

SMORBA

Frequently Asked Questions

Q) When is the Festival?

A) The Festival officially begins at 8pm on Saturday, February 18th at the Registration/Welcome Party at John Crow's Tavern in Ocho Rios. The Festival ends on Saturday, February 25th when we reach back to Ocho Rios after our 2 day stint at the super-secret location in the Blue Mountains.

Q) Can I just show up and ride?

A) No. You MUST register with SMORBA to be eligible to participate in the Festival. Get in touch with us and we can get you sorted.

Q) What is the Festival fee?

A) US\$1,150.00 US\$300 deposit required to reserve spot. Deadline is November 30, 2011

Q) How do I pay?

A) Please contact the SMORBA dudes for payment options.

Q) What does the fee get me?

- 1) Accommodation on nights of Feb 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25
- 2) Transport of riders and bikes for all Festival events
- 3) You will be fed a breakfast and evening meal every day (except 18th).
- 4) Some drinks included.

Q) What isn't covered with the Festival fee?

The items not included are:

- 1) Airfare to Jamaica
- 2) Transfer to/from airport/Ocho Rios
- 3) Snacks and some lunches
- 4) Be prepared to pay to party.

Q) What airline should I fly?

A) A number of airlines fly into Jamaica. Find the cheapest flight and get here! If you are in the Vancouver or BC area, Air Canada has a direct flight from Vancouver to Montego Bay. Sweet!

Q) Where should I fly into?

A) SMORBA strongly encourages participants to fly into Montego Bay. It will make your life much easier. Then simply make your way to Ocho Rios (see below) before 8pm on Feb 18.

Q) Will I have any hassles getting my bike through the airport?

A) There are two main places where you might encounter an issue. The first is that it is official Jamaican agricultural policy to have all bicycles sprayed before entering the island. Usually this is no big deal. However, it will help out greatly if your bicycle is CLEAN. If there is dirt on the tires, etc, the ag officer has a much greater likelihood of freaking out. Also, if you are putting gear (clothes, etc) in your bike box you might want to put them in a Ziploc plastic bag or something of the sort. If they do decide to spray, there isn't much you can do except wait for the officer. It may take some time, but don't freak out.

Second potential area of concern is customs. We are not aware of anyone ever having to actually pay duty on a bicycle coming into Jamaica. However, if you would like to be absolutely certain you aren't charged a nominal fee, please give us the following information (its also on the registration form) that we will forward to Jamaica Tourist Board who can then alert customs.

1. Your Name
2. Flight Details
3. Serial number and distinguishing mark of your bicycle.

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Q) How do I get from Montego Bay to Ocho Rios?

A) Shuttles from Montego Bay to Ocho Rios are available via Jamaica Tours Ltd. for US\$25 one-way or US \$45 round trip. Look for their desk (#21) in the airport arrivals area right between Half Moon Resort and the Ritz Carlton desks. Walk up and tell them you are going to Rooms Hotel in Ocho Rios and you'll be on the next shuttle coming to Ochi. BEWARE: Private taxi operators are skilled at acting like they are shuttle drivers and then charging people a whole heap of money when they reach. If you are uncertain, ask the driver if you are on the \$25 JTL shuttle BEFORE YOU LEAVE!

You may also want to make your life easier by paying for your return trip to the airport while you are standing there. Talk to the agent and they should be able to arrange this.

You can also charter a JUTA (private) taxi from just outside the arrivals lounge. Will probably cost somewhere in the range of US\$100.00

Q) Where will we be staying?

A) As described above, we will be staying in a number of locations as we did last year. This has meant that your friendly SMORBA dudes have had to take more control over the housing. The places you will be staying are:

Feb 18, 19, 20 Rooms Hotel, Ocho Rios
Feb 21 River Lodge, Robins Bay
Feb 22, 23, 24 Scorpio, Blue Mtn.
Feb 25 Rooms Hotel, Ocho Rios

SMORBA will do its utmost to accommodate specific accommodation requests. Single rooms for example, are available (at an extra cost) on the days we stay at Rooms Hotel. However, lodging is more limited in Robins Bay and EXTREMELY limited in Blue Mtn. Our prices are based on double occupancy. If you come by yourself, be prepared to share a room at some point.

Also, these accommodation options are based upon you sending us the deposit by the deadline (see above). If you are late with the deposit, we will do everything we can to ensure you are on this same accommodation track, but we cannot guarantee you'll be in the places listed above.

Q) What money is accepted?

Jamaica officially uses the Jamaican Dollar (current exchange rate is about 85JA to 1US). Almost anyplace you go US dollars will be accepted as well. However, to get the best exchange rate you are better off going to a local cambio (not the one in the hotel!), changing your money there and then spending JA dollars. There are now even dual currency cash machines at two locations in Ocho Rios.

Q) Are there any safety/crime issues to be concerned about?

We can't hide the fact that Jamaica has earned a poor reputation due to its high crime and murder rate. While the statistics are appalling, the vast majority of these crimes occur in about a 5 square mile area of Kingston.

Of course, as in any other country common sense should prevail. Don't count your money out in the open; don't agree to buy something from someone and then decide not to pay. If you ask for trouble, you are likely to find it.

If you have comments or questions, feel free to get in touch at:

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