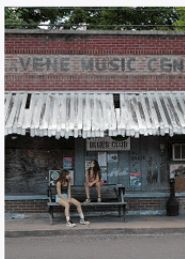


**On the Delta**

An intergenerational road trip through the Deep South conjures local and familial legends.

**Inside Out**

This heated lounge offers an ideal front-row seat to spring's glory, from sunrise to aperitivo hour.

**Hazy Memories**

The meeting of a New Delhi monument and inclement weather make for a supernatural moment.

**FINDING JAMAICA**

## Slice of Life

*Khira Jordan*



Courtesy of Jamaica Tourist Board

That city. I can still feel it. And I continue to chase its flavors months later, sipping up, snacking on, and cooking with the yellow ginger, mountain coffee, pepper sauces, breadfruit crisps, and bush teas I corralled into my luggage before leaving. My memories from this first trip to Jamaica — a country of both towering prominence and mystical depth — have an unctuous quality to them: plump yet slippery, palpable yet elusive, solid yet not. And I welcome it. I think that's what happens when a place that is so often referenced — and just as often misrepresented — finally has its say. Visiting Kingston felt like a radiant reinstating of intrigue, dimension, nuance. And it hasn't stopped glinting.

While I was on the jet bridge at Gatwick airport, queuing to board for Jamaica, a woman behind me on the phone said, in a soothing lilt, "Just remember to pour some rum on it. It'll heal." A fantastic prelude. One of the country's most notable exports, rum is among my favorite spirits: To me, there's just no matching its moody magic.

On the island, rum punch was ever-present, showing up sunset orange and eminently sippable. But its true crowning moment was my visit to the stunning grounds of Worthy Park Estate, the first rum distillery on the island still in operation, with a heritage dating to 1741. Blue mahoe trees shaded us with their distinctive heart-shaped leaves. Aging barrels of fragrant white oak sent out deep aromas, like those I'd loved catching a sniff of from our family piano. A taste of the estate's highly-prized molasses touched off a sweet memory of my Mississippi-born dad and his penchant for drizzling the stuff on his pancakes. It was all capped off by a sublime flight of five rum varieties, each one smoother than the next — a reverie, on many levels.

So too were the rose-colored cameos by sorrel, a Jamaican strain of hibiscus that made its tangy presence known in everything from kombucha to chocolate. And who could forget the superfood goodness of a sea moss smoothie? It's a concoction pleasantly reminiscent of tapioca and widely considered to be a health-booster. (Tip: Get it with spirulina for the perfect jade-green tint — and for the minerals and protein, of course.)

What I miss most, though, has to be ackee: that unparalleled national fruit with quite the personality. This yellow wonder is highly poisonous until ripe, starchy like a bean, and treated like a vegetable. I learned just how to wrangle it for breakfast under the merry tutelage of chef Joseph Johnson at the Jamaica Food and Drink Kitchen: sauteed with salted cod, tomatoes, onions, and, most importantly, the local trinity of thyme, pimento, and Scotch-bonnet pepper. Unbelievable. Bright and pungent with the perfect, buoyant chew. All this reminiscing has me considering whether to track down the canned incarnation. It was that good.

But that's the thing with Jamaica — whose tropical terroir can grow almost anything, whose culture is mighty beyond its size, and whose creativity is boundless — you'll never know the end of its wonders. One Sa-ti-deh Soup sparks a longing for the next. And, chances are, it'll spark even more than that.