

TREASURE ISLANDS

If booking an entire island of your own is your idea of the ultimate holiday, consider these super-luxe hideaways, writes
Adriaane Pielou

Privacy is the pull, but that's hardly the only draw to a private island. There's something about the prospect of having a world within the world to yourself – and the people you choose to have along with you there – that takes you back to the intense childhood fun of creating a secret hideaway. A den, a clubhouse, a place that feels like it belongs outside the usual parameters of space and time, of rules and regulations; it thrilled us then and can thrill us again now. Ice cream for breakfast, movies at midnight, a dip into the ocean before the crack of dawn? No eyebrows are raised at any of that when the island setting is temporarily, but absolutely, one's own. But these special places, which you can take over in their entirety, also serve a greater good than just rewarding the search for novelty and fun, privacy and prestige, and the ultimate in luxury. They have a strange purity. Marooned willingly on one of the most beautiful outcrops on our beautiful but troubled planet, sitting out under the stars, it is easier to think more clearly, talk more honestly and, hopefully, feel more keenly our responsibilities, obligations and potential.

Take flight
A 20-minute helicopter ride from Mahé, North Island in the Seychelles has 11 villas, each with 6,000 square feet of private space.