

## ISLAND DEEP DIVE

AFAR.com local expert Lebewit Lily Girma, of the travel blog *Sunshine and Stilettoes*, shares nine reasons, including jungle pools and killer jerk chicken, to stray from Jamaica's tourist zones.

### stay

#### HOW CAN I BREAK OUT OF THE TOURIST BUBBLE?

Over on the east coast, around the city of Port Antonio, you'll find fewer crowds but plenty of culture and Instagrammable landscapes. The renovated **Trident** ([tridentportantonia.com](http://tridentportantonia.com)) is a worthy splurge: Watch the sun set from your villa's Caribbean-facing plunge pool and then check out its sister property, **Geejam**, a hotel and recording studio. (Björk and India.Arie have recorded albums here.) Your meal of curried fresh-caught shrimp might be accompanied by live *mento*, a style of Jamaican folk music ([geejamhotel.com](http://geejamhotel.com)). For something even more remote, take a 50-minute drive along the coast to the neighboring village of Manchioneal, where you can swim in the sprawling **Reach Falls**, which are easily the island's most enchanting.

### swim

#### WHAT'S THERE TO DO WHEN I'M OVER THE BEACH?

Head inland to swim in fresh river wata, as Jamaicans do. Better than Dunn's River Falls, which tends to get crowded, is **Irie River**. You'll find a string of jade-colored pools and falls that cascades through a hundred-acre swath of forest and gardens planted with pimiento trees and ginger lilies ([www.irierriver.com](http://www.irierriver.com)). Or, twenty minutes uphill at the **Irie Blue Hole**, grab a vine, Tarzan style, and swing into the deep turquoise pool ([explorerjamaica.com](http://explorerjamaica.com)). Over in Jamaica's surreal Cockpit Country region, you can spend an afternoon shimmying past stalactites and stalagmites at **Rock Spring Cave**, then cool down with a dunk in an underground pool.



### eat

#### WHERE CAN I TRY REAL-DEAL JAMAICAN FOOD?

Local entrepreneur **Janet Crick** leads a half-day food tour of Falmouth ([jamaicaculinarytours.com](http://jamaicaculinarytours.com)), which takes you from roadside vendors to restaurants, tasting jerk chicken and *gizzada* (a coconut-filled tart) along the way. If farm-to-table is more your speed, the biweekly dinners at the **Round Hill** hotel are a parade of Jamaican produce sourced right from the garden—don't miss the Scotch bonnet pepper ice cream ([roundhill.com](http://roundhill.com)). And for the island's edgiest food, hit up **689 by Brian Lumley**, in New Kingston, for oxtail lasagna and spring rolls made with ackee, a savory fruit that's toxic when unripe ([chefbrianlumley.com](http://chefbrianlumley.com)).



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