



Dana Hamilton | August 9, 2019

📷 PHOTO:Hedonism II

## Hedonism II in Negril, Jamaica, is not like other all-inclusives.

On my flight to Montego Bay, I felt nauseous. My finger hovered over the button to call over a flight attendant and request an air sickness bag, but then I checked in with myself. *If this plane were landing anywhere else, would I still feel like this?* My stomach immediately settled and I realized my nausea was from nerves. Sure, I was headed to a nudist resort, but my anxiety didn't make sense. From naked beaches to naked yoga to naked spas, as an experienced nudist, I'm more comfortable nude than not. If it doesn't require clothes, I'm there with (albeit imaginary) bells on. But where I was headed in Negril, Jamaica wasn't *just* a nudist resort—this was Hedonism II, a nudist resort known for swingers.

While all my friends knew exactly where I was going—a testament to Hedonism's strong branding—none of us had any idea what it would be like. Expecting a raucous, party atmosphere, I was surprised to find it significantly less chaotic than I thought. It was peaceful, even. I ended up having a restorative trip where I could connect with my partner, try something new, and disconnect from the normal world for a few days. The worst part was the anxiety caused by not knowing beforehand. So here's what to expect before heading to a couple's nudist resort.

## Get Naked. Often.

Nudity isn't a requirement, of course, at Hedo, but one of the best parts of the resort is the feeling of acceptance and respect of your comfort level. Truth be told, I was anticipating major Mardi Gras "flash your chest for beads"-type vibes, but there is no pressure to strip down—or, more importantly, to cover up. And that's largely due to the amount of body diversity present.

Sure, you can stick to the "Prude" side of the beach, but you'll find yourself with little company. Even first-timers soon discover the nude side is far more comfortable. As soon as you get naked and physically comfortable—whether you're relaxing in a gently swaying hammock on the beach, laying on one the Hedo-provided floats in the pristine waters of the Caribbean, or simply holding hands with your partner while you take a seaside walk in the sand—the "weirdness" vanishes. And one of the biggest advantages Hedonism has to offer is how you can openly show affection (embracing, caressing, kissing) because, understandably, it's forbidden at your standard nudist resort (where children can be present). If you're looking for opportunities to feel good in your body, and want your partner to be able to help you feel good in it, too, I couldn't recommend Hedo more highly.

## Go With a Partner

Surprisingly, Hedo is best enjoyed with a significant other, and the design of the resort certainly reflects that. From hidden pools to showers near the beach that no one can peer into and bathrooms with floor-to-ceiling walls, the property provides plenty of little hideaways perfect for quickies. All of these spaces are incredibly clean; I didn't give a second thought to the fact that other people may have had sex in them more than I would a standard hotel bed. And yes, each room—which, just like the rest of the grounds, was very clean—has a mirrored ceiling (which my partner and I took advantage of in conjunction with the camera and tripod TSA definitely thought was a weapon in his carry-on) and floor-to-ceiling bay windows whose blackout curtains you could choose to keep closed or open to potentially give other resort-goers a show. My partner and I decided to keep ours open.



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**My partner very accurately said, “I think their motto should be ‘Dip your toe at Hedo.’”**

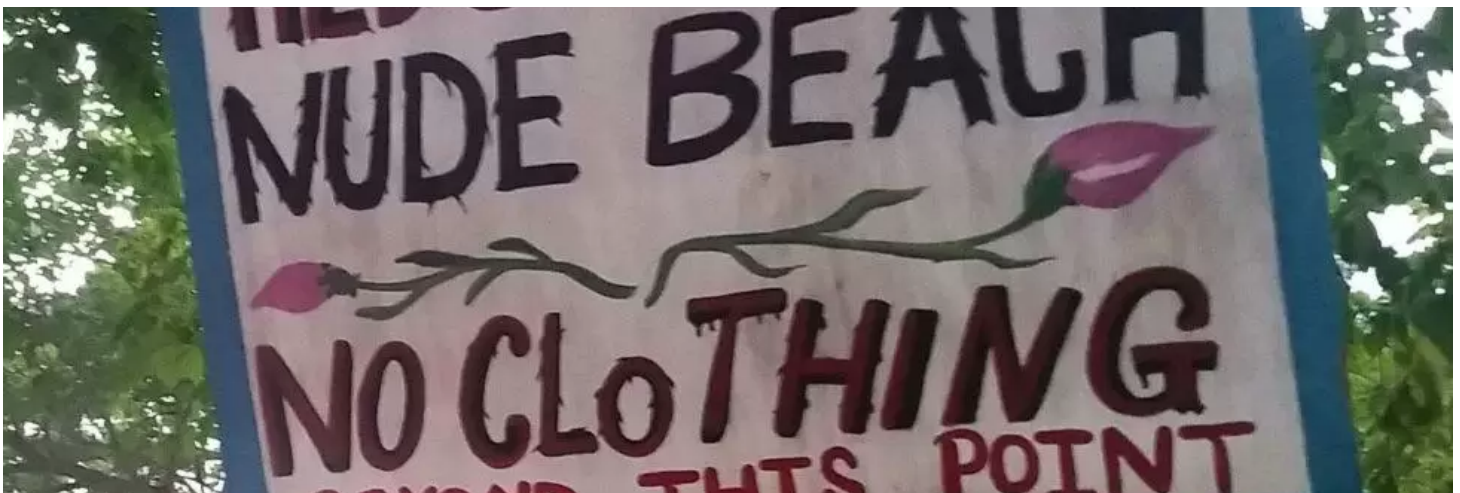
But the main draw of Hedo is the infamous “Playroom.” Starting at 10 pm, the Playroom is open to couples and single women; single men must be invited by an attendee in order to gain access. My partner and I went one night to check out the hype, and can only describe our experience as neutral. I hate to be the man behind the curtain à la *Wizard of Oz*, but the Playroom is simply a place where couples can have sex in front of other couples. There wasn’t much fraternization; people stuck to their partners. For a first experience, if you’re just dabbling and want to see what it’s like to hook up in front of other people, it’s a really safe way to do it. Engaging in your own play and listening to other people or glancing at other people engaging in their own play—that’s kind of exciting. It’s a solid icebreaker in terms of sexual exploration. But if you’re expecting more than that—or at least the opportunity to play with anyone other than the person you walked in with—the siloed nature of the room can be anticlimactic. There was one mattress with two couples on it, but that’s the extent of swinging we saw. (I’m sure there was more swinging to be had if you initiated it, but it wasn’t the main focal point of the resort.) My partner very accurately said, “I think their motto should be ‘Dip your toe at Hedo.’”

We had much more fun the following day, when, during the day, the “Playroom” transformed into the “Kama Sutra Palace,” and we attended one of the newest offerings at Hedo: tantra classes. After a 15-minute introduction to the practice, two incredibly kind, knowledgeable tantra experts led a guided massage demonstration that attendees replicated with their partners. The tantra class focused on connection and increasing pleasurable touch. The class was so effective that my partner and I had to, uh, return to our room and do something about it.

## **Make Friends**



It's undeniable: the resort is full of interesting people. After all, people who are cool with nudity, their sexuality, and who they are tend to generally be more accepting and liberal than the average person. One of our favorite memories was taking the 90-minute shuttle ride from the airport to the resort and getting an education from a couple of "regulars" about a local alcoholic energy drink (and rumored aphrodisiac) called Magnum available at the gift shop. (We ended up putting this new knowledge to good use.)



 Dana Hamilton; Hedonism II

There is an undeniable sense of camaraderie among all the heathens rejecting societal taboos. You automatically have something in common, so it's easy to start a conversation while on an excursion or at dinner. And even though you're at a swinger's resort, rest assured you can have conversations without any subtext. While we were noticeably younger than the rest of the crowd in their 40s and 50s, there was a mix of first-timers and regulars, newbies and members of national swingers groups, and locals and foreigners. We always felt welcome and comfortable.

Almost all of the resort-goers we encountered were coupled, which surprised me. I had wrongly assumed any couple who came to Hedo wanted to use the novelty of the place as a last-ditch effort to spice up a boring relationship. In reality, I found that couples who come to Hedo are there to express their sexuality without judgment and enjoy their person. It makes sense that a couple like that would seem to be in a rock-solid dynamic. I was surrounded by people who were very happy and comfortable with their significant other. In short, I felt the love.

Just be warned that whoever you meet on your first day may not recognize you with your clothes off later. That happened to my partner—who wore a suit on the first day and next to nothing the rest of the trip—a lot. It was also fun to guess what people did at home. “Look at that guy,” my partner said as he pointed out to a man in a pair of black leather shorts and a collar between singalongs at the piano bar. “For all we know, he could work at a FedEx Copy + Print!”

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#### INSIDER TIP

*If you don't want anyone to know exactly where you are, we were informed of an old trick—take a short walk down to the beach, snap a pic in front of the neighboring Sandals resort, and no one will be the wiser.*

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## Be As Adventurous (or Subdued) As You Want

Sure, you can stay out until the wee hours of the morning on the dance floor in leather and lace, or you can hit the beach with a book every day of your stay. At the end of the day, Hedonism II is just like any other resort. We enjoyed food that was far better than what you'd expect at all-inclusive resort (make sure you try all three restaurants on the property!), karaoke nights, beach-side massages, snorkeling, catamaran rides (you haven't lived until you've ridden on the meshy lattice hammock over the water while completely naked), and games like pool, chess, and shuffleboard. Sure, my partner sang “F— Her Gently” by Tenacious D at karaoke and we hooked up on a pool table, but that's just another day at Hedo.







On our last day, my partner said he'd come back once a year indefinitely. Once I realized he wasn't joking and it wasn't the rum punch talking, I told him I'd be on board. It was quite a transformation from nearly puking on the plane. I should've known, since many vacationers warned us about being "bitten by the Hedo bug."

I now understand why most folks would be vulnerable to sustaining a bite. Hedo is a great place to be to feel good in your skin, connect with your partner, and escape the pressures and expectations of work, kids, and society.

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