

Plenty of fresh air up here

HERE AND QUEER

## AIRHEAD

At first glance, Lanzarote doesn't seem the ideal destination for spiritual enlightenment. When I arrive at the Spanish airport, it's full of pasty white people with bad tattoos, puffing on fags. And then Alan, the 'breath guru' bounces into sight.

I'd visited Alan Dolan in London a couple of weeks previously on the recommendation of a friend who's big into psychics and wacky therapies.

'It's called Transformational Breathing and it's like being on drugs!' she gasped, adding that Goldie Hawn was a big fan.

I was cynical. Stuff like reiki and craniosacral therapy has never done much for me and I always leave feeling like a loser.

But yes, my TB session did feel exactly like taking legal drugs. I rapidly took in lots of oxygen, breathing as if there was a big balloon in my belly and suddenly there was a massive release of pent-up emotion and I was falling down some beautiful, dark, velvety tunnel. I was crying and laughing at the same time afterwards, totally, cathartically, blissed-out.

That's why I made the trip to Lanzarote – because I wanted to get back to that 'place'.

Dolan's breathing holidays in Lanzarote are the main part of his business and he has a big gay following. He says TB is ideal for 'the

### INFO

Transformational Breathing holidays start from €495 pp for three nights including self-catering accommodation, daily breath sessions and airport meet and transfers. Gourmet vegetarian menu available at a supplement of €30 a day. Beach bungalows and luxury villas also available. [breathguru.com](http://breathguru.com)

Ryanair offer round trips from London to Lanzarote from £50. [ryanair.com](http://ryanair.com)

kind of people who wouldn't stay in an Ashram if you paid them but who are open to something different'.

It's also a holiday which is ideal for a single woman. I felt totally safe in my private apartment and actually, when you've done your morning breathing, it's fantastic to float on an opium-like wave out onto the sunny terrace, lie down by the pool and properly process what's just been going on in your head and body without the need to chit-chat or be sociable.

What's nice in the afternoon is to hire a car or bike and cruise around this mysterious, brooding island. The Costa del Chips part is way over on the other side and I can't think of another place in Europe where there is such a feeling of space and a feeling of so few people. The volcanic vista feels prehistoric (One Million Years BC was filmed here with Raquel Welsh in her skimpy animal skins) and the landscape compliments the primal 'visions' you are having in your daily breathing sessions. (I found myself walking in lots of mountains on my daily 'trips'.)

But TB isn't just about wacky, drug-like sensations. If you do a full breathing holiday, you go on a journey – call it metaphysical, emotional or spiritual. I found myself back in the womb with my twin brother at one point, but that's a longer story...

When I returned to the airport five days later, I loved the tattooed tourists and I couldn't care less that the plane was two hours late. And once you've learned the technique you can do it at home on your own. Lots of days I'm lying in my bedroom breathing my way to a big Egyptian desert, or even back to Lanzarote...

