

Jamaica's first Artisan Village to be constructed in Trelawny

The parish of Trelawny is poised to be the site for the construction of Jamaica's first artisan village, Tourism Minister Edmund Bartlett disclosed last week.

The Tourism Minister explained that "the Port Authority of Jamaica has agreed to offer the Ministry of Tourism the land to build the first Artisan Village, not only in Falmouth, but indeed in Jamaica. We intend to start the process towards construction soon by meeting with our architects and draftsmen to decide on a design for the facility." The establishment of Artisan Villages in all the resort areas of the country formed part of the initiatives outlined in Minister Bartlett's 2009/2010 Budget presentation. He stated then that the Villages will allow Craft producers to obtain training in new and changing techniques in the production of items for the tourism and local markets. Minister Bartlett stated that "the Ministry through TPDCo intends to use the Artisan Villages to transform the existing craft shopping experience in each of the resort areas. The Artisan Villages will be developed as thematic attractions that will bring important benefits to tourism including the provision of linkages. Each village is expected to encompass several elements of a Jamaican cultural experience: art and craft stalls, traditional cuisine, entertainment, sporting facilities, musical and other cultural offerings." The Minister said once in operation, the Artisan Villages will offer a range of options to visitors and provide products that would be desirable to high-end niche markets as well as those visitors seeking more simple reminders of Jamaica. Similar types of artisan villages can be found in Mexico, Colombia, parts of New Zealand and parts of the USA. Initially Artisan Villages will be established in Port Antonio, Ocho Rios and Montego Bay.