

## Expedia Sees High Demand For Jamaica

Travel demand for Jamaica hotels on Expedia group sites grew more than 20 percent in the first half of 2015 when compared to the same time period in 2014 according to Expedia Group, one of the world's leading travel companies, reported Monday.

Hotel partners in Jamaica should focus on creating attractive mobile and package offerings as those booking types saw the most robust increase. "Jamaica continues to thrive in both package and mobile bookings, and local hotels are taking notice. As properties continue to benefit from the company's wide-range of tools, technology and expertise, we continue to build relationships with more hotel partners," said Demetrius Canton, Director of Lodging Partner Services for the Caribbean, the Expedia group. "Attending JAPEX and meeting with industry leaders and valued partners provides our Market Management team with the opportunity to enhance our relationships in the region and further identify the priorities and needs of our partners." Jamaica continues to experience a high percentage in package bookings to date, with a nearly 40 percent increase in bookings to Ocho Rios and a nearly 20 percent increase to Negril during the first half of 2015. Package bookings combine travel components like flights and hotel and generally feature twice the length of stay, twice the booking window and half the cancellation rate of a standalone (i.e. hotel only) booking. Mobile demand on Expedia group platforms continue to increase in Jamaica, with nearly 50 percent increase to Montego Bay and a 75 percent increase in demand to Negril during the first half of 2015. Expedia group data for the Caribbean shows that unlike other global Expedia markets, which generally feature same day demand on mobile devices, the largest share of Caribbean mobile bookings occurs in the 31 – 61 day window. This uncommonly long window gives hotel partners time to capitalize on mobile technology by managing prices beforehand to secure optimal bookings. New data from Expedia group also indicates that the United States remains the key feeder market for Jamaica with a reported growth of nearly 20 percent in the first half of 2015. Canada and the United Kingdom are other key markets for Jamaica, growing at nearly 20 percent as well in the first half of 2015. In response to the increased demand in Jamaica and the positive trajectory of partnerships with hotels in the destination, Expedia group has expanded its local market team and has added two people to help service the ever-increasing amount of Jamaican hotel partners. The expansion of the local team includes Adrian Harrison, Associate Market Manager; and Andre McKinley, Market Manager. Expedia group's presence continues to grow within the Jamaican market with more than 300 partners in the destination; more than 100 of them acquired this year. "The success of our accommodations sector is key to positioning Jamaica as a world-class destination," said Paul Pennicook, Jamaica's Director of Tourism. "We are happy for our growing partnership with Expedia as their capabilities are essential to keeping Jamaica top of mind for travelers from around the world. We welcome the expansion of Expedia's local market team and look forward to their participation in a successful JAPEX 2015." Representatives from Expedia's Market Management team will attend The Jamaica Product Exchange (JAPEX), the destination's premier trade event and the single most important business generator for Jamaica's tourism industry, September 20 – 22, 2015 at the Montego Bay Convention Center. Throughout the two-day conference, Expedia executives will share the latest news, information on innovative marketing tools and recommendations on how hotel partners can take advantage of Expedia's mobile technologies, tools and market intelligence to achieve increased visibility and incremental demand for their properties.