



# Ireland

UNWIND AND GO WITH THE FLOW

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# Hitching a ride with Marlon Brando the cab dude

**W**hen I write, the steel band from the night before had moved into my head. I would remember enjoying their show, but then everything went blank. No, were they loud, sure. It reminded me of the 1961 *Starliner* Cruise's *Way* when Alex Carter, played by John Brando, answers the telephone: "Calcutta, Black Hole speaking". Those rum punches packed a wallop. Two American couples kept buying on drinks. They were clearly CIA, (well, Brando a "botanist" ("man") And OK, they weren't actually buying — this was the manager's social party so they were drinking me for free. What did they want to know? What did I tell them? I could never find out. As I remember it my gorgeous partner Anne's thinking laughter then — oh, yes. I can still vaguely remember the flight over to our holiday on the Caribbean island of Nevis, suspiciously well behaved children allowing me to sleep for five hours, airline food that was not disgusting. Had everyone been dragged? Already though were complicated and, later, the staff at Hibiscus Plantations Beach Club — nobody was that nice. People scolded me easily; they belated me more than they had to. It was like The Shepherd Travels. They couldn't find me, I was from Manchester.

There's a permanent lesson here that flows the rum-soaked cocktails away. A week on the sea, off white sand, through the blue-green world, I take you to new world. You had to be careful because the wind was very deceptive. It was

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**GETTING THERE**  
**Luxury Holidays Direct** offers a seven-night stay for the price of six at Hibiscus Plantations Beach Club. Prices start at £1,309 including return flights, transfers and full-board accommodation. Visit [www.luxuryholidaysdirect.com](http://www.luxuryholidaysdirect.com) or call 0208 774 7200. Other tour operators to the Caribbean include Caribbean (020 7751 0900), [www.caribbean.co.uk](http://www.caribbean.co.uk), Clearer (0161 481 7003), [www.clearer.co.uk](http://www.clearer.co.uk), Emerald Resorts (01244 687 880), [www.emeraldresorts.co.uk](http://www.emeraldresorts.co.uk) and Thomas Cook (0844 703330), [www.thomastour.com](http://www.thomastour.com)



**THE MAN** Tim McInnerny with host Martin Pflaum, one of the many characters who spiced up his time on Nevis, main picture

found fought them off with their long, mean-looking cigarettes. Even though we bumped around all day, revving ourselves only to eat and drink, we still had no problems sleeping at night. We had a beautiful, huge room, and a bed as wide as my evening merged with the scolding sound of the surf. The only reason we woke early was the constant roar of breakfast when it seemed made out to order all four courses every day or else you'd spent the wonderful *Yuletide* and *Angels* and their fabulous friends.

Facing me, generally not cheap on Nevis but the dining is mighty fine everywhere. The hotel restaurant is particularly good. If you manage to get past the endless bar snacks (except *Travis*, *Spencer*) or your way to your veranda table. One of the island institutions is a night out at Miss Joan's. This lovely

once a week or so should look. The feels you would you have in the neck and change a bottle to your mouth until you feel like William Holden in the swimming pool. **A**fter her 40th birthday she held court in her bar — and was beside herself if they tried to leave early. "Where the hell you think you're going?" "No, I'm staying with Anne and Joan, a couple of writers from outside New York. They may not be fast servers but they're 40 and 42 years old, and I hope I have half their brains left by the time I'm well, by the end of the holiday, at this rate." So then, everybody's a character here. We had the drivers, the real Cabins, who Miss Joan claimed was the first taxi driver on Nevis.



**NICE WORK** The staff at the Hibiscus Plantations Beach Club, above, could not get any more friendly, says Tim McInnerny

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