Falmouth, Jamaica

A spotless purpose-built pier, a Georgian town still mending after Melissa, and the river and falls beyond.

Facts checked on 26 October 2026

I haven't sailed into Falmouth yet, so this guide is built the way I'd want one built for me: from the US State Department, Jamaica's own ministries, the cruise lines and the news on how the port came through Hurricane Melissa, with every price dated. It's one of the easiest piers in the Caribbean to step off. The town just beyond it is a different story, and I'll tell you both.

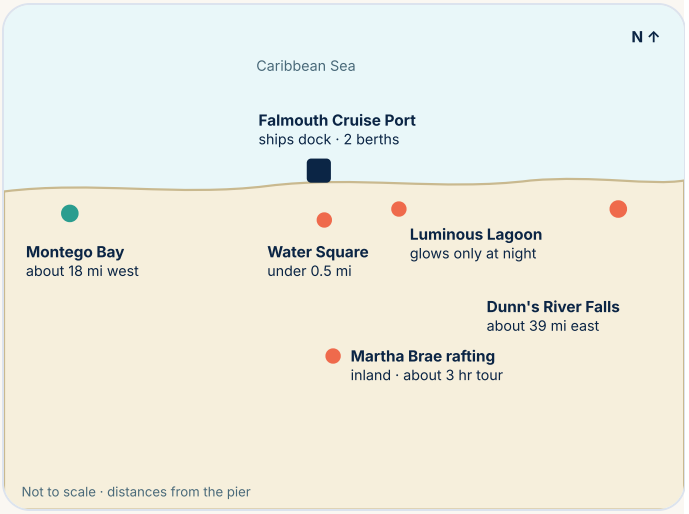
THE QUICK TAKE

- **Ships dock** at the Historic Falmouth Cruise Port, which has two berths. It's flat, paved and built for big ships.
- **Water Square**, the heart of the old Georgian town, is **under half a mile** from the pier.
- Hurricane Melissa hit in October 2025. The **port had almost no damage** and reopened in December, but the town is **still recovering**.
- **No camouflage.** Jamaica restricts camo clothing and material, children included.
- US dollars are widely taken. Use licensed taxis with **red PP/PPV plates**, and set the price first.
- Jamaica stays on Eastern Standard Time all year: **one hour behind Eastern in summer**, the same in winter. Go by ship time.

Falmouth at a glance

Getting ashore	Ships dock at the Historic Falmouth Cruise Port (two berths). No tender.
Ship to town	The port sits on the edge of the old town. Water Square is **less than 0.5 miles** from the pier.
Currency	Jamaican dollar. US dollars are widely accepted in tourist areas, with prices often shown in both. Change may come in Jamaican dollars.
Language	English is official, and many people also speak Patois.
Time zone	Eastern Standard Time all year, with no daylight saving: **one hour behind US Eastern from March to November**, the same in winter. Be back by **ship time**.
Taxis	Licensed taxis have red **PP or PPV** plates, and JUTA is the official tourist carrier. No meters, so agree the fare first. No Uber or ride-share.
Drive on	The left
Don't bring	Camouflage clothing, pepper spray, knives, guns, ammunition or even spent casings.

Map of the area



Falmouth sits midway along the north coast; the town is at the port gate, the big sights are a drive either way.

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Jamaica travel advisory
US State Department

Banned and restricted items
Jamaica Ministry of National Security

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From the ship to town

The Historic Falmouth Cruise Port

There's one cruise port here, built by the Port Authority of Jamaica and Royal Caribbean and opened in 2011, with **two berths**. Cruise Hive reports that Royal Caribbean and Celebrity ships usually take Berth 1, while Carnival, Norwegian, Disney and others use Berth 2. Either way, you walk off the ship into a gated shopping area of Georgian-style buildings. Cruise Critic lists shops, cafés, a tourist information desk, shaded seating and a wheelchair-accessible restroom. Its staff found no free public Wi-Fi.

How it came through Hurricane Melissa

Melissa, a Category 5 storm, hit Jamaica on 28 October 2025, coming ashore near Falmouth. The man coordinating relief in Falmouth reported that the port suffered **almost no damage**, and *Caribbean Princess* brought the first passengers back on **2 December 2025**. By 8 December, ships were calling at all four of Jamaica's main cruise ports. The town and the countryside took longer. A cruise guide updated in May 2026 said roofs, historic buildings and roads around Falmouth were still being repaired.

Walking out into town

The town starts right at the port gate. Cruise Hive puts **Water Square** at less than half a mile from the pier and St. Peter's Anglican Church at about a 20-minute walk. The taxi stand and bus stop are at the edge of the port.

Coming back: the walk is short, but leave time for the security line at the port gate on busy two-ship days.

At the Falmouth, Jamaica cruise port: what's there

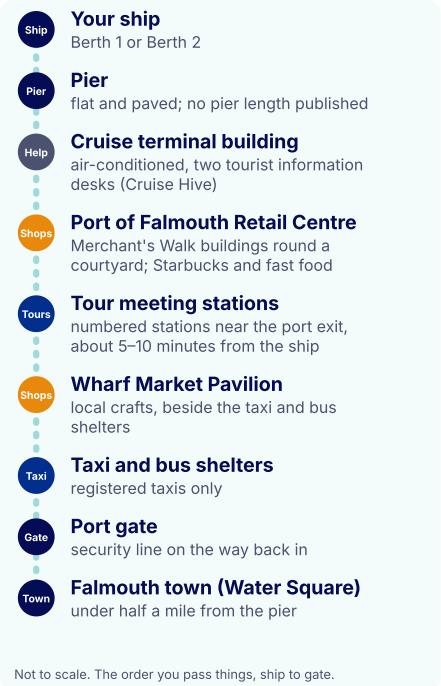
Port facts checked on 30 October 2026. Shops, prices and opening hours change, so check on the day.

Falmouth is one of the easiest ports in the Caribbean to step off: ships dock right alongside, and you walk straight into a flat, paved, gated shopping village built in Georgian style. If I were spending the day at the port here, I'd treat it as a pleasant browse with coffee and shade rather than a beach day, because there's no beach or pool inside the gates. The old town of Falmouth starts at the port gate, but it was still repairing storm damage in 2026, so the port is the comfortable choice.

Port map: this port doesn't publish a map of its own that we could find, so we drew the simple walk below from the port's and cruise lines' own descriptions.

From the ship: Historic Falmouth Cruise Port

One wedge-shaped, double-sided pier with two berths, built by the Port Authority of Jamaica and Royal Caribbean and opened in 2011. Cruise Hive reports Berth 1 is used mainly by Royal Caribbean and Celebrity (Oasis-class ships call), and Berth 2 (County Wharf) by Carnival, Norwegian, Disney and sometimes Royal Caribbean. It came through Hurricane Melissa (Oct 2025) with almost no damage, and calls resumed 2 December 2025.



Our own simple drawing, not the port's map.

Free things to do inside the port

Welcome music Free — Celebrity says local musicians greet arriving guests with reggae.
Arrival area

Shaded courtyard seating Free — Indoor and outdoor seating, many benches under shade structures.
Around the terminal and the retail courtyard
Access: Flat and paved

Air-conditioned terminal Free — A cool indoor spot to sit out the midday heat.
Falmouth Cruise Terminal

Free Wi-Fi (reported) Not confirmed — Cruise Hive reports free Wi-Fi across the port, often slow; Cruise Critic (Feb 2024) found no free public Wi-Fi, only Wi-Fi for paying customers.
Throughout the port

Georgian-style port architecture Free — The shopping village was built to echo the town's 18th-century Georgian buildings; a nice place for photos.
Retail Centre

Pools and beaches

No beach or pool inside the port — There is nowhere to swim inside the gates. Cruise Hive says the Margaritaville with its swim-up bar has closed. The nearest beaches need a taxi.

Food and drink

Starbucks — Coffee chain, a good backup spot if the port Wi-Fi is slow.
Inside the port

Dairy Queen — Ice cream and fast food, reported by Cruise Hive.
Inside the port

Nathan's Famous — Hot dogs, reported by Cruise Hive.
Inside the port

Auntie Anne's — Pretzels, reported by Cruise Hive.
Inside the port

Patty Port — Jamaican patties, reported by Cruise Hive.
Inside the port

Sweet Jamaican Jerk Restaurant — Jerk chicken and pork, reported by Cruise Hive.
Inside the port

Margaritaville Falmouth (closed) — Cruise Hive (updated 2026) reports it has closed. One blog (Nov 2025) still lists it, so check before you plan around it.
Formerly inside the port

Shopping

Port of Falmouth Retail Centre — Four Merchant's Walk buildings round a courtyard plus two smaller jewellery buildings: brand outlets, boutiques, gift and souvenir shops. No shop count is published.
Between the pier and the gate
Access: Wheelchair accessible (Cruise Critic)

Duty-free shops — Two large duty-free stores (Cruise Hive).
Retail Centre

Jewellery stores — Blogs name Diamonds International, Colombian Emeralds and Pandora among the brands.
Retail Centre

Wharf Market Pavilion — Local crafts: hot sauces, spices, dolls, leather goods, carvings.
Next to the taxi and bus shelters

What to buy — Celebrity suggests Blue Mountain coffee, Jamaican rum, jerk seasonings, carvings, batik and Tortuga rum cakes.
Port shops and craft market

Worth paying for (and what it costs)

Historic town trolley and walking tours — Heritage walking and trolley tours leave from the information kiosk inside the port (Adventure Begins). No official price is published.
Information kiosk, inside the port

Restrooms, Wi-Fi, money and help

Restrooms Free — Several restrooms in the terminal and around the port.
Terminal and shopping area
Access: Wheelchair-accessible restroom in the shopping area (Cruise Critic); Cruise Hive says all are fully accessible

Tourist information desks Free — Two desks inside the terminal (Cruise Hive).
Terminal building

Money — Jamaican dollar is official; US dollars and cards are taken in most tourist areas, change may come in J$. No source confirms an ATM inside the port.

Getting out of the port

Taxi stand

About US$5–15 within town and the immediate area (reported by Cruise Hive)

— A sheltered pickup line for registered taxis only. Look for red PP/PPV plates or a JTB decal. Agree the fare first; there are no meters and no Uber.
By the Wharf Market Pavilion at the edge of the port
Access: No accessible taxis published

City bus stop — A sheltered stop; service to Montego Bay is limited.
Edge of the port

Jaital Falmouth Transport shuttle About US$20 (reported) — Private shuttle, reported by Cruise Hive.

Tour meeting stations — Numbered meeting stations near the exit; some tours meet in front of the terminal. Check your ticket.
Near the port exit

Walk into town Free — Out the gate via Seaboard Street to Water Square, under half a mile. Streets are busier, less even and still under storm repair.
Port gate
Access: Cruise Critic members report the town is not very wheelchair accessible

A whole day without leaving the port

If I were spending the day at the port here, I'd let the tour crowds go first, then take a slow lap of the Retail Centre courtyard, sit with a coffee from Starbucks in the shade, and browse the Wharf Market Pavilion for hot sauce and Blue Mountain coffee to take home. Lunch would be a Jamaican patty or jerk from the port's own food stands, with the air-conditioned terminal as my cool-down spot. If you want more, the short heritage trolley tour from the information kiosk shows you the old town without tackling its streets. Leave time for the security line at the gate on busy two-ship days.

At the port with a cane, walker or wheelchair

- Ships dock, so there's no tender. Cruise Critic calls the port highly wheelchair accessible and Adventure Begins describes it as flat and fully paved, with shaded rest areas.
- Accessible restrooms are in the shopping area; Cruise Hive says the restrooms in the terminal and around the port are fully wheelchair accessible.
- No pier length, tram, wheelchair rental or scooter hire is published for the port.
- Outside the gate the town is far less accessible, with busy streets and storm-repair work zones.
- Ask your cruise line for its own accessible-tour options; transport is included with ship excursions.

More on cruising with mobility & health needs. Rules differ by cruise line, so check with yours.

Questions about the port

What is there to do at the Falmouth cruise port?
The port is a gated, Georgian-style shopping village with duty-free and jewellery shops, a craft market, Starbucks and Jamaican food stands, shaded seating and an air-conditioned terminal. There's no beach or pool inside the gates.

Is there free Wi-Fi at the Falmouth cruise port?
Cruise Hive reports free but slow Wi-Fi throughout the port, while Cruise Critic's 2024 visit found Wi-Fi only for paying customers. Starbucks in the port is the usual backup.

Is Margaritaville still open at the Falmouth cruise port?
Cruise Hive reports that Margaritaville Falmouth, which had a swim-up bar, has closed. Check your ship's port talk before planning around it.

Where the port facts come from: Cruise Hive: Falmouth, Jamaica cruise port (updated Sept 2026) (30 October 2026); Cruise Hive: Falmouth, Jamaica cruise port, piers and getting around (30 October 2026); Cruise Critic: Falmouth, Jamaica cruise port terminal information (Feb 2024) (30 October 2026); Celebrity Cruises: Falmouth, Jamaica port guide (30 October 2026); Seatrade Cruise News: Falmouth Cruise Port weathered Hurricane Melissa well (Nov 2025) (30 October 2026); Port Authority of Jamaica: Cruise shipping (30 October 2026); Royal Caribbean Group: Royal Caribbean brings history back to life at Historic Falmouth (2011) (30 October 2026); Adventure Begins: Falmouth cruise port guide (updated Nov 2025) (30 October 2026)

How I'd spend the day

If walking is hard

Stay in the port. It's flat, paved and shaded in places, with seating, shops and an accessible restroom. If you'd like to see more, a short guided historic town tour or a taxi tour with a licensed driver gets you to Water Square and the old churches without tackling the streets yourself.

Beach day

There's no beach to walk to. Take a licensed taxi or a beach-break tour to a beach club east of town, or go west toward Montego Bay. Agree the price and the pickup time before you leave. **see Falmouth Jamaica beach break from cruise port on Viator**

See the island

The two classic Falmouth trips are a gentle bamboo raft on the **Martha Brae River** (about three hours on Norwegian's version) and the climb at **Dunn's River Falls**, about 39 miles east. The second is a long day, so book it with a guaranteed return. **see Falmouth Jamaica Martha Brae rafting on Viator**

Getting around

Taxis

Licensed taxis carry red plates marked **PP or PPV**. JUTA (the Jamaica Union of Travellers Association) is the official tourist carrier. Taxis have no meters. Rough Guides says to settle the price before you get in, and to make clear whether you're hiring the whole car. A blog guide says the stand at the port posts its fares, but I couldn't find an official fare sheet online, so check the board and confirm with the driver. There's **no Uber or ride-share**.

Buses and shuttles

There's a sheltered city bus stop at the edge of the port. Buses to Montego Bay are limited.

Driving

Jamaica drives on the **left**. With unfamiliar roads and storm repairs still going on, I'd leave the driving to someone local on a port day.

What to see

Water Square and the Georgian town

Falmouth was one of Jamaica's busiest ports in the 1700s and 1800s, and its Georgian buildings are the reason the cruise port was built here. Water Square is the old center, under half a mile from the pier. Some buildings were still under repair after Melissa.

St. Peter's Anglican Church

The church dates to 1795, according to Norwegian, and Cruise Hive puts it about a 20-minute walk from the port.

Martha Brae River rafting

You float about three miles down the river on a two-person bamboo raft with a local guide doing the poling. Norwegian lists it at about three hours, with a 280-pound weight limit per person. Getting on and off the raft is the tricky part.

The Luminous Lagoon

The water glows from tiny organisms, but only in the dark. Most ships leave before nightfall, so check your all-aboard time before you book.

Dunn's River Falls

The famous climbable falls are about 39 miles east, roughly an hour each way. See our Ocho Rios guide for the details.

Beaches, ranked for a cruise day

1. **A beach club near Falmouth**, a short taxi ride. Guides mention clubs with loungers and food service near town, but none publish official prices, so ask before you go.
2. **Burwood Beach**, about 3.9 miles away by Cruise Hive's count, and one of the closest public beaches. There's a small entry fee, but I couldn't find it on an official page.
3. **Montego Bay beaches** such as Doctor's Cave, about 18 miles west. Busy and well equipped, but it's a long ride there and back on a port day.

None are walkable from the pier. Agree the round-trip taxi fare and your pickup time before you leave.

Where to eat and what to try

- **Jerk chicken or pork**, smoky and spicy, the dish everyone comes for.
- **Ackee and saltfish**, the national dish, and a **Jamaican patty** for a quick snack.
- **In the port**: Cruise Critic lists cafés and restaurants inside the gates, and Cruise Hive mentions a Starbucks and a Jamaican patty stand. Cruise Hive also reports that the port's Margaritaville has closed.
- **Red Stripe** beer and Blue Mountain coffee to take home.

Money, language and local rules

- **Money:** the Jamaican dollar is the official currency. US dollars are widely accepted in tourist areas, with prices often shown in both.
- **Camouflage:** the Ministry of National Security lists camouflage clothing and material among its restricted items, and Carnival says it's against the law for anyone, children included, to wear army-style camo. Cruise Hive reported a boy being sent back to his ship in Montego Bay to change. Leave camo shorts, caps and bags at home.
- **Weapons:** guns, ammunition and even spent casings are illegal to bring in, and so are pepper spray and knives without permission. The State Department warns of very large fines and detention.

- **Drones:** fly only in daylight, below 400 feet, and away from airports and crowds.
- **Medical care:** it may be limited, private hospitals want payment up front, and an air ambulance to the US starts around **$30,000**. Bring extra prescription medicine in its original packaging.
- **Ship time:** Jamaica doesn't change its clocks. In summer it's an hour behind the ship if your ship keeps Eastern daylight time. Go by the ship.

What the videos don't show you

- **The town is still recovering.** The port looks spotless, but Melissa's damage to roofs, historic buildings and roads around Falmouth was still being repaired in 2026.
- **Persistent vendors.** Cruise Critic warns the streets outside the gate can be busy, with vendors who don't take no easily. A polite, firm "no thank you" and keep walking.
- **The big sights are far.** Dunn's River Falls is about 39 miles away and Montego Bay about 18. Traffic can make those drives longer.
- **The glowing lagoon is a night show.** Daytime calls usually miss it.
- **Crime advisory.** The State Department rates Jamaica Level 2 for crime and health and names Level 3 neighborhoods elsewhere on the island. Falmouth isn't one of them, but use licensed taxis and keep valuables out of sight.
- **No ride-share.** There's no Uber or Lyft to rescue you, so agree your return ride before you leave.

With a cane, walker or wheelchair

The port itself is one of the friendliest in the Caribbean for us. Ships dock, so there's **no tender**. The port was purpose-built for big ships, and Cruise Critic calls it highly wheelchair accessible, with an accessible restroom in the shopping area. Life Well Cruised describes the retail area as wheelchair accessible too.

Outside the gate it changes. Cruise Critic members report the town is **not very wheelchair accessible**, and storm repairs may mean broken pavement and work zones. The port doesn't publish anything about accessible taxis or vans. Raft and falls excursions involve boarding, steps or wet rock, so ask your line about the exact activity level before you book.

See Mobility & Health Needs for what to ask, and check with your cruise line which berth you're on.

The biggest mistake

Packing camo. That pattern on a cap, a pair of shorts or a kid's backpack can get you stopped and sent back to change. Jamaica restricts camouflage clothing and material. The second mistake is heading out without settling the taxi fare and your ride back. There's no Uber here, and the ship goes by ship time.

Falmouth FAQs

Do cruise ships dock or tender in Falmouth, Jamaica?

They dock. The Historic Falmouth Cruise Port has two berths, built with Royal Caribbean and opened in 2011, so you walk straight off the ship into the port's shopping area.

Can you walk into Falmouth town from the cruise port?

Yes. The port sits on the edge of the old town, and Water Square is less than half a mile from the pier. Cruise Critic warns that the streets can be busy and the vendors persistent, and the town is still repairing damage from Hurricane Melissa.

Is Falmouth open after Hurricane Melissa?

Yes. The port came through the October 2025 storm with almost no damage, and passenger calls resumed on 2 December 2025. The town and the area around it were still being repaired in 2026.

Can I wear camouflage in Jamaica?

No. Jamaica's Ministry of National Security lists camouflage clothing and material among its restricted items, and Carnival says it is against the law for anyone, children included, to wear army-style camo. Leave it all at home, even a cap or a bag.

Do they take US dollars in Falmouth?

Yes, widely, in tourist areas, where prices are often shown in both currencies, according to the US Commerce Department. The official money is the Jamaican dollar, so expect some change in it.

Is Falmouth safe for cruise passengers?

The US State Department rates Jamaica Level 2, exercise increased caution (issued 23 June 2026), and Falmouth is not on its list of Level 3 areas. Stay inside the port or with licensed taxis and tours, and don't flash valuables.

Where these facts come from

- US State Department: Jamaica travel advisory (https://travel.state.gov/en/international-travel/travel-advisories/jamaica.html) (Level 2, issued 23 June 2026, checked 26 October 2026)
- Jamaica Ministry of National Security: banned and restricted items (https://mns.gov.jm/node/287) (checked 26 October 2026)
- Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Jamaica travel page (camouflage rule) (https://www.mfa.gov.sg/countries-regions/j/jamaica/travel-page) (checked 26 October 2026)
- Cruise Hive: Carnival's camouflage warning (quotes Carnival's What to Wear FAQ) (https://www.cruisehive.com/the-one-type-of-clothing-carnival-says-you-shouldnt-wear-ashore/209770) (19 May 2026, checked 26 October 2026)
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- Seatrade Cruise News: Falmouth Cruise Port weathered Hurricane Melissa well (https://www.seatrade-cruise.com/ports-destinations/falmouth-cruise-port-weathered-hurricane-melissa-well) (25 November 2025, checked 26 October 2026)
- CruiseMapper: cruise ships return to Falmouth (https://www.cruisemapper.com/news/15591-cruise-ships-return-falmouth) (December 2025, checked 26 October 2026)
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- Cruise Hive: Falmouth cruise port guide (berths, distances) (https://www.cruisehive.com/falmouth-jamaica-cruise-port/139873) (updated September 2026, checked 26 October 2026)
- Cruise Fever: things to do in Falmouth (recovery status) (https://cruisefever.net/24-things-to-do-in-falmouth-jamaica-on-a-cruise/) (May 2026, checked 26 October 2026)
- Life Well Cruised: Falmouth cruise port guide (https://lifewellcruised.com/things-to-do-in-falmouth-jamaica-cruise-port-guide/) (February 2024, checked 26 October 2026)
- Rough Guides: getting around Jamaica (licensed taxis, driving on the left) (https://www.roughguides.com/jamaica/getting-around) (checked 26 October 2026)
- Norwegian Cruise Line: Bamboo Rafting on the Martha Brae River (https://app.ncl.com/shore-excursions/FMH_06/Bamboo-Rafting-on-Martha-Brae-River) (checked 26 October 2026)
- Norwegian Cruise Line: Falmouth, Jamaica (https://www.ncl.com/uk/en/cruises-to/falmouth-jamaica) (checked 26 October 2026)

Facts checked on 26 October 2026. Ports change their rules and prices, so check before you sail.

About the "I" on this page. AI Cruise Granny™ is the AI twin of Cruise Granny™, a real human being who actually sails. Every experience written here in the first person is hers. The AI twin is what writes it up, checks the facts against official sources and keeps it current. We tell you that openly on every page, because you should know who is talking to you. More about how this works.