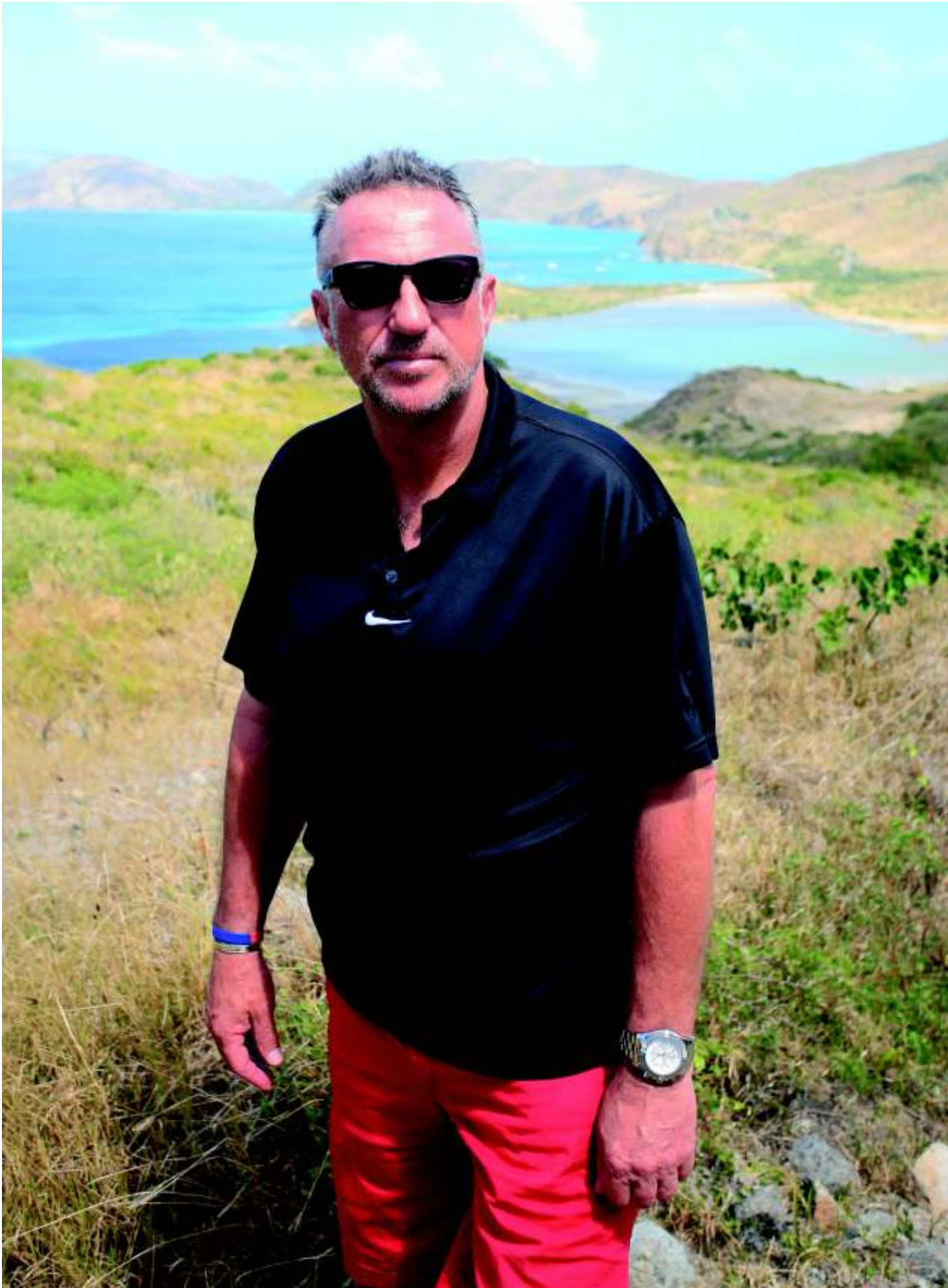


SIR IAN BOTHAM



Why Beefy got bowled over by St Kitts

After a summer commentating on England's triumphant Ashes campaign for Sky TV, Sir Ian Botham is looking forward to his next big innings in the West Indies, reports Peter Swain

Ian Botham, 'Beefy' to his friends, always played cricket with something of a Caribbean swagger.

Whether clubbing the ball over the boundary for six, or bowling with genuine venom, England's greatest all-rounder performed with flair more often associated with West Indian greats such as his good friend Viv Richards, or Gary Sobers.

So it should be no surprise that Beefy has chosen a new development in St Kitts, one of the Lesser Antilles, not far from Antigua and St Lucia, for his next holiday home in the sun.

"When I first saw Christophe Harbour, I knew I wanted to be part of it," says Sir Ian, 57.

"It's going to have everything: a deep-water marina for super-yachts, which is pretty good news for everyone, an awesome Tom Fazio-designed golf course, and great sea fishing, which I really enjoy, for the likes of Tarpon and Giant Trevally."

Botham was introduced to Christophe Harbour by its developer and fellow golf fanatic Buddy Darby, who has masterminded similar

schemes in South Carolina and Ireland, so has a good track record when it comes delivering such grand projects.

The infrastructure has already gone into the site's 2,500 acres, which covers most of the island's southeast peninsular, and earlier this summer, the St Kitts government invested \$16m in the scheme, taking a 30 per cent stake, so its future looks assured.

A dozen homes have been built so far, with 50 or so home sites sold and currently being developed.

"Earlier in the year, we bought a harbour-side site with a dual Atlantic and Caribbean aspect and 30ft of water frontage, so it's pretty special," enthuses Botham.

Similar lots cost about £500,000 (for more information, see www.christopheharbour.com).

So will he be unleashing his creative flair when it comes to fashioning the new house?

"I'll get very little say in all that - my wife Kath will be taking care of the design side of things!"

There are several finished villas currently for sale on the development at prices that suggest the Bothams are making a shrewd investment.

One hillside four-bedroom 3,948sq ft house is on at \$3.45m (£2.27m), while another rather larger palace would set you back \$4.85m (£3.2m).

But why choose St Kitts, a little larger than Jersey, in the first place?

"I've always loved visiting and playing cricket in the West Indies. I just like the vibe. There's a good ground on St Kitts, and I've found the people extremely friendly, very warm. I expect I'll be doing some work with the local kids, which is always fun."

He also quotes the twice-weekly BA flights direct from Gatwick as a big plus. But crucially, he says, this is one Caribbean island that has not been overdeveloped.

"Three years ago, no one had heard of St Kitts. In fact, I hope it doesn't get too sought-after, because at the moment it's just lovely," says Beefy.

"Christophe Harbour is a high-quality set-up, and unlike some other

Christophe Harbour also has an attractive fractional scheme. If you fancy rubbing shoulders with the great man, \$411,000 (£271,000) buys a one-tenth share of a deluxe four-bedroom villa, which entitles you to five weeks annual usage. Amenities include a deep-water marina designed for super-yachts, beach club, new golf course and a Park Hyatt in a bay half a mile away. christopheharbour.com
More fractional ownership offerings overleaf >>>



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island developments, Buddy won’t let it get too commercial.”

By which he probably means Barbados, where Wayne Rooney, Gary Lineker, Freddie Flintoff and fellow cricket commentator and England captain Michael Vaughan have bought into the likes of the Royal Westmoreland resort, and where typical prices are at least double those on St Kitts.

Botham has always been one to plough his own furrow rather than follow the crowd.

Reassuringly, the twin island federation of St Kitts and Nevis is also in the Commonwealth, the queen’s head is on the bank notes, and the legal system is very closely allied to the British one.

The financial side of things – St Kitts has an attractive tax regime and allows buyers of property costing more than \$400,000 to

Fractional ownership schemes

The Caribbean is a nine-hour flight away and not cheap to get to, so it’s well suited to fractional ownership. Schemes that offer between five and twelve weeks a year, usually spread over one period in the summer and one in winter, suit many British buyers. All these fractional schemes on St Kitts and Nevis entitle buyers to apply for local citizenship.



apply for economic citizenship – is not a factor for Botham.

“It’s really a lifestyle buy, and when it’s built, we’ll spend as much time there as we can. Mind you, I think Christophe Harbour has a very bright future,” he says.

Sir Ian, who lives in Yorkshire with wife Kath when he’s not globetrotting after the England cricket team for Sky, is no stranger

to the pleasures of a place in the sun, having bought a villa at Desert Springs in the Spanish province of Almeria in 2002.

Over the years he has been a very regular visitor there, sometimes grabbing a quick holiday in between Test matches. The superb Arizona-style golf course has been a major attraction, as has the almost guaranteed winter sun.

Designs have evolved since Botham bought, but an equivalent four-bedroom house to Botham’s, with its own pool and views across the fairway, would today cost about €705,000 (£610,000): almanzora.com.

Not many of us have Sir Ian Botham’s resources, but there are various fractional ownership options at more modest price points (see examples left, right, above and below). ➡



Kittitian Hill - another hotel-based proposition, this time on St Kitts. With good eco credentials, the Asian-themed boutique hotel is due for completion by Christmas, the Ian Woosnam-designed 18-hole course by autumn next year. Three- and four-bedroom villas featuring small infinity pools, cathedral ceilings and spacious verandahs are being built, aimed at buyers who want to spend between 6 and 8 weeks ‘on island’. Prices vary between \$405,000 (£267,000) for a one-eighth share, up to \$495,000 (£327,000) for a one-sixth. selectresorts.co.uk



Cliffdwellers, Nevis

Seaside at Cliffdwellers on next-door Nevis has a variety of fractional offerings: a quarter share of a two-storey, two-bedroom villa entitles you to 12 weeks use a year - 6 consecutive weeks in the winter, 6 in the summer - priced from \$400,000 (£265,000), with five years operating costs included. A one-eighth share of a four-bedroom buys you six weeks in total for the same amount. The 14 traditional Caribbean-style villas, with generous open-plan living rooms and terraces are next to the beach, and share an 80-foot free-form pool. cliffdwellers.org



Four Seasons, Nevis. Eleven three-bedroom and four four-bedroom villas are being built next to their soignée beachside hotel. One-tenth shares, costing between \$472,000 (£312,000) and \$530,000 (£350,000), give 5 weeks usage a year, with no added annual fees. Access to the hotel’s outstanding facilities, which include three restaurants, many pools, a gorgeous spa, and Robert Trent Jones II 18-hole championship golf course, is a big part of this scheme’s appeal. http://residences.fourseasons.com/private_residences/neviswestindies

