

Travel  
May 12, 2013

**T**  
THE  
NEW YORK  
TIMES  
STYLE  
MAGAZINE

Loving and Loathing Marin County  
Around the World With James Turrell  
Rupert Everett's Charming Demons  
& Heat-Seeking Fashion

**HOT  
SUMMER**

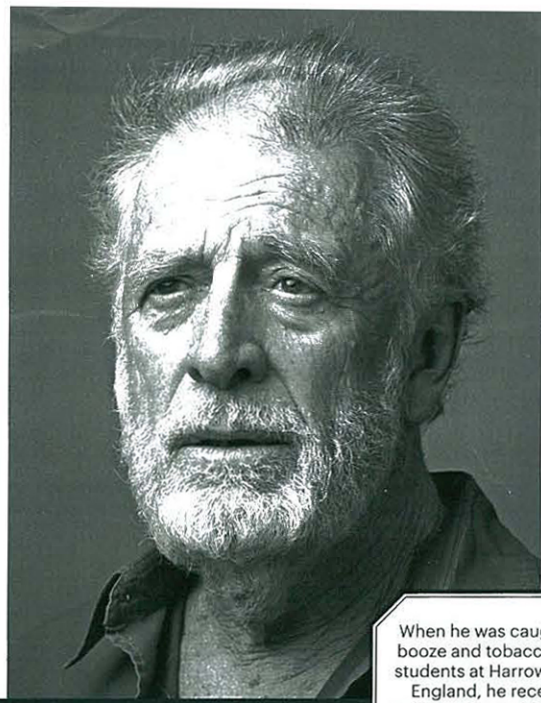


By the Numbers

# The Man With the Golden Ear

The 75-year-old businessman Chris Blackwell has made a fortune betting on the charms of his beloved Jamaica. In 1959, Blackwell started Island Records, which brought reggae and Bob Marley to a worldwide audience. (He also signed U2, Cat Stevens, Grace Jones, Nick Drake and Roxy Music.) When Blackwell sold Island 30 years later, he turned his attention to hotels: both in Miami's South Beach, which he helped put on the map when he transformed blighted Art Deco properties into luxury destinations; and, more enduringly, at home, where his current holdings include GoldenEye, the former home of the James Bond author Ian Fleming (a longtime lover of Blackwell's mother, Blanche), which attracts the likes of Kate Moss and Naomi Campbell. His latest venture? Jamaican rum, naturally.

BY JULIA FELSENTAL



When he was caught selling booze and tobacco to fellow students at Harrow School in England, he received the school's first public caning in **130 YEARS**

**17th Century**  
WHEN HIS FAMILY EMIGRATED TO JAMAICA

Amount of money it took to start Island Records in 1959  
**About £3,000**

Amount of money PolyGram paid for Island Records in 1989  
**Close to \$300 million**

HOW HE LIKES HIS RUM  
**Neat**



Artists and bands that Blackwell passed on:  
**Dire Straits  
Pink Floyd  
Elton John**

**"MUSIC TO STRIP BY"**\*  
An early-album released by Surprise, Blackwell's label before Island Records  
\*included with purchase: a G-string

Personal motto:  
**You can't do good deals with bad people, and you can't do bad deals with good people.**

**Zero**  
Number of air-conditioning units in his personal homes (in Jamaica, London and New York)

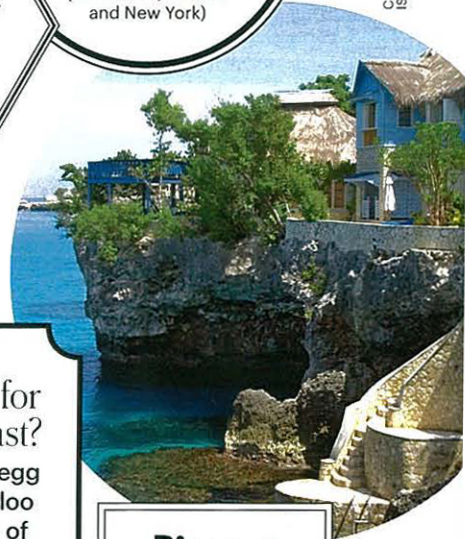
NUMBER OF INSTRUMENTS HE PLAYS  
**None**



**On first hearing U2**  
(to NPR)  
"I didn't love the music that much, quite honestly, because it was a little rinky-dink to me because I love bass and drum. But I loved them. There was a passion."

On Grace Jones  
**"A Hot Hurricane"**

What's for breakfast?  
Poached egg and callaloo with lots of Scotch-bonnet pepper oil



**Biggest pet peeve**  
Chocolates on pillows in hotels

LONGEST BACKGAMMON GAME HE'S EVER PLAYED  
**3 days**

**One of the 10 most attractive men on the planet,**  
as once described by the London Daily Mail gossip columnist Nigel Dempster.

Copies of "Legend" by Bob Marley sold to date:  
**25 MILLION**

JAMES BOND CHARACTER SUPPOSEDLY INSPIRED BY BLACKWELL'S MOTHER, BLANCHE  
**Pussy Galore in "Goldfinger"**  
The guano tanker in "Dr. No" was also called "the Blanche"



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: DAVID YELLEN/CORBIS OUTLINE; COURTESY OF BLACKWELL RUM; ISLAND; OUT POST; DENIS O'REGAN/CORBIS; BRIAN COOKE/REPERNS; KEITH HANSHIRE/GETTY IMAGES.