



### **Couples Resorts Corporate Backgrounder**

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### **Couples Resorts' Corporate Background**

Before Couples Resorts became what it is today, Abe Issa, the founder of Couples Resorts and father of modern Jamaican tourism, convinced his father Elias Issa to venture into the hotel industry and purchase the Myrtle Bank Hotel in Kingston in 1943. Abe thrived in the hotel industry, and continued to expand his influence. As a result of continuous remarks from guests of Myrtle Bank expressing the desire for a resort on the north coast of Jamaica, Abe set-out to make it happen as only he could.

In 1948, Abe embarked on building Tower Isle Hotel, and in January 1949, after 365 straight days of intense manpower, Tower Isle Hotel opened its doors to the world. Word spread quickly and subsequently the new hotel soon became a popular Hollywood hangout. Stage and screen stars, sports heroes, and political figures frequented the resort. Walt Disney, actress Eva Gabor, screen sensation Debbie Reynolds, movie star Errol Flynn, boxer Joe Louis and playwright Noel Coward are just a few of the celebrities that were drawn to the old world charm of Tower Isle Hotel. Even Princess Margaret stayed at the resort on one of her many visits to the island.

Tower Isle established the start of a new era of tourism in Jamaica. It also became the first resort to remain open year-round, thus creating a summer season which had never existed on the island. In 1955, Abe Issa was appointed to chairman of the Jamaica Tourist Board, and from 1955 to 1963 he led "The Golden Age of Tourism" in Jamaica. It was then when visitor arrivals surged from 86,000 to 227,000 per year.

During these years Abe contemplated the concept of a pre-paid Jamaican vacation and began researching the idea. In 1978, he turned the concept into a reality and pioneered the all-inclusive concept in Jamaica – turning Tower Isle Hotel into the first all-inclusive resort for couples only, aptly named Couples Resorts. In 1984, after a rich and full life, Abe Issa passed away. Now, over 30 years after the inception of the first Couples Resorts property, Abe has left behind a legacy and the all-inclusive concept in Jamaica has flourished. All thanks to the dedicated efforts of one man, the father of Jamaican tourism.

Today, Couples Resorts proudly owns and operates four luxury all-inclusive, couples-only properties on the beautiful island of Jamaica. The properties include the first-ever couples-only,

all-inclusive resort, Couples Tower Isle (formerly known as Couples Ocho Rios), along with Couples Sans Souci, Couples Swept Away and Couples Negril. The company that was pioneered in 1978 by the legendary Abe Issa is today led by Abe's son, Elias "Lee" Issa. Lee Issa leads a dedicated and loyal group of Couples Resorts employees who are inspired to provide a truly memorable vacation experience for adult couples.

Each Couples Resorts property is an unsurpassed model of the all-inclusive concept. Bold design elements and local inspiration create a laid-back, natural setting infused with an authentic Caribbean spirit. For over 30 years, Couples Resorts has continued to delight its guests with outstanding service, exceptional dining and unparalleled value-added experiences.