



THE
CONTINENTAL
MAGAZINE

Villas For Rent in Jamaica

FALL 1975

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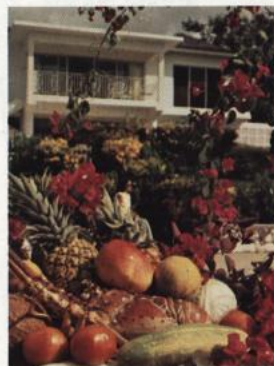


Hood ornament of today's Mark IV, with the greyhound hood ornament of past Lincolns in the background

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Behind the group of island foods is a villa named Andante, at Ironshore Estates, near Montego Bay, Jamaica.
A story on renting villas in Jamaica begins on page 2.
Photograph by Leonard P. Johnson

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Villas for Rent in

JAMAICA

No island of the West Indies has such a variety of homes available for vacationers

by Virginia Radcliffe

In 1967 about fifty owners of rental cottages in Jamaica met to form an association. When a Jamaican speaks of a "cottage," he is usually referring to a luxurious, or at least very comfortable, place by the sea or in the country. Many of the people gathered at the meeting had such three- and four-bedroom homes complete with swimming pool, adjacent tennis courts or golf courses and spectacular views of the Caribbean Sea. Others had simple apartment units or modest two-bedroom villas on or near a beach. One or two could even claim a "great house," a term applied in the islands to the mansions of an estate.

The owners agreed that there must be a market in North America for every kind of house among seekers after an informal vacation in Jamaica, particularly families with children. But how was a couple in Pittsburgh or Omaha or Seattle to know what was available in the Caribbean? Mainland travel agents had no way of knowing, either, and making arrangements by mail or cable was often a complicated and frustrating process.

The outcome was the formation of JAVA, the acronym for Jamaica Association of Villas and Apartments. What has happened since 1967 is a rather remarkable arrangement that lets anyone wanting to rent a vacation home in Jamaica

book it either through a travel agent or by direct contact with the Jamaica Tourist Board. There is no charge for the service in either case. Everything is set up in advance: a car, if the people want one—and it is recommended, because Jamaica is a big island—a staff of servants (usually maid, cook and gardener) and food and drinks for two days waiting in the refrigerator. Almost all the houses have access to a good beach, if they are not directly on one, and in some areas temporary membership in the local golf or country club is included.

What is not spelled out in the rental contract is the ambiance of Jamaica itself. There is no one way of describing the kind of experience cottage renters seem to have, whether they be two or more couples pooling expenses or families vacationing with children, who, if teenagers, may arrive resenting the whole idea. But the theme has been played back again and again in conversations with neighbors at home later, the showing of color slides and even letters to JAVA.

It is the novelty of living, if only for a week or two, in a foreign country, being a householder, a "resident," meeting and talking with people whose whole way of life is different, discovering what they think and believe. More than one story is on record of the bridging of the



Left: Half Moon—Rose Hall
Golf and Country Club

photographs by Leonard P. Johnson

