

The business of life & living

PORTFOLIO.

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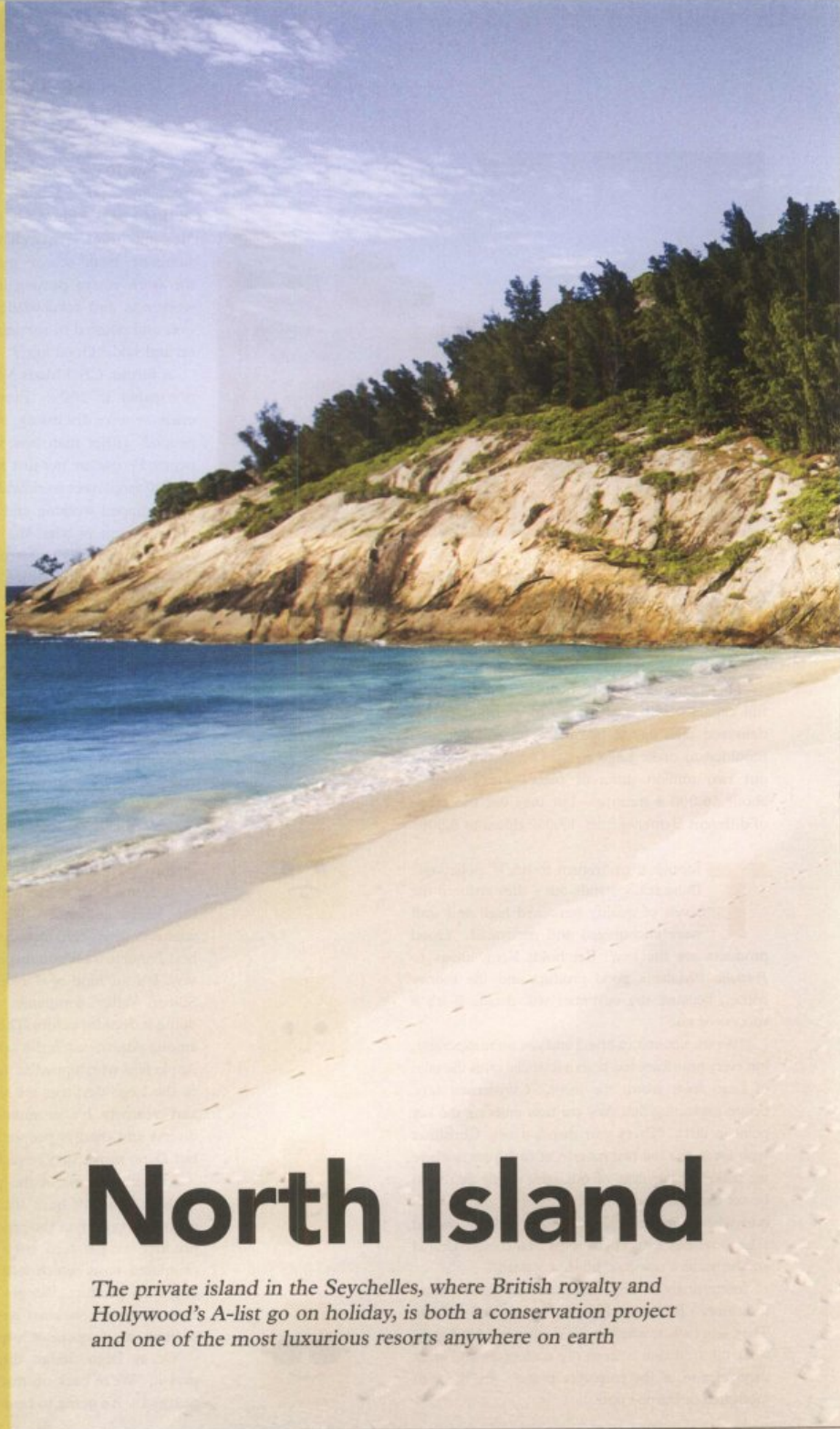


THE SEYCHELLES' A-LIST ISLAND P72

North Island in the Seychelles has been the chosen destination for British royalty and A-list film stars, but amid the five-star luxury is an island with eco credentials

PORTFOLIO.

LIVING



North Island

The private island in the Seychelles, where British royalty and Hollywood's A-list go on holiday, is both a conservation project and one of the most luxurious resorts anywhere on earth



WHERE
TO
STAYNORTH ISLAND,
THE SEYCHELLESNorth Island,
The Seychelles

PRICE

From \$3,351
per night

north-island.com



SEZ



There's a great line in the comedy *30 Rock* where Jack Donaghy and Jerry Seinfeld talk about going on holiday to a place "only rich people know about". If there were such a place, it's probably just like this. North Island is the private island where the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge decided to go for their honeymoon. (Wills and Kate stayed in villa number four in case you're interested). It's also where George Clooney and his bride Amal chose for their honeymoon. It's been the destination for many others for whom nowhere is off limits and who are in a position to go wherever they want. They can go anywhere, so they choose here.

Until 1997 it was just an overgrown granite island, one of 40 inner islands of the Seychelles. Uninhabited by humans for centuries, aside from sporadic explorers who would stop off on their journey to stock up on coconuts and fruit, the main life here were the hundreds of giant tortoises.

Around 100 of them still live on the island today and are part of an on-going conservation project, with some being old enough to remember what the island

**"Many of
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was like in the 1860s. The resort opened in 2003. This wasn't rushed and certainly wasn't done cheaply, with vast amounts were spent creating the resort, yet guest numbers have been kept to a minimum. With so few villas on the island you can go for days without seeing another guest and being the only person on one of the beaches is not uncommon. Just ten presidential villas sit amid palm trees, set just back from the beach, each 450 square metres in size with one additional larger villa of 750 square metres at the end. Each one is a home.

The villas are self-contained with large master bedrooms, en-suite bathrooms



Words: Matt Pomroy

ON THE HOTEL

ARRIVE

The hotel has its own helipad (located away from the villas so you don't hear them) that can fly guests into the resort from Mahe airport in 15 minutes.

EAT

You can eat at the oceanside piazza, on the West Beach or in your villa, but everything is included and menus are more like starting points.

EXTRA TOUCH

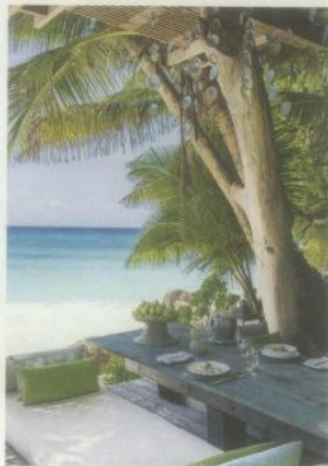
You get your own golf cart, letting you explore the island at your own pace. It's a fine way to go and meet some of the 100 or so giant tortoises.



featuring big Balinese marble baths, and indoor and outside showers. You have your own deep plunge pool for deskside loafing and lazing about is taken into serious consideration here. There are lots of spots with recliners, sofas, chairs and seats created to maximise doing very little. The flatbeds at the bottom of your own garden are perfect for lying back at night, turning off all the lights and looking at the thousands of stars above.

While many resorts have a minibar, here you get a whole pantry. All the food and drink is complementary, so when you finish that bottle of Ruinart champagne, it's soon replaced. In fact, all the food and drink on the island is included, unless you opt for some of the high-premium wines, of which they have many. The excellent sommelier is worth speaking to and can arrange a wine tasting if you wish.

What keeps all this running seamlessly are your own private butlers. And it's not just having a staff member dedicated to your villa, it really is like having your own butler. Whims are anticipated, breakfast made for you on the stove in your pantry (there's no set menu, just a board of suggestions, order any time), bookings for activities sorted,



even babysitting if you fancy leaving the sleeping child and going for a midnight stroll. The level of service is incredible, but if you want total privacy then they're just a mobile phone call away.

For those who venture beyond their villa there's a spa, an excellent gym with views and beach library and lounge. The 45-metre main pool is stunning and is perched on the side of the island giving you infinity vistas heading out over the beach and ocean. For those who want something more active, there's a world-class PADI dive centre (and some excellent dive spots to visit), fishing cruises, glass-bottom canoes, paddleboarding and some great hiking trails up to the peak of the island. If you fancy the latter it's worth going on one as part of a nature walk as the island is a conservation project as well as resort, with tortoises, turtles, birds and over 200 plant species that have been identified and are now flourishing.

There are lots of five-star places in the world and more opening each year, but there are just a handful that are truly among that next level of resort. This really is one of them. It's easy to see why so many of the people who can afford to go anywhere choose to go here. ●