

Private paradise

Drop a pin in the map and take a car to the jet. *Upward Curve* provides the magic coordinates for unparalleled private island destinations across the world

Sometimes an ultra-luxury holiday resort – or a celebrity getaway – is just not enough. So Richard Branson, Johnny Depp, Celine Dion, Diana Ross and Marlon Brando started snapping up islands. The following six islands are oases of tranquillity and stunningly beautiful islands away from the high-speed urban jungle:

THE BRANDO, FRENCH POLYNESIA

“Tetiaroa is beautiful beyond my capacity to describe,” said Marlon Brando, who first purchased the island as personal retreat. “One could say that Tetiaroa is the tincture of the South Seas.” Tetiaroa is an atoll composed of a dozen small islands, surrounding a sparkling lagoon, 30 miles northeast of Tahiti.

Brando was so passionate about preserving Tetiaroa’s cultural richness, natural beauty, and incredible biodiversity that he started a legacy there. Now the all-inclusive luxury resort offers ecologically friendly luxury in the midst of pristine nature. With access to the island by private plane, the resort features 35 villas on white-sand beaches frequented

by sea turtles, manta rays and exotic birds. The sustainable resort was designed to reflect Polynesian lifestyles and culture. thebrando.com

ARIARA ISLAND, PHILIPPINES

By virtue of its remote location, Ariara and its surrounding islands are considered to be the last frontier of unspoiled Philippines. Untouched by development, pollution and tourism, the Sulu Sea is home to the remarkable UNESCO World Heritage Site, Tubbataha Reef Natural Park.

Below: A short but spectacular 20-minute flight from Tahiti, Tetiaroa’s The Brando resort is a stunning circular atoll that is made up of 12 islands



CNN travel website, cnngo.com, ranks the park among the top eight dive sites in the world and, for the visiting diver, conservation fees provide essential funds to protect it from illegal exploitation.

Luxury accommodation and full board in private Jungle Villas, Beach Cottages, and the Lodge Suite, starts from US\$475 (based on 15-18pp.pn for seven nights).

That includes private use of the central lodge and infinity pool, for dining and entertaining, and private access to 125 acres of tropical paradise with 600m of white sand beach. A resident chef, PADI dive instructor, staff of 30 and crewed yacht (with air-conditioned cabins) are all on hand, and water sports equipment is abundant. Fuel is charged accordingly. One return transfer – by private vehicle and yacht – to Busuanga (Coron) is also part of the deal and transfers from Manila can be arranged. ariara island.com

CEMPEDAK, INDONESIA

A cempedak is a species of tree in the family Moraceae, and in the same genus as breadfruit and jackfruit. Sticking with the natural theme, Andrew Dixon

Above: Kate Hudson on Lizard Island: ‘the most romantic place in the world’ Right: Ariara (top) and Lizard Island Right: Barak Obama stayed at The Brando

and partners, who first acquired the lease for neighbouring Nikoi, first camped on the completely uninhabited island to discover its natural beauty. The vision materialised to create something that would challenge even the most discerning of traveller’s preconceived notions of a holiday in the tropics.

With a maximum of 40 adults only, no televisions and an island that has been slowly developed over several years to preserve the natural habitat and wildlife, 20 stunning hand-crafted bamboo villas blend into natural jungle foliage as if they have always been there. Each villa is set over two storeys with more than 150 sq.m of personal space, an upstairs balcony and a generous deck and plunge pool. A treetop walkway leads guests through to the main

dining room where Executive Chef Dika and his team of local chefs prepare fresh fish and local fruit and vegetables – some grown on the island’s market garden. From US\$450 for a one-bed beach house per night, plus US\$70 for full board. cempedak.com

LIZARD ISLAND, AUSTRALIA

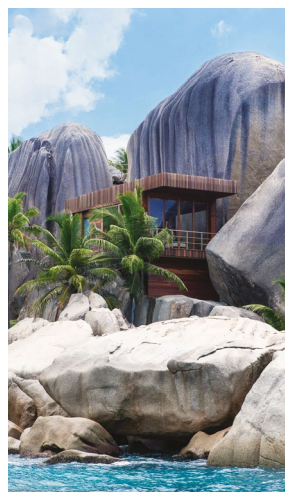
Lizard Island is located in protected waters on the World Heritage Listed Great Barrier Reef, where an abundance of marine life, coral reefs and world-renowned dive sites exist, including the celebrated Cod Hole. Secluded within a beautiful and diverse National Park, and bound by 24 private beaches, Lizard Island is, as they say, ‘like nowhere else’. With the choice of a two-bedroom Villa, one-bed /

lounge room Pavilion suite, one-bed Beachfront Suites, Oceanview Villas and Gardenview Suites and Rooms, there are sublimely comfortable options aplenty. The private beachside degustation tops the cuisine menu, but there is also dining at the Saltwater ➤





Left: Private Villa jacuzzi and luxury dining at Thanda Island in Tanzania **Below:** Shower with a view outside a Six Senses Zil Pasyon villa in The Seychelles **Bottom:** The naturally shaped Cempedak villas blend into the Indonesian wild habitat for ultimate privacy and relaxation



Restaurant, Driftwood Bar or Marlin Bar. With the Essentia day spa, walks, talks, adventures by air, land and water, a multitude of activities are at fingertips for those tired of absolute serene bliss. The island can also be hired exclusively for private events, weddings, meetings or business goal incentives. lizardisland.com.au

SIX SENSES ZIL PASYON, SEYCHELLES

Félicité, just one of the stunning 115 islands that make up Seychelles, is home to Six Senses Zil Pasyon. With just a pair of two-bedroom pool villas (up to 5,380 sq.ft), private residences

and 28 one-bedroom pool villas, its accommodations offer seclusion that is only interrupted by tropical vegetation. With a personal butler service, two restaurants, two bars and an ice-cream bike, there is something for the most diverse and discerning of tastes.

Seychelles is a year-around destination for diving and fishing, while sailing and snorkelling is optimal from October to June. The remarkable spectacle of nesting sea turtles can be enjoyed from October to March.

From watersports and beach activities to diving and discovering nature, Six Senses Zil Pasyon

has an abundance of adventure pursuits for everybody. sixsenses.com/zilpasyon

THANDA ISLAND, TANZANIA

Intimate and discreet, Thanda Island features just one beautifully

decorated villa, with five suites and two stylish bandas (Tanzanian style beach chalets) accommodating a further eight guests.

The Boat House contains equipment for every water sport going, a selection of guitars and an outdoor cocktail bar – there is also a tennis court.

Off-grid, solar-powered and environmentally sensitive, Thanda's guests have the chance to swim with whale sharks, watch turtles nest and hatch, and visit nearby islands to explore ruins, coconut plantations, lagoons and underwater sights. All-inclusive usage of the island is available at US\$10,000 per night.

Thanda celebrated 110 green turtle hatchlings in 2017 and is in the process of developing a programme that will allow guests to integrate in its conservation partnership activities, including turtle nest monitoring, dugong monitoring and research, whale shark monitoring, patrolling of the marine reserve and snorkel surveys off the coral reefs.

thandaisland.com ■

