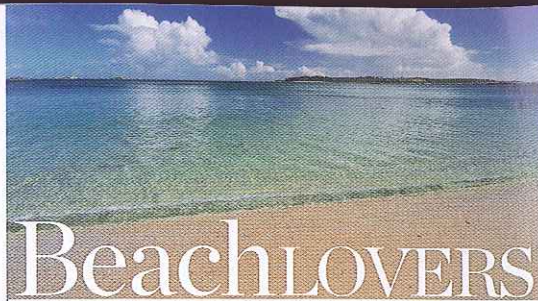


Goa to India

Vasco, near Goa in southern India, celebrates coconuts during the 10-day festival of Vasco Saptah, beginning on 19 August. The story goes that in 1896 a sacred coconut saved townspeople from a cholera epidemic and so, to this day, one of these brown-haired nuts is paraded through the town by dancers, before being immersed in the sea. The coconut industry is so important in Goa that last year the government offered a prize of one million rupees to anyone who could invent a machine to harvest coconuts. And of course, no Hindu wedding would be complete without a coconut offered up to the gods. incredibleindia.org



BeachLOVERS

3 FOR

It's summer and time to get to the beach. We pick three that offer far more than just sand and sea...

1 Once described as 'a pearl in thousands of miles of crushed shell', Vamizi Island in Mozambique is widely acknowledged as home to one of the best beaches in Africa. Out to sea is a reefscape teeming with an array of sea life, from whales, dolphins, turtles and reef sharks to gorgonian fan corals. Best of all is the canyon that dips a kilometre below the ocean surface, creating one of the healthiest reefs in the world – and some of the best diving. vamizi.com

2 Spain's Costa del Luz has around 3,000 hours of sunshine a year – and the fine white sands and sparkling seas of Playa de Mazagón are the place to enjoy them. Encircled by soaring cliffs and fragrant pines, the beach is nearly four miles long and usually deserted. If you get sick of sunbathing, you can go birdwatching in nearby Doñana National Park, a former hunting reserve of Spanish kings and now one of Europe's largest and most important wetland reserves. spain.info

3 It's hard to believe that the Isles of Scilly aren't somewhere south of the Equator (the weather can be a bracing reminder). The tiny island of Tresco (pictured above) – just 1.15 sq miles in size – is compact and allows you to do much more besides catch rays on the sandy beaches that surround it. Leave the shore to explore the island (it won't take long) and you'll discover exotic plants flourishing in the sub-tropical Abbey Gardens and a cracking crab sandwich at the New Inn. tresco.co.uk

Travelnews

Under African sun

You can appreciate the diverse wildlife of Malawi, East Africa, without worrying about your impact on the environment, thanks to a new lodge running entirely on solar power. The Mkulumadzi lodge is hidden amid the wild mango trees of the Majete Wildlife Reserve in the Lower Shire Valley.

If you're lucky, you may even spot the elusive black rhino from the comfort of your sun deck – before you settle in for an evening watching the African stars. mkulumadzi.com

