

QUICK THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO!



JAMAICA[®]

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ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

All Canadian citizens visiting Jamaica are encouraged to travel with a valid Canadian passport to gain entry to the island. All Permanent Residents require their PR cards along with a valid passport from their country of birth.

GETTING THERE & GETTING AROUND

Daily flights arrive from major cities worldwide at our two international airports: the Donald Sangster International Airport in Montego Bay and the Norman Manley International Airport in Kingston. If you are in a hurry to get to your favourite beach or resort, a network of domestic air shuttles awaits. Taxis, buses and rental vehicles are also available. Taxis in Jamaica are not metered so be sure to agree/negotiate a set fare before starting your journey. Most hotels have set fares posted in their lobby areas.

BANKS/CURRENCY

Licensed cambio centres and commercial banks are accessible in all resort areas. Official currency exchange rates vary daily, so it's advisable to shop around for the best rate before converting your cash. Most Jamaican ATMs accept international bank cards with Visa, MasterCard, Cirrus and Plus logos. Banks also give credit card advances, change traveller's cheques among other financial services.

CLIMATE

Jamaica enjoys a tropical climate and temperature ranges from 20 degrees Celsius to 32 degrees Celsius. The northeast trade winds and mountain breezes keep the temperature pleasant year round.

Though we're known for our warmth and sunshine, the island sees two rainy seasons from May to June and September to November.

Will it rain during your holiday? If it does, don't worry. Most times, the short tropical showers provide a welcome break from the afternoon heat – just look at it as liquid sunshine, not rain!

COMMUNICATIONS

Jamaica is well connected to the rest of the world. Direct international telephone service operates in all areas 24 hours a day, and telephone operators will gladly facilitate collect, third-party or credit card calls. International faxes, cables and telegrams can be sent from most hotels and post offices. E-mail and Internet access is available too, usually at hotels and parish libraries, but also at local Internet cafes. There are three daily national newspapers and five weekend newspapers, all available island-wide. Some hotels and gift shops receive the international editions of The New York Times, TIME, The Economist and the London Times.

DRIVING

The most important thing to remember when driving in Jamaica is that here, we drive on the LEFT, although some flexibility is required to avoid collisions with pedestrians, cows, goats, chickens and other domestic animals. The speed limit is 50 kmph (30 mph) in built-up areas, and 80 kmph (50 mph) on highways. All drivers are required to carry a valid licence. Jamaica recognizes valid International Driver's Licences, but Canadians may use their licence for up to three months per visit. Car rental is available in most major towns and cities, and usually, clients must be no less than 25 years old to rent.

SAFETY & SECURITY

There are 8 visitor information booths on the island, conveniently located in Montego Bay, Ocho Rios and Negril. Each one has radio contact with the police and with the Jamaica Tourist Board offices. Security personnel and front desk managers at hotels are also able to offer assistance in an emergency. Jamaica Tourist Board offices have personnel on hand to offer assistance when needed. Our offices are located in Montego Bay and Kingston. Remember, when you are away from home, no matter where you go, it makes good sense to take extra care to ensure that your journey is safe and pleasant.

ELECTRICITY

The electrical supply in Jamaica is 110 volts/50 cycles standard, and electrical appliances use plugs that are two-pronged and flat (such as those used in the United States and Canada). If your appliances do not use 110 volts or flat two-pronged plugs, bring the requisite adaptors and converters with you. Although adaptors and converters are available in Jamaica, they may not be easy to come by. Most laptop computers have built-in converters and can be used with an adaptor. If the idea of lugging all this equipment around seems daunting, leave it behind. Most hotels have hair dryers, alarm

clocks, radios and clothes irons available, and in any case you probably won't need many appliances. You are, after all, on holiday.

LANGUAGE

The official language of Jamaica is English, although most of us converse using 'Patois', a dialect as colourful and intriguing as our Jamaican personalities. It may take some time for you to become accustomed to it. When that happens, though, you'll have fun trying the local expressions.

TIME ZONE

Jamaica falls within the Eastern Time Zone (UTC/GMT -5 Hours) and does NOT observe Daylight Savings Time. At times in Jamaica, however, it seems as if we don't observe any time at all, so for the least amount of stress on your vacation, you may want to think about leaving your watch behind! At approximately 18 degrees north of the equator, the island falls within the tropics, and as such does not experience drastic seasonal changes in sunrise and sunset times. Year-round, the island averages between 11.5 and 12.5 hours of sunlight per day – always enough time to do everything, or never enough for anything!

WATER

"Xamayca" is the name that the first Jamaicans, the Tainos, gave to this country. It means "Land of Wood and Water", and for good reason; Jamaica has hundreds of spring and rivers, both above and under ground. Over the years, we have developed extensive water treatment and supply systems islandwide, so all drinking water in Jamaica is purified and filtered by modern methods. Our water is safe for you to drink, clean your teeth, bathe and wash clothing in. If you choose not to drink the water, rest assured; there are many brands of Jamaican spring water that meet or exceed the highest international standards, available at most shops and restaurants.



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