from Island Car Rentals. The company has offices at both major airports on the island.

Dining Options

Global culinary influences make for some of Kingston’s best dining experiences.

Chillin’ Restaurant

231 Old Hope Road, Kingston
876-630-7183

Authentic Jamaican cuisine is served within the historic Hope Zoo in Kingston.

Goddard Catering Group

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International Airport
876-924-8131

With locations throughout the Caribbean, Goddard Catering Group can help with social events, weddings, business conferences or any other manner of gathering.

Opa Greek Restaurant

Devon House
26 Hope Rd, Kingston
876-631-2000

Kingston’s only Greek restaurant is located in Devon House.

Rojo Restaurant

Spanish Court Hotel
1 St. Lucia Ave.
876-926-0000

Stylish Rojo embraces Asian-style and Jamaican traditions, infusing their cuisine with rich flavours.

So So Seafood

4 Chelsea Ave., Kingston 10
876-968-2397

SoSo Seafood Bar & Grill offers patrons sumptuous food and an exclusive lounge experience.

The Strawberry Hill Restaurant

Liguanea, Kingston 6
876-944-8400 / 619-7872

Taste all the richness of the island’s multi-cultural heritage with the restaurant’s succulent New Jamaican cuisine served at a wraparound veranda that features stunning mountain views.