



**Arnie Weissmann**

How many travel jobs are at risk from Trump's executive orders? Millions. **12**

**IN OTHER NEWS**

In a hard-hat tour, Hyatt reveals the centerpiece hotel of Baja Mar **6**  
TSA to reduce number of nonregistered travelers in PreCheck lines **8**

**Danny King**

Airbnb, Uber and Lyft differed from legacy companies in responding to the travel ban. **33**



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# TRAVEL WEEKLY

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## Safety is relative



Despite terrorism-related travel warnings from the U.S. and British governments and deteriorating relations with Washington, the Philippines' mix of cultures, its cosmopolitan capital and lush beach resorts make the country worth visiting.

BY PATRICIA SCHULTZ **PAGE 14**

## Trump's travel ban shakes the industry

**Airlines struggle to accommodate passengers and crews left stranded around the world by the policy**

By Robert Silk

U.S. and international airlines have been forced to scramble in the last 10 days to deal with the controversial travel ban implemented by president Donald Trump in an executive order on Jan. 27.

The ban, which Trump said he ordered as a security measure, impacts travelers to the U.S. from the Muslim-majority countries of Iran, Iraq, Libya, So-

malia, Syria, Sudan and Yemen for 90 days. It blocks refugees from entering the U.S. for four months.

**American Airlines' CEO issued a statement critical of the procedure followed by the administration.**

Yet to be seen is whether the ban will have an impact on the bottom lines of airlines or other segments of the travel industry that serve the U.S. "Our challenge is not just to reassure potential Muslim travelers but to persuade everybody else that the U.S. is still open for business and  
*See AIRLINES on Page 34*

**Agents, trade groups, tour operators, voice concern that executive orders make U.S. seem unwelcoming**

By Michelle Baran and Johanna Jainchill

Travel organizations from ASTA to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) voiced concern last week that president Donald Trump's Jan. 27 executive order banning the citizens of seven countries from entering the U.S. for 90 days would discourage travel and harm the U.S. economy.

Industry trade associations and companies weighed in throughout the week following the order, mostly complaining that the ban painted the U.S. as unwelcoming to travelers and that the confusion around its implementation had created an environment of uncertainty, which is never good for the industry.

ASTA CEO Zane Kerby said, "It's clear from our member feedback that the developments of the past few weeks have injected a great deal of uncertainty into the travel industry, from disruption for travelers to or from the seven countries flagged by the  
*See BAN on Page 36*

**IN THE HOT SEAT**

Travel Leaders Group's Ninan Chacko on the company's luxury-market moves. **4**

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**MARK PESTRONK**

Inform clients in writing that they may incur penalties if a trip you organize is canceled. **7**

# Jamaica stretching out with wellness efforts



From left, the holistic bathhouse at the Rockhouse Hotel features two soaking tubs; a Kiyara Spa cabana at the Cliff Hotel in Negril; the pool at Jakes, an enclave of cottages on Jamaica's southern coast.

By Barbara Redding

**W**ith the shimmering Caribbean Sea as a backdrop, a half-dozen women clad in neon-colored leggings listened intently to the soothing voice of the tall, blond yoga instructor. It was 7:30 a.m., and a soft breeze was blowing on the curtains surrounding the pavilion, but sweat was already dripping off our foreheads as we assumed the extended triangle pose.

Welcome to sunrise yoga at the Cliff Hotel in Negril, Jamaica. Our instructor, Joy Montes from St. Louis, was hosting a yoga and wellness retreat at the newly renovated resort perched on the cliffs of the West End.

As beautiful as Jamaica's beaches are, many visitors are seeking a healthier, more calming break from their cubicles than the usual drinking, eating and tanning associated with this Caribbean island's better-known, all-inclusive properties.

"Travelers are looking to stay fit, even on vacations, and the Jamaican tourism product is adjusting to meet that demand," said Paul Pennicook, Jamaica's director of

tourism.

On a recent health-and-wellness press trip sponsored by the island's tourist board, I visited several boutique resorts that offered nourishment for the body, mind and soul with yoga classes, meditation sessions and spa treatments as well as unlimited fresh fruit and vegetable smoothies.

A relaxing body scrub and massage in a seaside cabana at Kiyara Spa provided the perfect cooldown after my yoga class. The Cliff, whose 33 rooms feature glorious sunset views and hammocks, blends modern spa treatments with Jamaican natural healing remedies. The scrub contained island sorrel and locally grown sugar, while

the massage oils used were made from native Jamaican plants and seasonal fruits.

Nurturing at the Cliff includes nutritious meals of local produce, fruits and herbs. Our first dinner at Zest, an open-air restaurant at the cliff's edge, began with a lesson in making passion fruit salad dressing. Fresh papayas, bananas and pineapples topped the breakfast menu along with gluten-free pastries. Egg-white omelets as well as a traditional Jamaican breakfast of freshly caught fish also were offered.

Nearby at Negril's better-known Rockhouse Hotel, tours of the organic garden are an integral part of daily activities at this resort, whose 34 thatched-roof bungalows intermingle with the jungle greenery. Produce cultivated by Clinton, the Rastafarian gardener, is blended into daily juices served at the resort's breezy restaurant, which offers spectacular views.

In addition to snorkeling off the rocks, Rockhouse guests can take painting, cooking and yoga classes as well as learn African drumming and meditation. Spa treatments in the Relaxation Lounge start with the feet: a welcome cleansing in a bowl of fresh seawater laden with remineralizing salts. The invigorating foot scrub dispels tension and prepares you for what's next. That could be a signature wrap in island mint tea or rum or, even better, a hot rock massage.

At the far end of Negril's West End is Jackie's on the Reef, a rustic resort that entices the work-weary with five-day yoga and raw food retreats. A pile of yoga mats, dangling crystals and a table strewn with meditation books greet guests who arrive for tai chi, full-moon ceremonies, star-watching and a chance to connect with past lives. Jackie's five guestrooms include a geodesic dome with an outdoor shower and toilet. We spent several hours there under owner Jackie Lewis' care, meditating and practicing deep breathing techniques. A visit to Jackie's, as one guest described it, is like a warm hug.

On the island's hard-to-reach south coast, Jakes is an artsy enclave of cottages and villas where guests can practice mindfulness or train for a triathlon. No phones, TVs or internet compete with the sounds of the sea in guestrooms, although there

is WiFi in the lobby.

Sunrise and sunset yoga are practiced daily on an elevated platform. Massage tables sit on the water's edge, and spa products include seaweed, mango and coconut. Fresh local produce and seafood dominate the rotating menu at the resort's farm-to-table restaurant, where you can learn to cook with Jamaica's legendary jerk seasonings.

For more information about health and wellness getaways in Jamaica, see [www.visitjamaica.com](http://www.visitjamaica.com).

**A visit to Jackie's on the Reef, a rustic resort on Negril, entices the work-weary with five-day yoga and raw food retreats.**

## BVI set to sustain its boost in visitors

By Gay Nagle Myers

Increased visitor numbers in 2016, a robust calendar of events, hotel upgrades and expansions and the launch of a rewards program for agents point to another strong year for the British Virgin Islands.

In addition, the British Virgin Islands received a visibility boost last month with the arrival of the Obamas for a vacation at Richard Branson's private Necker Island estate.

The couple was photographed with the staff at the T. B. Lettsome Airport on Tortola. "As their visit relates to our tourism product, I think it will give the [British Virgin Islands] a positive boost," said Archibald

Christian, junior minister of tourism.

For 2016, cruise ship visitors jumped 35% over 2015, to 699,105 passengers, stayover visits were up 3% and daytrippers surged 36% over last year, bringing the total visitor count in the British Virgin Islands to 1.1 million, 22% ahead of the previous year.

On the hotel front, Rosewood Little Dix Bay is slated to reopen in December following an 18-month renovation project that included guestrooms, suites and updates to its gardens and three restaurants.

Quito's Gazebo and Inn, a boutique property with 21 rooms, will debut this December in Cane Garden Bay on the northwest side of Tortola, across from the

long-standing Quito's beachside bar and restaurant.

Turtle Bay, also on Tortola, will unveil its upgraded cottages, suites and new restaurant this fall, and White Bay Villas on 3-square-mile Jost Van Dyke is adding eight more villas and a restaurant this year.

Pending government approval, BVI Airways plans to launch flights between Miami and Tortola in mid-May.

The Rolex Swan Caribbean Cup runs from March 1 to 5 and features yacht racing and is followed by the Spring Regatta & Sailing Festival March 27 to April 2 with races, cruising and parties throughout the archipelago.

Visit [www.bvitourism.com](http://www.bvitourism.com).



The British Virgin Islands had a strong 2016 with 1.1 million total visitors, a 22% increase from the year before.