

ABSTRACT

Exploring the Possibilities and Challenges of Kingston as a Prime Heritage
Tourism Destination.

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The purpose of this paper is to examine the prospects of developing and marketing a cultural heritage tourism programme for Jamaica's capital, Kingston, within the context of far reaching effects of globalisation on urban centres. The study comes at a time when Kingston is in doldrums and the city has long been showing signs that it needs an injection of sustainable social and economic programmes to capture a straying young population.

One of the essential objectives of the paper surrounded the definition of the area referred to as Kingston, particularly as the subject being explored involves a cultural heritage programme. The areas defined to encompass Kingston's heritage tourism programme include the immediate environs of St. Andrew, St. Catherine, and St. Thomas based on proximity to the capital as well as the quality and potential of the cultural heritage product within each area identified. The paper examines the emergence of Jamaica's tourism industry, specifically as it relates to the early role that Kingston played in the subsequent development of

the product. The paper also challenges the feasibility of marketing Jamaica's tourism product as the traditional "sand, sun and sea' destination, and emphasizes the potential role of building the country's tourism product by exploring the possibilities of urban heritage tourism. The integral approach to research methodology was principally centred on an historical analyses of Jamaica's tourism industry, a review and assessment of the existing plans for the development of the country's tourism product and recorded interviews among various private and public sector interest groups with the view of exploring the possibilities and challenges that exist for urban heritage tourism.

The thesis highlights the social and economic benefits of urban heritage tourism particularly with respect to its potential to provide opportunities for the local population, and the development of community tourism. The paper illustrates the urgency to preserve Kingston's remaining architectural heritage, and demonstrates how heritage and urban life can coexist without negatively affecting the authenticity of tradition and altering the customary functions of the city.

Keywords: Janice Francis-Lindsay; Urban Heritage Tourism; Community Tourism and Authenticity.

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