

A Quest for the Heart of Rastafari

MOVEMENT OF JAH PEOPLE

Negril, Jamaica, March 7th to 13th 2009

www.opencenter/jamaica

Jamaica has been described for centuries as the most beautiful island in the world, known for the richness of its culture, the perfection of its climate, and its exquisite vistas, beaches and waterfalls. More recently it has emerged at the spiritual heart of the Caribbean from which the vibrant, One Love spirit of Rastafari has spread reggae music and the values of peace and natural living across the whole planet.



What exactly is Rastafari? Where and how did it arise? What are its beliefs, rituals, forms of artistic expression, and strategies for natural living and “Chanting Down Babylon,” liberating humanity from mental and social oppression? This week at the serene and beautiful West End of Negril, surrounded by turquoise sea, pure blue sky, and rich greenery, aims to introduce participants to the depth and vitality of Jamaican culture with special emphasis on the spirituality, art, music and reasoning of Rastafari—one of Jamaica’s most extraordinary and most loved gifts to the world.

Distinguished authors, scholars and poets will speak to us on the origins of Rastafari, the influence of the 17th century Maroon culture of escaped slaves, the varieties of Caribbean religious experience, and Rastafari as a highly creative and influential response to centuries of exile and hardship. Days will be spent exploring the immense natural beauty of the island, chilling with the waves, and soaking up the uniquely good vibes that only Jamaica can offer.

This unique week will also include live reggae music, poetry, tribal drumming, delightful walks to valleys and caves, and plenty of time to relax and enjoy the exquisite natural surroundings of sea, sky, and lush flora. The Quest also offers plentiful opportunities for silence, sacred time, and attunement to nature.

We will also visit the Rastafari Indigenous Village in Montego Bay where we will speak with the elders and understand more of Rasta “livity,” language, healing practices, culture, and vision for the future.



We invite you to leave behind the winter blues and join the Open Center's first tropical quest in the Caribbean.

Co-sponsored with the Rastafari Indigenous Village and Jackie's on the Reef.

Presenters include:

Barry Chevannes, Yasus Afari, Barbara Blake Hannah and elders from the Indigenous Village.

Conference fee (including meals): \$1325 Early Bird (before February 1st), \$1425 after that date

Accommodation costs vary — see www.opencenter.org/jamaica or call the Open Center for details.

For more information, call 212 219 2527 ext. 2 or write jamaica@opencenter.org.