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The Adventurous Life

TRAVEL

*PLAN A FAMILY-FRIENDLY
VACATION TO JAMAICA*

A DREAM TRIP TO EGYPT

LOCAL SERVICES

*WHY WELL-TRAINED DOGS
MAKE GREAT
TRAVEL COMPANIONS*



APRIL 2023
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Photography: courtesy of Zillman Weddings & Travel



No Worries, Mon!

“Come back to the vibe that comes alive in Jamaica,” says the Jamaica Tourist Board on their website. Sounds nice, right? Especially after the past few years we’ve just experienced. And, in the spirit of wanting everything to be less complicated (and less dreary) post-COVID, wouldn’t it be nice to book a direct flight to said paradise?

No worries, mon! Now you can!

As of February 2023, Frontier Airlines offers the *only* direct flights (to date) from Denver to Montego Bay, Jamaica. So, whether you want to relax and soak up the sun or find adventure, your Jamaican paradise is just a little over 5 hours away. And the price is right too! As of March 2023, direct roundtrip flights from DEN to MJB average \$350 per ticket.

Sound terrific, right? But I bet you have questions.

I spoke with Parker native Nicole Zillman of Zillman Weddings & Travel about traveling to Jamaica. And though she’s a local girl, Nicole is also a “Top Jamaica Specialist,” as designated by the Jamaica Tourist Board, and a top agent with the Sandals and Beaches Resorts. In addition, Nicole is a destination wedding specialist. So, who better to

spill the (Jamaican Blue Mountain Coffee) beans about the “no worries” lifestyle of Jamaica?

Here, Nicole shares her top tips for planning your trip and how *best* to enjoy Jamaica’s attractions once you’re there.

PLANNING YOUR TRIP

When planning your trip to Jamaica, remember the two most important requirements for entering and exiting the country are your roundtrip (or onward) plane ticket and your passport. Make sure everything is in order, and then check and re-check that you have both before heading to the airport. You won’t be able to leave the U.S. without them.

If you’re a little apprehensive about leaving the U.S. and making your way through immigration, customs, and security on your own, Nicole suggests signing up for Club Mobay, a multi-award-winning airport concierge and lounge service managed by VIP Attractions. For under \$100 per roundtrip ticket (though a la carte services are available too), Mobay offers

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CHILLIN’ (OR THRILLIN’) IN JAMAICA
IS NOW ONE NONSTOP FLIGHT AWAY



personalized service. First, they meet you at your arrival gate. Then, they escort you quickly through immigration, customs, and security. From there, they take you straight to their premium lounge, where a range of comforts await you as you wait for your hotel/resort transfer.

Now that you have your ticket, passport, and you're signed up for Mobay, now what? "Buy insurance!" urges Nicole. "If I could get all of my clients to do just one thing, it would be to buy travel insurance." According to Nicole, travel insurance prepares you for whatever obstacles come your way—and it can be tweaked to fit your personal needs. SquareMouth is one site that offers a quick way to compare several travel insurance types, coverages, and companies to find your best policy. You can also buy your insurance through SquareMouth, but remember to book your accommodations first. That way, you can insure the *total* cost of your trip.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Jamaica is best known for its all-inclusive resorts, so whether you're traveling solo, with a partner, your family, or your tribe, Jamaica has an all-inclusive location for you.

Montego Bay offers several adults-only and family-friendly resorts, including Sandals (21+) and Beaches (family-friendly)—both of which Nicole is very familiar. According to Nicole, Sandals and Beaches resorts offer a wide variety of accommodation levels—from super affordable to super luxury, but if you want "super luxury," she suggests Sandals Dunn's River, which is on the north coast of Jamaica and opens in May 2023. "It will be Sandals' most luxurious, modern, and innovative resort on the island," she says.

When asked about Excellence Oyster Bay, another brand-name resort in Jamaica, Nicole says, "All of my clients have been very happy with Excellence Oyster Bay!" That said, the Excellence is not the Jamaican resort her clients request most often. "I presume it's because it's about 45 minutes from the airport—between Montego Bay and Negril," she says. "I think most guests would rather do the 90-minute drive and be on Negril's Seven Mile Beach or keep the drive to a minimum and stay in Montego Bay. That said, it's on a beautiful peninsula and very close to the dolphin park and ziplining/adventure park."

Want a smaller (but still popular) location? Nicole suggests booking your stay at Moon Palace in Ocho Rios—approximately two hours from Montego Bay. "And as for smaller or more boutique experiences, there are a lot of private villas in Jamaica, which are privately managed and fully staffed."

CONTINUED >



Although known for its calm blue waters, sandy beaches, and water adventures, Nicole says Jamaica is constantly upping its game.

Want to bring your kids but also want periodic freedom? The Franklin D. Resort & Spa (a little over an hour away from Montego Bay) offers free nanny service for your entire stay. At FDR, you will be greeted by a nanny who will remain with you from 8:30 a.m. to 4:40 p.m., for your entire stay, and will be responsible for attending to your children, keeping your suite neat and tidy, and assisting you with your vacation plans, Corinne McDermott of the *Have Baby Will Travel* blog raves about FDR and its nanny service, although she was initially weirded out by the prospect. “Within two minutes of arriving at our (incredibly spacious) room,” she writes, “my son’s dirty diaper was changed, and both kids were in their swimsuits and at the beach. I was left to unpack in peace with a cold Red Stripe.”

WHY JAMAICA, WHY NOW?

Although known for its calm blue waters, sandy beaches, and water adventures, Nicole says Jamaica is constantly upping its game. “They’re always going the extra mile to attract tourists.” Also, Jamaica’s “no worries” lifestyle helps its visitors “embrace the culture of [its] people, which is different than any other island. Jamaica is very family friendly—especially for families with small children—and has safe beaches and tons of kid activities, kid clubs, waterparks, dolphins, and watersports.” So, whether it’s culture, food, relaxation, or adventure you’re looking for, Jamaica has it all. Following are five top suggestions from Nicole, the Jamaica Tourist Board, and me:

THE BOB MARLEY MUSEUM:

If you’re looking for reggae culture, visit Marley’s museum. With several shuttle bus services from the Montego Bay to Ocho Rios, getting there is easy. But beware! The bus ride can be a bit harrowing, as the roads are quite narrow and wind their way up to the mountain village of Nine Mile, which is nine miles from Negril (thus its name).

MYSTIC MOUNTAIN BOBSLED:

If you’ve always wanted to try bobsledding, you’ll want to visit Mystic Mountain. You’ll take a chairlift to the top of the mountain, where you can visit the Olympic museum, which features the Jamaican bobsled team, world-renowned sprinter Usain Bolt, and other Jamaican legends. Afterwards, enjoy the pool or head directly to the bobsled for your exciting trip down Mystic Mountain!

NEGRIL’S SEVEN MILE BEACH:

Seven Mile Beach in Negril is considered to be one of the most beautiful beaches—and a visitor favorite. Families come to this beach because of its shallow and calm water, but there are plenty of water sports, including snorkeling and scuba diving, which can be done right off the shore.

BAMBOO RAFTING ON THE MARTHA BRAE:

Jamaica’s number-one rafting attraction is located approximately 20 minutes from Montego Bay. The embarkation area, “Rafters Village,” is situated on a natural horseshoe island that offers picnic grounds, a full service bar, two souvenir shops, swimming pool, and modern restrooms. Be sure to visit “Miss Martha’s Herb Garden,” while you’re there to view Jamaica’s famous medicinal and healing herbs.

FLOYD’S PELICAN BAR:

Touted as one of the coolest bars in the world, the Pelican Bar sits approximately one mile from the shores of Black River, Jamaica. Constructed with sticks, driftwood, and palm branches, you can only get there by boat. Once there, you can sunbathe, swim in the ocean, drink a Red Stripe, and eat some local food. Have your taxi driver call ahead for your lobster or other fresh fish order. And remember to bring cash (no credit cards), your sunscreen, and water shoes.

For additional information on Jamaican attractions check out VisitJamaica.com, or contact Nicole Zillman, directly at nicole@nicolemarieevents.com.



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Deb C. and Reagan H.

Reagan H.

I started with exercise coach after recuperating for six months with a shoulder injury. After only two months at The Exercise Coach, I had my stamina back and my strength was back... I highly recommend The Exercise Coach for anyone that has been disappointed with gym memberships in the past, or anyone that finds it difficult to get motivated to work out in a typical gym environment.

Deb C.

I'm loving The Exercise Coach! I've been attending regularly for 13 months and I see a big improvement in my stamina and strength. The coaches are top notch and know their stuff. They're so supportive and encouraging and make it a pleasure to workout. This is the only exercise program I've ever stuck with I don't foresee stopping anytime soon!



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Nicole Zillman of Zillman Weddings and Travel is Parker's go-to destination wedding planner and travel agent! Specializing in all-inclusive and family travel, and a top agent for Sandals and Beaches Resorts, Nicole Zillman will help you have the "time of your life!"

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