

Private islands



For a magical, non-showy escape **Vamizi Private Island** Mozambique

We didn't intentionally save the best till last, but we're yet to find a better African patch of paradise than the unspoilt, unplugged and unrivalled Vamizi. A short hop from Mozambique on a teeny private plane (go in August and you're likely to see humpback whales on their migration route) prepare to gaze upon swathes of uninhabited sands, untouched mangrove forests and, if you look hard enough, a luna-esque rocky landscape located at the tip of the island. It's a real 'pinch-me-am-I-dreaming' kind of moment. And that's just on land. Beneath the glittering waters you'll find more than 180 species of coral, jam-packed with kaleidoscopic marine life, which makes for some of the best diving and snorkelling in the world. Somewhat of an eco marvel, the six lodges have all got style with equal amounts of soul; stuffed with handmade African crafts (pictured) and held aloft by huge driftwood trunks bleached a soft white. Each comes with its own host, a cook and a driver. Discuss your day's menu over a delicious zesty mango tea cooler – will it be cashew-stuffed chicken or just-jumped-from-the-sea kingfish and calamari for lunch? But the *really* special part of a stay here? You are entirely. Cut. Off. In the best possible way. Expect the stillness to be broken only by the call of a samango monkey or the chat of the weaver birds as they build their basket-like nests. Make no mistake about it, Vamizi is a spot that will steal your heart.

WOW FACTOR Getting up at 5am to walk halfway around the island – ending with a swim across a beautiful lagoon to a deserted hut, which has been transformed for breakfast. It was like a mirage.

GO And Beyond (andbeyond.com) offers one night from £1,350 per person, full board. South African Airways (flysaa.com) return flights start at £1,360. **B**

