

Press Coverage 2018: Chablé Resort & Spa

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5 OF THE BEST PLACES TO
VACATION IN JANUARY



Nikki Beach Resort & Spa, Dubai

Follow the sun and head for warmer climes – these are the hottest destination hotels to escape the January blues

NIKKI BEACH RESORT & SPA, *Dubai*

Against a backdrop of the jade-colored Arabian Gulf, the legendary Nikki Beach Resort caters for all social tastes and traditions. There's a party buzz and a scene if you want it; a more peaceful atmosphere in the main hotel with the loveliest balcony suites, all poured concrete and minimalist furnishings; or total solitude in the self-contained beach residences with their private pools. Overlooking the boom of the ocean, surfers and a dazzling beach landscaped with palms and cacti, the intimate, low-key vibe is a breath of fresh air in brassy Dubai.



POOLSIDE GLAMOUR

While away the day lounging on a cabana with a cocktail from the Nikki Beach Club's swim-up bar

CHABLÉ RESORT, *Yucatán, Mexico*

Nature reclaimed this 19th-century hacienda some 80 years ago, and it's taken more than a decade to turn it into the heavenly kingdom of Chablé Resort it is today. The sprawling gardens, snaking vines and twitchy-eyed iguanas are best experienced by moonlight, when parota trees creak and fireflies flicker. At the spa, treatment cabins overlook a spring-fed cenote, which the Mayans believed to be a portal to the underworld. Pathways lead to 38 standalone casitas, all smooth limestone and flashes of topaz, courtesy of Mexico City-based interior designer Paulina Morán. After dark, follow the flames to the Ixi'im restaurant for hand-rolled tortillas, slow-roasted suckling pig and the world's largest private collection of tequila.



JUNGLE OASIS

Chablé Resort's freeform pool is dotted with islands, fountains and sunbathing decks.



SONEVA FUSHI, *Maldives*

Azure skies. Neon blue seawater. Powdery white sand beaches. All these are a given in the Maldives. But Soneva Fushi, situated in the breathtaking Baa Atoll, is one of the Maldives' most beloved resorts; guests return again and again, having fallen in love not only with the island, but the resort's unique ethos created by the warm and attentive staff, who truly make it feel like home – the 24-hour butler service is phenomenal. The spacious villas, many with private pools, are dotted throughout the island's lush foliage, where you can roam around on old-fashioned bicycles to an early morning yoga session or a late-night ride home from the open-air cinema.



BAREFOOT LUXURY

Soneva Fushi's six-bedroom Villa 42 features a lagoon pool, a private spa and a sauna.

AHILYA BY THE SEA, *Goa*

Seek out the easy-going spirit of Goa at Ahilya by the Sea, a haven of peace and quiet where, from the high terraces of the enveloping gardens, you can gaze out to views that stretch onto the Mandovi River as it meets the Arabian Sea. The staff have a way of allowing you to treat the place as your own: they'll bring you tea as you read by the turret windows, dangling your feet over the sill from the day bed (designed strategically to catch the afternoon breeze), or invite you to take your yoga mats onto the treehouse platform, followed by a massage performed to the soundtrack of crashing waves. You can also dine at whatever vantage point you like, so you'll be able to spot dolphins on the horizon as you enjoy the kingfish or red snapper simmered in coconut, as is the Goan tradition.



HOME FROM HOME

The intimate Ahilya by the Sea retreat has nine individually decorated rooms spread across three independent villas

SONG SAA, *Cambodia*

Among the many islands and dreamy beaches of Southeast Asia, those in and around Cambodia still feel like virgin territory. The private island of Song Saa promises some of the best. Small-scale, high-end, it has a wonderfully eclectic feel, a long way from the banality of 'international resort chic'. At the heart of the island is the spa run by an inspiring Indian practitioner, steeped in a variety of wellness disciplines. At the other end of the island, a boardwalk leads to the dining pavilion, which makes wonderful use of local ingredients and flavors, from the national dish of curried steamed fish to coconut. In the 'activity hut', there's access to diving and snorkeling expeditions, mangrove tours, nature walks, deep-sea fishing, and picnics on empty beaches throughout the archipelago.



ISLAND LIFE

Take a peek at Song Saa islands' natural reef through the portholes of your Overwater Villa