

Q & A

THE BUCKET LIST

Gary Barlow taps into his inner Bond in Jamaica. *By Holly Rubenstein*



Ibiza's charming Old Town

What destination most reminds you of childhood holidays? Ibiza. I was about seven when we started going there, and that was our first holiday abroad.

Can you recommend us a hidden gem? One of the most beautiful places I've ever visited is Montauk, in the Hamptons, right at the end of Long Island. It's particularly pretty off-season. If you get a lovely blustery sort of day out there it's just magnificent. The whole of the US east coast – Maine, even as far north as Nova Scotia – I've done all that and it's amazing.



Portland Head Light in Cape Elizabeth, Maine



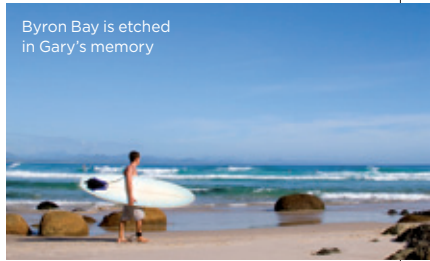
The Galápagos Islands are top of his bucket list

WHAT'S AT THE TOP OF YOUR BUCKET LIST?

The Galápagos Islands, because the last time I went to the Maldives, I felt like I was in Disneyland. I feel like they've sculpted it so much now that it's almost from a movie. In the Galápagos you're getting an absolute history of nature and I'd love to see it.



The untouched Bartolomé Island



Byron Bay is etched in Gary's memory

You've toured the world many times over. Where was the most memorable?

Australia last year. There was a place called Wategos Beach, in Byron Bay, where we had the most unbelievable four-hour lunch, after which we surfed, and finished off with a long walk.

When you need to unwind where do you escape to? The Cotswolds. We live out there. It's so beautiful and a real tempo change from the city. It's all about eating local food, walking the dogs and, of course, hitting the pub.

What is your favourite hotel? San Ysidro Ranch in Santa Barbara, California. Oh my God, it's just uber romantic - perfect for a honeymoon and the food is like nothing you've ever tasted.

What is your favourite city? Berlin. Just drive around it. There are so many little interesting areas to explore alongside the big sights like the Brandenburg Gate and the Wall.

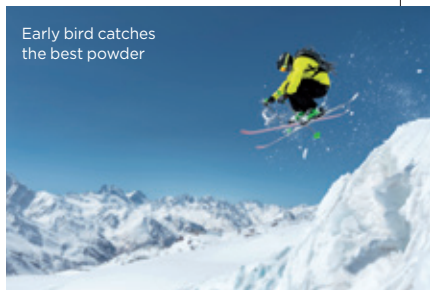
Where do you always eat well? New York has the best food in the world. I go to The Spotted Pig, Peter Luger's for steak, Nobu for Japanese... I could go on. And, New York is the only place I eat pizza.



Ian Fleming penned some of the Bond stories at GoldenEye

At GoldenEye you can swim from your room to the spa

If you had to recommend one place for us to visit, which would it be? GoldenEye in Jamaica. Ian Fleming wrote some of the Bond stories there, and his house still stands. Jamaica is an incredible island and the hotel's setting means the sea runs into a lagoon behind the hotel rooms. I remember swimming from my room to the spa - it was unbelievable.

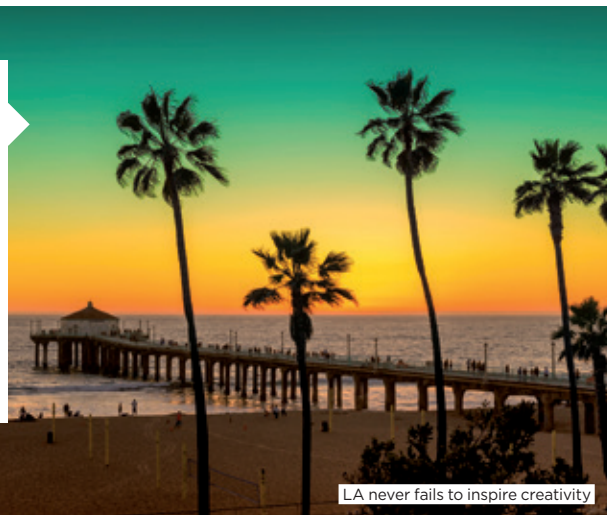


Early bird catches the best powder

Where do you keep going back to? The French Alps to ski - I love Courchevel and Val d'Isere. I'm up early and ski until they shut the slopes with a long lunch in the middle. It's the best holiday.

Where have you learned something new about yourself?

Los Angeles. I did a little escape there in the early 2000s when our son was about six months old. No one knows me there, so I could just spend time thinking. It's a creative town, so you feel its energy and, ultimately, it led me back to music. I felt good and unafraid about being creative.



LA never fails to inspire creativity



Sydney is particularly magical at Christmas

WHERE WAS YOUR HAPPIEST HOLIDAY?
SYDNEY AT CHRISTMAS. AS A FAMILY, WE HUNG OUT AT THE BEACH, CLIMBED OVER THE HARBOUR BRIDGE AND WATCHED THE NEW YEAR'S EVE FIREWORKS FROM A BOAT ON THE WATER.

A Better Me by Gary Barlow (Blink Publishing) is available now in audio, print and ebook.