

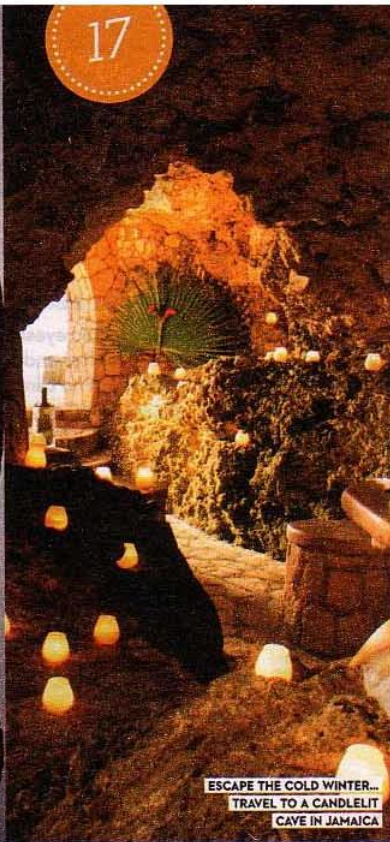
STYLIST

25th JANUARY 2011



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ESCAPE *Routes*RELAX AND RECHARGE WITH
A SLICE OF WINTER SUNTHE CAVES, JAMAICA: DOZENS
OF TEA LIGHTS HELP THE
RESORT SAVE ELECTRICITY*Dine in a candlelit Jamaican cave*

Have you had enough yet? Of January, of course. Grey skies and inverted umbrellas, the inevitable broken boiler and New Year's resolutions... That's why this year *Stylist* resolved to spend January as far away from the UK as possible. The destination? Jamaica.

Suspended on honeycomb cliffs near Negril on Jamaica's west coast, The Caves is a hotel built around a rocky outcrop that drops dramatically into the Caribbean with natural volcanic caves and grottos studded along the shore. It might not have a beach, but guests can jump into the turquoise sea from the rocks (at 10m it's just the right height to give you an exhilarating thrill without risking whiplash) or merely slip into the deep blue via a ladder (like *Stylist*), meaning that for the duration of your stay, the Caribbean doubles as your hotel pool.

The all-inclusive Caves resort consists of 13 cliffside villas that, decor-wise, look as if Salvador Dalí has given Whitstable beach shacks a makeover. All have balconies that overlook the ocean and feature quirky wicker furnishings, while many have

four-posted beds swathed in mosquito nets. There's also a four-bedroom villa with private pool and butler. Which is where *Stylist* staved off the January blues. We loved the bulging bookshelves, although be warned, there are no phones or TVs.

Holidaying at The Caves won't include much more than a triathlon of sunbathing, ocean dips and larking around with fluorescent cocktails. However, it's nigh on mandatory to take a snorkelling tour, where a guide takes you to a rock-pool hot tub, bat cave and secret beach that can only be reached by swimming underwater, while lobsters, manta rays and chartreuse-coloured fish stream past. Then there's the Caves Massage offered by the Aveda Amenity spa, inside a candlelit grotto, bellini in hand.

Why it's hot The Caves is part of the Island Outpost portfolio, owned by Island Records boss Chris Blackwell (also see lush mountain getaway Strawberry Hill and Jake's spa retreat). And is every bit as cool as you'd expect

from the chap responsible for Bob Marley and Grace Jones' careers.

The Caves has seen its share of celebrities. Naomi Campbell, Kate Moss and Catherine Zeta Jones have all shown their faces, and Jennifer Aniston gushes about her stay in the guestbook.

It's obvious why they like it: privacy. You can spend hours without glimpsing another soul - just find a lounger in your own sun-soaked spot. Or like some couples *Stylist* spotted, escape to your own cave with a bottle of wine.

All couples are booked into two events. First, the sunset hot tub: cut

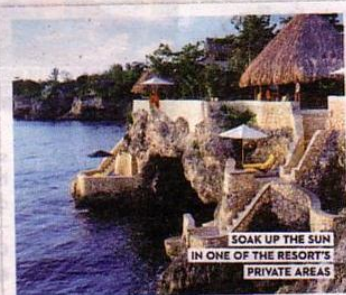
into a cliff-face overlooking the sea, you're plied with champagne while you watch the yolk-like horizon, gushing "wow" every five seconds.

Then there's 'cave dining' which takes place in your own private cave. Surrounded by candles and strewn with petals, it's all indecently romantic.

Eating and drinking The Caves boasts two dining gazebos, where staff ferry you delicious-but-healthy Jamaican fare including ackee and saltfish, jerk lobster and curried goat. The real show-stopper though is the pancakes with butter and golden brown sugar.

Unlike most all-inclusive resorts where the free alcohol is of the super-sweet variety, the cocktails here are seriously good. Go for a Chocolate Monkey or Dirty Banana cocktail.

Photo opportunity The cliff jumps. Within days, the cyan sea will seem so alluring, you'll be flinging yourself off like a kamikaze Tom Daley. Trust us.



The Caves is from £280 per room per night (islandoutpost.com; 01895-422 476)