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## SAA & SAFA

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Africa's Leading  
Inflight Magazine



For 14  
Consecutive Years



By Daniel Scheffler

# GLOBAL EYE



▲ **AMSTERDAM:** The Waldorf Astoria has opened its glorious doors on one of the city's Unesco World Heritage-listed canals. The Goldfinch Brasserie, an elegant lunch venue, is ideal for a business meeting (with bike or car valet). Try the Toro tuna tartare, Japanese ribs or pan-fried foie gras, paired with wines from Europe. Then walk it off in the establishment's gardens. [www.waldorfastoria3.hilton.com](http://www.waldorfastoria3.hilton.com)



▲ **NEW YORK:** The Knickerbocker Hotel is right on Times Square, making it ideal for a pre- or post-Broadway show dinner. Charlie Palmer serves everything from a classic steak frites to a Niçoise salad, while the views alone make it worth staying the night. [www.theknickerbocker.com](http://www.theknickerbocker.com)



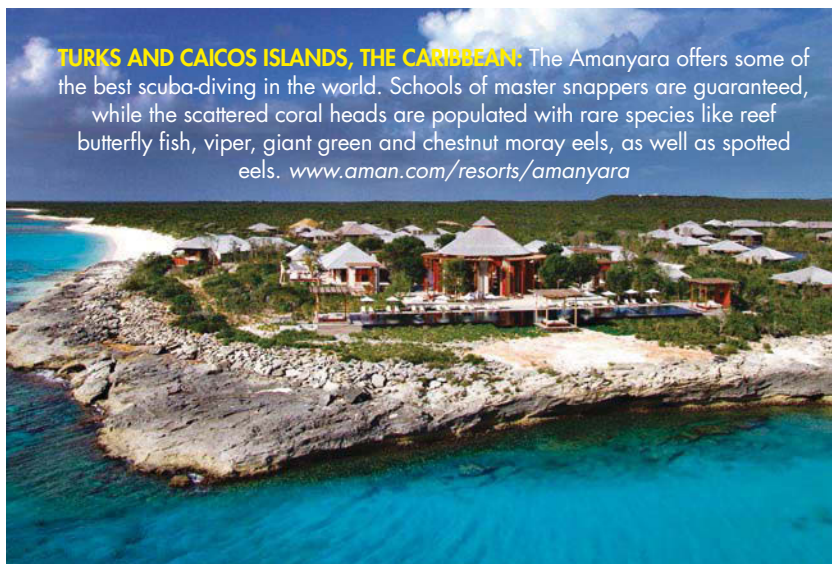
▲ **MEMPHIS, USA:** The city of the blues and, of course, Elvis Presley offers a lot more than its musical heritage: City & State serves superb coffee, the Beauty Shop attracts very interesting clients and soon Hugo Matheson's Kitchen will be feeding visitors too. Stay downtown at the Madison, with views over the great Mississippi River. [www.madisonhotelmemo.com](http://www.madisonhotelmemo.com)

► **ÇEŞME ALAÇATI, TURKEY:**

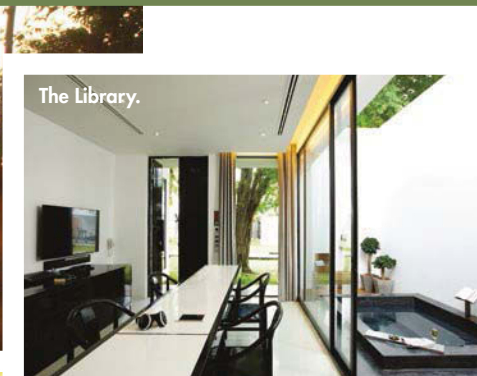
Alaçati previously had no accommodation for visitors, which was part of its attraction for those seeking a total break from tourist traps. However, Ottoman-era stone houses were recently turned into "butik otels" with new kid on the block Alayya (loved by locals and creatives from Istanbul wanting a getaway) striking a balance between too much and too remote. [www.tourismturkey.org](http://www.tourismturkey.org)



▲ **TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS, THE CARIBBEAN:** The Amanyara offers some of the best scuba-diving in the world. Schools of master snappers are guaranteed, while the scattered coral heads are populated with rare species like reef butterfly fish, viper, giant green and chestnut moray eels, as well as spotted eels. [www.aman.com/resorts/amanyara](http://www.aman.com/resorts/amanyara)







# TRYING OUT... Thailand

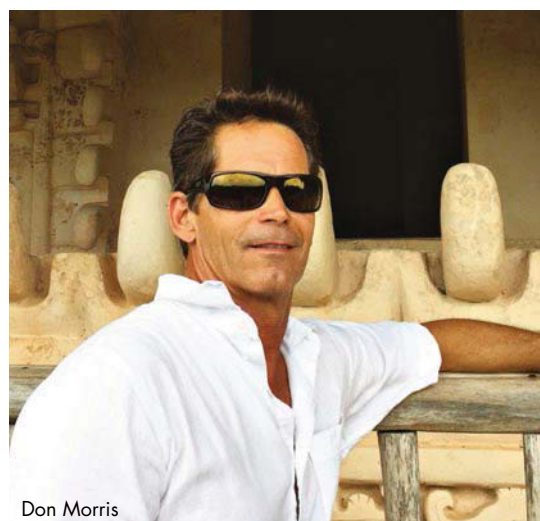
For some serious tropical island R&R, **The Library in Koh Samui** is the place to go. Situated on an exquisite Thai island, this boutique hotel spoils guests with its minimalist, Oriental design, fine dining and world-class service. You need never leave the tranquillity of its red pool as you sip cocktails or nibble fresh coconut and watch the turquoise and emerald waves lap the powder-white shore. Visit the hotel's incredible library (which includes DVDs) before retreating to your Jacuzzi bath before dinner on a moonlit beach, transformed into a magical fairground speckled with fire-dancers, lanterns and restaurants. The Library offers both a secluded five-star haven or all the action and adventure the Chaweng region has to offer right on its doorstep. [www.thelibrary.co.th](http://www.thelibrary.co.th)

**Haadtien Beach Resort on Koh Tao** (known as "the Turtle Island" in Thailand) is definitely one for the bucket-list. Divers and snorkellers from around the world flock here in hopes of seeing the elusive whale shark, turtles, spotted rays and other tropical fish. The prolific marine life, healthy coral reefs and translucent, emerald sea make it possible to spot schools of colourful species while simply standing knee-deep



in the water. When you're not enjoying the many ocean expeditions the island and hotel have to offer, you can chill at Haadtien Beach Resort & Spa ("Haadtien" means "Shark Bay", named after the harmless little black-tipped sharks in the area). Stay in its castaway luxury villas right on the beach or in the Haadtien Beach Club Hotel. Swim in the black pool, nestled under palm trees, from where you can watch a breathtaking sunset over the sea and you'll be wondering why you have to leave. Visit: [www.haadtien.com](http://www.haadtien.com)

– **Daniella Renzon**



Don Morris

## 5 MINUTES WITH...

Don Morris, General Manager of gorgeous boutique beachfront property Rancho Pescadero, knows Mexico better than anyone else. Besides the beauty down here in Baja, it's all about the food and idyllic bathing

**Favourite book?** *The Prophet* by Kahlil Gibran (Alfred A Knopf).

**Favourite travel app?** Start with leads from TripAdvisor and then speak to locals – they're the best information resources of all.

**Next holiday destination?** Guadalajara – we go there a few times a year. It's a vibrant city where we love eating, shopping and soaking up the culture.

On Sundays the streets are closed to vehicles, so we hire bicycles and ride all over the town.

**Must-have travel items?** Persol sunglasses, my Tumi satchel and a good pair of sneakers.

**Favourite international destination?** Şirince in Turkey. Go to Ephesus first and then rent a car and drive there.

– **Daniel Scheffler**





# MY PRIVATE Island

By Daniel Scheffler

The next level in mega-wealthy real estate is here – and it's mind-boggling: buying a private island. Then basking in the sun, knowing every grain of sand and palm tree around you is your own

"The prices of islands took a little longer to stabilise after the global recession, as opposed to mainland real estate, so that could account for why we're seeing more sales now," says Chris Kralow, the CEO of Private Islands Inc (a Toronto, Canadian-based global marketplace for island sales and rentals). Vladi Private Islands, based in Germany, has sold roughly 2 650 islands around the globe over the past 40 years. One of its latest transactions – a 99-year lease costing roughly R120/m<sup>2</sup> – was in the Maldives. However, it has an island for every taste.

Private islands are more procurable than ever before – in fact, there seems to be a groundswell in this trend, with dedicated real estate broker Airbnb rental options and reality TV shows like HGTV's *Island Hunters* designed to inspire purchases.

"It's about privacy," says Rory Hunter, co-founder and CEO of Song Saa Hotels & Resorts off the coast of Cambodia. "Our lives are rushed and overwhelming these days: people are seeking escape and solitude, a destination unto itself where others can do the thinking for

them, so that they can fully relax." So, short of waiting around for planets to become available for hire or purchase, a private island offers all the tranquillity and privacy you could want and is much more than just another hotel vanity buy.

Although it's not for sale today, the island of Manhattan – the "new Netherlands" – was very much up for grabs back in 1626. According to Dutch National Archives, it was sold for 60 guilders (about R14 600 today, with inflation) – a paltry amount today, but a considerable fortune

at the time. Since then, the moneyed (and, of course, royalty) have procured islands to hide out on, entertain friends and family, soothe their fragile souls and, of course, flaunt the ultimate status symbol.

"Untouched wildness is down to 1% and even though there are reserves and conservation areas in the world, only about 9% of land impacted by humans is being protected," says Megan de Beyer, an eco-psychologist based in the UK and Cape Town. But there's a group of people who are looking at wild lands – and, particularly,



islands – as a way of promoting conservation. Adriana Cisneros, CEO and Vice-chairperson of Cisneros Real Estate, has worked on “Tropicalia”, the southern coastline of Samaná Bay in the Dominican Republic, with the Four Seasons hotel group. And while this isn’t island real estate *per se*, she says it’s “a case study for the rest of the world to see conservation as an integral part of real estate and hospitality”.

Real estate hunters are no longer merely acquisitive, but also increasingly environmentally minded. A case in point is American billionaire Chris Burch, who’s engaged with his island project Niihau and his Sumba Foundation in Indonesia. Here the proceeds go back to the community, as well as supporting local businesses and cultures. According to Jarra Campbell, Niihau’s Marketing & Business Development Director, this is what actually “sets a new standard for island purchasing”.

## ISLANDS THEN AND NOW

The island properties of the world had their share of real estate prospecting long ago. Buying one meant eliminating all interference: while you were subject to the rule of whichever country had territorial sovereignty over your particular sea or ocean, you could live precisely as you wished in splendid, luxurious seclusion.

It started in 1938, when wealthy American aviator Charles Lindbergh purchased Illiec, off France’s Brittany coast, for safety and privacy. Next up, in the Sixties, parts of the Maldives were sold off to affluent seekers of a *Treasure Island* fantasy. Then, in 1978, Sir Richard Branson brought overtures to barefoot luxury by acquiring Necker Island in the Caribbean’s British Virgin Islands. And this is where it all became rather desirable.

Now the trend is hotting up again. Actor Leonardo DiCaprio has an eco-resort in Belize called Blackadore Caye, Johnny Depp’s frequent trips to Greece have allowed him to invest in his own island playground, while Beyoncé Knowles is also rumoured to be eyeing the area. Oracle software billionaire Larry Ellison is claiming his share too, by way of Hawaii’s Lanai Island. And Christie’s International Real Estate recently announced its own version of luxury island real estate: the fully customisable, “man-made” Amillarah Private Islands, which will be eco-friendly and also totally portable, so you can install them wherever you like and move them when required. Choosing your own island locale has to be the height of luxury.



# Island round-up

Here are some islands to inspire a purchase, or just an interim island voyage



## EXUMAS, THE BAHAMAS

With just four villas, Over Yonder Cay (a member of Ultra Villa in the Exumas Archipelago) is an eco-luxe retreat when only the best will do. This section of the Bahamas, south-east of Nassau, is the most sought-after in the region, with Bernard Arnault, LVMH Chairman and CEO, possessing his own island.

With a friendly attitude of “do what you want, when you want”, the island offers activities such as golf on the nine-hole course, fishing in the perfect waters and seaplane rides to other remote islands for a picnic. Or, of course, simply lounging in one of the individually designed villas doing what private islands are best for – nothing at all. Visit: <http://overyondercay.com>

## NORTH ISLAND, SEYCHELLES

Known for its honeymoon appeal, this small granitic island off the coast of Kenya in the Indian Ocean recently hosted Hollywood royalty George Clooney and his wife Amal Alamuddin, as well as real royalty the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge. But, besides their celebrity appeal, the 11 eco-aware open-plan villas – offering boundless privacy – are what really attract.

There's a spa, a world-class gym (plus trainers) and various pools all built into the rocks. There's also dining on the beach by candlelight or out on a gently drifting boat. With a focus on conservation, diving is done with conservationists. Other activities include lessons in astronomy and watching giant Aldabra tortoises. Visit: [www.north-island.com](http://www.north-island.com)

## EAST OF MAHÉ, SEYCHELLES

Just four degrees south of the Equator is where Frégate Island – part of German hospitality brand Oetker Collection, after a big refurbishment last year – is situated. With just 16 villas, the exclusive-use island promises tranquillity on an unprecedented scale.

With food mostly grown on the island itself and fresh fish at all hours, days are spent lounging on the pristine beach, punctuated only by gourmet meals. Private pools and hot tubs overlooking the ocean are standard for everyone and act as a perfection drawcard for the more than 100 tropical bird species. The new tree-house is another great hide-out – though even up there, one of the dedicated butlers will fetch and carry whatever your heart desires.

"According to legend, there's buried treasure somewhere on the island and guests like James Bond creator Ian Fleming have been inspired by its aura of swashbuckling pirates and romance, as well as its beauty," says Wayne Kafcsak, MD of the property. Visit: [www.fregate.com](http://www.fregate.com)

Africa

## OFF THE COAST OF MOZAMBIQUE

Singita, the iconic African conservation brand known for its Cecile & Boyd's design and decor, is funded by American billionaire Paul Tudor Jones, a member of [www.robinhood.org](http://www.robinhood.org) who's encouraged

others in his tax bracket to invest in our continent – including its islands.

The next project on which Singita will start work is an island off the coast of Mozambique. Besides the extreme luxury of the place, the idea of conserving remote lands (and islands) is the real appeal. Boyd Ferguson, Creative Director of Cecile & Boyd's, says: "The world's waking up to the new luxury – where bling is forgotten and conservation is king."

According to Luke Bailes, CEO of Singita: "The shift is now towards philanthropists interested in saving the earth. I want to link governments and like-minded billionaires with a commercial business like Singita so that we can be serious about areas in the world which are at risk." Visit: <http://singita.com>



Asia

## SULU SEA, THE PHILIPPINES

Aman Resorts, known for their restrained elegance and finesse, have a private island just a quick hop away from the capital, Manila, by private plane. For the 6,4km perimeter of the island, powdery white-sand beaches offer endless hours in the sun, while being thoroughly pampered.

With a focus on wellness, the spa – up on the tiny hilltop – is where Aman excels itself. Specialists from all over the world, including intuitive healers like Steve Jeanes and the finest yoga instructors, are on hand for holistic healing – or, as they call it, "transformative wellness". Visit: [www.aman.com/resorts/amanpulo](http://www.aman.com/resorts/amanpulo)