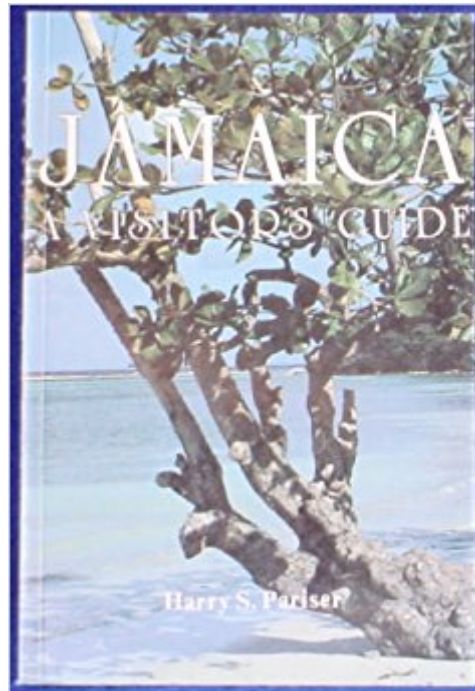




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Jamaica: A Visitor's Guide



Book Information

Paperback

Publisher: Hunter Publishing (April 1990)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1556502532

ISBN-13: 978-1556502538

Product Dimensions: 0.7 x 5.5 x 8.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.4 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 3 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #2,396,884 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #71 in [Books > Travel > Caribbean > Jamaica](#)

Customer Reviews

Refreshingly honest in the overall evaluation of the country and the occasional tongue-in-cheek adds a spark to the writing. For example in the section, "GETTING THERE: BY AIR", Pariser notes, "Jamaica is readily accessible from most American Cities. Although the only really cheap way to get to Jamaica is to swim." Harry Pariser's evaluation of the Jamaican Government and the country's economy is hard hitting and accurate, as it should be for Jamaica has one of the greatest disparities of wealth in the world today. His anthropological explanation of the people is excellent for a guide book. His expose of religion in Jamaica (especially Rastafarianism) and music (Reggae - Bob Marley, Jimmy Cliff, Garnet Silk) is well written and very informative. After reading the first 120 pages of "Jamaica: A Visitor's Guide" you will have a well-rounded grasp of this unique Caribbean culture and how to navigate around in it. The downside of "Jamaica: A Visitor's Guide" is that the information regarding lodging, food, entertainment reflects the published date of 1995. In Kingston, two of the smaller hotels listed are now closed and prices in the book have risen about at least 30%. Compared to other guide books on Jamaica (Lonely Planet, Moon Travel, etc.) its description of the budget and moderate accommodations receive less ink thus there is not much for you to make an intelligent choice by (i.e., he writes "14 rooms, with an attractive atmosphere, T.V. lounge and restaurant.") Jamaica: A Visitor's Guide introduces you to many interesting facets of Jamaica and if Pariser brings out a fourth edition, I would hope that he would add more descriptions to accommodations and dining and list hotel's e-mail/web pages (a peeve that I have with all guide books). With those changes I would push this guide book to the front of the line for Jamaica. Currently, there are better guides to use when traveling to Jamaica. Conditionally Recommended.

Pariser covers the physical setting, history, government, economy, the people, language, religion, music, food, and "practicalities" (which includes how to conduct oneself). The book then goes on to provide an overview of the regions of Jamaica -- useful to help one decide which part of Jamaica to visit. The many high quality color photographs help bring the book, and the island, alive. Pariser is very honest (shall we say blunt?). After describing the beautiful 11-km beach at Negril, he writes: "Once a traveler's paradise, Negril now qualifies as an up-and-coming Miami Beach, well on the way to holding the dubious distinction of being the worst tourist trap on the island." Jamaica, A Visitor's Guide, is full of interesting background material which can help to make a visit to Jamaica an enriching experience and not simply a visit to a pretty tropical island. Unless you intend to spend all of your time behind the gates of your all-inclusive resort -- in which case you need no guidebook. Judith Nicholls, Four Winds Travel, [...]

As someone who has visited Jamaica regularly since 1960, I can recommend Harry Pariser's guide as unequivocally the most useful. It's the book we keep on the shelves of our own house there at Tryall, for our guests and those who rent the place. Michael M. Thomas, columnist, New York Observer, and novelist

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