

The Gleaner
Hospitality Jamaica

KEEPING YOU CONNECTED TO THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2017



**HALF
MOON
CLOSES FOR
REFURBISHING**

**JHTA HONOURS
PORTIA P2
P2 ▶**

**WHITHER FOR
CHARLOTTE?
P8-9 ▶**



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Portia Simpson-Miller (second left), is surrounded by staff of the Hilton Rose Hall Resort and Spa, and Opposition Spokesman on Tourism, Dr Wykeham McNeill (right).

JHTA honours Portia

THE JAMAICA Hotel & Tourist Association (JHTA) paid tribute to former prime minister, Portia Simpson-Miller for her contribution to Jamaica's tourism in a glitzy cocktails and dinner event hosted at the Hilton Rose Hall Resort & Spa on Saturday, August 26.

Simpson-Miller, who served as minister of tourism from 2000-2002 "made an indelible impact on Jamaica and Jamaica's tourism", said executive director of the JHTA, Camille Needham.

She lauded Simpson-Miller for, "Putting gears in motion on the Master Plan for Sustainable Tourism Development and her commitment to extending the tourism pie to include the average Jamaican."

Omar Robinson, president, JHTA, in his citation on the life and contribution of Simpson-Miller noted that through her illustrious political career, which spanned over four decades, she has served as an advocate for the down trodden, while being a testament that with hard work and perseverance one can achieve true greatness.

"For tourism and our country she has created a platform which will forever impact on the continued success of the industry." He recounted the sensitive, caring and timely response she made to the



From left: Omar Robinson, president of the JHTA; Tanisha Smith, marketing and communications manager, JHTA; Portia Simpson Miller; Camille Needham, executive director of the JHTA, and Paul Pennicook, former director of tourism.

9/11 tragedy which had the ability to bring tourism in Jamaica to a stand still. He stated: "The Most Hon Portia Simpson-Miller travelled to ground zero herself, accompanied by many hoteliers and tourism officials and later on launched a touching communications campaign which encouraged persons to come to Jamaica and experience love."

The event was attended by Opposition spokesman on tourism, Dr Wykeham McNeill who

recounted side-splitting stories which brought home how much of a thoughtful and warm person Simpson-Miller was as tourism minister.

David Dobson, senior director - technical services at the Ministry of Tourism delivered a message on behalf of the Tourism Minister Edmund Bartlett, who was unavoidably absent, which also spoke to the impact the great Jamaican woman has had on tourism.



Portia Simpson-Miller embraces John Lynch, chairman of the Jamaica Tourist Board.



Carol Bourke, general manager, Hilton Rose Hall, and former Director of Tourism Paul Pennicook.



Robert Headley (left), chairman, JHTA Montego Bay Chapter and general manager, Tryall Club shares insights with Evelyn Smith, JHTA past president and chairman of the Tourism Enhancement Fund, Godfrey Dyer.

Half Moon closes for first time in 63 years

Luxury hotel undergoes extensive renovations



Janet Silvera

Hospitality Jamaica Coordinator

FOR THE first time in 63 years, Half Moon will close its doors, while focusing on refreshing existing accommodations and guest facilities on the 400-acre resort.

The hotel, which became a trailblazer for the luxury-resort industry in the Caribbean after it was built as a winter escape in 1954, will remain closed for the month of September, reopening on October 4, General Manager, Sandro Fabris has confirmed.

The closure follows an announcement earlier this year that the resort would be undergoing extensive renovation as part of a \$9.6 billion refurbishing exercise.

“The construction of the new accommodations and guest facilities is progressing nicely, and during this period we have been able to continue providing to our guests, the remarkable service that Half Moon is known for. We decided to close for the month of September to focus on refreshing existing accommodations at the resort and we are looking forward to welcoming guests on October 4, 2017,” said Fabris.

This latest phase follows the 2015 refurbishment of the award-winning Sugar Mill Restaurant, the resort lobby, Robert Trent Jones Sr. designed golf course and the introduction of the popular Lester’s Cafe.

Also recently completed was the centralised Back of House complex, which was scheduled to open in June, providing first-rate resources and modern facilities for Half



CONTRIBUTED

The lobby at Half Moon.

Moon team members.

On completion of the entire project in October 2018, guests will have the option of 57 new rooms and suites, two additional restaurants, three new bars, an expanded beach front and adults-only pool.

A new lobby and entrance to the resort is also in the plans.

“The entire exercise is designed in such a way that guests are experiencing minimal to no disruption,” said the hotel management.

independently managed, Half Moon has been a landmark of world-class hospitality,” stated Steuart III.

“We now look forward to welcoming a new generation of guests as we embark on this journey that will extend the legacy - refreshing, repositioning and readying Half Moon for the next 60 years.”

EUROPEAN PLAN HOTEL

The resort remains one of the only remaining European Plan hotels in the tourism capital, Montego Bay.

The expansive resort is situated on acres of tropical gardens and bordered by two miles of beach front.

On its 60th anniversary, then president of the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association, Josef Forstmayr spoke glowingly of the resort, stating that it remained a beacon of distinction in the hotel industry.

“The resort with its high level of personalised service and varied, world-class amenities has become the standard by which many other luxury hotels in the Caribbean are judged,” said Forstmayr.

Opposition leader at the time, and now prime minister, Andrew Holness lauded the resort’s commitment to nation building, through its efforts to generate wide-scale employment, specifically targeting persons from local communities; as well as using the country’s home-grown products in its array of delectable dishes.

The majority of the resort’s employees have been sent on vacation for the month.

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THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

When travel ceases to be an experience

David Jessop

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

IN AN age when most in the industry are seeking higher-yield millennials and baby-boomers, by selling authenticity, it is perhaps puzzling that another rapidly growing industry segment is now seeking to deliver just the opposite.

Type the words 'private islands' into a search engine and it is immediately evident that this element of the industry reflects a new and rapidly growing phenomenon.

To be clear, this is not about elite destinations like Richard Branson's Necker Island, or the upscale, exclusive, small resorts that exist, for example, in the Grenadines, but about a new form of mass-market Caribbean tourism that is being developed by the cruise companies.

The concept involves large cruise lines such as Norwegian, Disney or Royal Caribbean buying or leasing small islands in locations close to their home ports, and developing on them facilities which they control.

For the most part, these locations have deepwater berthing facilities that enable the lines to bring some of their largest ships directly onshore. This enables them, quite literally, to transfer the many thousands of



David Jessop

passengers each ship carries, to beaches which have an adjacent mix of amenities and attractions in a way that most Caribbean destinations do not.

The effect is that a significant part of the visitor market which wants to travel to the Caribbean is coming to see these private islands, like the cruise ships on which they travel, as a safe, relatively upmarket substitute for one which might be describe as the real Caribbean.

EVERYTHING OFFERED

So far it seems that with two exceptions, all such facilities are in The Bahamas, and offer everything from swimming pools to spas and bars, water sports and live music, and even minor injuries clinics in order to provide a 'safe' environment.

From the cruise companies' perspective, not only do such facilities offer a controlled version of the Caribbean for the nervous, often older middle-market traveller who wants, as it were, to see the Caribbean 'in safety', but the opportunity to retain their expenditure.

While the cost of investing in developing small, forgotten islands in The Bahamas, the Dominican Republic or elsewhere is substantial, the cruise companies believe they have found a way of delivering hundreds of thousands of their passengers to Caribbean locations, avoiding the grittiness, or worse, that

some visitors have experienced on shore in the region. Their objective, they say, is to develop facilities, attractions and even engineer beaches and the environment in a manner that ensures their clients experience the white sand and waving palm tree paradise they have imagined.

Recent reports in the travel trade press suggest that the concept is expanding with Carnival, for example, looking not just at The Bahamas but at Honduras as well.

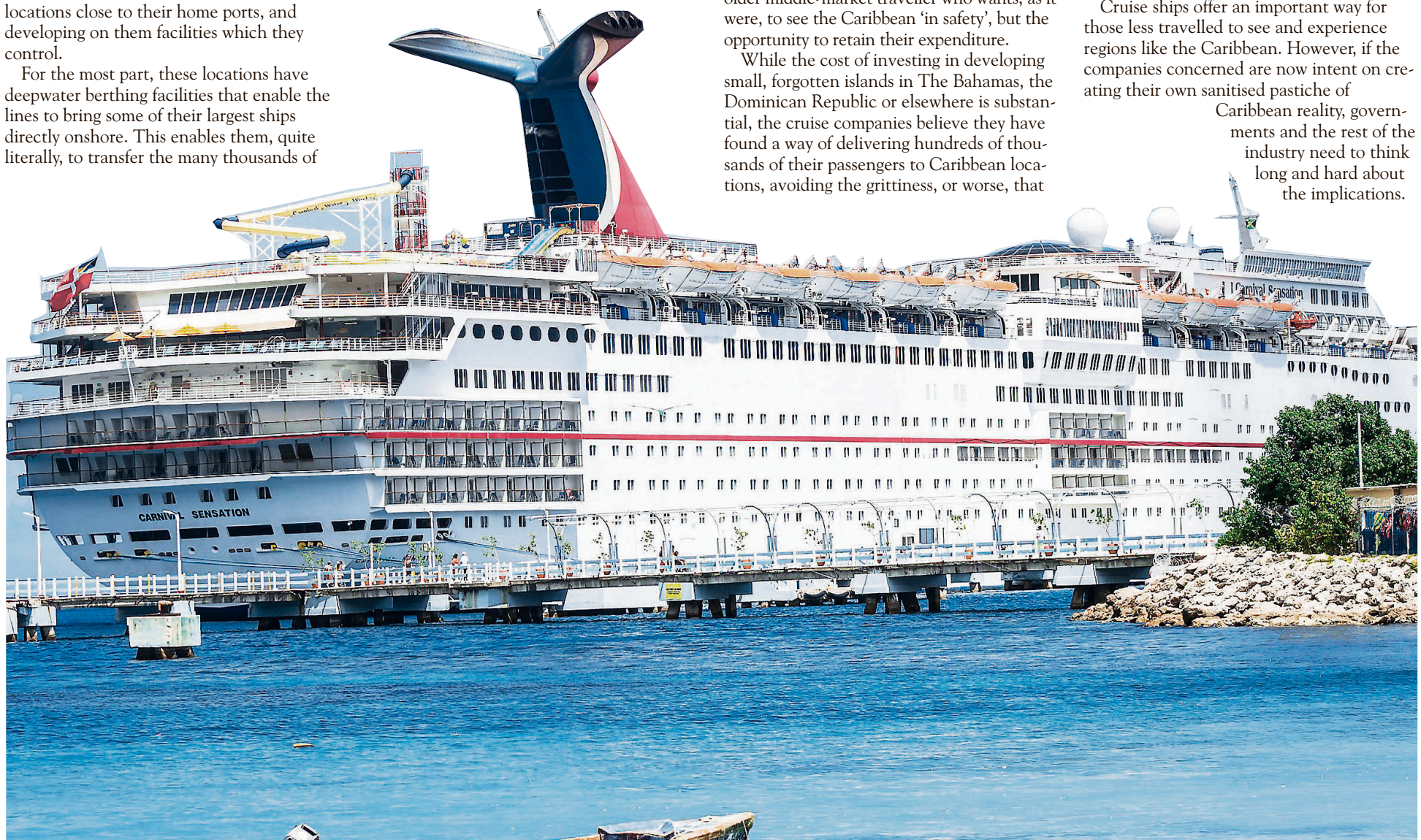
For the companies, which stand to significantly increase their profits from this approach, the private island concept, and the control they can exercise over the visitor experience and passenger security in a potentially hostile world is what matters.

Surprisingly perhaps, this category of cruising is in great demand. Surveys suggest that it is highly popular, indicating that many travellers may be less interested in where they are going and more desirous of a safe experience in a tropical climate that feels Caribbean but offers little in the way of authenticity.

Employment and passenger taxes apart, how this can be of any long-term value to the Caribbean is a mystery. Worse, it ignores tourism's ability to create relationships and understanding though people-to-people contact, let alone the experience and sense of wonder and adventure that travel provides.

Cruise ships offer an important way for those less travelled to see and experience regions like the Caribbean. However, if the companies concerned are now intent on creating their own sanitised pastiche of

Caribbean reality, governments and the rest of the industry need to think long and hard about the implications.



Glittering performance at Sandals Festival of Arts

THE OCHO Rios region covered itself in glory by winning seven of the nine categories in the local finals of the Sandals and ATL Group Festival of Arts Talent and Model Search Competition, held recently at Sandals Ochi Beach Resort.

In what was an amazing showcase of song, dance, instrumental and modelling, the brightest stars in the hotel group's constellation shone brilliantly with some riveting and magnificent performances.

The Festival of Arts (formerly ENCORE) was created in 2003 to foster and develop talent within the Sandals and Beaches hotels and has seen major improvements each year since its inception.

The highlight of the night was undoubtedly the female vocalist category, which saw Shelly-Dean Bartley, an entertainment coordinator at Sandals Ochi, who sang Mariah Carey's *Vision of Love*, engage in a ding-dong battle with crowd favourite Mellow Shakes from Negril. In the end, Bartley's stage presence and vocal clarity gave her the nod in what was a battle royale as both ladies were at the peak of their powers.

AMAZING FALSETTO

In the male vocalist section, Justin Morris from Sandals Ochi had the ladies screaming for more with his amazing falsetto and proved a clear winner with both judges and audience alike.

Other Ochi regional winners were Gerine Thompson, Spoken Word; Jevaughn Graham, Best Instrumentalist; Ashley Thomas, Best Female Model (from Beaches Ocho Rios); Patrick Ramsay, Best Male Model; Shevaughan Sewell and Reynaldo Gray, Group Dance.

The other winners were Toni-Gay O'Meally from Sandals South Coast for Best Solo Dance and Jason McIntyre, Beaches Negril, Best Clash DJ.

According to Sandals group manager of entertainment Joel Ryan, "Our company continues to create a platform for employees to showcase their talent. The feedback we have gotten from the public has grown tremendously and has progressed into an event that is highly anticipated."

The international finals, showcasing winners from across the Caribbean, will take place in September at Sandals Ochi Beach Resort.

“ The Festival of Arts (formerly ENCORE) was created in 2003 to foster and develop talent within the Sandals and Beaches hotels and has seen major improvements each year since its inception. ”



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS
Patrick Ramsay,
best male model.

Justin
Morris was
voted best
male
singer.



Gerine
Thompson,
spoken
word
winner.

Jevaughn Graham, best instrumentalist.

PART 1

China's exploding outbound travel and Ja's position for growth

David L. Shields
Contributor

AT THE staging of the 2017 China Outbound Travel & Tourism (COTTM) show, one of the largest outbound travel trade events in China, there was celebration in Beijing that the country had surpassed the 135 million mark for outbound travellers.

The COTTM is held annually and has been one of the leading outbound travel shows to influence this growth over the years with many countries, like Jamaica, actively promoting to the affluent Chinese travel market.

The global forecast for outbound tourism presents a very positive outlook with world outbound travel projected to be between four per cent and five per cent for 2017. Asia, and in particular China, is expected to play an important role in that growth, with the Chinese already taking more international trips this year.

According to the United Nations World Tourism Organisation, there was a six per cent growth in outbound travel from China to 135 million in 2016, placing the country as the world's leading outbound market. International tourism expenditure by Chinese nationals also had a strong increase of 12 per cent to US\$261 billion, making China the undisputed leading source market for tourist globally since 2012.

It is important to note that this growth is being achieved in an environment where only four per cent of the Chinese population owns a passport, compared with 37 per cent of Americans.

Jamaica welcomed 3,899 Chinese visitors in 2016 which was a 4.1 per cent increase over the 2015 arrivals. The 2016 arrivals represented a 61.1 per cent over the 2013 numbers of 2,420, which, while small numbers, reflect an annual increase each year since 2007 (except for a decline in 2008,



From left: Zhang Hui, co-CEO and director, China National Travel Service; David Shields, vice president, sales, Island Routes; Roy Page, CEO, Caribic Group of Companies; Dr Adam Wu, CEO of China Business Network, which is the China representative of the Jamaica Tourist Board.

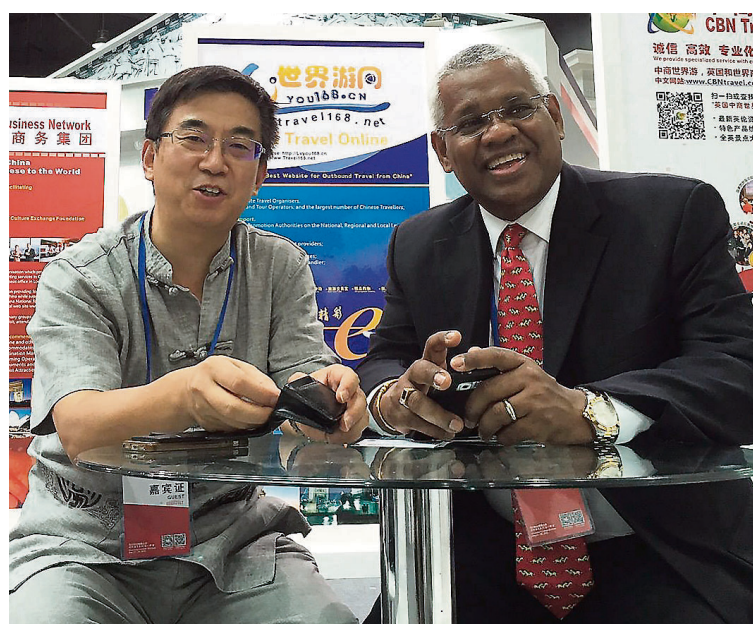


David Shields

the year of the Beijing Olympics).

For the first six calendar months of 2017 (to June), Jamaica has received 2,217 Chinese visitors which is a 12.7 per cent increase in Chinese arrivals. At this pace we could end the year at over 4,500 arrivals, again small given the global experience, but this is an indication of the vast potential that remains possible for Jamaica.

With friendly relations and a policy framework which supports



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Dr Adam Wu (left), CEO of China Business Network and Jamaica Tourist Board China representative, and David Shields, vice-president, sales of Island Routes at the Sichuan International Travel Expo, Leshan City, China in 2016.

the government of the People's Republic of China, Jamaica has

been leading the Caribbean region in the development of the

programmes and structures necessary to benefit from the explosive growth in outbound travel. However, even with the Chinese increase in travel globally, Jamaica and our Caribbean neighbours continue to lag in terms of numbers of Chinese arrivals.

SIGNIFICANT TURNING POINT

Jamaica's hosting in February 2005 of the First China/Caribbean Economic & Trade Cooperation Forum marked a significant turning point, not only in terms of bilateral relationship with the People's Republic of China, but significantly in the promotion of tourism between China and the Caribbean. This historic event, and the related negotiations, validated the push by China to open the opportunities for expansion of China's outbound travel, especially to the Caribbean.

At the 2005 event in Kingston, Jamaica joined its Caribbean neighbours, who had diplomatic ties with China, for the signing of a memorandum of understanding with the Chinese National Tourism Administration to facilitate the development of outbound travel of Chinese nationals to Jamaica, under the approved destination status (ADS). Countries that did not have the ADS Agreement in place were restricted for visits by Chinese citizens, and those countries were not allowed to promote their destinations to the Chinese or within China. Chinese nationals visiting non-ADS destinations were limited to business and official travel only.

Immediately after the granting of the ADS designation in 2005, Jamaica moved immediately to satisfy the requirements for travel by establishing key relationships and educating the Chinese-approved outbound tour operators about Jamaica and travel to the destination. We also ensured that the receptive entities here were prepared to welcome the new visitors. A visa-issuing mechanism was agreed with the various state agencies (Immigration, Ministries of National Security and Foreign Affairs) consistent with the understanding of the ADS. Today, over 147 countries are signatories of ADS, thereby driving the explosive growth in outbound travel from China and making for a very open environment for travel promotions in China.

■ **David Shields is a former deputy director of tourism with responsibility for marketing.**



**CheersCPJ**
with SPIRITS

Must be 18 years and older to drink. Drink responsibly!

Whither Fort Charlotte?



PHOTOS BY PAUL H. WILLIAMS

Onyije, the 'queen' of Fort Charlotte.

The well-preserved artillery store at Fort Charlotte.



Fort Charlotte has the potential to host a variety of events



One of the three remaining cannons at Fort Charlotte.



A section of Fort Charlotte.

A scenic view of a headland through an arch of Fort Charlotte.

Paul H. Williams
Hospitality Jamaica Writer

IT IS one of the vestiges of the British occupation of Jamaica, Fort Charlotte. Charlotte was the consort of King George III and the fortress was named for her. Barracks to house 50 soldiers were also constructed. Built in 1761, at one end of Lucea's Harbour, in Hanover, it was to protect the north northwest section of the island. The extremely thick walls are made of rectangular cut-stones, and consist of a series of arches.

Twenty-three embrasures (openings) were built in the fort. Cannons were mounted on 20 of them. Three more cannons, on traversing carriages, were added in 1807. No war on record was fought at Fort Charlotte, a section of which is on the campus of Rusea's High School. Three of the cannons are still mounted in the main courtyard. They are undergoing various stages of weathering by the salt from the sea. Some amount of flaking is taking place. The remnant of the circular base of a platform that was constructed to rotate guns in several directions is still visible. The buttressed artillery store, also made of cut-stones, is in a very good

state of preservation.

From this national heritage site there are great views of the sea, headland, mountains to the south, and the Lucea Harbour. It needs a storyboard to give visitors information on its evolution and history, and protection rails.

Over the years attempts have been made to turn Fort Charlotte into Lucea's tourism magnet, but the diamond in the rough is yet to sparkle under the Caribbean sun. Who is finally going to take her, wash the salt from her face, doll her up, and embrace her tightly? Not King George III. He is long dead.

In late 2014, the then mayor of Lucea, Wynter McIntosh,

announced plans for the refurbishment of Fort Charlotte. Such plans were to be activated the following year.

During the latter part of last year, preliminary work to renovate the Hanover Parish Council-owned property started with the clearing of dilapidated structures, and the preparation of the area on which a parking lot was to be built. The project was funded by the Tourism Enhancement Funds and managed by the Tourism Product Development Company (TPDCo).

The Georgian style architecture was to be maintained in the construction of buildings, such as an amphitheatre, a museum, gift shops and restaurants. Guard rails and a ticket booth were

also in the drafts. Throngs of visitors it was hoped would be overrunning the project in the first quarter of this year.

In August when Hospitality Jamaica visited there was no semblance of restorative work that was done, or being done. There was no piped water, electricity, and sanitary facilities, and the area designed a car park was still unpaved. A JUTA minivan brought about four white people, but in a jiffy they were gone.

Similar plans for restoration were made in 2001 when TPDCo allocated \$2 million towards that endeavour. A dispute between the Hanover Parish Council and the National Works

Agencies, which had buildings on the property, prevented the implementation of the plans. What happened to that money?

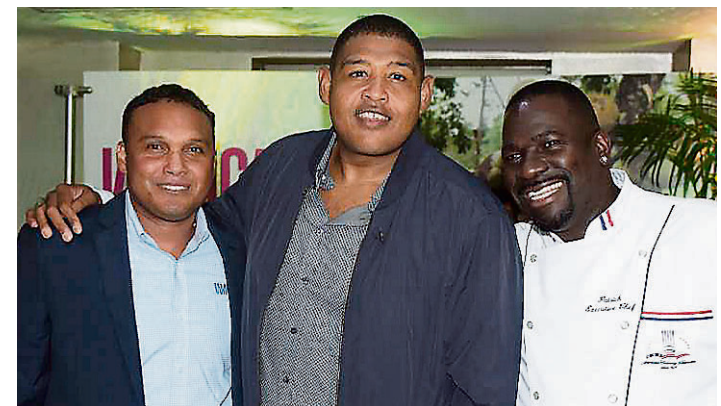
And in 2011 there was another big buzz surrounding the revival of the moribund Charlotte. The hovering bald-pated Jamaican buzzards had their doubts. They had heard it before, and poor Charlotte did not hold her breath, and she still is not.

She is used to decades of abandonment and unfulfilled promises, and can only cry salty tears as she looks out to sea, reminiscing about her glory days. The soothing sea breeze that caresses her night and day is her only succour, whispering into her ears, hush, hush, sweet Charlotte.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Jamaica Tourist Board's (JTB) representatives at the Taste of Tennis event (from left): Michelle Catin, e-commerce director of segments and social media for Palace Resorts; Natalia Chapur and Jabib Chapur, vice-president of food and beverage for Palace Resorts; Marcia P. Sinclair, district sales manager – Northeast USA for the JTB; Kathy Halpern, vice-president of global marketing for Palace Resorts; and Kristopher DaCosta, media relations manager, JTB.



From left: Kristopher DaCosta, media relations manager at the Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB); Omar Miller, actor from HBO's television series 'Ballers'; and Walkerswood's corporate Executive Chef Wenford P. Simpson pause for the camera at the JTB's lounge at the Taste of Tennis event.



A French tennis star was among many enjoying Taste of Tennis. Chef Shorne Benjamin (left), French professional tennis player Gael Monfils (centre) and Jamaican Chef Andre Fowles of Miss Lily's/Rockhouse hang out at Taste of Tennis.

Jamaican chefs take centre stage at Taste of Tennis in New York

JAMAICA TOURIST BOARD

THE JAMAICA Tourist Board (JTB) partnered with Palace Resorts, Miss Lily's, Appleton Jamaican Rum, Red Stripe and Walkerswood in hosting the Home of All Right Lounge at the 18th annual Taste of Tennis.

The event which brings together the world's celebrated tennis players, tennis fans, celebrities and top chefs, was held at the W New York Hotel on August 24, and attendees were served an array of Jamaican specialties, including: curried ital stew with roti by Chef de Cuisine Andre Fowles of Miss Lily's/Rockhouse; Cajun escoviteched shrimp on watermelon arugula salad with guava vinaigrette and pulled jerked chicken over curry succotash with raisin flatbread by Chef Wenford P. Simpson, Walker-



Jamaican Chef Andre Fowles takes centre stage at Taste of Tennis with him (from left) are Francisco Perez, executive chef for Palace Resorts; Iron Chef Masaharu Morimoto; 'Chopped Champion' Chef Andre Fowles from Miss Lily's/Rockhouse; Pastry Chef Karina Rivera representing Antonio Bachour; and Chef Nilvia Ramirez from Palace Resorts.

swood's corporate executive. Moon Palace Jamaica's Pastry Chef Karina Rivera created decadent desserts including key lime-flavoured tennis ball macaroon; s'mores with burnt marshmallow, chocolate mousse, and graham cracker and Orellys Namelaka with strawberry gel and coconut streusel. To complement the savoury and sweet treats, patrons sipped Red Stripe and Appleton's 'Match Point' Rum Punch.

Taste of Tennis is deliberately staged just before the start of the US Tennis Open in Flushing Meadows in New York, and the weeklong celebration has become one of the most anticipated events on the tennis calendar. Given its appeal, the event is an ideal platform to dish out authentic Jamaican cuisine and great Jamaican music. The Jamaica Tourist Board continues to capitalise on this unique opportunity in promoting the island as one of the signature places for travellers to visit for a rich gastronomical experience. From the unique foods, to mouth-watering culinary creations, Jamaica's culinary ambassadors continue to satisfy palates around the globe, using Jamaica's gastronomic prowess, as one of the elements in defining the island in the international marketplace.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

From left: Michelle Serieux, director of 'Sugar'; Renee Robinson, JAMPRO film commissioner, and Shantol Jackson, lead actress in 'Sugar' discussing the short film after it was screened, in an evening salute to Jamaican filmmakers.

Great Huts hosts Portie Film Festival

Paul H Williams

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

THE USUAL calm and quiet resort called Great Huts Paradise on the Edge, buzzed with activity from August 17-20, as Cinema Paradise Portie Film Festival zoomed in on the eco-friendly, Afrocentric retreat, located at Boston in Portland.

It was the event's seventh annual installation, and after a full-house premiere night on August 17, inside Hope Zoo's Serengeti in St Andrew, the 'Great Hall' of Africana House, the newest and most regal unit at Great Huts, was transformed in a 'cinema' on Friday, August 18 with the screening of *Shashamane*.

Shashamane is about the state of affairs of the 'Promised Land' in Ethiopia. The producer allows some people, including many Jamaicans who have been living there for quite a while, to tell the stories of their challenges, redemption, hopes and disappointment.

After the screening, Steven Golding, president of the Universal Negro Improvement Association in Jamaica, and Ras Rai, independent filmmaker, talked about their



A section of the audience that turned out to see the screening of 'Rasta: A Soul's Journey' inside the Serengeti at Hope Zoon in St Andrew.



A section of the Great Hall inside African House where the full-length documentary, 'Shashamane', was screened.

experiences in *Shashamane* to a rapt audience, including in-house guests and other patrons.

On Saturday the 19th, the dub pool party kept IsetSankofa busy at the turntable on the Mandela Deck, the roof of Africana House, while patrons soaked up the sun and drinks at the poolside.

RELAXED UNDER THE STARS

In the night the spiral staircase in Africana House was the path to the cinema on the Mandela Deck, where people lounged and relaxed under the stars as they watched *Shock Value*, *Sugar* and *Origins* on a night dedicated to Jamaican filmmakers.

In the audience were Kurt Wright, director/writer of *Origins*; Adrian Lopez, writer/director of *Shock Value*; and Michelle Serieux, director of *Sugar*. Shantol Jackson, the lead actress in *Sugar* was also in attendance. The question and answer session after the screening was moderated by Renee Robinson, JAMPRO film commissioner.

The big climax to the four-day event came Sunday night when *Bruk Out*, a dancehall queen documentary, unfolded on the Sahara

Deck. That screening was scheduled for nearby Boston Beach, but was relocated because of the threat of inclement weather.

The capacity audience watched as dancehall queens from the world over prepared for the 2014 Dancehall Queen Competition, held at Pier 1 in Montego Bay, St James. Director Cori McKenna explores the hopes, dreams and challenges of some of the competitors, exposing the impact that Jamaica's dancehall movements have on popular culture in general, and on some people's life in particular.

McKenna and associate producer Brad Martin were in the house to field question and comments, but the audience was equally delighted with the presence of Pinky, a popular Japanese dancehall queen. All three were part of an engaging post-screening discussion of issues concerning dancehall.

Pinky fell off the stage during the actual competition, and told the audience on the deck what happened. And she obliged, to the joy of those present, when a request was made for her to 'bruk out'.

And with that Cinema Paradise Portie Film Festival zoomed out from 2017.

Jewel Paradise Cove Beach Resort & Spa

Wellness Retreat Island Style

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUCTORS, local yoga and wellness professionals and guests seeking health and wellness converged on the Jewel Paradise Cove Resort and Spa for a weekend an 'Island Style Wellness Retreat' recently.

Visiting master teacher, Denise Cox had guests awake and energised with her daily morning yoga classes, while Jewel's fitness instructor, Earl Bishop provided spin, morning power walks and aqua strength experiences, exploring the grounds of the resort.

When the muscles became sore, the hotel's Radiant Spa utilised the various in house massages, coupled with the eucalyptus-infused steam room, where soothing sauna



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Master Yoga Teacher Denise Cox has a full class during her Yoga session, held just outside the Radiant Spa at Jewel Paradise Cove at its Wellness Week, held recently.

sessions were a welcome gift.

The retreat was one packed full of bliss, accompanied by educational and informational presentations, combining the healing properties of lemongrass and aloe vera as well as poetry and the healing wonder of words by Skripcha.

"The days ended with a meditation workshop with local artist, Philip Payne, known worldwide for his therapeutic encounters," boasted Charmaine Deane, the chain's director of marketing and public relations.

Deane spoke of afternoon healing Reiki and morning vibrational humming immersions hosted by artist and gemstone mystic, Jasazi McKenzie.

The vibes, she said, turned way

up in the afternoons with Kingston's own Chai Studios queen, Shani McGraham-Shirley, who enjoyed a staycation while leading her Zumba and YahSuh classes.

"These were definite favourites among the guests."

Placing the final touches on what was tagged, 'Sizzling Saturday', spa director of Grande Spa at Jewel Grande Montego Bay, the Jewel Resorts collection and Hilton Rose Hall, Sienna Creasy presented the icing on the wellness, with her world famous Reggaealates.

Not to be outdone, executive chef Ravi Anne, joined the niceness, serving up a lunch combination of local cuisine and vegetarian healthy choice specials for participants.

Already dates are booked for the next Jewel Paradise Cove Beach Resort & Spa wellness retreat.

"December 10-16 are the dates for the next retreat," said Deane, adding that this session has two visiting master instructors, including Cindy Caperton, who has over 500 hours of certification in yoga, including therapeutic yoga and guided meditation.

Deane invites readers to visit www.jewelparadisecove.com for more information.



Jewel Paradise Cove's Fitness Instructor Earl Bishop takes guests through his Aqua-cise moves during Wellness week.



Jewel Resorts Spa Director Sienna Creasy makes it look easy during her Reggaealates class held at the Jewel Paradise Cove during Yoga/Wellness Week.



A relaxing view of the recently-upgraded pedicure thrones at the Sandals Negril Red Lane Salon.



The beautiful bevy of ladies from the Red Lane Spa at Sandals Negril welcomes guests to their newly rejuvenated salon.

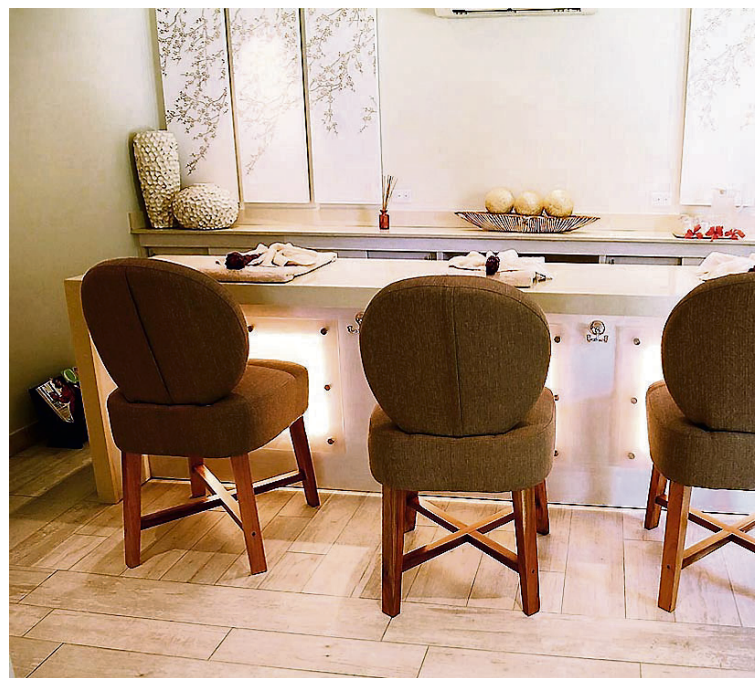
Sandals Negril's Red Lane Spa Salon gets beauty treatment

Sandals Negril Beach Resort and Spa is celebrating yet another upgrade to its five-star, luxury-included facilities with the recent rejuvenation of the salon at the Red Lane Spa.

The salon, which was built over 10 years ago, now boasts an upgraded styling and manicure bar, pedicure thrones, shampooing zone and electric mirrors. The colour scheme has lightened to create an even more peaceful ambience for clients.

"Our salon offerings provide our guests with the opportunity to choose the experiences that best suit them. These services include manicure and pedicure, make-up, hair styling and paraffin treatment," shared Spa Manager Denise Morrison.

Morrison also revealed that brides can also take advantage of the Bridal Event in a Box offering in the well-appointed space. "Brides and their bridal parties are offered the option of having the salon to themselves for 30 minutes during which they are served a variety of cheeses and champagne while being pampered. At the end



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

The newly renovated nail bar at Sandals Negril's Red Lane Salon.

of the experience the bride receives gifts for the bridal party and a Red Lane Spa-inspired thank you note for personalised messages."

Morrison believes that this renovation will benefit clients greatly as they will be more comfortable and relaxed in the space. She also



Sandals Negril's General Manager David Latchimy is joined by destination weddings travel agent and owner of Luxury Vacation Guru, Irene Sauger in the ribbon cutting ceremony marking the official opening of the recently-renovated Red Lane Salon at the resort.

revealed that clients can even receive a back massage while getting a pedicure.

"People will not necessarily get this type of service everywhere. We always aim to go above and beyond for our guests and this is one of our many exploits," she said.

The renovated salon has been generating positive feedback from both guests and employees. Destination weddings travel agent and owner of Luxury Vacation Guru,

Irene Sauger was all 'oohs and ahhs' during the grand opening of the salon.

"Sandals Negril is my favourite resort to sell and it makes me really happy to always witness and hear about the continued upgrades to the property. The salon is absolutely lovely," she gushed, after assisting the resort's general manager, David Latchimy in cutting the symbolic ribbon draped across the salon doors.



Farmer Lise Bouffard.

AROUND JA WITH PAUL H.

Going nuts on Lise Bouffard's animal farm

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IMET Lise Bouffard in Kingston at a farmers' market. I was talking about the scarcity of macadamia nuts, which I string up to make necklaces.

Macadamia nuts, slightly bigger than marbles, are edible. Delicious, if I may. The surface of the outer shell is brown and glossy, looking edible, but is not.

Though the kernel is quite tasty, I sacrifice them for the glossy shells. "What a waste!?" some people say.

So, when Bouffard told me she has a macadamia nut tree in her yard in Newport, Manchester, my excitement went into overdrive. Finally, I could fulfil the orders for macadamia-nut necklaces and chokas. I promised to pay her a visit.

I went to see her recently, not just for the nuts; I also wanted to see her farm. Bouffard is a farmer who made and sold goat cheese. The Canadian native's family background has been in farming, so the legacy continues.

I wish I were a part of that legacy for, I, too, would have my own farm. I am prepared to grin and bear the

scents of the animals, and the sounds that they make. Bouffard and Devene Martin, one of her assistants, have been doing it for years, so why not me?

It was Martin whom I saw first. He went to get Bouffard. She was glad to see me, and proceeded to take me to the farm right away. Before we went into the farming space itself, the three of us stood talking on a back porch.

Then they pointed to a tree saying it was the macadamia nut tree. I had forgotten that it was the main reason for my visit. But the nuts thereon looked bigger than macadamia nuts. And had an odd shape. I told myself that they may be a variety.

But I also realised the pod looks very different from that of the macadamia nut, which is covered with a green coating that makes it look like a guinep.

There were many of the nuts under the tree, some still in the pods, others not. I took up a few, but was now a little confused. They looked absolutely nothing like the macadamia nuts I know. They have an irregular shape, a rough surface, looking like a brain, and were dull in colour. Not candidates for my necklaces.

The ground under the tree was strewn with them, and whatever they were, I decided to take back some with me, but I wanted to see the animals first. Bouffard and Martin took me to them.



Devene Martin restraining a stubborn sheep.

PHOTOS BY PAUL H. WILLIAMS

What I saw impressed me. They looked very healthy. Some have names, but the most personable, if I may use such a word to describe animals, were the pigs. They did not ignore us like the rest. In fact, they greeted us, putting their front legs forward, and grunted in anticipation of food.

The strangest are the sheep. They came running from afar when Martin called them using a particular sound. I stood at a spot waiting for them to come through. But they stood their ground when they saw me and Bouffard. As much as Martin egged them on, they would not move, until we moved away. Then they went to a spot where they stood for a while as a group, making a sort a shimmy movement.

I was also shown goats, white turkeys, rabbits (some white, some black and shiny), hens, roosters,

ducks, geese, and three peahens, whose story is the most fascinating of them all.

But, in all of the joy of seeing these beautiful creatures, the most memorable sight was that of a raven that stood on a bucket, looking up at a tap expecting water to come from it. When I got close to it to get a shot it did not even budge.

From the animals I went back to the nuts. I felt some energy popping so I got a rake, and went to work gathering the nuts. The more I collected the more I was convinced they were not macadamia nuts. Unless I was the one mixing up the names. Lise suggested that the ones I know were hazel nuts.

On my way to another stop I went browsing, for the confusion was driving me nuts. Google to the rescue. I was right. Bouffards' are walnuts, not macadamia nuts.



These sheep will not move unless you move out of their way.



Walnuts surrounded by a necklace made of macadamia nuts.



This little raven came for a drink.



These peahens have a very interesting story.



Hello! I'm ready for my close-up.



White turkeys.

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