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# The Cliff Hotel

Negril, Jamaica

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9/10

Telegraph expert rating

" A stylish, modern boutique beach resort opened by Mary Phillips, one of Jamaica's most experienced hoteliers. It's a refreshing addition to the well-established properties in this beautiful part of the island, with a destination restaurant, very attractive grounds and hammocks for all guests. Bliss. "

Telegraph Review



By **Rachel Cranshaw**,  
CONTENT EDITOR - HOTELS

## Location

8/10

At the end of West End Road's strip of luxury cliff resorts, but on flat, almost volcanic-looking rocks at sea level, as opposed to built into the face like most of its neighbours. It's not as beautiful a setting as for example The Caves, but it does have the advantage of

2 min to Spread

being significantly quieter than hotels closer to Rick's Cafe and other bars playing loud music. The nearest airport, in Montego Bay, is around an hour and a half away.

## Style & character

**9**/<sub>10</sub>

When the hotel was taken over from its previous owners, the lobby of the main building was opened up so that upon entering, you can see straight through to the beautiful winding pool at the centre of the complex, set within luscious gardens, and beyond, the ocean. This sets the tone for a clean, calm, contemporary beach feel throughout, yet still with a real sense of place thanks to a brilliant team of local designers: just the right amount of white is offset with characterful touches like lights made from poinciana tree pods, and liberal use of wood, straw and bamboo materials. The place oozes luxury and glamour without being at all blingy or OTT; it's relaxed and effortlessly cool.

## Service & facilities

**8**/<sub>10</sub>

Members of staff are very eager to please, providing prompt, friendly and personal service. Massages with Carolyn in the open-fronted beach-side treatment room come highly recommended. The lifeguards can take you out snorkelling and keep a careful eye on the sea — if it's too rough, there's a natural saltwater pool to loll about in, as well as the stunning main pool, which winds its way under bridges and has loungers in its shallows and a swim-up bar. The 'beach' is, as mentioned, set flat on volcanic-looking rocks, but individual lounging stations with beds and umbrellas have been created, from where staff will happily serve you, and there is access to the sea via ladders. There are a number of good nooks and crannies for whiling away an afternoon, including covered pagodas with adjustable shading.

- ✓ Bar
- ✓ Beach
- ✓ Laundry
- ✓ Parking
- ✓ Pool
- ✓ Restaurant
- ✓ Room service
- ✓ Spa
- ✓ Wi-Fi

## Rooms

**9**/<sub>10</sub>

The 33 suites are housed either in the main building, or across the four villas (two one-bedroom; one four-bedroom and one five-bedroom) that flank it. Villas have their own private plunge pools and loungers, indoor and outdoor seating areas. Space is never scrimped on, and you'll get a balcony (amazing views, of course) with supremely comfortable and stylish hammocks wherever you stay — a really nice feature. Rugs of hessian (in the bedrooms) or cool blue tones (in the villas' living rooms) on the tiled floors add a homely touch; attractive bright works from Venezuelan artist Benjamin Garcia are a perfect complement to the dark wood and pale hues of furniture and fabrics.

Fridges can be stocked on request (remember it's not all-inclusive here), and, very pleasingly, ditto kettles and high-quality tea bags. Coffee machines were on their way when I stayed — iPod docks would be a welcome addition, but may well materialise as development continues. Bathrooms are another delight — in mine, a huge egg tub and open rain shower sat on a pebbled floor, with double sinks.

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#### Food & drink

9/10

Zest restaurant, with its tree-shaded terrace illuminated by fairy lights at night, is a real boon of staying at The Cliff. Award-winning chef Cindy Hutson serves up interesting and delicious fare made from top-quality local produce. If you're looking for something light, try the Norma's signature salad, with greens, citrus fruit, jerk chicken or shrimp (US\$20/22 [£15/£17]). Catch of the day is always a treat, showcasing more unusual choices such as lionfish, which I enjoyed with sweet potato mash and slaw (US\$30 [£23]). Vegetarian options when I visited included a flavoursome, comforting aubergine stack (US\$20 [£15]). Desserts come in at around the US\$10 (£8) mark — the homemade mango ice cream is a must-try.

For breakfast, there's fresh fruit and juices (the soursop comes particularly recommended); healthy oat-based options (I loved the smoothie with local yoghurt and fruit, whey protein and chia seeds, US\$12 [£9]); a variety of cracking (sorry) egg dishes including omelettes with a tasty variety of ingredients to choose from accompanied by breakfast potatoes, homemade bread and jam (US\$14 [£10]); and of course a full Jamaican (US\$16 [£12])

The bartenders make excellent cocktails (US\$10-15 [£7-11]), best enjoyed from the beach bar in a squashy chair watching the sun go down with something tasty like plantain chips and black bean hummus to nibble on.

#### Value for money

8/10

Suites from US\$260 (£200) in low season; rising to US\$450 (£345) in high. Breakfast excluded — dishes from US\$8 (£6). Free Wi-Fi.

#### Access for guests with disabilities?

Ground-floor rooms are available and most of the grounds have level/ramp access, with the exception of the beach area.

#### Family-friendly?

Two villas have multiple bedrooms, but children aged under 13 are not permitted.

📍 West End Road, Negril, Jamaica.

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