

# JAMAICA HERITAGE TRAIL



**1 Spanish Town**, originally called «Villa de la Vega», was founded in 1534 as Jamaica's second capital before this was moved to Kingston in 1871. Today it is a busy market and transport hub, containing historic buildings along with long-established schools, churches and chapels.

**2 King's House** is the official residence in Jamaica of its Governor-General, the representative of the reigning monarch of England. One of the Kingston's architectural treasures, it is set amidst sweeping lawns and enjoys gardens which contain trees, flowers and other plants from all over the world.

**3 Gordon House** was officially inaugurated as the Parliament Building of Jamaica in 1960. Its name honours the Rt. Excellent George William Gordon, one of Jamaica's National Heroes, who strongly supported the rights of the newly emancipated ex-slaves in the 1850's.

**4 Palisadoes** refers to the spit of land which partially encloses Kingston Harbour, the seventh largest natural harbour in the world. As its mangrove swamps provide an important habitat for a number of endangered species, it was declared a Protected National Heritage site in 1999.

**5 Port Royal**, although today a small village engaged in fishing and tourism, was a major centre of commerce in the late 1600's. Just off-shore is «The Sunken City», one of the most significant underwater archaeological sites in the western hemisphere which continues to yield important artefacts and treasures.

**6 New Seville** was established in 1509 by Juan de Esquivel, the first Spanish Governor of Jamaica, as the island's first capital before this was moved to «Villa de la Vega» (Spanish Town) in 1534. Its rich and diverse history encompasses Jamaica's four most significant cultures: the Taíno, Spanish, African and British.

**7 Runaway Bay** has been traditionally regarded as the site from which the Spanish left Jamaica in 1660, following the arrival of the English five years earlier. With the signature of the Treaty of Madrid in 1670, the island was officially ceded to England and governed as a colony until granted full independence in 1962.

**8 Rio Bueno** is believed to be where Christopher Columbus planted the Spanish flag in 1494, thereby formally claiming possession of Jamaica in the name of Queen Isabella of Castille. During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it developed into a bustling seaport town; today, it is a tranquil fishing village with two historical churches.

**9 Mamme Bay** was the site of a large village established by Jamaica's indigenous people, the Taíno, as early as 650 AD. Over time, the area has been used for growing sugar cane, indigo, pimento trees, coconuts as well as raising cattle. Today, it is home to several prestigious hotels.

**10 Oyster Bay** is claimed to be one of the brightest fluorescent lagoons in the world. Due to the mixing of its fresh, brackish and salt waters, it provides an optimum environment for numerous light-

producing (bioluminescent) organisms. For this reason, it is also known as Glistening Waters or the Luminous Lagoon.

**11 Falmouth** is considered the best planned town in Jamaica. Established in the end 1700's at the height of the sugar industry, it was carefully laid out along a grid pattern with the parish church in the centre. Its water wheel, built in 1795, provided its residents with fresh piped water well before New York City. Today, it is a quaint and quiet seaport town with many attractive old Georgian buildings.

**12 St. James** was first inhabited by the Taíno people, believed to have arrived in Jamaica between 650-900 A.D. and called it «Xaymaca» («isle of springs»). The parish of St. James remained sparsely inhabited and with little commerce until the mid-1700's when its sugar production soared. Today, it is a major tourism destination and welcomes more than 500,000 visitors annually.

**13 Rose Hall** was an important sugar estate in 17<sup>th</sup> century. It is enshrined in local legend as the result of one of its owners, Annie Palmer, also known as the «White Witch of Rose Hall». With its Great House carefully renovated in 1965 by entrepreneurs John and Michele Rollins, it is today a beautiful national monument which brings to life the country's rich and colourful past.

**14 Cinnamon Hill**, a former sugar estate, was named after the wild cinnamon trees which were once abundant on the property. Built in 1760, its Great House was home to Johnny Cash and June Carter Cash from the 1970s until 2003. The biography of these world-famous musicians is depicted in the Oscar-winning film, «Walk the Line» (2005).

**15 Montego Bay** is believed to derive its name from «Bahia de Manteca» («Lard Bay») due to the large quantities of pig's fat (manteca) exported by the Spanish colonisers in the early 1500's. Following the English conquest of Jamaica in 1655, the area was used for sugar cultivation and Montego Bay became a major port for its export. Today, it is the country's second largest city and widely heralded as its tourism capital.

**16 Freeport** was created from a multi-million development project which began in 1967 and reclaimed 500 acres of land from the sea. It is considered an important commercial hub of Montego Bay and today houses shopping and resort complexes along with commercial and recreational facilities.

**17 Point** was a sugar estate established in 1677 and which remained productive until the late 1800's. Its sugar works were located at the centre of this estate, the former windmill tower and the boiling house still visible today. Already home to a tourism resort, Point is anticipated to continue with real estate development on its remaining acreage.

**18 Lucea**, probably founded around 1515, was originally christened «Santa Lucea» when Spanish settled in this area. In 1723, it became the capital of the parish of Hanover and was given the status of a free port shortly thereafter, in 1766. Within its octagonal fortification, known as Fort Charlotte, is the Old Barracks complex which currently houses the Hanover Museum.

**19 Negril** is thought to have been named «Negrillo» by the Spanish in 1494. Despite a long history, it did not become well known until the late 1950's coinciding with its development as a resort location. Today, it is most famous for its «Seven Mile» beach, considered one of Jamaica's most magnificent beaches.