

The Gleaner

Hospitality Jamaica

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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

Tourism must be prepared to respond to all forms of disruption

Miss T's Kitchen and MSC Cruise to welcome Martha Stewart

'Jamaica Jamaica' has come home

Anthony Drummond – From behind bars to raising the bar



Deafinitely Jamaica Tours creates

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The team of tour guides. From left: Setria Bryan, Peta-Gay Graham, Adrian Downer, Nickadian Smith and Davia Bartlett. CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS



Adrian Downer gives his own rendition of the famous Usain Bolt 'Jamaica to the World' pose outside Usain Bolt Tracks and Records.

Deafinitely Jamaica Tours creates **ACCESSIBLE TOURISM** IN JAMAICA

Janet Silvera
*Hospitality Jamaica
 Coordinator*

IT WAS out of concern for the future of deaf children in Jamaica, who are oftentimes not afforded the opportunity to reach their full occupational potential, which prompted Renee Campbell to conceptualise Deafinitely Jamaica Tours.

Headquartered in Montego Bay, the island's newest destination management company (DMC) is the first to target primarily the deaf and other tourists with disabilities and their families, providing booking of tours, deaf tour guides, hotel rooms and other requisite services.

The company is tapping into accessible tourism to woo a market still gravely underserved in Jamaica, despite the



The sign 'I love you' is universal, and the team from Deafinitely Jamaica Tours did just that with these tourists.

United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) recognising facilitating travel for people with disabilities as an exceptional business opportunity.

Chief Executive Officer

Renee Campbell, who is the mother of a deaf daughter, told **Hospitality Jamaica** that she initially grappled with communicating with her child, and as the youngster grew up, thought to herself that she wanted



Renee Campbell

“something better on the landscape for positions or jobs” for her child and for other deaf persons, which would also enable them to travel freely to Jamaica and other countries without language being a barrier.

“As I looked at the students that have matriculated out of the deaf institutions, I realised that most of the time I see them in the supermarkets packing bags, or they are working in the hotels as housekeepers or sous chef, positions where their language is not really used up,” Campbell explained.

“I believe that when you go to a country, when you get first-hand experience of the country from the locals who work there, it enhances the entire travelling experience for you, and I don’t believe anyone in this landscape is able to provide deaf persons with a better experience than deaf persons themselves,” she added.

Along with two silent partners, Deafinitely blossomed from just an idea in 2018 into a full concept which included data from intensive market research, consultations with the Jamaica Association for the Deaf, and overseas promotion which included familiarisation trips to the Deaf Nation conference in the US to promote Jamaica as a destination. These trips revealed some interesting facts, including the reason many deaf people and their families avoid Jamaica, despite them wanting to visit the island.

“Persons came to our booth and there was quite a buzz. Brand Jamaica is big in the deaf community, so we had to come and ensure that we had everything in place, getting our certification and our license so that we could be legal and not try to do something in the background,” Campbell said.

“They want to come into Jamaica – quite a number of deaf persons that travel – but because the services are not available in Jamaica, they avoid Jamaica. What we wanted to see is more deaf persons coming into Jamaica, and that would not only bolster our tourism product, but also help the persons within the deaf community to give them another avenue to use up their language and to interact and communicate with persons from other countries,” she said.

UNWTO statistics indicate that people with disabilities represent 15 per cent of the world population. If that same logic is applied to the one billion international



Members of the Deafinitely Jamaica Tours team posing with US visitors outside the world-famous Doctor's Cave Beach.

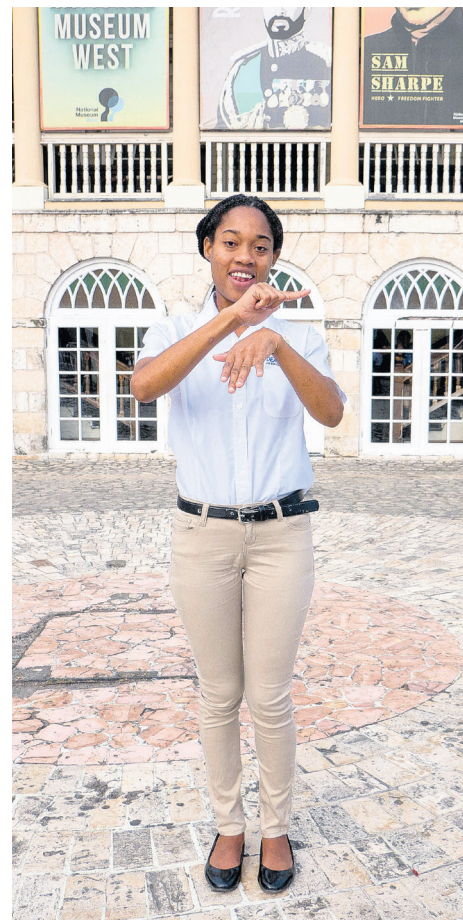


Tour guide Adrian Downer standing in the historic Sam Sharpe Square and signing.

tourists that travel each year, this means a 150 million market is there for the taking, in addition to their families or travel partners.

Having met the prerequisites of the Jamaican authorities, Deafinitely is gearing up to kick-start operations come the 2020 winter tourist season, which Campbell says they will precede with several soft launches.

A total of 10 tour guides, nine deaf persons and one hearing person skilled in sign language, were trained and certified by the Tourism Product Development Company Ltd as tour guides, with the Caribbean Christian Centre for the Deaf in Granville,



Nickadian Smith giving the history of the Montego Bay Cultural Centre.

St James, providing the interpreter during the training exercise.

“They are on call and as we develop, we will have a trainer dedicated to the company. Training and development will be a big part of what we do,” she said.

Campbell also noted that the company’s intention is to, in addition to the use of the Jamaica Sign Language, which is a derivative of the American Sign Language, increase the vocabulary of the tour guides by exposing them to the different types of sign languages to enable them to better cater to people from other regions.

The start-up company has access to two buses owned by one of its directors, who is a player in the ground transportation sector. The vehicles are retrofitted with ramps to accommodate persons who are using wheelchairs, but the aim is to procure a specially designed bus for that purpose, and then grow based on demand, Campbell said.

In the recent past, the UNWTO also called for a change in mindset and for provisions in the model of tourism services to meet this major market demand, noting that “accessible environments and services contribute to improve the quality of the tourism product and can create more job opportunities for people with disabilities”.

The World Health Organization has also given its take on the matter of accessible tourism, noting that accessibility for all to tourist facilities, products, and services should be a central part of any responsible and sustainable tourist policy.

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Christopher Gonzales' interpretation of reggae icon Bob Marley has been returned to the Corporate Area, for good.



Reggae royalty Toots Hibbert (centre) presents one of his earlier guitars to Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport Olivia Grange, while Herbie Miller, director at the Jamaica Music Museum, looks on. PHOTOS BY JANET SILVERA

'JAMAICA JAMAICA!' HAS COME home

Paul H. Williams

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

THERE IS no doubt that Jamaican music has had a significant impact on people's lives the world over, and, according to Herbie Miller, director of the Jamaican Music Museum (JMM), "the greatest advertisement that we have had for the past 50 years has been our music".

Miller was speaking as one of three curators at the official opening of the Jamaica leg of 'Jamaica Jamaica! How Our Music Conquered the World' exhibition on Sunday, February 2, inside the National Gallery of Jamaica (NGJ), downtown Kingston.

The exhibition had its genesis in Europe in 2015, when La Philharmonie de Paris commissioned Sebastien Carayol to mount an exhibition on the evolution and impact of Jamaican music. For,



A sound system of yesteryear.

despite its presence in Europe, not much was known there about Jamaican music.

"It's a sort of injustice in people

not knowing the whole story of Jamaican music," Carayol, one of the curators, told the capacity audience. The purpose of the exhibition

in Europe was to showcase the “beauty” and “the amazing range of the spiritual involvement of Jamaican music”, he said. In referencing Dennis Brown, he declared that “it was important for people to know the second half of the story, which has never been told”.

That second half was told first in Paris in 2017, after which it was narrated in São Paulo for a while, and now it is being related to a Jamaican audience, some of whom definitely have some knowledge about it. It is being curated in a different way, however, to fit into the Jamaican context. There are more local items on show. Many of the pieces exhibited in Paris and São Paulo did not make the trip to Jamaica; only those that were sent from Jamaica have been returned.

It is an audiovisual platform consisting of audio tapes, video footage, posters, photographs, musical equipment and instruments, memorabilia, etc, from private collections, the national collection, and the JMM. When Carayol was approached he, in turn, contacted the NGJ and the JMM with the intention to propose a collaboration. The proposal was accepted, and the show is being staged in association with the Ministry of Culture, the JMM, the NGJ and La Philharmonie de Paris through the French Embassy in Jamaica.

Carayol said the showcase is a prelude to the establishment of a physical building to house the JMM, so some finance has come from France to kick-start the said museum. To the French ambassador, Denys Wibaux, who was in the audience, Minister of Culture Olivia Grange expressed gratitude for his “working tirelessly to ensure, along with the team, that this exhibition come to Jamaica”.

NO SOLID CULTURE

People are happy that it is here, but Herbie Miller used the opportunity to say not enough is being allocated in the national Budget for music, and bemoan the fact that there is “no solid music culture in Jamaica” and no building to host a music museum. Then, he implored the Office of the Prime Minister and the Ministry of Finance to do right by helping the preservation.

“I am going to ask you, please, to endow the Ministry of Culture with such a budget that the prosperity our Government speaks about will be a reality,” Miller said. He also implored musicians and other members of the music industry to make donations to the museum for their posterity. And, in



The Mystic Revelation of Rastafari band adding much excitement to the event.



Musical instruments once used by the Skatalites.

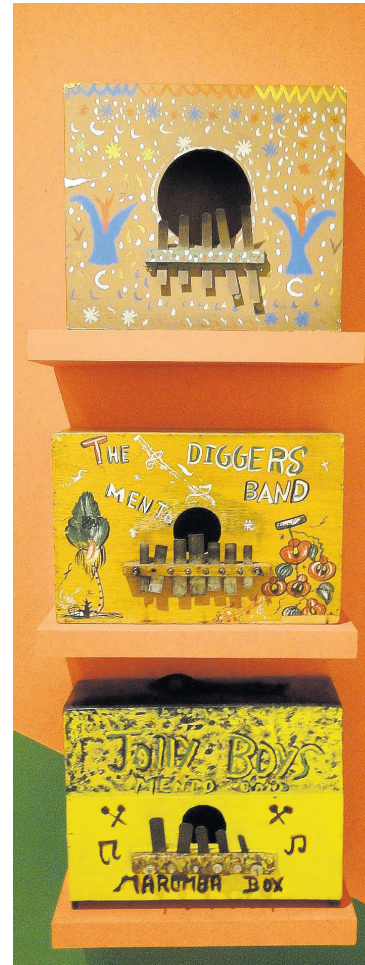


Professor Verene Shepherd beaming beside the legendary Bunny Wailer.

her address, Minister Grange told Miller that the matter of financing of which he spoke was discussed at

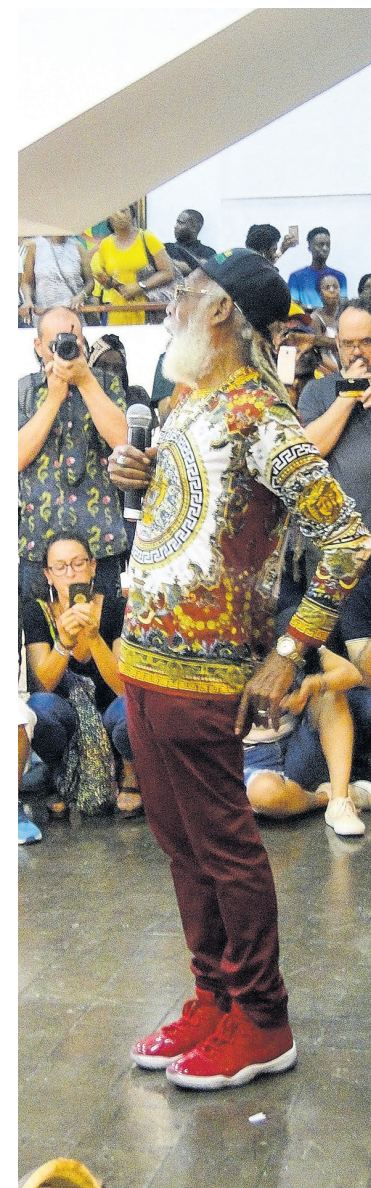
the Cabinet retreat from which she had come to the opening.

Minister Grange said the



A collection of rhumba boxes.

exhibition, which took its name from the Brigadier Jerry 1985 hit, **Jamaica Jamaica**, “celebrates the musical innovations born on this island. It seeks to unveil the story behind the musical genre of kumina, revival, mento, ska, rocksteady, reggae, dub, and dance hall.



The ‘godfather of dancehall’ Big Youth shows them how it is done.

It also highlights the impact of the local sound system culture, street culture and visual arts”.

The formalities came to a fitting climax as the Mystic Revelation of Rastafari band served up a suite of traditional and contemporary Jamaican tunes, moving people to get up and dance. Then into the space the ever-youthful ‘godfather of dancehall’, Big Youth, stepped, giving a masterclass in vocal variety and stage movements, with the band playing to his needs.

Big Youth was joined by another Jamaican music royalty, none other than Toots Hibbert. What a bam bam! After a brief but well-received stint, Hibbert presented one of his earlier guitars to Miller and Minister Grange to add to the collection at the JMM. Jamaica Jamaica! is open to the public until June 28, Tuesdays to Saturdays at 10 a.m.

Miss T's Kitchen and MSC Cruise to welcome MARTHA STEWART

Carl Gilchrist
Hospitality Jamaica Writer

MISS T'S Kitchen, a restaurant in Ocho Rios, is collaborating with MSC Cruises to bring the Martha Stewart Caribbean Excursion to this resort town within a matter of weeks.

Miss T's, owned and operated by Anna-Kay Tomlinson, recently opened a new location, Miss T's at Murphy Hill, which will figure in the Martha Stewart experience when she arrives in Jamaica.

In the meantime, work continues in order to get the restaurant's organic farm at Murphy Hill ready for the occasion.

"We have a tour; through MSC, we do a farm table tour with Martha Stewart," Tomlinson told **Hospitality Jamaica**.

"We're not exactly sure of the date just yet, but we're trying to get it like March, April, definitely within a next couple of months."

"The farm itself is organic. We don't use

fertiliser, we don't use spray, and at the same time, we're trying to fix the road and all that so when she comes; everything will be up to 110 per cent."

Mayor of St Ann's Bay, Michael Belnavis confirmed earlier this week that the St Ann Municipal Corporation will be spending \$15 million to repair the roadway leading from Ocho Rios to Murphy Hill, via Parry Town and Beecher Town.

While Miss T's in Ocho Rios has built up a reputable clientele, the new location, Miss T's at Murphy Hill, which occupies a section of the great house, will be a somewhat exclusive location.

"I started working on it in December 2018 and we opened April 2019. Right now we're just open for the tour that we presently do, and we cater to private groups of 10 or more persons, like corporate groups. We've done birthdays, weddings; we're really pushing it for weddings."

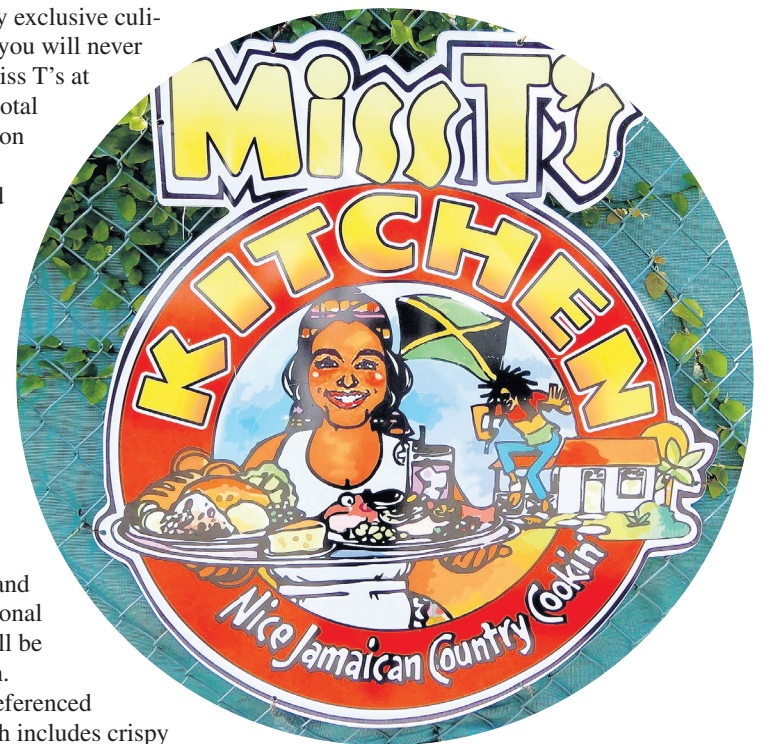
"We don't plan to open every day, because

I want it to be a really exclusive culinary experience that you will never ever forget. I want Miss T's at Murphy Hill to be a total experience," Tomlinson explained.

Stewart is expected to tour the farm at Murphy Hill to view the patches of cabbage, carrots, Scotch bonnet pepper and other produce.

And according to MSC Cruise's website, the farm-to-table experience will see guests walk through the gardens and reap a variety of seasonal vegetables, which will be used to prepare lunch.

The website also referenced Miss T's menu, which includes crispy panko-crusted fish fillet in a coconut sauce, served with peas and rice; smoked goat with local curries; jerked chicken pasta with sun-dried tomatoes and crispy cassava sticks; and escoveitched ackee with pickled onions, carrots, Scotch bonnet peppers, pimento and coconut-steamed balmy.



The sign at Miss T's restaurant in Ocho Rios. PHOTO BY CARL GILCHRIST

While in Ocho Rios, the tour will also visit Konoko Falls and journey to Montego Bay to tour Jamaica Flavours Tasting Tour and Craft Market.

THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

Tourism must be prepared to respond to all forms of disruption

David Jessop



ALTHOUGH THE misinformation continues to swirl, no cases of the coronavirus (COVID-19) have been reported in the Caribbean, and governments and the Pan American Health Organization continue to work together to prepare for any related possibilities.

At the time of writing, several Caribbean countries, including Jamaica, Antigua, The Bahamas, Dominica, and Trinidad, have imposed travel restrictions to and from China, and others have said that they are conducting rigorous screening at all ports of entry. In addition, some US cruise lines have stopped Chinese passengers and crew from boarding, and the indications are that cruise and air travel may be hit disproportionately in the coming weeks.

Making clear the importance of a well-prepared and measured response, and the need for multi-sectoral coordination between

the health and tourism authorities, Jamaica's Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett has said the global travel and tourism industry has a pivotal role to play in shaping the global response.

"At this point, the main focus of the global response to the coronavirus threat is to prevent further exposure beyond the currently affected areas, as well as to isolate infected persons from uninfected populations," Mr Bartlett told the media.

Noting that accomplishing this will require the mobilisation of significant resources to establish reliable systems to monitor, evaluate, and isolate risk, especially at various points of entry, he said that large investments "were urgently needed to procure modern health technology to screen risks, conduct vaccine research, develop public education campaigns, and ensure real-time information sharing and coordination across borders".

SHORT-TERM SHOCK

What the outcome for the region or the wider world from COVID-19 will be, will be seen in the coming months, but a significant short-term

shock to global tourism is possible if the emerging health crisis cannot be contained.

This may well affect the Caribbean not just because of its heavy dependence on travel and tourism, but, as more generally, the sector benefits from the confidence that a vibrant global economy creates.

Recent experience, however, suggests that the Caribbean has an extraordinary resilience and ability to bounce back from a variety of crises.

Speaking recently about this, Luis Lopez-Calva, the regional director for Latin America and the Caribbean at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), told the regional media that while it is too early to fully grasp the impact of the virus, "history demonstrates that in the region, volatility is the norm and not the exception", and that the challenge, as always, will be "to return to a predetermined path of development in the shortest possible time after suffering from an adverse shock".

Tourism is no exception. In recent years, the industry in the Caribbean has demonstrated its

ability to recover quickly from hurricanes; climate change-related phenomena such as sargassum and beach erosion; and, for example, the reputational damage on social media caused by crime- and visitor-related incidents.

It has been able, albeit at a monetary cost, to demonstrate that it can overcome such shocks, so that today, with only a few exceptions, every nation in the region has this winter season been reporting very healthy visitor arrival figures and increased earnings from tourism.

This suggests that despite the immediate impact of hard-to-predict events, awareness has grown about preparedness and the development of systemic and robust responses.

In contrast, much less consideration is given to the less tangible but equally real economic disruption tourism is likely to face in relation to technology and changing attitudes to travel and tourism.

The industry in the Caribbean knows from experience that it is vulnerable to the appearance of international technology-driven innovators, such as Uber, Lyft, or Airbnb. What it may not yet be prepared for is the next wave of

technological disturbance caused, for example, by 3D printing which potentially enables the manufacture of almost anything, including whole hotels, blockchain technology which link hoteliers directly to consumers.

There are also other, possibly more potent long-term disruptive trends, social in character, that will also require new thinking.

Around the world, increasingly vocal, populist environmental groups are expressing concern about the effect on global warming of carbon emissions. Their views on travelling less by air or cruise ship show signs of crossing into the mainstream, as does related thinking about the carbon footprint of travel, hotels sourcing in a local and ethical ways, and concerns that 'over tourism' is damaging host communities and the local environment.

The threat of a COVID-19 global pandemic is immediate and must be taken seriously. It may be disruptive for citizens and visitors in the short term, but as with all similar past events, it will pass.



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CHTA Education Foundation to build on success in 2020

Will expand scholarships and training programmes

BUILDING ON the success of its 2019 training initiatives, the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association Education Foundation (CHTAEF) is planning to expand its hospitality training programmes and scholarship support in the Caribbean this year.

On the heels of a strong outcome at the annual New York Times Travel Show fundraising drive, for which CHTA member hotels and resorts generously donated stays for auction, CHTAEF officials report that they are getting ready to roll out professional development and training programmes and award scholarships for current and future tourism professionals.

Reflecting on its activities last year, CHTAEF Chairperson Karolin Troubetzkoy reported that the foundation reached more than 750 hospitality professionals in Barbados, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Maarten, and Tobago through its on-island training courses.

"The feedback from our colleagues who participated in these trainings was phenomenal, and we look forward to delivering more training in other destinations in 2020," Troubetzkoy said, doffing her cap to long-time sponsors

Virgin Holidays and Interval International for prioritising Caribbean hospitality education and training with their generous support of both the training and the scholarship programmes.

In 2018, CHTAEF's board of trustees decided to offer more training opportunities in the region in support of 33 national hotel and tourism associations. The decision to go beyond awarding individual scholarships came with the realisation that on-island training would reach more Caribbean tourism industry professionals and assist them in adapting to the ever-changing needs and expectations of global travellers.

Following the launch of a pilot programme in 2018 and the subsequent on-island training delivered throughout 2019, property managers reported that they noticed changes in the way many of their team members interacted with guests, displaying more empathy and compassion, which resulted in increased satisfaction scores from visitors.

In 2019, CHTAEF also awarded 20 scholarships to students from Anguilla, Aruba, The Bahamas, Barbados, British Virgin Islands, Grenada, Jamaica, St Lucia, Trinidad & Tobago, and the US

Virgin Islands.

Troubetzkoy noted that scholarship benefactors are gaining hospitality knowledge, training and skills at some of the most prestigious institutions around the globe, including College of Mount Saint Vincent, Cornell University, The Culinary Institute of America, Edinburgh Napier University, Johnson & Wales University, Les Roches, Lynn University, Monroe College, University of Aruba, University of the Virgin Islands, University of the West Indies, and Vatel Hotel & Tourism Business School.

One of CHTAEF's 2019 highlights was inking a partnership with the highly regarded Les Roches Global Hospitality Education in Switzerland, allowing deserving Caribbean students to be trained at the elite institution. "Our partnership with Les Roches presents an excellent opportunity for Caribbean nationals to receive a highly desirable hospitality business degree, gaining an entrepreneurial mindset and a global outlook in the process," Troubetzkoy said, adding that as the scholarship recipients grow and develop, they become "future ambassadors" for the Caribbean hospitality industry.



Anthony Drummond (centre) makes his training sessions at the Riviera Main Pool Bar light-hearted and fun. CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Anthony Drummond:

FROM 'BEHIND BARS' TO RAISING THE BAR

WHEN SANDALS South Coast bar manager Anthony Drummond was asked what was his favourite quote, he quoted Dora the Explorer's, "We all have something that makes us happy, I know you do, too, but the happiest thing about being happy is being happy with what you do."

Being happy with what he does has certainly been a hallmark of Drummond's colourful 14-year career, more than half of which he spent 'behind bars' as he jokingly puts it. From bartender to manager, Drummond relishes his Sandals journey; his own growth as well as his current role to impact those he manages.

A true Sandals baby, the now 32 year-old landed his first job at Sandals South Coast back in 2006, the same year he completed his studies in Hospitality Management at the Heart Trust training institution in Culloden.

"At the time, I had friends working at Sandals South Coast and they spoke so highly of the resort that I decided to apply," says Drummond. He also

admits that while attending Black River High School, he dreamt of one day becoming an actor as he loved being on stage. "I never pursued that dream, as I found a new passion in bartending". But it wasn't long before the bar became his new stage.

As a bartender, Drummond's undeniable charisma gained him the reputation of a talented bartender who drew people in and kept them hooked. Nowhere is this more evident than in his enviable fan base of adoring guests, many of whom would return year after year to watch Drummond in action and whet their palates with his latest creations, bar games, and stories.

"But charisma could only bring me so far. If the bar was going to be my stage I had to know it inside out, all its nooks and crannies," says the bartender who dedicated himself to learning the overall bar operation throughout his seven years in the profession. "Additionally, in order to provide that 'above bar' service for which Sandals is known, I had to take some risks, learn some tricks, excite

and create."

Indeed, it was Drummond's ability to create that landed him the title of being the top bartender at the resort several years running. He is also an award-winning bartender who has walked away with top honours in various bartending competitions, including the Eldorado Drink Competition of 2010 and the Stolichnaya Jamaica Cocktail Master Competition of 2013, where he represented Sandals and Jamaica at the international level.

RISE TO THE TOP

Drummond's rise to the top was strategic and consistent. It didn't take long for the resort's management to realise that this fun-loving, baby-faced bartender had all the makings of a superb bar manager – an energetic, fare and compassionate team player who was respected by his colleagues and passionate about learning and teaching, not to mention being a stickler for excellence in service delivery with an eye for detail.

However, Anthony himself admits that his transition to management was not an easy one. "I was offered the bar supervisor position three times before I finally accepted it," he said, noting that it wasn't



Anthony whips up a cocktail at the Neptunes Bar.

because he doubted his abilities. "I was having the time of my life behind the bar and I wasn't ready to give that up; serving up cocktails was everything to me."

"But, eventually, I realised that because you're passionate about something or love being in a certain position doesn't mean you have to only do that or stay there," says Drummond. "Sometimes stepping into a new role and trying something different is what makes life interesting, or shall I say, colourful."

With that epiphany, Drummond decided to put aside the shots and go for the bottle. He spent six months as a bar supervisor and four years as an assistant bar manager. In 2017, he was appointed bar manager, and since then he has been busily raising the bar at Sandals South Coast.

Cultural Wellness and Culinary Festival welcomes REGGAE VETERANS

THE CREATION of IRITS Cultural Wellness and Culinary Festival by the outreach and education team from the Rastafari Indigenous Village (RIV) took place two and a half years ago.

Founded and managed by Arlene McKenzie and Firstman (Edward Wray), the festival takes place within the Portobello community on the last Sunday of each month. The event has been growing steadily since its inception.

The Rastafari Indigenous Village hit a high note with the recent appearance and celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Mighty Diamonds on January 26, 2020, which evolved out of a partnership with Masani Productions from Rastafest Canada. Mighty Diamonds, the harmony trio of Jamaican recording artistes, are renowned for performing a genre of roots reggae with a strong Rastafarian influence. Formed in 1969, the group is best known for its 1976 debut album **Right Time**, which became a hit among reggae lovers.

IRITS saw the group performing their **I Need a Roof and Them Never Love Poor Marcus**, with their megahit, **Pass the Kouchie**, drawing loud accolades from the audience. The veteran reggae group received a stirring tribute from veteran broadcaster Barry G, who took the audience down memory lane.

Emerging from a group of Village friends and family gatherings, IRITS evolved into what it is today – a veritable cultural showcase of Jamaica's brightest and sought-after entertainers. IRITS speaks to spiritual balance, peace, harmony with one's inner being. It is a strictly well-mind, well-body, well-spirit event which incorporates the literary arts, spiritual development, Nyabinghi drumming and reasoning, musical and poetic expressions, arts and crafts, always staying on the cutting edge.

The IRITS cultural showcase and holistic philosophy has attracted an eclectic mix of veteran

and youth entertainers, such as Chronixx, Kelissa and Kesnamdi, Luton Fyah, Terry Linen, Ritchie Spice, and emerging artistes such as Rosh Rebel, Kali Grn and d'Rebelz, Dinho Music and Indie Allen.

This Sunday, February 23, RIV welcomes Luciano to the IRITS cultural space between 1 p.m. and 6 p.m..

Born Jepther McClymont, Luciano is affectionately known as 'Jah Messenjah' and is one of Jamaica's renowned international second-generation roots reggae artist. His vast discography offers each music lover countless hits like **Sweep Over The Soul**, among others such as **Moving Up, One Way Ticket, After All** and **Where There Is Life**.

The IRITS Festival is inextricably linked with the culinary arts; expert vegan chefs and nutritionists are ever present. The Sunday gathering where people interact and meander within the village, offers a cornucopia of exquisite food and is a major part of the Sunday gathering. The village allows no alcohol or animal products.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The organisers have drawn on the RIV for its strength and development, supported by the Nelson family at the Montego River Gardens, the Tourism Product Development Company, and an army of volunteers.

Business operators such as Oral Fernand of Document Solutions, Dr Jodie Tafari of Sekhmet Medical, Mudadah Hammanut from Adwa and V-Spot Vegan restaurant have all come on board.

The festival has enabled new and innovative cottage industry businesses and entrepreneurs to present their products to a ready audience within the holistic environment and beauty of the Montego River Valley.



The Mighty Diamonds.



CHTAEF is preparing for a strong year of education and training. CONTRIBUTED

THE BEST of Jamaican cuisine is returning to the Food Network & Cooking Channel South Beach Wine & Food Festival presented by Capital One & Food Festival presented by Capital One (SOBEWFF). For the second consecutive year, award-winning chefs for Taste Jamaica, presented by the Jamaica Tourist Board and the Tourism Enhancement Fund, will take over the historic National Hotel on South Beach on Friday, February 21. Hosted by J.J. Johnson and Andre Fowles, Jamaica's top culinary talent will serve up a cornucopia of Jamaican flavour, rum, and rhythm.

"Taste Jamaica highlights fresh, innovative takes on traditional Jamaican cooking, incorporating popular ingredients people know and love," said Donnie Dawson, Jamaica Tourist Board's deputy director of tourism, sales. "It is a perfect opportunity for foodies to get a sampling of the culinary culture that makes Jamaica a top destination for diverse cuisine."

Following a sold-out debut in 2019, the event is bringing together James Beard Award-winning Chef J.J. Johnson of Field Trip in Harlem, New York, and Chef Andre

JAMAICA TO BRING **BOLD** ISLAND FLAVOUR TO SOUTH BEACH FESTIVAL

Fowles, culinary ambassador for Jamaican cuisine and owner of Everything Food, based in New York, NY, as hosts for the evening soirée. Curated by an eclectic line-up of talented chefs, the menu will celebrate classic flavours and ingredients of Jamaica, while incorporating exciting twists to staples such as jerk-style dishes, ackee and salt fish, breadfruit and more.

Participating chefs include:
 ■ Samantha Davis-Allonce, FieldTrip (New York)

- Winston Grant, Aunt I's Jamaican Restaurant (Miami)
- Charissa Henry-Skyers, Pink Apron Jamaica (Kingston)
- Cindy Hutson & Delius Shirley, Ortanique on the Mile (Miami)
- Oji Jaja, Ashebre The Virtual Restaurant (Kingston)
- Dennis Kerr, Dunkunoo Jamaican Kitchen (Miami)
- Geoff Lee, Makka & Mana Poke (Miami)
- Kalisa Martin, Kalisa Marie Eats

- (Philadelphia)
 - Matthew McDonald, National Hotel (Miami)
 - Christina Simonitsch, Simo's (Montego Bay)
 - Wenford Patrick Simpson, Walkerswood Caribbean Foods (New York)
 - Hugh Sinclair, Chef Irie Spice (Miami)
- The Food Network & Cooking Channel South Beach Wine & Food Festival is produced by Florida International University and Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits, with the support of the Miami Beach Visitors & Convention Authority and the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs. All proceeds from the festival benefit the students of the Florida International University Chaplin School of Hospitality & Tourism Management. To date, SOBEWFF has raised more than \$30 million for the School.

Taste Jamaica will take place on Friday, February 21, from 8 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. at the National Hotel, 1677 Collins Avenue, Miami Beach.

To purchase tickets and for more information, visit www.sobewff.org/jamaica.

JTB teams up with Jamaica Rum Festival for New York launch

EVENT SPONSOR Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) participated in the launch of the second annual Jamaica Rum Festival at Campari America's headquarters in Manhattan, New York, last Monday. The annual festival celebrates and recognises Jamaica's outsize impact on the world with its rum, food and music.

The Jamaica Rum Festival, scheduled for Hope Gardens from February 29 to March 1, serves to showcase the distinct culinary and cultural offerings of Jamaica. Aimed at encouraging new and repeat visitors to experience the vibrant destination, the festival's location in Kingston also showcases the capital city as a premier entertainment hub.

"As a destination, we have sought to adopt an aggressive marketing strategy to keep Jamaica top of mind for travellers planning their next vacation," said Philip Rose, Jamaica Tourist Board's regional director, Northeast US. "Part of this strategy is our new brand positioning – 'Jamaica: Heartbeat of the World'. The Jamaica Rum Festival is an excellent example of our larger-than-life experiences, as it combines many of our uniquely Jamaican assets – warm people, rich culture, vibrant entertainment, savoury cuisine, and, of course, our fiery rum."

The festival will feature artists such as Protege, Ky-Mani Marley,



Freddie McGregor and more. Throughout the festival, Appleton Estate Jamaica Rum will host interactive seminars with the first female master blender, Joy Spence, and senior blender David Morrison.

Marsha Lumbley, director of marketing, J Wray and Nephew Limited, addresses the audience at the Jamaica Rum Festival New York launch.



A bartender pours a cocktail at the Jamaica Rum Festival launch in New York last Monday. **CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS**

TPDCo executive director launches

TOURISM AND TRAVEL BOOK

Paul H. Williams
Hospitality Jamaica Writer

THE BLUE Mountain Suite inside The Knutsford Court Hotel in St Andrew was filled to capacity on Tuesday evening, February 11.

Well-known stakeholders in the tourist and hospitality industries, colleagues, associates, family and friends of Dr Andrew Spencer, executive director at the Tourism Product Development Company (TPDCo), had gone to wish him well.

It was the launch of his second single-authored book, **Travel and Tourism in the Caribbean – Challenges and Opportunities for Small Island Developing States**.

The event, which saw speaker after speaker heaping praises and accolades upon Dr Spencer, was compered by the affable Dr Dalea Bean, lecturer and graduate coordinator in the Institute of Gender and Development Studies at The University of the West Indies, Mona campus, and long-time friend.

The father of two, who describes himself as a ‘pracademic’, is a tourism scholar who has been applying his knowledge to his professional endeavours. He does not only research and teach it, but he practises it, **Hospitality Jamaica** has gathered. He was



From left: UWI Pro Vice-Chancellor Densil Williams, Diana Spencer, executive director of the Tourism Development Company; Dr Andrew Spencer; Tourism Minister Edmund Bartlett, and Godfrey Dyer, chairman of the Tourism Enhancement Fund, are cracking up by something Dr Dalea Bean, comper, said. **PHOTOS BY PAUL WILLIAMS**

seconded from the Mona School of Business and Management, where he lectured in tourism management, to TPDCo. The Wolmer’s Boys’ School alumnus was also director of the Centre for Hotel and Tourism Management, University of the West Indies, Nassau campus in The Bahamas.

He holds a PhD from the School of Tourism at Bournemouth



Dr Andrew Spencer signs his book as Dr Mechelle Best, professor and chair in the Department of Recreation and Tourism Management at California State University, Northridge, looks on.

University in the United Kingdom (UK), and was the first PhD graduate from Bournemouth’s Tourism Lab. His research focused on the determinants of technology adoption for travellers, with particular emphasis on

the strategic management implications and leadership imperatives for owner-managers. This thesis was awarded the ITT PhD Student of the Year 2011-2013 by the ITT Education and Training Committee in the UK.

His publication credits include about 30 articles/papers, with his

first single-authored book being **The Leadership Imperatives: Technology Adoption and Strategic Management in Travel Firms in Jamaica**. In her commentary on his latest book, published by Palgrave McMillan, Dr Acollo Cameron, dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences at The University of the West Indies, St Augustine campus in Trinidad, said it is “timely, relevant, required and far-reaching”.

“The insights, dialogues and recommendations offered bear testament of the writer’s vast experiences and knowledge on the subject matter and provides the reader with a clear way forward. In a time when tourism in small island states in the Caribbean is under threat by many exogenous forces, this book acts as a beacon of light and hope, and inspires us to make every effort to successfully navigate the rough waters and establish ourselves once again as the leading region in global tourism,” Dr Cameron said.

The foreword, written by Tourism Minister Edmund Bartlett, was read by Dr Mechelle Best, professor and chair in the Department of Recreation and Tourism Management at California State University, Northridge.

“It is this rare combination of solid academic grounding and a shrew understanding of the daily realities of the tourism praxis which are merit in this work, and make it a necessary prerogative literature of Caribbean tourism in the 21st century ... The work unpacks the ways in which tourism has been, and continues to be, the linchpin with which many Caribbean economies and societies are put together,” Dr Best read, among other things.

The launch evolved into a pre-birthday party of sort, as Dr Spencer celebrated his 40th birthday the day after the launch. With his wife, son and daughter by his side, he cut his birthday cake, part of was an edible replica of his book.

A birthday cake with a difference.





WORLD TRAVEL AWARDS



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Jamaica Inn named the Caribbean's

LEADING All-Suite Hotel 2020

Experience the breathtaking views of Jamaica Inn.



Dinner is served on the picturesque Jamaica Inn terrace. Welcome home!

Mickella Anderson
Features Writer

FOR A third consecutive time, the timeless and stylish Jamaica Inn has been named the Caribbean's Leading All Suite Hotel by the World Travel Awards. The Caribbean and North American Gala Ceremony was held recently at the Sandals Royal Bahamian Resort in a picturesque affair fitting for an industry of this nature.

General Manager Kyle Mais says the win reiterates the standard that has been the hallmark of Jamaica Inn's now 70-year existence. "We can't say that it was an expected win, but we are very happy to be the recipient of this award," he told **Hospitality Jamaica**. "Jamaica

Inn is one of the leading luxury boutique hotels in the Caribbean and awards such as the World Travel Awards reiterate the same."

Each year, the awards recognise and celebrate excellence across all key sectors of the travel, tourism, and hospitality industry. The prizes are divided into a series of regional awards recognise individual and collective achievements within each geographic region.

AN ICONIC PROPERTY

To date, Jamaica Inn is one of the island's last remaining iconic, luxury properties. According to Mais: "As an EP hotel, we encourage our visitors to explore as much as Jamaica has to offer and dive deep into our culture. We also have, quite notably, one of the



Meet the caring and courteous staff at Jamaica Inn.



The west wing roof at Jamaica Inn offers great views.



The terrace at Jamaica Inn.

most beautiful, natural swimmable beaches on the island, which is a huge bonus.”

He said, “As a family owned independent hotel also, we extend value through personalised service, anticipating guests’ needs and truly making them feel at home.”

Mais thanks Graham Cooke, leader of the World Travel Awards, for giving intimate boutique properties like Jamaica Inn the ability to be recognised on the global scale. He added, “It also wouldn’t be possible to win such an award without the hard work and dedication of our incredible team, and, by extension, the organisations we partner with who contribute goods and service, which

are par excellence.”

Looking on to the future, Mais says the maintenance of traditional flair and exceeding the needs of guests are paramount to the continued success of Jamaica Inn. This means that the property will remain relevant as they continue to be aware of the varied needs of the market such as ‘the emerging millennial travellers’.

But even so, Mais says there is no need to change ‘just for the sake of changing’. He told **Hospitality Jamaica**, “In a world where everything changes quickly and competition between hotels gets tougher and tougher, you

PLEASE SEE **INN**, 14



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INN

CONTINUED FROM 13

would expect it to be necessary for the hotel to constantly change as well. At the Inn, it is actually the opposite.”

He used the hotel’s traditional brass room keys as an example explaining that “changing them to smart keys and smart locks would take away the most important thing: interaction with the guests. We still want to greet our guests, talk to them and make them want to come back.”

“It has worked out pretty well,” he affirmed. “The hotel has a lot of returning guests coming back every year. Also, after taking a look at our guest reviews, you quickly notice one word repeating itself: authenticity. There is no other hotel like Jamaica Inn, that’s for sure.”

Concluding, Mais made an impassioned plea for local hotels to take a serious look at their impact on the environment. “Jamaica Inn has embarked on a comprehensive plan not only to reduce our carbon footprint, but also to help champion the cause of creating a sustainable tourism industry which will benefit residents



Make a splash at Jamaica Inn.

and visitors alike,” he said.

OTHER NOTABLE JAMAICA INN ACCOLADES:

- The 2020 US News & World Report Best Hotel rankings has chosen Jamaica Inn as the number six hotel in the Caribbean and number two hotel in Jamaica.
- The 2019 Jamaica Gleaner Hospitality Awards has recognised Jamaica Inn as

Jamaica’s Best Eco Sustainable Resort.

- The 2019 World Spa Awards has recognised Jamaica Inn’s Ocean Spa as Jamaica’s Best Hotel Spa.
- The 2019 Trip Advisor Travelers’ Choice Awards named Jamaica Inn number one in Jamaica for Service and Romance and number three out of the Top 25 Hotels in the Caribbean overall

2020 WINNERS

CARIBBEAN’S LEADING ADVENTURE TOUR OPERATOR 2020

- Island Routes Caribbean Adventures

CARIBBEAN’S LEADING ADVENTURE TOURIST ATTRACTION 2020

- Dunn’s River Falls Jamaica

CARIBBEAN’S LEADING AIRLINE 2020

- Bahamasair

CARIBBEAN’S LEADING AIRLINE BRAND 2020

- Caribbean Airlines

CARIBBEAN’S LEADING AIRPORT 2020

- Sangster International Airport, Jamaica

CARIBBEAN’S LEADING AIRPORT LOUNGE 2020

- Club MoBay @ Sangster International Airport, Jamaica

CARIBBEAN’S LEADING ALL-SUITE HOTEL 2020

- The Palms Turks & Caicos

CARIBBEAN’S LEADING ALL-INCLUSIVE FAMILY RESORT 2020

- Beaches Turks & Caicos

CARIBBEAN’S LEADING BEACH DESTINATION 2020

- Turks & Caicos Islands

CARIBBEAN’S LEADING BEACH RESORT 2020

- Amanera, Dominican Republic

CARIBBEAN’S LEADING BOUTIQUE HOTEL 2020

- Point Grace, Turks & Caicos

CARIBBEAN’S LEADING BOUTIQUE RESORT 2020

- GoldenEye, Jamaica

CARIBBEAN’S LEADING CAR RENTAL COMPANY 2020

- Avis

CARIBBEAN’S LEADING CASINO RESORT 2020

- Atlantis, Paradise Island, Bahamas

CARIBBEAN’S LEADING CONFERENCE HOTEL 2020

- Grand Hyatt Baha Mar, Bahamas

CARIBBEAN’S LEADING CRUISE DESTINATION 2020

- Jamaica

CARIBBEAN’S LEADING CRUISE LINE 2020

- Norwegian Cruise Line

CARIBBEAN’S LEADING CRUISE PORT 2020

- Port of Falmouth, Jamaica

CARIBBEAN’S LEADING DESTINATION 2020

- Jamaica

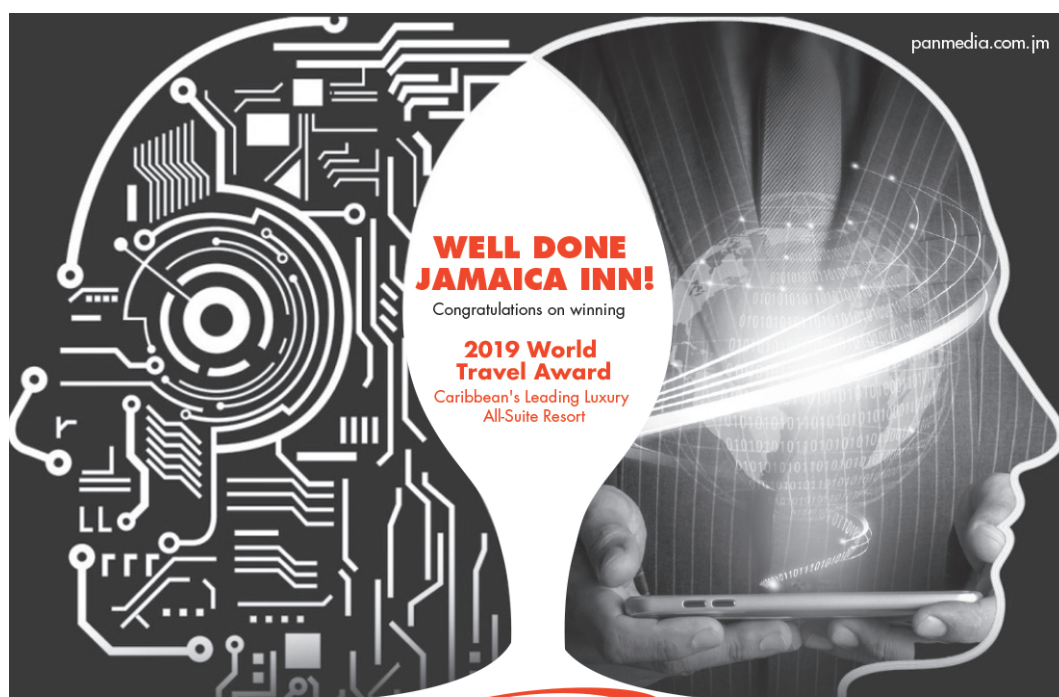
CARIBBEAN’S LEADING DESTINATION MANAGEMENT COMPANY 2020

- GO! Jamaica Travel

CARIBBEAN’S LEADING DIVE DESTINATION 2020

- Cayman Islands

PLEASE SEE **WINNERS**, 15



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About World Travel Awards

CELEBRATING ITS 27th anniversary in 2020, World Travel Awards was established in 1993 to acknowledge, reward, and celebrate excellence across all key sectors of the travel, tourism, and hospitality industries. Today, the World Travel Awards brand is recognised globally as the ultimate hallmark of industry excellence.

Its annual programme is renowned as the most prestigious and comprehensive in the global industry. Each year, World Travel Awards covers the globe with its Grand Tour – a series of regional gala ceremonies to recognise excellence within each continent, culminating in a Grand Final at the end of the year.

World Travel Awards™ gala ceremonies are regarded as milestone events in the industry calendar, attended by the industry’s key decision makers and figure heads as well as key trade and consumer media. The programme, its winners, and its sponsors are represented globally on social media, with fresh daily content on multiple platforms.

In 2019, World Travel Awards™ Grand Tour featured regional gala ceremonies in North America and the Caribbean (Jamaica), Middle East (Abu Dhabi, UAE), Africa and the Indian Ocean (Mauritius), Europe (Madeira, Portugal), Latin America (La Paz, Bolivia), and Asia and Oceania (PhuQuoc, Vietnam). Regional winners then competed head to head in the corresponding world categories. The winners were announced on the night of the World Travel Awards™ Grand Final in Muscat, Oman, in November 2019.

The 2020 Caribbean and North American Gala Ceremony was held at the Sandals Royal Bahamian Resort.

2020 WINNERS

WINNERS

CONTINUED FROM 14

- CARIBBEAN'S LEADING ENTERTAINMENT VENUE 2020**
■ Margaritaville Caribbean, Jamaica
- CARIBBEAN'S LEADING GREEN RESORT 2020**
■ Curtain Bluff, Antigua
- CARIBBEAN'S LEADING HOME PORT 2020**
■ Port of Montego Bay, Jamaica
- CARIBBEAN'S LEADING HONEYMOON DESTINATION 2020**
■ Saint Lucia
- CARIBBEAN'S LEADING HONEYMOON RESORT 2020**
■ Sandals Grande St Lucian, St Lucia
- CARIBBEAN'S LEADING HOTEL 2020**
■ Coco Reef Resort & Spa, Tobago
- CARIBBEAN'S LEADING HOTEL BRAND 2020**
■ Sandals Resorts International
- CARIBBEAN'S LEADING HOTEL RESIDENCES 2020**
■ The Tryall Club, Jamaica
- CARIBBEAN'S LEADING HOTEL SUITE 2020**
■ Grace Bay Penthouse Suite @ Grace Bay Club, Turks & Caicos
- CARIBBEAN'S LEADING INDEPENDENT CAR RENTAL COMPANY 2020**
■ Island Car Rentals, Jamaica
- CARIBBEAN'S LEADING LUXURY ALL-SUITE RESORT 2020**
■ Jamaica Inn
- CARIBBEAN'S LEADING LUXURY ALL-INCLUSIVE RESORT 2020**
■ Sandals Emerald Bay, Bahamas
- CARIBBEAN'S LEADING LUXURY HOTEL VILLA 2020**
■ Fleming Villa @ GoldenEye, Jamaica
- CARIBBEAN'S LEADING LUXURY ISLAND DESTINATION 2020**
■ The Bahamas
- CARIBBEAN'S LEADING LUXURY ISLAND RESORT 2020**
■ Sailrock Resort, Turks & Caicos
- CARIBBEAN'S LEADING LUXURY RESORT 2020**
■ Meliá Braco Village, Jamaica
- CARIBBEAN'S LEADING MEETINGS & CONFERENCE CENTRE 2020**
■ Montego Bay Convention Centre, Jamaica

- CARIBBEAN'S LEADING NEW HOTEL 2020**
■ AC Hotel Kingston, Jamaica
- CARIBBEAN'S LEADING NEW RESORT 2020**
■ Cabrits Resort & Spa Kempinski Dominica
- CARIBBEAN'S LEADING PRIVATE ISLAND RESORT 2020**
■ Kamalame Cay, Bahamas
- CARIBBEAN'S LEADING PRIVATE JET CHARTER 2020**
■ Privé Jets
- CARIBBEAN'S LEADING RESORT 2020**
■ Sandals Royal Barbados
- CARIBBEAN'S LEADING TOUR OPERATOR 2020**
■ GO! Jamaica Travel
- CARIBBEAN'S LEADING TOURIST BOARD 2020**
■ Jamaica Tourist Board
- CARIBBEAN'S LEADING TRAVEL AGENCY 2020**
■ Trafalgar Travel
- CARIBBEAN'S LEADING VILLA RESORT 2020**
■ Round Hill Hotel & Villas, Jamaica
- CARIBBEAN'S MOST ROMANTIC DESTINATION 2020**
■ Turks & Caicos Islands
- CARIBBEAN'S MOST ROMANTIC RESORT 2020**
■ Sandals Grande Antigua

Jamaica

- JAMAICA'S LEADING ALL-INCLUSIVE FAMILY RESORT 2020**
■ Beaches Negril
- JAMAICA'S LEADING BOUTIQUE HOTEL 2020**
■ Strawberry Hill
- JAMAICA'S LEADING BUSINESS HOTEL 2020**
■ Spanish Court Hotel
- JAMAICA'S LEADING CAR RENTAL COMPANY 2020**
■ Island Car Rentals
- JAMAICA'S LEADING CONFERENCE HOTEL 2020**
■ Hyatt Ziva Rose Hall
- JAMAICA'S LEADING HOTEL 2020**
■ Round Hill Hotel & Villas
- JAMAICA'S LEADING LUXURY RESORT 2020**
■ Hyatt Ziva Rose Hall
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