



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT Ariara's deck and infinity pool, dinner with a view, the island in all its verdant glory

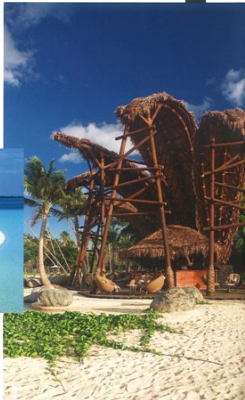
ARIARA, PHILIPPINES

One of the Philippines' little-known Calamian Islands, Ariara, a hump-backed verdant lump fringed with lovely beaches, accommodates just 18 guests (and 30 staff) in villas that combine Filipino tradition with modernity. British-owned and run, it has a luxurious yet informal atmosphere reminiscent of the best African game lodges. Much of the focus here is on water - jet skiing, waterskiing, wake-boarding, diving or snorkelling - but, equally, you can simply choose to relax at The Lodge, a comfortable lounge space at the end of a long pier. Visit ariaraisland.com or email bliss@ariaraisland.com with your telephone number and time zone to request a call back to make an exclusive reservation, or book through Black Tomato (0843 636 8089; blacktomato.com).



LAUCA LA ISLAND, FIJI

Owned by Dietrich Mateschitz, the man behind the Red Bull energy-drinks brand and its Formula One team, this South Pacific destination is not a fully private retreat - locals also farm and fish on the island, providing for the freshest food. Its 25 residences are, however, situated on a private peninsula, complete with its own mini-isle which is the nucleus for snorkelling and swimming. It has a spa, five restaurants and bars, an 18-hole golf course cleverly concealed in an old coconut plantation and a staff of 500. Mateschitz asked for Gauguin's Garden of Eden and he got it. Contact Laucala (+679 888 0077; laucala.com) or book through Elegant Resorts (01244 897000; elegantresorts.co.uk).



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE Sand bar, Musha Cay, Laucala's poolside bar, the Pier House on Musha Cay

MUSHA CAY, BAHAMAS

Islands are often described as 'magical', but Musha Cay really is the product of magic - it's owned by illusionist David Copperfield. Part of the scattered archipelago of the Exumas in the Bahamas, its 40 Pearly-white beaches border a sea right out of a Hockney palette. Thirty staff tend to guests in an enormous plantation-style manor house and two guest villas. There's a thatched beach house, a pool, tennis court, gym, open-air cinema, business centre and water sports, including jet skis for hopping to other islands. A minimum four-night stay here includes all meals and drinks, plus the use of facilities, but excludes flights and transfers. Book direct on +1 208 3097106 or via mushacay.com.



COURTESY OF MUSHACAY AND THE GARDEN OF COPPERFIELD ISLAND