

Caribbean-Focused

An Interview with Adam Stewart, Executive Chairman, Sandals Resorts International

EDITORS' NOTE Adam Stewart is Executive Chairman of Sandals Resorts International (SRI), the company founded by his late father, Gordon "Butch" Stewart, and the organization behind the world's most recognized brands of luxury all-inclusive resorts including adults-only Sandals Resorts and family-friendly Beaches Resorts. Prior to becoming Executive Chairman, Stewart spent more than a decade as Deputy Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the organization, overseeing a period of great expansion that reinvented the all-inclusive concept and introduced luxuries such as the region's first overwater accommodations. His efforts have been recognized by numerous hospitality industry awards including being named the 2015 Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association Hotelier of the Year. He now follows in his father's footsteps in leading the strategic vision of the company as it executes its bold strategy forward. In addition to his role with SRI, Stewart continues his leadership role in the family's extensive hospitality, media, automotive and appliance business holdings, including his position as Executive Chairman of The ATL Group, comprising the Jamaica Observer, the country's leading daily newspaper and ATL Appliance Traders, a chain of domestic and commercial appliance outlets combining exclusive distributorship of the world's top electronic brands and unbeatable customer service throughout Jamaica. An entrepreneur in his own right, Stewart is the founder of leading attraction and tour company Island Routes, offering more than 500 tours in nine Caribbean destinations, making it easy for visitors to authentically connect with locals and experience the region. Deeply committed to the region, Stewart is President of the Sandals Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization aimed at making a difference in the Caribbean communities where Sandals Resorts operates. One hundred percent of the monies contributed by the public to the Sandals Foundation go directly to programs benefiting the Caribbean. He is an active member of the Jamaica Hotel & Tourist Association, where he recently served as 1st Vice President and is chair of the country's Tourism Linkages Council, which seeks to enhance the capacity and competitiveness of local suppliers, making the strength of tourism work for all. Stewart serves as a special



Adam Stewart

investment envoy for tourism, appointed by Jamaica's Prime Minister Andrew Holness to drive innovation, investment, and economic growth in Jamaica. He serves on the Executive Committee of the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) and is part of the Wall Street Journal CEO Council, a global network of the world's most influential business leaders. A graduate and active alumnus of the Chaplin School of Hospitality & Tourism Management at Florida International University in Miami, Stewart is a dedicated runner and outdoorsman who lives in Montego Bay, Jamaica.

COMPANY BRIEF The world-renowned Sandals Resorts (sandals.com) brand was conceived and brought to life on the majestic shores of Montego Bay, Jamaica – earning its place as one of the most well-known and award-winning hospitality names in the world over the last 45 years and counting. Together with its sister brand, the family-friendly Beaches Resorts (beaches.com), the organization comprises 19 properties in nine Caribbean island nations including Antigua,

The Bahamas, Grenada, Barbados, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Curaçao, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Turks & Caicos. As the undisputed leader of Caribbean vacation experiences, Sandals Resorts and Beaches Resorts remain fiercely committed to the region, dedicated to innovative resort development that in the words of founder Gordon "Butch" Stewart, "exceed expectations" for guests, associates and the people who call the Caribbean home.

How does Sandals define its corporate culture, and how do you ensure that culture stays alive across 20,000+ team members?

Sandals is a Caribbean-born company, and our culture starts with pride in where we come from and the people who power it. You see it across every detail: how we care for our guests, how a room is prepared, how ingredients are sourced, how leaders mentor, and how we show up for the communities around us. At a scale of 20,000+ team members across nine islands, culture isn't a program we implement; it's a way of being. That's why we invest so much in leadership development and promoting from within, to create clear pathways for growth. We also put



Sandals St. Vincent and the Grenadines

people close to the business so they understand the “why” and feel the ownership, not just responsibility. We hire for heart, train for excellence, and lead with purpose. That’s how we cultivate the special Sandals culture. There’s a favorite saying that “Culture isn’t defined by words on a wall, it’s defined by actions in the hall.”

Will you provide an overview of Sandals’ growth plans?

Our growth plans are deliberate, Caribbean-focused, and long-term. We expand where we can strengthen the destination’s tourism ecosystem, deepen local economic linkages, and deliver something truly distinctive for our guests. You’ve seen that strategy in action in recent years through our expansion into the Dutch Caribbean with Sandals Royal Curaçao and into the Eastern Caribbean with Sandals Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, opening up new ways for travelers to experience the region. At the same time, we’re continuing to invest heavily in the islands where we already operate, particularly Jamaica, where Sandals Dunn’s River has helped set a new standard for what luxury can look and feel like.

From our perspective, growth follows two parallel tracks. One is thoughtful expansion into destinations where the product can be genuinely differentiated and where long-term community partnership is meaningful. The other, equally important, is reinvestment and transformation across our existing portfolio through design evolution, operational enhancements, and continually higher service standards as expectations rise. That commitment is on full display in Jamaica, where Sandals Montego Bay, Sandals Royal Caribbean, and Sandals South Coast are being reimagined for the next era of the brand.

We’re applying that same disciplined approach to family travel through Beaches Resorts. Our \$1 billion investment includes major



The new Treasure Beach Village at Beaches Turks and Caicos

projects like the recently opened Treasure Beach Village at Beaches Turks and Caicos, with additional resorts planned for Barbados, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Exuma in The Bahamas, and Jamaica over the next several years.

Our job is to keep raising the benchmark, not just for Sandals and Beaches, but for Caribbean tourism as a whole.

Sandals has introduced many industry firsts. Will you discuss Sandals’ commitment to innovation?

Innovation has been part of Sandals’ DNA since day one. This company was built by challenging what an all-inclusive vacation could be, and in turn, it has raised expectations for the entire category. From introducing

the Caribbean’s first swim-up bar and overwater villas, to designing rooftop Rondovals, infinity-edge sky pool suites, and more recent innovations like island-inclusive experiences, we’ve consistently set new benchmarks for how guests experience the Caribbean.

Today, innovation goes well beyond what we build. It’s how we operate and how we evolve, from sustainability practices and workforce development to sourcing models and personalization at scale. The modern traveler still wants a high level of luxury, but they also want meaning and authenticity. They want experiences that feel rooted in the destination.

That’s why our approach is intentional. We listen closely and invest where it truly elevates the guest journey while staying true to our Caribbean roots. It’s how we protect what makes Sandals distinct while continuing to move the category forward.

How valuable has the Sandals Corporate University been in terms of building service quality and employee retention?

Sandals Corporate University has been one of the most important strategic investments we’ve made, because in hospitality, the only truly sustainable competitive advantage is people. A culture of service excellence is built through training, leadership, and consistency over time. The SCU gives our team members the opportunity to earn accredited degrees and professional certifications while they work, strengthening both capability and confidence. Just as importantly, it creates real pathways. When people can see a future, they stay, they grow, and they lead. That directly raises service quality and strengthens retention, because it reinforces something powerful: we’re not just hiring for a job, we’re investing in a career.

The impact also extends beyond our own resorts and ecosystem, developing talent at scale across not only the Caribbean, but around the world. It creates globally competitive



Vincy Overwater Two-Story Villas at Sandals St. Vincent and the Grenadines



Sandals Dunn's River in Ocho Rios, Jamaica

professionals who are Caribbean-born and Caribbean-proud, and it helps build the long-term resilience the tourism industry depends on. I'm incredibly proud when I travel and hear someone say they got their start at Sandals. It's a reminder that our influence doesn't just stop at our shores.

How do you define Sandals' responsibility to the communities where the resorts operate?

We don't simply operate in the Caribbean; we are the Caribbean. That sets a different standard, and it shapes how we lead. As the region's largest private employer, our responsibility has to extend beyond the guest experience. Through the Sandals Foundation, we deepen that commitment, investing in education, community development, and environmental conservation to ensure that tourism uplifts the people and places at the heart of it.

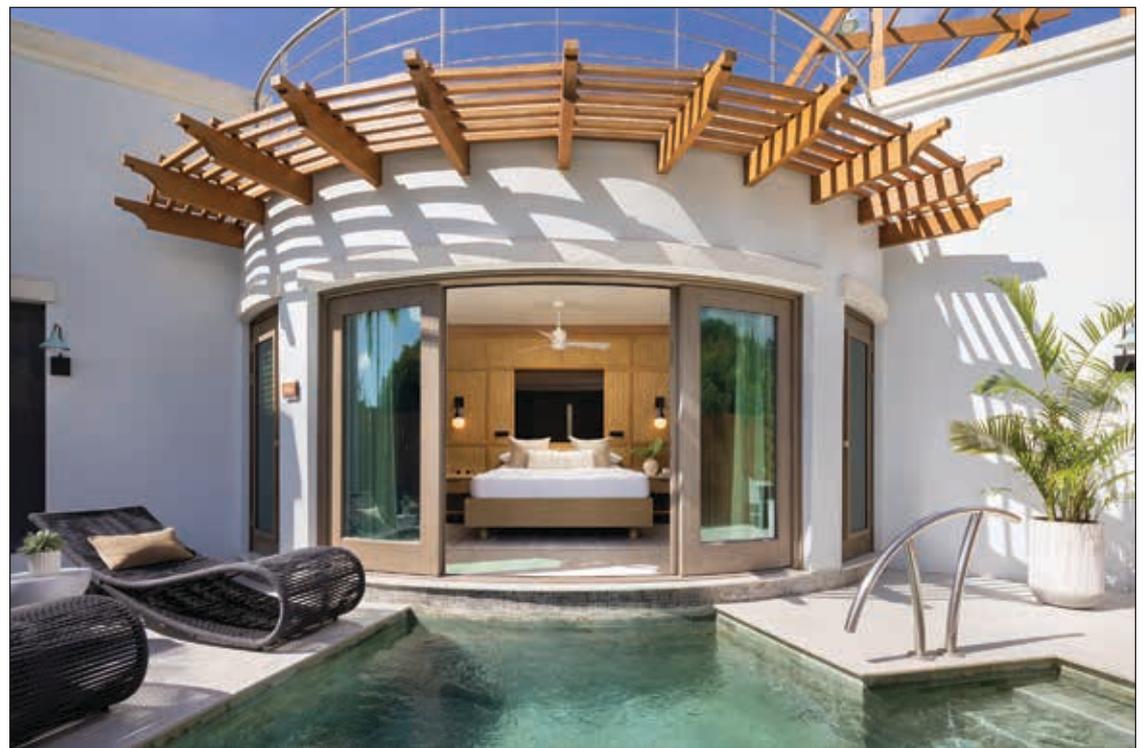
Tourism only works over the long term when communities feel the benefit in real, tangible ways. That means strengthening economic linkages by sourcing from local farmers and fishers, supporting artisans, partnering with small businesses, and ensuring tourism dollars circulate through the broader economy. That is our model, and the only path forward that truly endures.

Will you highlight Sandals Foundation's initiatives in the environment, education, and community development?

The Sandals Foundation is our philanthropic arm, but more importantly, it reflects how we've always understood our role in the Caribbean. Giving back has been part of the Sandals story from the very beginning. We cover all administrative costs of the Foundation so that 100 percent of every dollar donated goes directly to programs in three core areas: education, community, and the environment.

On the environmental front, we support marine conservation through coral restoration, marine sanctuaries, and community engagement that brings residents and guests into the work of protecting ocean ecosystems. We also invest in sustainable agriculture initiatives and composting programs that strengthen local food systems and reduce waste.

In education, we partner with schools and trusted local organizations to improve infrastructure, expand access to resources and technology, and support programs that broaden opportunity, because education remains one of the most enduring drivers of community development.



Rondoval Butler Sky Villa at Sandals Regency La Toc in St. Lucia

And in community health and support, we provide free dental and vision clinics and work alongside local partners to reach underserved communities with practical services that create real improvements. Across every pillar, our approach is the same: build long-term partnerships, stay committed, and deliver impact that lasts.

What are your priorities for the business?

Our focus is on staying disciplined and investing where it matters the most. That means investing in our people and the leadership pipeline that powers service, reinvesting across our resorts so the product continues to evolve with guest expectations, and expanding thoughtfully where we can strengthen the destination's tourism ecosystem. At the same time, we're reinforcing the fundamentals that will shape the next decade of travel, from smarter resource use to stronger local supply chains and deeper community partnerships. We're building for the long term, and creating lasting value for guests, team members, and the Caribbean alike.

What advice do you give young professionals entering the global hospitality industry?

Say yes to every opportunity to learn. When you learn the fundamentals, you learn how the business runs, and you automatically put yourself in environments that expand your experience. Above all, discover your superpower, that unique blend of passion and perspective that only you bring.

Hospitality is a people business. If you show up with genuine care for your team and your guests, success will find you. Opportunities in this industry grow out of the way you treat others, the way you lead when no one is watching, and the standard you hold yourself to. If you lead with heart and back it up with effort, doors will open, often to places you never imagined. ●