



Story | SALLY J. CLASEN

# Get lost

Fall off the grid and retreat from civilization at some of the world's most remote luxury destinations

Looking to get away from it all? You don't have to head into uncharted territory to get some peace and quiet. Many destinations combine spectacular surroundings, luxury comfort and privacy in one itinerary.

## Wolwedans Dunes Lodge

At the Wolwedans Dunes Lodge, you'll think you've stepped onto the set of "Out of Africa." Perched on a dune plateau deep in the NamibRand Nature Reserve in Namibia, the luxury "tent" camp has a 360-degree view of Africa's most unspoiled and cinematic landscape. The private reserve is tucked between the Namib-Naukluft Park and Nubib mountain range and covers 444,600 acres. Its vast natural beauty and

remote location—the nearest village is three-and-half hours from the Dunes—instills a powerful feeling of "emptiness."

Made up of nine rustic wood and canvas luxury "chalets" with en-suite bathrooms and private verandas, the camp has a swimming pool and a main lodge that features two lounges, a fireplace, tea deck, library, wine cellar and two dining rooms. A massage therapist trained in Swedish massage also is available.

Guests can take in the colorful vistas from their verandas or multiple sundowner decks. Or choose to go hot-air ballooning, take scenic drives and flights, or trace the footsteps of the Bushmen on a guided walking safari. Whatever the path, visitors will experience the depth of the reserve's protected biodiversity, like striking red sand dunes, the enigmatic barren patches

that are the "fairy circles," and a chance to spot several bird species and wild creatures, such as oryx, gazelle, zebra, giraffe, leopard, bat-eared fox and caracal.

After a day of rest or exploration, lavish but unpretentious five-star bush cuisine is prepared with local organic produce and served with select local and South African wines.

**GETTING THERE:** Fly to O.R. Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg, then to Windhoek. From there, guests can rent a car (five-hour drive), or hire a private or group charter to the Wolwedans' reception area, where staff will escort them to the Dunes Lodge. [wolwedans.com](http://wolwedans.com)

## Whitepod

Need to chill out? It's easy to get a different perspective when your

hotel room is a prefab wooden igloo constructed in a pristine alpine environment. Whitepod, a unique eco-ski concept, is located at the foot of the Dents-du-Midi mountain range, the start of the Swiss Alps. The private facility is a low-crowd/low-impact retreat with 15 geodesic domes, which are independently anchored on wood platforms into the mountainside with panoramic views of the Swiss Alps and Lake Geneva. All are equipped with wood-burning stoves, full-service bathrooms and organic luxury bedding. A separate Pod-house contains a breakfast room, a bar and relaxation space.

The environmental impact and benefit of the secluded maverick design is felt instantly. At check-in guests receive a rucksack, a map, a headlight,



crampons and walking sticks to guide them during the 15-minute walk to their pod.

The ski estate includes Les Cerniers, a traditional wooden chalet with a refined-cuisine restaurant that acts as base camp. In addition, L'Alpage de Chindonne, an authentic mountain lodge, is on the property. Spa services include a Finnish bath and Japanese sauna in the Pod-house, and a treatment area at Les Cerniers for massages. Guests also can schedule off-site thermal baths.

Adventure and tranquil thrills are abundant at Whitepod, which has 4.35 miles of ski slopes and three chairlifts. Popular activities include skiing, cross-country skiing, snowboarding, dog sledding, paragliding, snowshoeing and ice skating.

**GETTING THERE:** The nearest airport is Geneva Airport (GVA). From there, drive or take a train. The closest train station to Whitepod is Aigle; the train from Geneva Airport to Aigle takes approximately one-and-a-half hours, then connect via two buses to Les Cerniers. [whitepod.com](http://whitepod.com)

## Petit St. Vincent Private Island Resort

The only way to get to Petit St. Vincent (PSV) is by boat, but don't expect a luxury liner to drop you off or a sea of hotel options lining the shore once you dock. On this tropical paradise, a 115-acre private island/resort located in the Southern

Grenadines, the accommodations total 22 guest cottages.

The resort's motto, "A private place for private people," guarantees a complete disconnect from modern distractions, including humans. The ocean-view cottages, though carefully appointed, are discreetly spaced apart on the hillsides for privacy and don't have any TV, Internet or outside phone access. The unplugged approach includes a simple communication style: A yellow flag indicates, "I have a request," while a red flag means "Do not disturb."

The tranquil pace makes it easy to absorb the natural rhythms of the Caribbean wilderness. Two spots, the open-air Hillside Spa and yoga pavilion, help guests unwind and gain some mental and physical clarity.

Although there's no pressure to do anything on PSV, the rolling hills and two miles of white sandy beaches provide an ideal backdrop for non-motorized water and land sports such as hiking, running, kayaking, windsurfing, snorkeling and tennis. Sailboat excursions and island-hopping tours can be arranged, as well as 18-hole tee times on nearby Canouan Island.

The dining lineup includes room service, a main and beachfront bar/restaurant, weekly barbecues or private picnics. If you really want to distance yourself from others, rent the entire island.

**GETTING THERE:** Fly to Grantley Adams International Airport in Barbados and then to Union Island, where PSV staff pick up guests for a 20-minute boat ride to the island. 800-654-9326, [petitstvincent.com](http://petitstvincent.com)

