



How to rent a... **PRIVATE ISLAND**

NO MATTER HOW LUXURIOUS A RESORT, YOU WILL ALWAYS BE MIXING WITH OTHER HOLIDAYMAKERS. RENT A PRIVATE ISLAND INSTEAD FOR THE ULTIMATE IN EXCLUSIVITY, WRITES *Lucy Jones*.

What kinds of islands can you rent?

Private islands can be broadly divided into three categories: self-catering, full service and resort.

SELF-CATERING: These islands generally have single homes or villas on them and come with no staff, save for a caretaker, and guests cook and clean for themselves. Staff can be arranged but these will come at an additional cost.

FULL SERVICE: Accommodations are also a single home or villa, but full service islands come with some staff (like housekeeping, chef and security) and the kitchens will be stocked with provisions.

RESORT: The most luxurious islands are just that, private luxury resorts with multiple homes or villas, facilities like restaurants, a spa and watersports equipment, and a full staff.

Prices vary accordingly, so expect to pay considerably more for those with full facilities and service. Be aware that many islands will promote themselves as "private", but in reality multiple parties can book accommodation on an individual basis. A true private island is only ever available for single use.

Where can you rent them?

Short answer: everywhere. From Canada to the Caribbean and Tanzania to Tonga, there are private islands available to rent all over the world. You can rug up in a stone farmhouse in Maine or escape to a thatched hut in the Seychelles. The most popular regions for private islands are the Caribbean, the Maldives and the South Pacific.

What is included?

With the exception of self-catering islands, tariffs are generally all-inclusive and cover food, drinks, staff and basic activities. Extra charges can apply for premium wines or spirits, spa treatments, transfers and specialty activities like scuba diving, but this varies from island to island.

How is the food organised?

For self-catering islands you can choose to bring all of your food with you and cook your own meals in the fully equipped kitchen. If you would rather arrive to a fully stocked kitchen, then the island manager can arrange for provisions to be

brought in before you arrive according to a shopping list that you provide. At full service and resort islands the chef and team will prepare restaurant-quality meals for every sitting, customising a menu to your preferences.

What is provided?

No need to bring your own sheets and towels to a luxury private island. Everything will be provided from beach towels to scuba gear.

How do you get there?

There are unlikely to be scheduled services to most private islands, so a boat, helicopter or seaplane transfer is your best option. This

is not always included in the rental price and may need to be arranged separately.

How many staff will you have?

On fully self-catering islands there will be no staff, though a caretaker is usually available for any questions or problems. On full service islands all housekeeping, kitchen and security staff are standard, with specialty staff provided in some cases or by request. For resort islands the staff to guest ratio is always above one to one – on Dolphin Island there are 10 staff for a maximum of eight guests and on Necker Island there are 70 staff for a maximum of 36 guests. These include spa therapists, recreation staff for activities and watersports, and specialty staff like scuba diving or sailing instructors.

What can you do on the island?

You can tailor your days however you like. Most islands will have a cache of equipment for activities, like snorkelling, surfing, paddleboarding, windsurfing, kayaking, bike riding and fishing. The more luxurious islands can also come with scuba diving equipment, motor boats, jetskis and more.

Who does the cleaning?

For self-catering islands the house (or houses) will be clean upon arrival, though there may be an additional fee for cleaning when you leave. You are also responsible for keeping the island itself clean and properly disposing of rubbish. On full service and resort islands, all cleaning will be taken care of.

FIVE OF THE BEST PRIVATE ISLANDS



01

COUPON KEY
Florida, USA

STYLE: Self-catering
SIZE: 14.5 acres
ACCESS: Boat
SLEEPS: Up to 12
RATES: From US\$4,350-7,800 (about A\$4,700-8,429) per night plus taxes.

This small island in the middle of the Florida Keys is almost completely covered in trees, with just one 420 square metre, eight-bedroom house sitting right in the middle. There's a huge wraparound deck for a sunset cocktail, a private dock and numerous spots for swimming and fishing. There are no staff or provisions, but groceries can be provided for an additional fee.
spottswood.com/couponkey.php

02

MOTU TETA
French Polynesia

STYLE: Full service
SIZE: Nine acres
ACCESS: Boat
SLEEPS: Up to six
RATES: From €533 (about A\$787) per person per night for six guests to €1,300 (about A\$1,919) per person per night for two guests plus taxes.

It's the ultimate in barefoot luxury at this breezy beach house on a tiny speck of an island in French Polynesia's remote Rangiroa Archipelago. Try your hand at outrigger canoeing with one of the local guides or just take a (swimsuit optional) dip in the crystal clear lagoon. The chef will cook relaxed meals of freshly caught fish to be served on the deck of the main house, or you can take your breakfast by the beach.
yourdreamisland.com

03

TAGOMAGO
Spain

STYLE: Full service
SIZE: 148 acres
ACCESS: Boat, helicopter
SLEEPS: Up to 10
RATES: From €100,000 (about A\$147,642) per week.

Just off the coast of Spanish party island Ibiza, Tagomago is one of the few private islands available for rent in the Mediterranean. A five-bedroom, ultra modern villa sits in the centre and has a large swimming pool, sauna and steam room, and separate accommodations for the full staff. The island comes with an impressive selection of toys, including a yacht, two motorboats, jetskis and a helicopter.
island-tagomago.com

04

DOLPHIN ISLAND
Fiji

STYLE: Resort
SIZE: 13 acres
ACCESS: Boat, helicopter, floatplane
SLEEPS: Up to eight
RATES: From NZ\$1,145 (about A\$1,060) per person per night for eight guests to NZ\$1,595 (about A\$1,477) per person per night for two guests plus taxes.

Sister property of the ultra luxe Huka Lodge in New Zealand, Dolphin Island has just four bures set around the main building. Renowned interior designer Virginia Fisher is behind the look and feel of the island and the dining is luxury lodge standard. For even more privacy, guests can spend the night in the open-air hilltop bure.
dolphinsfiji.com

05

NECKER ISLAND
British Virgin Islands

STYLE: Resort
SIZE: 74 acres
ACCESS: Boat, helicopter
SLEEPS: Up to 30 plus six children
RATES: From US\$60,000 (about A\$64,827) per night.

Arguably the most famous private island in the world, Necker is Sir Richard Branson's personal playground. The Great House has been completely rebuilt after it was burned to the ground and the deck is once again stocked with hammocks, daybeds and pillows. There's a huge swimming pool with a swim up bar and an aqua trampoline anchored to the floor off the Main Beach. You can also play on the Necker Nymph, a three-person aero submarine that takes you down to 30 metres.
neckerisland.virgin.com