



**01 Lemoneight Article**

# ***Regal Rewards: Celebrating Top Travel Advisors***

***At the ceremony held in Jamaica, the effort and work of the top 5 travel advisors of this year were recognized***

On Saturday, June 10, 2023, Jamaica Cruising celebrated the inaugural Regal Rewards Ceremony at Sandals Ocho Rios, Jamaica, to recognize the Top 5 Travel Advisors in the Regal Rewards Program. The program allows travel advisors to track their cruises to Jamaica, earn points, and - for the Top Five - get recognized at this epic event.

After the invocation by Kerry Ann Quallo Casserly of Blue Diamond Resorts, Jennifer Griffith, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism, introduced the evening's keynote speaker: The Honourable Edmund Bartlett CD, MP, Minister of Tourism for Jamaica, who had returned from a marketing blitz in the U.S. specifically for the ceremony!

**“That’s what we do in tourism, we tell great stories. Beautiful stories about wonderful destinations and experiences that are compelling and also unable to be resisted.”**

*- Edmund Bartlett*



Edmund Bartlett, Honorable Minister of Jamaica, and Joy Roberts, Executive Director of Jamaica Cruising

*In his riveting address, the Minister thanked the “movers, shakers, and itinerary makers” of Jamaica’s cruise travel industry for their resilience, hard work, and innovation through the COVID-19 pandemic. Noting that tourism was the only industry that completely stopped, with cruise tourism being the hardest hit of all, he proudly shared some exciting statistics. After dropping to zero cruise passengers while travel closed down, 2022 saw 600,000 arrive – even with some ports closed, and many travel restrictions still in place.*

*From January to May 2023, Jamaica has exceeded last year’s total, receiving 643,000 cruisers, and is on track to hit 1.3 million by the end of the year. And now that travel is back in full swing, Jamaica hopes to surpass pre-pandemic records by 2025! As the Minister said, “We are opening all Jamaica to you. We want you to feel the welcome; we want you to feel the appreciation that we have for you, and we want that appreciation to stimulate a new urge on your part to bring 2 million cruise visitors to Jamaica by 2025!”*

**“  
...Cruise by its very nature is about people meeting people, interacting with people, and exchanging ideas and enjoying themselves together, and earning money at the same time. That’s what cruise does!”**

*– Edmund Bartlett*

*Minister Bartlett was also excited to share the Ministry of Tourism’s new initiative: Destination Assurance – a new policy to make sure that all the elements of tourism work together to create a “safe, secure, and seamless experience” for visitors to Jamaica. Recognizing cruise’s role in the broader tourism industry and its role in developing Jamaica’s economy, he expressed appreciation for travel ad*

-visors' place in reaching the country's goals.

Regal Rewards winners received exquisite plaques specially designed by Antillean Charm, a local artisan renowned for their ceramic-work shadowboxes featuring native flora and fauna.



## Top 5 Travel Advisors



1

1st Place

**Troy Culbert**

2

2nd Place

**Darcy Solis**

3

3rd Place

**Marjorie Correa**

4

4th Place

**Donna May**

5

5th Place

**Jovoanda Reed & Annick Lousseize**

First-place winner Troy Culbert delivered a short speech thanking JamVac, the people of Jamaica, and the entire cruise industry, and shared that, "The best thing I do in my job is to connect people with other people, and the more we can do that, the more we come together." Along with his plaque, he was presented with a special timepiece in recognition of the time he spends, each and every day, promoting Jamaica to his customers.



Joy Roberts, Executive Director of Jamaica Cruising, and this year's Top 5 Travel Advisors.



*Marc Melville receiving his special recognition.*

*Next, a surprise special award was announced, and Joy Roberts, Executive Director of Jamaica Cruising, presented Marc Melville, CEO of Chukka Caribbean Adventures Groups, with a plaque commemorating the Order of Distinction he received from the Government of Jamaica last October for his role in building and promoting Jamaica's cruise tourism.*

*Marc thanked Ms. Roberts and Minister Bartlett, commenting on the good that cruise tourism does for everyone in Jamaica, creating economic benefits that trickle down to everyone.*

**“**You great people who sell great vacations to Jamaica, you don't realize that when those people get off that ship...the money that they're happy to spend in our country goes straight down to the independent taxi operator, every craft vendor, every hair braider, every gift shop owner... Cruise tourism is a big part of this country's tourism success, and it trickles down fast in many, many ways.”

**- Marc Melville, CEO of Chukka Caribbean Adventures Groups**



*Lemoneight's own Claudine Pohl was also recognized personally by Ms. Roberts and brought up for recognition of the relationship between Lemoneight and Jamaica Cruising. Joy shared a story of their first trip together in 2018, when she watched Claudine go above and beyond to help a stranger get cleaned up and back on his ship, and praised the training that's "made me a rock star! Because when I am passing through the hotels, all I hear is 'Jamaica! Jamaica, the best training!'"*

*With frequent entertainment interludes throughout the evening from amazing local artists, including saxophonist Fitzroy "Saxy" Minott, synchronized swimming team Island Aquatic Synchro, dance group Jabali Generation, and musical guests Hard Drive, epic raffle prizes for attendees, and an atmosphere of easy elegance with island comfort and friendliness, this was indeed an evening to remember!*

