**Stirred not Shaken**

There is a magical place in the Caribbean, an oasis of calm, nestled in a small corner of the island of Jamaica, where a famous author created the best-known spy on the planet.  That spy is Bond, James Bond, and this is his birthplace - the mind of Ian Fleming and the villa called GoldenEye.

Fleming bought fifteen acres of scrubland, a former donkey racetrack, in Oracabessa Bay in 1946. He sketched his dream villa and vowed to spend the rest of his life there. All thirteen of his original James Bond novels, starting with *Casino Royale*, were penned at GoldenEye, named, by the way, after a secret World War Two mission.

Today, GoldenEye is a luxury resort, where a chosen few can stay in Fleming's villa, or, in one of the other secluded villas, cottages and suites on the property.  This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the first Bond movie - *Dr. No*, and *Skyfall*, the twenty-third movie of the franchise, starring Daniel Craig, opens next month.  What better reason to pay a visit to this secluded gem, sip a rum cocktail on the beach and maybe dream up your own best-selling hero? As Fleming himself noted:

*“I wrote every one of the Bond thrillers here, with the jalousies closed so that I would not be distracted by the birds and the flowers and the sunshine outside. Would these books have been born if I had not been living in this gorgeous vacuum of a Jamaican holiday? I doubt it.”*

What then would I write about a visit to GoldenEye? Obviously there’s the stunning location, the privacy, the beauty, the fabulous food and the relaxing spa. However, all these can be found at many other luxury resorts.

The magic of a visit to GoldenEye lies in its provenance – protected and preserved to coexist peacefully and naturally alongside its twenty first century reincarnation.

The resort is owned by Chris Blackwell, ex-head of the fabled Island Records group, who actually consulted on the soundtrack for *Dr. No* back in 1961.

While on vacation at GoldenEye in 1983, Sting wrote the number one Police hit *Every Breath You Take*.

While you’re there, you can take a picnic lunch to the nearby property of Firefly, Noel Coward’s own Jamaican oasis, where he hosted The Queen Mother, among many others.

So that’s the story here: the past, present and future fusing in unique symbiosis, imbuing visitors with that sense that they’re experiencing something few others will get to do.

I was lucky enough to visit GoldenEye about fifteen years ago, before the massive renovations that took place in 2010. The place was a little more rustic back then, but no less special for that. One day I’ll return to see for myself what’s changed and what’s still the same. Sharing that experience will hopefully stir others as much as it stirred me.