

# TAKE ME TO CUBA

## Checking in...

**John Illsley**

Dire Straits star



### WHERE NEXT?

I'M HEADING to Cuba where I'm looking forward to seeing Havana's old architecture and exploring the countryside.

### BEST FOREIGN CITY?

I WAS IMPRESSED by the Portuguese capital on a recent visit. It has a touch of faded grandeur about it, but it's being tidied up. The people are lovely, too.

### TOP TIP?

TRAVEL as lightly as possible; I'm always amazed by the number of bags people take on planes.

### TRIP MUST-HAVE?

PROBABLY my iPad, because I'm a Scrabble addict.

### EVER GOT IN TROUBLE ON YOUR TRAVELS?

WHEN Dire Straits were crossing from Canada to America, we were given the third degree by customs officers who searched us rather too intimately for my liking.

### FIRST HOLIDAY MEMORY?

AS A boy, going to Trevone Bay in Cornwall, where my father had met my mother. We rented a bungalow near the



Shabby chic: Cuba's colourful capital Havana is known for its captivating architecture

beach and I soon got to know every single rock pool.

### FIRST TRIP ABROAD?

I DIDN'T have a passport until I was in my late teens. My first use of it, aged 19, was flying down to the south of France to join my brother. We stayed on a campsite and misbehaved for a month.

### DO YOU ENJOY TOURING?

WE TOURED as a band for around 16 years — I love the family atmosphere you get on

the road. I still enjoy touring, but nowadays can handle only a couple of weeks at a time.

### TOURING LOW POINT?

WE ONLY ever cancelled one gig — when a makeshift stage in Luxembourg collapsed.

### AND HIGH POINT?

PLAYING London's Marquee Club in the early days. One night it must have been over 100f and the sweat was pouring off us — that's when Mark Knopfler

started wearing a headband and I wore wristbands.

### DREAM DESTINATION?

I'D LIKE to visit a friend in Papua New Guinea because it sounds so beautiful, but it's going to take some planning.

■ **JOHN ILLSLEY** is currently touring the UK. His new album, *VIII*, is out now.

For more information, visit [johnillsley.com](http://johnillsley.com)

**YORK MEMBERY**

READY FOR TAKE-OFF

Flights ++ Airports ++ New routes

### QATAR AIRWAYS SALE

DISCOUNTED flights are being offered by Qatar Airways if booked by May 3 for travel up to October 31. Return fares include Heathrow to the Maldives from £677, Manchester to Zanzibar from £594 and Edinburgh to the Seychelles from £688 ([qatarairways.com](http://qatarairways.com)).

### PRIVATE JET PACKAGES

TRAVELCOUP Deluxe has package holidays flying by private jet from Biggin Hill to 17 destinations in Europe including Nice, Ibiza and Mykonos. Three nights in a five-star hotel in Venice costs from £3,805 pp including breakfast and transfers, based on a group of four ([travelcoupdeluxe.com](http://travelcoupdeluxe.com)).

### MANCHESTER BOOST

TERMINAL Three at Manchester Airport has reopened fully and is being used by seven airlines including British Airways, Ryanair, Vueling and Loganair. Flights with [Jet2.com](http://Jet2.com) are now split between Terminals One and Two ([manchesterairport.co.uk](http://manchesterairport.co.uk)).

### BOSTON BOUND

FLYING to the Massachusetts capital is now easier. United ([united.com](http://united.com)) has started running a daily flight from Heathrow and JetBlue ([jetblue.com](http://jetblue.com)) will follow suit from August 22. The low-cost U.S. carrier will also start a Gatwick service on July 19.

■ FOR the latest travel advice, see [gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice](http://gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice).

**NIGEL TISDALL**

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