

# Sandals Negril Resort (Trip Report) - 69

**Shayne:** Hello, and welcome to All Things Travel. What would you say to a vacation, fellow traveler, that's full of sand sun, impeccable service and attention to detail, and puts all guests into the Caribbean mood.

And what if I told you that everything was included today? Ryan and I discussed not only one of our favorite ways to vacation, but also what about favorite vacation brands? You're listening to All Things Travel, episode 69, original air date, September 8th, 2021.

**Ryan:** Well, Shayne, I just got back from vacation.

**Shayne:** Again?

**Ryan:** Man. So, so this has been an insane August for me, vacation wise. And I do want to preface this. With this trip that I'm going to talk about today was supposed to happen a year ago. And for a variety of reasons, I'm not going to have to belabor that you all know what they are.

Um, what's

**Shayne:** What did I miss?

**Ryan:** with traveling. So this, this trip, uh, popped into this past week. Um, well, before I knew about my European adventure with that was ocean voyages. So it just kind of hit me that, oh my gosh. For three weeks of August, I'm not going to be here

**Shayne:** And now you're back.

**Ryan:** now. I'm back.

So the trip, just to give you a quick overview and then we'll go into detail about it in the show. My wife and I went down to sandals and the grill, which is in Jamaica. And we spent five nights at sandals, new grill, which is an all-inclusive adults. Only resort. Absolutely loved it. It was an amazing time.

I'm excited to tell you all about it. What's included with sandals, why sandals might be right for you. And then also some highlights of our specific trip.

But first I want to know where some of our listeners from Shane

**Shayne:** Where in the world is all things travel. You know, what's funny is

Grammarly keeps trying to get me to change that to where in the world are all things travel and I just can't get

**Ryan:** well.

**Shayne:** her, it them, whatever Grammarly is to Indiana.

**Ryan:** Greenwood, Indiana.

I know some folks there, I think in the area there.

**Shayne:** well maybe, maybe they would invite us out and we could have a few beers at the prodigy burger bar sometime

**Ryan:** I love it. Great idea.

**Shayne:** Dateline, Norwood, Massachusetts.

**Ryan:** All right.

**Shayne:** And you know, since we're always meeting at bars, why not meet at the castle island brewing company? It looks like a lot of fun.

**Ryan:** I like that idea.

**Shayne:** Ryan. This is interesting because sandals is actually a luxury resort. It's one of the finest vendors that we have. But I think, I don't know if it's the amount of promotions that they do, or maybe it was the episodes on the office where Michael and Jan went to sandals, but I don't think people appreciate how nice

**Ryan:** Yeah, agree. And I think it's one of the most recognizable names. And so you kind of have a connotation about what it's going to be. Um, and I can tell you from my experience, not only working with sandals as a travel advisor, but visiting sandal. It is a very high level of service. It's a very high level of all inclusive relaxation.

**Shayne:** It seems like there's kind of a, a party atmosphere type reputation with sandals. Is that what you've done all weekend, Ryan, have you just partied like it costs 1995.

**Ryan:** Aye. I know that's going to, I know it's going to surprise you, but no, I have not been. My experience was sandals both as a travel advisor and as a guest at sandals is there is definitely any type of atmosphere that you want. If you want to be social, if you want to have a party, it's there.

If you want to be social and just meet a few people and talk on the phone. It's

there. If you don't want to talk to anybody else besides your partner, who's there with you when you want to have romantic time and space yourself. It's there. So, I mean, there's really a little bit for everybody.

**Shayne:** That does sound more realistic for an adult's exclusive resort that caters more to couples.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

And that is sandals brand. I mean, they are based off of, of couples. Now. They certainly have options. If you want to come with a friend group. Or, or something like that. Um, but they're their bread and butter if you will, is based on couples. And I think part of, one of the reasons that they're so recognizable is they're all over the place.

I mean, they have resorts throughout the entire Caribbean. They have multiple resorts in Jamaica. Um, multiple resorts in The Bahamas in Barbados and St. Lucia, they have a resort in Grenada and Antigua, and they just are opening one and carousel and they have more resorts on the way. And one thing we haven't talked about, and we'll talk a little bit about it in this show, um, is beaches and beaches is their family resorts.

And right now they have three of those one in Turks and Caicos and two in the Bahamas. With more on the way and, uh, beaches and the grill. I actually visited as part of my trip. So we'll talk about.

**Shayne:** And I was looking today at some, some dates to try to go to beaches and they are pretty booked up throughout the next year and a half.

**Ryan:** they are very busy. So. You definitely beaches in particular, you want to get on top of when you want to travel and things, or you're either going to have no availability or availability that you might not want prices. Well, Shane, we have talked about why in previous shows, why we love all-inclusive resorts.

what are some of the things that are included, particularly in a sandals resort?

**Shayne:** Well, in addition to the, the dynamic that's it's five-star dining, breakfast, lunch, dinner snacks, anytime room service. And unlike some all-inclusive resorts, this one includes the premium liquors. So it includes everything

**Ryan:** I could ask for most liquor types I wanted for drinks and, and it was there.

**Shayne:** and that's going to be

**Ryan:** that wasn't a

problem now that wasn't necessarily at every bar throughout the resort, but it was

there for me, um, at, at the resort in general.

**Shayne:** right. So that's what you wanted. You get asked for it and, and get it.

**Ryan:** Yep.

**Shayne:** And then a lot of activities are included, some scuba diving, snorkeling trips that are included that might otherwise be an addition. Excursion costs at a, at another resort hobby cats, paddleboards, kayaks, instruction for the water sports, and some of the resorts have private islands that are part of the resorts. And then some of the, I guess if they have a golf course, the green fees are going to be included with that. Yeah. So, and then, you know, a lot of the other thing, a lot of the other inclusions that the other resorts have, like the fitness center and the tenant.

**Ryan:** Yeah. And I would say what I was surprised about it being your sandals is the number of things that I saw where I've paid. Um, and other resorts, so things like scuba diving, so you can actually take your class there to become certified, or if you bring your certification, you can actually scuba dive for free, um, all, all during your vacation.

Um, another thing that I liked was we did one of those pull behind, um, the jet ski boat with the tube. Like we were kind of like an account. Type thing and hold holding on again, some of those motorized things. Um, yes, I ha I, I do have pictures to prove it. Um, some of those motorized things are not often included all inclusives and at sandals they were, . A big one for me was a lot of the sandals properties and beaches properties are built around one another. And so you can actually have exchange privilege. It's most of the time there are some exceptions, but most of the time you can have exchange privileges. So for instance, we wanted to check out the beaches resort because my wife got a, an idea.

that sometime we want to bring the kids here.

So we said, let's go over to beaches and check it out. We had breakfast, we had breakfast over there. We could have snacks over there. We could walk around, we could do whatever we want it. So, and then, no tips, taxes, and gratuities, there was roundtrip air, airport transfers included, which I can tell you is not common for all inclusive resorts.

**Shayne:** That's usually something that you got to work out at the airport. If you don't, if you don't take care of it in advance and it can be a little intimidating if you don't have it, have the arrangements already

**Ryan:** Absolutely. Or you have to pay extra. Yeah. At Jamaica and Saint Lucia, there are actually sandals, um, lounges in the airports. So you can relax until your transfer comes, whether that's a shared transfer or a private transfer. Um, and then obviously. Weddings are included if you stay for three nights or longer.

So if you're planning a wedding and you want to do it at sandals, or, um, you can do that. And, and, uh, the primary stuff is included. So you can obviously add on from there, but that's, uh, you know, that's a huge savings if you want to have that a destination wedding, and then, um, But we're service is also included at certain levels of accommodations.

And I'll talk more about Butler service here in a second. And right now, Travel insurance that covers medical issues or COVID related issues. And also your COVID testing. If you need that to travel home is included. So for instance, with us, before we traveled, sandals sent us a PDF of the travel insurance.

So if anybody asked us, do we have travel insurance, we were able to prove it. Um, and then our COVID test was just scheduled for us as part of our time there, it literally took 15 minutes out of our day and we enjoyed the rest of our vacation, knowing that we were COVID negative.

**Shayne:** And this travel insurance it's covering the travel insurance policy. That's required by Jamaica.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Shayne:** Right. So they're just, they're taking care of that for you. One less, one less worry for you.

**Ryan:** Yeah, absolutely. So for our stay, um, like I said, it was a birthday stay, so we did splurge on a couple things. And so, um, we decided to stay, but we're level and sandals has three different levels of accommodations. They have luxury club and Butler. The luxury is kind of the entry level.

Accommodations very high level of service, but there are some things that are not included. Most, everything that we've talked about minus room service is included in, in that level. The club level then has some more personalization. There's, there's more options with room service. They help you with reservations for dining there's a club lounge, things like that.

The highest level Shane is Butler service, and this was, again, this was a sport. This is not something we would normally do, but boy did it impact our vacation.

**Shayne:** Oh, I'm sure it did.

**Ryan:** So basically what that is is you've got two butlers that are assigned to you and They're assigned to other, other, uh, rooms. So it's not I mean, they're not there for you 24 7, but they're certainly there.

**Shayne:** They're not following you around

**Ryan:** they are not following us around with a fan. No, no, no, that'd be pretty cool. Um, so we had Sean and Ian, they were our Butler for the week. And essentially what they did was they took care of some of those hassles that we would have to take care of during our vacation. Um, yes, all inclusive vacations do have some hassles.

So for instance, when we met with our. He showed us around the resort. He showed us our room. Um, we had a preference form that we filled out before the vacation. So the types of liquors that we wanted, the types of things that we enjoyed eating, um, were all noted. He knew my wife has a food allergy. He knew our, our eating preferences.

As far as we don't eat this, we do like, this. Um, the types of liquors that we wanted to have in our, in our mini bar was. Um, so for instance, um, I had, I had scotch, my wife had vodka, um, you know, we had different types of wine that we knew we wanted and.

it was all there. It was Right.

Our Butler then asked us what time we wanted to have dinner.

Most nights we said we were happy to have dinner around seven o'clock. Um, and so when he came back later that night, he had our week planned out as far as our dinner reservations. And he also had several other things noted. So there were cocktail parties or martini tasting parties or things. And again, this was for the club level or the Butler level of service.

Those are the types of things that you're going to see at those levels that you're not going to see at the luxury level. However, don't get me wrong. The luxury level is still Very much luxury. Our Butler then would ask us, do you want me to organize your breakfast? So basically room service, or are you going to be going to one of the restaurants for, um, for the meal?

So the first day we wanted to have room service because it was going to be a really nice meal. That was delivered to our room. We ordered it the night before he escorted us to our restaurants, sat us down, got us our drinks. So he knew we were, we were sat in a good place. He started the service. Then he would ask, do we want to be at the beach or the pool for the day?

And if we do, he would set it up for us. In fact, the first day we were at the beach because we prefer the beach to the pool. And, and he said it, he set it up for us. We said, Hey, we really liked this spot. Um, we want to be here tomorrow. He goes, no, no, no. This is your spot for the entire week. Unless you tell me you don't. And so it was already reserved. It was set for us when we got there in the mornings, um, towels were set out, there was a cooler set out with water with beer. Um, he would also bring other people, um, cause we kind of, I, I realized during the trip, the butlers kind of had all their people. In the same area so they

could, so they could manage them.

So you saw him interacting with other people. So there were people that one of the bottle of champagne on the beach every morning, so they would get there and there'd be a bottle of champagne, um, or, or, you know, things like that. When we wanted lunch, he would say, you know, do you want to order lunch where you are?

I can bring it to you. Um, we could go off of the normal room service menu. We could actually order from the restroom. She would bring them there. And we did all this Shane on a phone that he gave us, and we actually had a phone that we could call or text with Sean or Ian, uh, throughout the day he obviously bought us drinks.

Um, if we had any special things like, um, one time the, the. Water sports guy came over and talked to us about a boat tour. And I said, I think that would be a fun birthday present. Let's do that. And so we talked to Sean, Sean, organized it with the guy, took care of it. Um, so it's that type of stuff that now I will tell you.

While I said earlier that gratuities and tips were included. The butlers are one area where you can provide them tips. Um, and I would suggest, I mean, for the level of service that I just described at the end of the week, you're going to want to provide them a tip.

**Shayne:** Sounds like you would want to

**Ryan:** Absolutely.

**Shayne:** that's so cool. So in addition to the planned lunches and dinners, just anytime during the day, you decided you needed an extra snack or an extra sip of something, you could just text him and he. Show up eventually bring it to you.

**Ryan:** absolutely.

**Shayne:** That is

**Ryan:** yep. Yep, absolutely. And that was very nice. That, that was, that was really, that was a nice way to do it, especially at all-inclusives breakfast and lunch is pretty easy. Dinner can be a challenging sometimes because often those take reservations and so,

**Shayne:** But you have to make,

**Ryan:** yeah. So having somebody deal with that.

Yeah. The other special thing that we did for this. Was we actually purchased a private transfer. So if we wanted to do the shared transfer that was included in

our trip, we would have boarded a. Uh, motor coach, um, you know, a tour bus, they would have taken our luggage. We would have gotten there.

Everything would have been great. No problem at all. My wife wanted just a little bit of an upgrade. So we actually did a private transfer. So when we were in the, in the club in the airport, they announced our, they, they came and got us a Porter, took our luggage out to the car and, um, and the driver took us.

We had a BMW. The driver took us to Negril. Um, and part of it was because new grill is about an hour and a half from the airport with traffic. Now, when we got there on Sunday, it was only about an hour because there was Very little traffic, um, that day. And so we just decided we wanted to have our own space.

You know, we had just been on an airport or an airplane with hundreds of people might not be such a bad idea to not be in a, in a bus. The driver had he had drinks, you know, there was red Stripe beer, there was rum punch, there was water. And there was a little appetizer plate in the back for us. Again, I tip, I tipped him because that that's an extra service.

Um, but those were the only two people we tip the entire trip because tips and gratuities are included. Now that being said, one thing I did notice about Sandra. I notice people wearing no tipping buttons. I saw somebody give back a tip that, that our guests to give to them. I saw somebody take a tip that somebody had given them.

I saw somebody at, or Somebody asked me for it. So

**Shayne:** you for one.

**Ryan:** somebody asked me, but again, that was for, that was for a special extra thing. Um, we didn't have our, to be honest, we were in the all-inclusive mindset. We didn't have our wallet with us. We didn't have any money. Um, and so it just didn't happen. But so you, I guess what I'm saying, There, there is a little bit of difference, at least based on what I noticed, um, w with sandals, when it came to that.

But, but do not feel like you have to tip folks that is one of their rules. Um, no, no extra tipping,

**Shayne:** I'm guessing you'll feel like you want to, but they,

**Ryan:** yeah.

**Shayne:** it stated that they, that it's included and that they'll try to discourage it, or at least not encourage.

**Ryan:** So one last thing that we added extra along with the private transfer was

we added, club Mo bay and in Jamaica at the Montego bay airport is club Mobay and at the Kingston airport is club Kingston. And this is a VIP add on that you can have. And this is what happened. Um, when we got off the plane and walked to the end of the hallway, there was somebody there with her.

And that young lady walked us through an expedited line for customs and immigration. She walked us through the processing line so fast that we got there before our bags even started coming on. When our bags came off, she walked us through, you know, kind of out of that customs area, those final steps and walked us to a lounge.

The lounge had drinks, food, everything like that. We could sit and wait and relaxed, private bathrooms. Sit, wait, relax. Um, until our transfer came,

**Shayne:** How much time do you think you saved going that you

**Ryan:** uh,

**Shayne:** going through the line?

**Ryan:** Well, I would say at least 45 minutes and a lot of headache of not knowing what's going on. Um,

**Shayne:** the worst part.

**Ryan:** yeah,

**Shayne:** Not, knowing what's going to

**Ryan:** yeah.

And, and so then when, when we purchase, you don't have to purchase it for both.

For both entrance and extra exit of the country, but we did. Um, because coming back, once we checked in to Southwest, we walked over to the club Mobay table. They checked us in and we walked through a fast track line for security. And we walked to the lounge and the departure lounge was much larger because people spend more time there.

It was a multilevel lounge. We had, once we had drinks, we were able to relax. Um, if you wanted to get work done, there was separate place to do that. And then when our flight was ready to go, we could walk down to the gate and all taken care of. That was really nice. I mean, you think about the, you think about the hassle of flying in and out of an airport, especially in international.

That was worth every bit of money that we spent on that it was really nice.

**Shayne:** Yeah, so much more relaxed just knowing that it's waiting for you instead of you having to wait for it.

**Ryan:** So those were a couple of upgrades that we did. And again, it was my birthday trip. It was a trip that was postponed. We wanted to do it kind of nice. So, so that's how we handled it.

So let's talk about sandals Negril and our experience, um, in particular, unless do you have any questions? About a private driver, but we're service club.

Mobay

**Shayne:** No. Nope. I was going to ask about the club and you covered it. Sorry.

**Ryan:** So sandals, the grill is about an hour and a half from the, from the airport in Montego bay. And I would say that's the only thing that's kind of a, of a, of a caution or a consideration is there's a little bit of a Trek before you get to your vacation and. And you are driving through what I would consider a rural Jamaica.

I don't know if Jamaicans consider it rural Jamaica. Um, but you know, it's, it, it is an hour and a half of driving, um, through, through, through small towns, you know, twists and turns and things like that. So if you're ready to have your vacation right away, You know, the grill is out there. However, when you get there, it is absolutely gorgeous.

It's along the seven mile beach, um, into grill, it's a beautiful property. It really had a beach feel to it. It was private, but yet it was connected to other resorts. Um, it was the longest strip of beach, but there was enough kind of growth that you felt like it was kind of its own property.

**Shayne:** Oh, wow. Nice.

**Ryan:** So,

**Shayne:** that drive that hour and a half drive is something to consider when you were booking your return flight,

**Ryan:** yeah. Oh 100%. Absolutely.

**Shayne:** extra early to get to the airport on time

**Ryan:** Yeah. I mean our flight, our flight coming back, uh, we, we had a direct flight from Montego bay to Chicago and our flight was at one 50 and our car picked us up at night. So, you know, that was another reason why I wanted to purchase that club. Mobay was I knew we were going to stay spending a decent amount of time now, not a ton of time but a decent amount of time in the, in the

airport once we, em, and it took us all of an hour and a half because it was a weekday.

I mean, we left at nine and we got there at 10 30. So, um, so Yeah.

you're right. You do have to plan out. during our time at sandals new grill, we were pretty much beach bums. We preferred the beach and I would say kind of the resort edges. One of the things that I would tell people about sandals Negril is it's very small compared to the other, all inclusive resource I've been to.

Um, which I like, I very much liked that the edges are more. So the middle where the main bars, the swim up bars, the pool, the end of the large pool, that's kind of the parties zone my wife. And I want to be around that when we want to be around that, we don't want that to be our entire vacation. So we would stick more to the edges.

In fact, the beach that was kind of in our area, the Caribbean village. Uh, the resort, that's pretty much where we stayed. And I told you that our, our Butler picked out our spot for us. I counted chain cause on that anal, I counted one time. It took me 30 seconds from our chair on the beach to go back and get into our hotel room.

So I could use the bathroom and pick up my.

**Shayne:** Wow.

**Ryan:** So 30 seconds away. I am, I am from door to beach, um, from, from, from my hotel room. So we pretty much stood, stayed on That end for the beach. And then if you went to the complete other side of the resort, which again was only about a five, 10 minute walk, we're not talking about a long Trek here.

There was a nice quiet pool, quiet Whirlpool. Um, you, you were kind of away from the crazy middle part. Middle part was fun. Don't get me wrong. But, you know, there were definitely places to be quiet if you wanted to have some quiet.

**Shayne:** Yeah, that's nice to know that if, if you need that quiet time, that it's five minutes away versus trying to find it

**Ryan:** Oh, 100%. Yeah.

**Shayne:** a long walk and.

**Ryan:** Yeah. I mean, it was our last, all inclusive, um, vacation was with my kids. And we talked about this on this podcast with hard rock review or Maya, you know, if you were going to the pool, the beach. You would pretty much need to pack up for the amount of time that you wanted to be at the pool and.

the beach.

I mean, it was cause it was going to be a 20 minute walk back to your bed depending on where you were or at least where we were, you know, it was, it could have been a good 15, 20 minute walk back to your rear room with this. I mean, I could, I could walk anywhere within minutes.

**Shayne:** Very nice.

**Ryan:** So for us, definitely a highlight of our trip is just being able to set our own schedule.

Um, you know, and, and that's what I like about an adult's trip. I love traveling with my kids, but an adults trip just feels completely different. You know, we were able to say, you know, this is what we want to do today. This is how long we want to stay there. We want to add this onto our day. And sandals is a great place to do that because they just roll with it.

I mean, I mean, at any point, if we wanted to do anything, even if we weren't at the Butler level, we were going to be able to do it. I mean, there, there was lots of water activities to do if you wanted to do it. Um, people were out kayaking, there, were a paddle boarding. They were out with the Aqua bikes. Um, they were able to do all that kind of stuff.

There were three or four. Free included snorkeling trips throughout the day. So, and you could do that as many times as you wanted. There was no limit to that. Um, you know, like I said, if we wanted to get certified or if we just wanted to sit on the flipping beach, you know, we could do all of that. So just being able to kind of set our own schedule.

In fact, I kind of joke with my wife in the morning. I'm like, what are your goals for the day? And she goes, my goals for today is to read a book, take a nap. And sit on the beach and I go, okay, we can w we, we can handle those goals. We can

**Shayne:** a checklist.

**Ryan:** Yeah, absolutely. Absolutely.

**Shayne:** Did you attend any of the social functions,

**Ryan:** So, so yeah, so, so that one of my points about sandals is, you know, you can be as social or, or an active, or as you want, you could be go, go, go all day long.

Um, so we did a couple things. We did a martini taste. Um, and that was fun because one of the things that they did was I think there were four or.

five different couples that were part of that. So they actually had you go around and just kind of briefly introduce yourself, you know, have you been to sandals before?

Are you celebrating anything? Just so you kind of get to know people and talk to people? Um, you know, there was a nice lounge area. One of the bars had kind of a unextended outside, inside kind of area. Where there were pool tables and games on, there was a, like a TV lounge there. So, you know, you could kind of hang out there and talk to folks.

And then we did do a boat ride for my birthday present. We actually did a two hour boat ride where we, um, Did kind of a sight seeing of Negril and the seven mile beaches as seven mile beach. And one of the things that is really cool, um, down from the beach is, is it the, the new grill seascape turns into chaos. And so one of the things that we did was we actually got to swim in the cave from Dr know, the James Bond

**Shayne:** Ah,

**Ryan:** there's actually a bar in there now. And so from the resort up above, you can actually walk down and they have a bar area in there. There was nobody in there now, I dunno if you could rent it or if they just had it closed, but we could swim in there.

We could check it all out. Um, so we checked out some other cases. And we went to Rick's Rick's cafe. You may have heard of where people jump off the cliff and everything like that. So we went and checked that out and we just kind of did a boat tour. You know, the guy talked about the history of Negril. He talked about the different areas of the beaches.

He pointed out the resorts. It was just a, it was just a great way to spend a gorgeous afternoon out on the water. Um, now we did pay for that. That was extra. Um, you know, but there was, there was lots of opportunities for things like that, that you could book before your trip. You could book while you're on your trip.

There was a lot of, a lot of just kind of planting, planting, spur of the moment. I think tomorrow I want to do this. I think tomorrow I want to do that. Now that being said. You need to keep track of the weather because the weather does dictate. If you can do things or not. So, you know, don't wait until your last day, because our last day was a rain out.

So, you know, you want to make sure that you, you keep mindful of those things.

**Shayne:** Make sure you do the things that you want to do earlier so that they don't get rained out

**Ryan:** Yeah.

My, my suggestion, and this is what I tell people when they go to Hawaii too. Um, is the first day is just relax. The first day is, is just kind of what the relaxation kind of wash over you and don't plan anything. Don't do anything. Just kind of check it out because you usually here's what happened.

When you go to an all-inclusive resort, the first day kind of feels like camp. You've got to check this box, you've got to do this. People are telling you where these things are and you're kind of just spinning around. Okay. Kind of like an, a cruise is that way too, Right. Because you've got your muster drill.

You're trying to figure out where your state room is, all That kind of stuff. The first full day don't do anything. Don't plan anything. At all, but make sure as long as the weather cooperates those next couple of days after that, you've got some of those half twos mapped out because if you have to move them because of weather, you may still have time to do.

**Shayne:** Right.

**Ryan:** And That's why I feel like for me, after a couple of trips, five nights in an all inclusive feels right.

For me now, there were definitely people that were there for less. There were definitely people there for more. Um, we talked to one guy or I overheard him at the bar, say, I'm here for nine more nights.

He didn't say how many nights he had been there already. So, you know, I mean, there are definitely people that are there longer. We met one couple who were there for a very quick. Um, three night honeymoon because that's the time that they had. So I, I feel like, you know, you do want to do a little bit of mapping out of your week, but don't feel like you have to go crazy.

**Shayne:** Yeah, I think three nights is the minimum stay.

**Ryan:** Yeah, Yeah. absolutely.

**Shayne:** What, so did you dine on the beach completely or did you check out any other

**Ryan:** Oh no. So, so basically what we would do, so, so breakfast, we kind of did a variety of things. Um, One morning. We had breakfast in the room, on our, on our patio. So we were overlooking the water. Um, the next day, a couple of days, we went to the buffet. Um, one day there was, they had kind of a seaside restaurant where you were on the beach.

We had breakfast there and then one day we were over at beaches resort,

checking that out and we had the buffet. Over there. Um, but you could do, I mean, like I said, you could have room service in your, in your room every day. If you wanted to. Um, there were multiple restaurants?

kind of five main restaurants.

There was a continental restaurant. Um, there was an Italian restaurant, a teppanyaki. Jamaican kind of Caribbean. And then there was a beach dining kind of seafood focused. There was also a cafe that was open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, kind of like a sandwich place. Um, and they all or not dinner, but late night dining, there are also several coffee stations.

There was a lounge, a game areas. I would say there's probably three large bars, but there's wait staff kind of milling all over the place.

**Shayne:** And you can always text your Butler.

**Ryan:** And you can always text your boat or absolutely. There were multiple beach areas, I would say kind of three large pools. Um, there was actually at the one end, there were some swim up rooms, which I've always kind of not liked those because they're kind of in big strips where you've got, you know, like 50 rooms, this was like 10 rooms.

And this was also the quiet part of the resort. So, you know, if I booked there again, That may be where I want to be, because I like that idea of just lounging in my pool chair On my patio. Um, and so, and there were also multiple whirlpools and things, so lots of stuff, um, you know, lots of spaces to spread out the resort did not feel full at all.

Um, it wasn't talking to some of the staff, it was not at high capacity, um, but it definitely felt manageable.

**Shayne:** On your jaunt over to beaches, was there much noticeable difference between the beaches and the sandals resort from what you saw?

**Ryan:** No, I would say, I think the. stuff that I noticed at beaches, and again, beaches, this for families, um, the kids' activities are kind of more in your face. So, so that is one thing, you know, which is great for the kids and great for families who are looking for things for their kids to do. I think with beaches there was just it, and it felt different because we hadn't been around kids for a couple of days. So, you know, there was, I think there was a lot more energy,

**Shayne:** Right. And then all of a sudden you were.

**Ryan:** and right, exactly. And so, and so I think that's what I noticed with beaches. Was there were.

more grabbing go places, you know, grab a snack, grab a tree, grab an ice cream, wear sandals.

It was more meals or food being brought to you. You know, there was not, which is actually one of the things that I really like is having a place where I can just go up and grab a sandwich or go grab a gelato or something like that. That's what I didn't see at sandals that I did see at beaches. I think part of that's because when kids are hungry, kids are hungry.

Right.

**Shayne:** Right, right. Yeah. There's no waiting until dinner at 7:00 PM.

**Ryan:** Yeah,

**Shayne:** Feed them now.

**Ryan:** Yep. Absolutely. And, and like I said, there was, um, a relationship with sandals Negril sandals, beaches, nobody, nobody batted an eye that we were there from another resort we could, we could eat there. We could walk around, we could check it out. No problem at all. That's what I was going to talk about with sandals. What else do you want to know?

**Shayne:** Is there a city or a town of Negril that you can go to? That's not the resort.

**Ryan:** So, so there is, um, and we were on the edge. I felt like we were on the edge of. Um, but there is definitely a resort town of new grill. I would say we didn't venture out other than the boat ride. Um, But I definitely know that there are bars, there's restaurants, there's other resorts and things to do. I felt like for me, when I go to a resort like sandals, I'm fine.

Staying there for the most part, maybe doing one or two excursions out and about, but I didn't feel like I needed to do that in the grill. Not because it was new grill, just, that's not what this trip was about, but yes, the grill is a very, um, famous resort area.

**Shayne:** Okay. Cool. Yeah. And I learned my lesson about going into town and being resort

**Ryan:** know? Yeah.

**Shayne:** first story episode.

**Ryan:** and there was a sense of that. I mean, there, there was a sense of that, but I felt, I felt very safe. I mean, there, there was never an issue. Um, you know, and it was one of those things where you did have people going up and down the

beach that weren't part of it. Part of the, uh, the resort they were selling, um, various items let's say, and you know, this is one of those things, but you know, if you weren't interested, they were fine with it.

They didn't hassle you at all. Um, it wasn't an issue.

**Shayne:** Okay. Good. Yeah. Sounds great.

**Ryan:** So for me, I kind of think of it. Who is sandals right. For, so what does this sound like for you, Shane, as far as who sandals might be right for?

**Shayne:** Definitely adults since it's don't explosive. Now, what do you think about the, how was the age range?

**Ryan:** So, so I would say most folks were younger than us. Well, no, I think we were. Yes. I would say probably two thirds of the folks were younger than us. And a third of the folks were our age or older. Both my wife were in our mid forties. It definitely had a newlywed vibe. Um, as far as the type of people that we, that we met, but we did not feel out of place at all.

I did not see very many elderly couples, a few. Um, so I would say probably. Sixties, um, were the, were the oldest folks that, that we tended to see there and that.

and, and that felt fine. Um, as far as there weren't older folks,

**Shayne:** so I better hurry up then.

**Ryan:** you better hurry up. Yes. Yes. I also think that sandals is, is good for couples who just want to unwind.

Um,

**Shayne:** Yeah, it seems like it would be a good place to, if you haven't had a couple strips in a while, or if you had, but just, if you just need to get away, just the two of you to sounds like a perfect place for that. Whether it's for three nights or nine plus.

**Ryan:** absolutely. And it's, it's a great place for you to plan your vacation your way. Um, you know, you can be as active or inactive as you want. I know there are some resorts that focus on activities. You know, they're activity focused. This is there. If you want it, it's not there for you. What about beaches though?

We haven't talked a lot about beaches on this show other than kind of comparing it to sandals

**Shayne:** Well, I guess you're going to get the same level of luxury and

**Ryan:** very much so. Yeah. Very

**Shayne:** more activities for kids.

**Ryan:** Yeah. Yeah. And I think one of the things that I liked when I went to see it. are activities for a variety of kids.

So there was the small kid activities, younger kid activities. Beaches has a relationship with Sesame street. So there was that kind of stuff around, but then there was also an X-Box lounge.

There were all the activities that I talked about on the beach with water sports are available beaches too. So. I could see my son getting on a kayak and going around for an hour or so. I could see him in his sister getting on an Aqua trike and doing all sorts of stuff. I could see having to drag my son out of the X-Box.

Wow. For any sort of, you know,

**Shayne:** There's a beach here, kid.

**Ryan:** absolutely there's a, there's a small water park area, you know? So, so there's, there's definitely stuff for a variety of kids. I would say what I saw skewed a bit younger, but I also didn't explore everything.

**Shayne:** Right. Yeah. You just kind of saw it for a couple hours, maybe.

**Ryan:** And so, and so for me, I think beaches would be great for a multi-generational trip. You know, if you've got grandma and grandpa, and you've got multiple adult families with kids and cousins, man, I could just see having a ball at a place like this.

**Shayne:** Like a big family gathering. All right.

**Ryan:** So Shane with sandals and beaches. We talk about the fact that you see advertisements all over the place. And there's an advantage to that because with the advertisements all over the place, there's also often promotions all over the place. So for instance, I, I always see when I look at sandals for folks there's discounts, there's last minute deals.

There's last-minute travel deals that you can get. There are different promotions. So for instance, they have a BFF girls get away, where they have, you know, a four night special for best friends, they have booking discounts, they have discounts for military police, FEMA, workers, firefighters, you know, just different things like that.

So do not be afraid. If you're interested in this type of vacation, do not be afraid to

reach out and have somebody work through this with you. And the good thing is. as promotions come up, you can apply those to things that you've already booked, which is really cool.

**Shayne:** Yeah, so we can find you a nice fun trip for you and whatever group of friends you want to go with.

**Ryan:** Absolutely. Well, you know what, by now that Shane and I would love to help you plan your next amazing vacation and it might just be at sandals or beaches. We are both travel advisors with creating magic vacations. you can reach out to me, [ryan@creatingmagicvacations.com](mailto:ryan@creatingmagicvacations.com). That's R Y A N or [shayne@creatingmagicvacations.com](mailto:shayne@creatingmagicvacations.com), S H A Y N E. And remember, it's our job to make you the all-inclusive vacation superhero.