



Discover an underwater island off Africa's coast , by Jenn Selby, 10 May 2010

With icing sugar sands, rugged jungle wilds, glistening seas and secluded, Robinson Crusoe-style accommodation, Vamizi Island - just off the coastline of Mozambique - offers a more rustic, back-to-nature experience than more popular destinations nearby, </news/2010/march/is-vamizi-island-the-new-mauritius> as we reported in March.

The African island retreat is extremely exclusive with just 13 villas, spaced apart for added privacy. In the daytime, guests may languish in the sun on their private decks and stretches of beach, or trek into the jungle to spot wildlife. By night, they may enjoy barbeques on the beach with friends, eat in the elaborate formal dining area, or watch the sun go down with a cocktail, expertly mixed at the island's bar.

But to visit this Indian Ocean paradise without taking a look below the surface would be to miss the point completely. Underneath the waves, a little way from the shoreline lays Neptune's Arm: an untouched underwater island just eight meters below sea level.

The little-known area is regarded as one of the best dive sights in the world, with tremendous canyons teeming with colourful corals and wildlife. Divers can expect to swim side-by-side with friendly reef sharks, snappers and potato bass, or find themselves caught in a whirlpool of tropical reef fish, appearing as flashes of colour against a backdrop of translucent turquoise water.

Suitable for divers of all levels, there are a number of two- and three-day PADI scuba diving courses available on the island, as well as advanced courses for the more experienced. What's more, tour operator Original Travel is offering an exclusive Dive In Style package for those who wish to explore Neptune's Arm - and Vamizi - as it's meant to be seen. A seven-night all-inclusive stay on the island starts from £3,450 per person, which includes all flights and a complimentary dive.

For more information, and to book, call Dive In Style on 0207 978 0505 or visit www.diveinstyle.comBottom of Form