



The History of Sandy Lane

While enjoying his winter home in Barbados, former British politician Ronald Tree was inspired to create a luxury hotel with a golf course on the island, and he had in mind the old Sandy Lane sugar plantation. It was perfection.

Finance was raised and architects appointed, Happy Ward and Jimmy Walker, started work on the Sandy Lane Hotel in 1958. With just 52 rooms, Sandy Lane welcomed its very first guests in February 1961 and quickly became known as the only truly elegant, sophisticated and chic, hotel in Barbados, indeed at that time, in the Caribbean.

By 1967, the hotel group Trust House acquired Sandy Lane, which at that time had 120 rooms, a swimming pool and tennis courts. Three years later, Trust house merged with the Caitwin, headed by legendary businessman Charles Forte. THF was born. In 1996, THF was the subject of a hostile takeover by Granada, indirectly placing Sandy Lane in a vulnerable position. It did not fit the profile of the new conglomerate and was put up for sale. Various potential buyers loomed on the horizon, all with plans to dramatically increase the number of rooms threatening to destroy this iconic hotel.

Two Irishmen, who had known the hotel for many years, felt they could not let it fall into the hands of a multinational, and so it was Dermot Desmond and JP McManus together with three partners who became the new owners of Sandy Lane. The hotel's new owners had just one goal in mind; to create the most distinguished address in the Caribbean and to elevate hotel luxury to a whole new level.

This was no mean feat, and although changes would have to be made, the overall design and ambiance of the "old" Sandy Lane had to be preserved. The decision was taken to demolish the hotel and rebuild. Sandy Lane closed for three years on April 25, 1998.

The plans for the new Sandy Lane were extraordinary. An underground engineering plant to accommodate all back of house services, a desalination plant, the new Spa and pool and 45 holes of world championship golf, with two courses designed by Tom Fazio. The hotel re-opened on March 17, 2001 on St. Patrick's Day.