

# THE WORLD'S BEST VILLAS

From penguins on the doorstep in Cape Town to a half-house, half-cave in the Outer Hebrides, **Issy D'Arcy Clark** has sourced the finest residences across the globe to suit every need



## SUMPTUOUS SANCTUARIES

### New heights

Casa Vera, Sicily, in the hills over Noto – legend has it Daedalus stayed here while flying over the Ionian Sea; Casa Ingá, Bahia, Brazil, has views over the Atlantic



### GOLDEN TICKET

#### **Casa Vera, Sicily**

**Sleeps** Ten, in five rooms

**From** £5,090pw

With its grey polished concrete interiors, cobalt-blue pool and iron-grill shading, a stay at the Casa Vera will have you feeling as if you've wandered into the set of a sun-soaked Tom Ford film. Plus the statement art, designer furniture and in-house chef will put the finishing touches to your slice of Sicilian solitude. Find even more beauty in the nearby Baroque town of Noto and Vendicari nature reserve. [thethinkingtraveller.com](http://thethinkingtraveller.com)

### ARABIAN NIGHTS

#### **Villa Alkhozama, Morocco**

**Sleeps** Four, in two rooms

**From** £7,000pw

Explore the dizzy delights of the

souks of nearby Marrakech while staying at Villa Alkhozama. Masterminded by local architect Karim el Achak, this dusky pink villa is shrouded in shady olive groves with views of the Atlas Mountains. Sink into the plunge pool, then hit the spa for a hammam and therapeutic massage, accompanied by the scent of Moroccan argon oil. [cvvillas.com](http://cvvillas.com)

### COASTAL CALM

#### **Casa Ingá, Brazil**

**Sleeps** Ten, in five rooms

**From** £10,220pw

Part of The Thinking Traveller's Think Exquisite collection, this hilltop villa has style in abundance. The tiered wooden decking by the pool and playfully rustic design capture the

essence of barefoot luxury, while the spacious main house contains the dining room, kitchen and chill-out area all under one thatched roof. The views from every angle are worth the trip alone, taking in both the verdant jungle and the white sands of nearby Nativos Beach. Casa Ingá is just a short stroll to the pretty town of Trancoso, too. [thethinkingtraveller.com](http://thethinkingtraveller.com)

### AT YOUR SERVICE

#### **Villa Tirrena, Lazio, Italy**

**Sleeps** 12, in six rooms

**From** £30,340pw

Dusky Tuscan sunsets over the 70 acres of undulating Calanchi Valley are just the start of what visitors will experience at Villa Tirrena. Just one hour from Florence, this 16th-century estate is home to a vineyard, spa and both indoor and outdoor pools – as well a cook, a maid, a handyman and in-house governess. Plus, booking with The Villa Collective means you'll be put in direct contact with the person who knows the property best: the owner. [villacollective.com](http://villacollective.com)

## Explorations

## Villas

### Perpetual feast

From top: Villa S'Era, Mallorca, offers private banquets; Sunset House has a front row view of the Antigua sundown over the Caribbean Sea; Silvia Executive Villa is part of Almanara Luxury Resort



from a ceramics workshop to massages from Spa@Home and a private banquet from excellent local caterer Delicioso.  
[charlesmarlow.com](http://charlesmarlow.com)

### A GREEK IDYLL

#### *Villa Tsampikos, Rhodes*

**Sleeps** Six, in three rooms

**From** Seven nights from £549pp\*

A modern villa overlooking the Aegean Sea, Villa Tsampikos is perfectly set up for fuss-free family breaks. Children will love the spacious pool, big stretch of lawn and direct access to Lahania Beach. The barbecue is the real triumph – superb for cooking fresh fish bought at the local market in the nearby town of Lahania.

[ba.com/rhodes](http://ba.com/rhodes)

### DESERTED SANDS

#### *Silvia Executive Villa, Diani Beach, Kenya*

**Sleeps** Six, in three rooms

**From** £8,672pw

This coastal Kenyan villa has all the attentiveness of a hotel, with all the autonomy of a private stay. A personal chef will prepare all meals, using fresh local produce, so you'll have more time to spend in the Jacuzzi or roaming the deserted white sands of Diani Beach. If you're looking for other ways to pass the day, Almanara is on hand to arrange a whole fleet of watersport activities, as well as spa treatments.

[almanararesort.com](http://almanararesort.com)

## SEASIDE STAYS



### RED SKY AT NIGHT

#### *Sunset House, Antigua*

**Sleeps** Ten, in four rooms

**From** £600pn

With an infinity pool that stretches into the sea, lush green gardens and light, breezy interiors, you know this tropical retreat will get you off to a good start. Scuba diving, zip-wiring and sailing await you on the beach, while the lively bars of Jolly Harbour are only ten minutes' walk away. Aptly named, the villa is situated on the western side of the island, meaning that you'll be treated to a spectacular sunset each evening.

[sjvillas.co.uk](http://sjvillas.co.uk)

### NATURE'S BOUNTY

#### *Villa S'Era, Mallorca*

**Sleeps** 12, in six rooms

**From** £13,010pw

It's all about location with this hilltop property – and the views that come with it. It's in the luxurious Ca L'abat area, where vast scenes of olive groves and sea stretch out before of you. But inside the villa is where the fun truly begins as the team at local villa agency Charles Marlow has created a programme of activities to keep you amused,



\*Based on six adults sharing, travelling 20 September-10 October, including return flights and accommodation. Book by 31 May



## BLISSFUL SOLITUDE

**Villa Amantik, Peru**

**Sleeps** Four, in two rooms

**From** £1,460pn

Situated on Amantani island, in Lake Titicaca, Peru, location isn't the most striking feature about this futuristic pad. Floor-to-ceiling glass walls are topped with a straw-thatched roof, so the villa blends into the natural landscape without compromising the lake views. Enjoy the quiet solitude while reading on the terrace, knowing that a concierge is on hand to organise day trips to meet shamans and explore the local Inca heartland.

[lecollectionist.com](http://lecollectionist.com)

## PALLY PENGUINS

**Boulders Beach Villas, Cape Town, South Africa**

**Sleeps** Nine, in four rooms

**From** £1,270pn

Though this villa is startling in its design, with its geometric angles and suspended staircase, its most notable feature is in fact the next-door neighbours – a breeding group of more than 2,000 African penguins who spend their days hopping across the granite rocks of Boulders Beach. As this villa comes with a sea-facing terrace, you'll be able to keep an eye on the cheery colony over breakfast.

[mantisownerscollection.com](http://mantisownerscollection.com)



## CURIOUS QUARTERS

### MAN CAVE

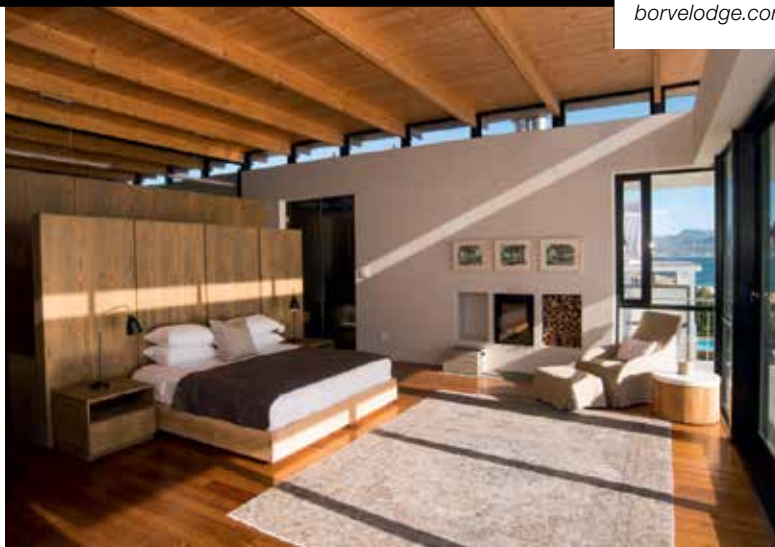
**The Rock House, Scotland**

**Sleeps** Two, in one room

**From** £1,200pw

Resembling both Fred Flintstone's homestead and The Thing from *The Fantastic Four*, this residence is half-house and half-cave. Part of the magnificent Borge Lodge Estate on the Isle of Harris, you're free to roam the coast and moors, taking part in a whole range of activities from kayaking to fly-fishing.

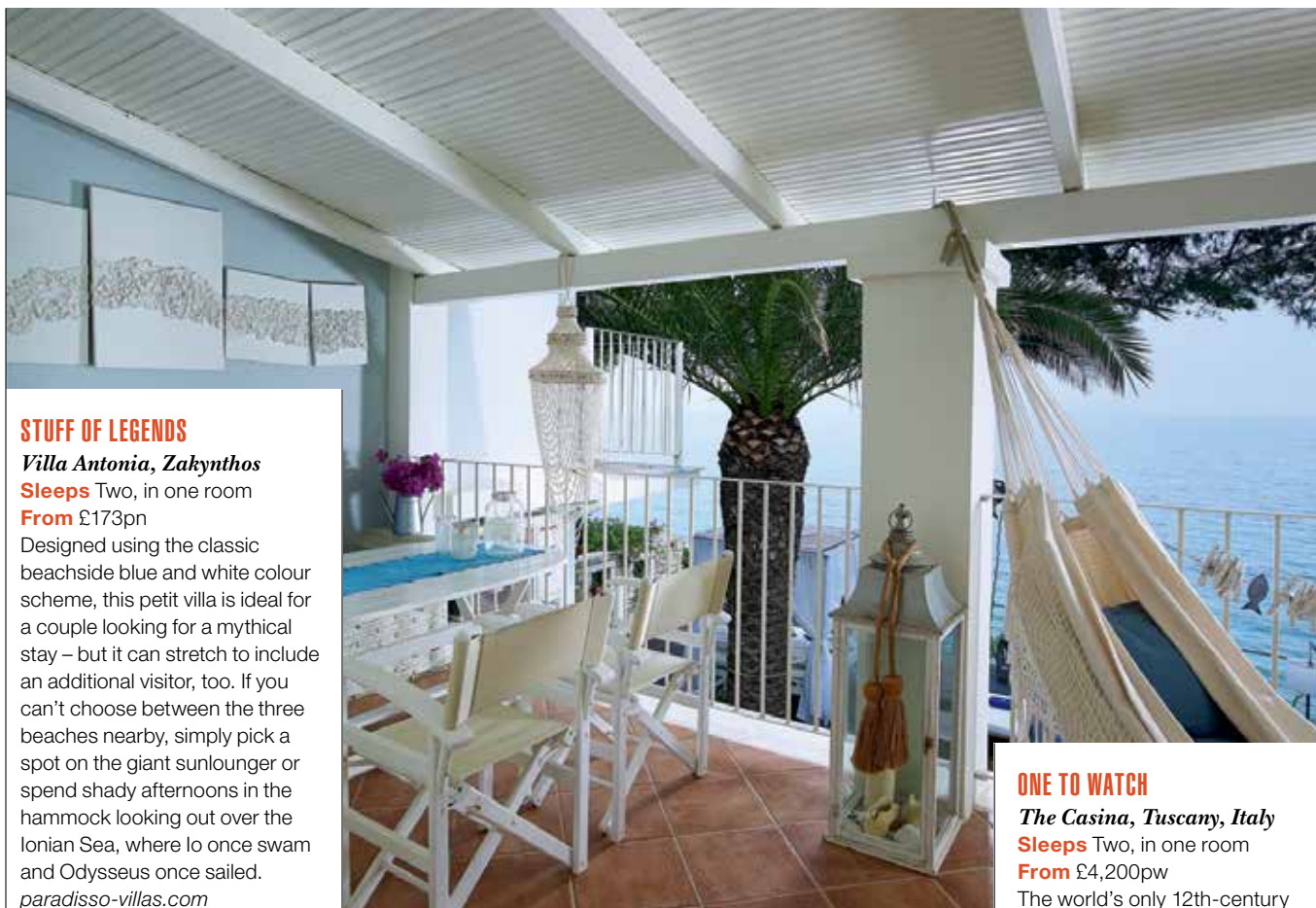
[borvelodge.com](http://borvelodge.com)



### Flora and fauna

From top: Villa Amantik on Amantani island, Peru, also home to the Pachatata and Pachamama mountain peaks; the Rock House, on Scotland's Isle of Harris, overlooks the North Sea; Boulders Beach and its penguin neighbours





### STUFF OF LEGENDS

**Villa Antonia, Zakynthos**

**Sleeps** Two, in one room

**From** £173pn

Designed using the classic beachside blue and white colour scheme, this petit villa is ideal for a couple looking for a mythical stay – but it can stretch to include an additional visitor, too. If you can't choose between the three beaches nearby, simply pick a spot on the giant sunlounger or spend shady afternoons in the hammock looking out over the Ionian Sea, where lo once swam and Odysseus once sailed.

[paradisso-villas.com](http://paradisso-villas.com)

### ONE TO WATCH

**The Casina, Tuscany, Italy**

**Sleeps** Two, in one room

**From** £4,200pw

The world's only 12th-century watchtower with its own Netflix subscription. Enclosed in a quiet olive grove within a World Heritage site, you can relax or barbecue by the infinity pool, luxuriate in the hot tub or unwind in the steam room. Use the villa's bicycles to explore locally, or venture further afield to Siena, Florence and Montalcino in a Suzuki four-wheel drive.

[akvillas.com](http://akvillas.com)

### FULL CIRCLE

**Villa Veinte, Costa Rica**

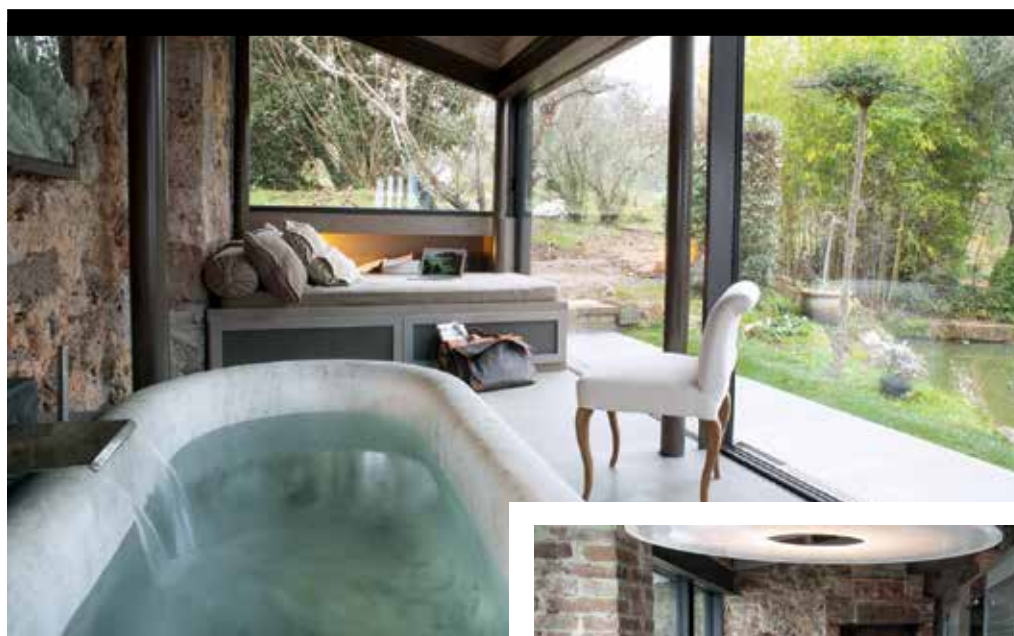
**Sleeps** Two, in one room

**From** £240pn

This circular escape may make you completely rethink the concept of a 'bungalow'. As sweet as it is surreal, this is a blissful spot for a break for two. By day you can lounge by the private plunge pool or take in the delights of the Pacific Coast on Playa Jobo Beach, then make use of the telescope for stargazing deep into the night. What's more, in holiday season you can opt for an all-inclusive stay with your own private chef.

[luxuryretreats.com](http://luxuryretreats.com)

## VILLAS FOR TWO



### Just married

From top: Villa Antonia, on Zakynthos, the third largest of the Ionian Islands; The Casina is in a 12th-century Tuscan watchtower





## WILD THINGS

**Hacienda Chekul, Mexico**

**Sleeps** Eight, in four rooms

**From** £2,348pw

If your children have ever sat transfixed while watching *Planet Earth*, then this is the villa for you. Located by the beach inside the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve and just a short drive from the vibrant town of Tulum, it's where budding naturalists will love spotting black howler monkeys, magnificent frigate birds and possibly even a Baird's tapir. Set in a six-acre jungle estate, it's the ultimate break for letting your kids run wild.

[scottdunn.com](http://scottdunn.com)



## FAMILY FAVOURITES



## IBIZA UNCOVERED

**Villa Es Socarrat, Ibiza**

**Sleeps** Eight, in four rooms

**From** Seven nights from £399pp\*\*

Up to two families can enjoy this whitewashed villa, set in a secluded spot in the Balearic party island's countryside. Just a short drive from the coast and the village of San Miguel, children will love the table tennis and pool, while adults can take turns to escape to the sun trap on the top floor for some peace – as well as panoramic views of the surrounding forest. Or, they can always sneak off to Playa d'en Bossa for a night out.

[ba.com/ibiza](http://ba.com/ibiza)

### Special reserve

From top: Hacienda Chekul, Mexico, in the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve; Villa 12 Samujana, in Koh Samui, Thailand, has its own basketball court and trampoline

## THINK BIG

**Villa La Napoule, near Cannes, France**

**Sleeps** 16, in eight rooms

**From** £6,635pw

Rather than cramming your loved ones into a tiny room on the Croisette, head out of town. Not so much a villa as your own private resort, La Napoule can host multiple families – and all their cars and kit, too. The bright lights and big boats of Cannes are just a ten-minute drive away, but if you decide to stay poolside, the garden is large enough for kids to explore and adults to find some solitude in the sun.

[southfrancevillas.com](http://southfrancevillas.com)

## NONSTOP FUN

**Villa 12 Samujana, Koh Samui, Thailand**

**Sleeps** 14, in seven rooms

**From** £2,260pw

The ultimate trip for multiple families with a busy tangle of children who need around-the-clock entertainment. When the kids aren't in the pool blasting out tunes through the underwater speakers, there are Muay Thai boxing lessons in the private gym, a vast library of films for the home cinema, hoops to shoot in the basketball court and an open-air trampoline.

[ultravilla.com](http://ultravilla.com)



LONDON



WORLD

**FIND IT AT BA.COM** British Airways flies to Florence from London City; to San José, Cancun, Catania, Marrakech, Lima, Antigua and Rhodes from Gatwick; to Nairobi and Zakynthos from Heathrow (from 3 June); to Cape Town from Heathrow and Gatwick; to Nice from Heathrow, Gatwick, London City and Stansted; to Ibiza from Heathrow, Gatwick and London City; to Palma from Heathrow, London City and Stansted; to Koh Samui from Heathrow via Bangkok on a codeshare basis with Bangkok Airways, to Stornoway via Glasgow and Edinburgh on a codeshare basis with Flybe and to Rio de Janeiro, where you can get connecting flights to Bahia, Brazil.

**COLLECT THOSE AVIOS** Join the Executive Club and collect and redeem Avios on every flight.