

THE WORLD'S BEST VILLAS

An abode in Death Valley, a converted kiln and a palatial property costing £18,000 a night... **Issy D'Arcy Clark** scours the globe for one-off wonders



THE MOST EXPENSIVE VILLAS

AMANYARA TURKS & CAICOS

Sleeps 12, six rooms
From £91,210 per week
Amanyara Villa is the latest and most striking addition to the Aman Resort. Its series of elegant pavilions surround a black volcanic rock pool, that leads out onto the waters of the marine reserve beyond.
amanresorts.com
British Airways flies to Turks & Caicos from London Heathrow.

CASA LAGUNA MEXICO

Sleeps six, three rooms
From £54,635 per week
Tucked away amidst verdant scenery by a huge clear lagoon, Casa Laguna barely needs its rooftop pool and Jacuzzi. The interior's gaucho colours and textures have a modern twist. A private boat will help you to get to know your surroundings better.
rosewoodhotels.com
British Airways flies to Cancun from London Gatwick.

Photograph: HomeAway

VILLA OPULENCE MYKONOS

Sleeps 25, 12 rooms
From £127,345 per week
One of the most exclusive villas in the world, this is a private paradise. Overlooking the Aegean, it mixes classic Greek architecture with cool features, such as the swings and hammocks by the infinity pool. It even has its own private nightclub.
Part of Blue Villas private collection
British Airways flies to Mykonos from London Heathrow.



THE BEST CURIOUS VILLAS

VILLA DRAKOTHEA MYKONOS

Sleeps nine, four rooms
From £540 per night
High in the hills overlooking Lia Bay, the haphazard layout of Drakothea somehow manages to stay on the right side of bizarre. From the interior that is filled with curios and unusual furniture, to the daring addition of a man-made beach to one end of the infinity pool, there is plenty here that you won't find anywhere else.
coolstays.com
British Airways flies to Mykonos from London Heathrow.

MOULIN DU JARDINIER MOUANS-SARTOUX

Sleeps nine, four rooms
From £9,110 per week
As director Sir David Lean's former holiday home, Moulin du Jardinier could well have been instrumental in inspiring greats like *Doctor Zhivago* or *Lawrence of Arabia*. It's not difficult to imagine – heavy canopies of flowers hang over the pool, and the vaulted ceilings of the 15th-century former mill house have been preserved indoors. Every corner of this Provençal palace is truly a treat.
sjvillas.co.uk
British Airways flies to Nice from London Gatwick and London Heathrow.

KAMINI VILLA SANTORINI

Sleeps four, two rooms
From £580 per night
Of all the curious conversions in this list, this is the most unexpected. It was once two vast kilns, the larger of which is now the kitchen and living room, while the smaller is a bedroom and bathroom. The rooms are light and airy, their white curved edges complementing the shape of the kiln.
bluevillascollection.com
British Airways flies to Santorini from London Heathrow.

DEATH VALLEY HOUSE NEVADA

Sleeps six, three rooms
From £1,890 per week
Sitting in 80 acres of clear views of the Nevada High Desert, this curious Modernist abode looks like it's part of an elaborate film set that has somehow been forgotten. A great retreat for solitude seekers.
homeaway.co.uk
British Airways flies to Las Vegas from London Gatwick and London Heathrow.

Clockwise from this picture
Nevada's Death Valley House looks like it is set on the moon; lounge by the pool at Amanyara Villa; a kitchen at Santorini's luxurious converted kiln, Kamini Villa

Clockwise from this picture

Portugal's Villa Vidro is a modernist marvel; Villa Degli Agrumi in Sicily fuses old and new; a room at Villa Cetinale, Tuscany

DESIGN VILLAS

VILLA VIDRO PORTUGAL

Sleeps Ten, nine rooms
From £9,250 per week
Nowhere will you feel more like Batman and Bond combined than at Villa Vidro. If the white cubed rooms and glass walls weren't enough, then perhaps the giant pool that glides through the centre of the house might just do it for you. What's more, with some clever trickery and glasswork, the villa appears to be floating away from the side of the hill for some extra design kudos.
thewowhousecompany.co.uk
British Airways flies to Faro from London Gatwick.

BOSCO DEGLI ULIVI PUGLIA

Sleeps six, three rooms
From £2,179 per week
This stylishly designed villa, with its polished cement floors and glass sliding doors, is made all the more desirable as it doesn't have the heavyweight price tag that usually accompanies smarter escapes. Hidden away in an olive grove and with a huge outdoor deck around the pool, there is also ample privacy and space for relaxing and entertaining.
thethinkingtraveller.com
British Airways flies to Bari from London Gatwick.

VILLA MOONSHADOW KOH SAMUI

Sleeps Eight, four rooms
From £5,080 per week
The three connecting pavilions make the sumptuous Villa Moonshadow completely unique. Sitting high on Chaweng Noi Hill, it offers a 180° view of Coral Cove below. Inside it is kitted out with all the latest gadgets, while the furnishings work Thai motifs into contemporary design. The guest manager is also on hand to organise boat trips or a Thai massage at any hour of the day.
holidaylettings.co.uk
British Airways flies to Koh Samui from London Gatwick.

Photograph: CV Villas

THE BIGGEST VILLAS

VILLA DEGLI AGRUMI SICILY

Sleeps 20, ten rooms
From £7,500 per week
Fusing history and modernity, the faded red façade of this classic Sicilian house has been nudged into the 21st century with the addition of chic glass balconies. Inside, the exposed old stone brickwork contrasts with – while also complementing – the contemporary furnishings.
massimovillas.com
British Airways flies to Catania from London Gatwick.

EL BOURA MOROCCO

Sleeps 16, seven rooms
From £6,295 per week
Floor-to-ceiling windows, flowing drapes and arched doorways – El Boura combines Eastern design with Western luxury, while its extensive gardens and outhouses make it practically a kingdom for hire. The huge pool, neighbouring olive groves and souk means

there is also plenty to do and dining alfresco, with soaring views of the Atlas Mountains in the distance, will round off each day perfectly.
rocksure.com
British Airways flies to Marrakech from London Gatwick.

THE TIDE HOUSE CORNWALL

Sleeps 18, seven rooms
From £2,350 per week
This house in St Ives has been designed with families in mind so there are sleeping arrangements to suit all ages. Kids will love the children's den and for outdoors activities, there are the beaches and rock pools. For evenings, the little pebbled courtyard at the back



of the house is great for cooking barbeques.
perfectstays.co.uk
British Airways flies to Newquay on a codeshare from London Gatwick.

VILLA CETINALE TUSCANY

Sleeps 27, 13 rooms
From £21,245 per week
Every inch of this Roman Baroque villa has been carefully curated and styled. It feels like being in a Zeffirelli film, with muralled ceilings, four-poster beds and gardens filled with lemon trees.
cvvillas.com
British Airways flies to Pisa from London Gatwick.



Explorations

Lounge in the sun
Phuket's Villa Sawarin is flooded with natural light and offers a wonderful view; Torre Sponda's pool (below) looks out on to the scenic Amalfi coast

Villas



TURQUOISE ESTATE VILLA BVI

Sleeps Ten, five rooms
From £11,160 per week
This Virgin Gorda villa has great views over the Caribbean Sea. Go kayaking and snorkelling, enjoy an in-house massage or lounge on the beachside swing bed. Two neighbouring villas sharing a beach make up the whole of The Turquoise Estate.
sjvillas.co.uk
British Airways flies to Antigua from London Gatwick.

VILLA SAWARIN PHUKET

Sleeps 16, eight rooms
From £1,485 per night
For something super-smart with a sea view, try Villa Sawarin. On Cape Yamu, it combines traditional Thai architecture with modern decor, cleverly fused by architects Jean-Michel Gathy and Philippe Starck. Its 24-metre infinity pool overlooks the Andaman, and there's a private practice green for golfers.
homeaway.co.uk
British Airways flies to Phuket on a codeshare with Bangkok Airways via Bangkok.

CASA MARJANI MOZAMBIQUE

Sleeps 12, five rooms
From £28,860 per week
Casa Marjani utilises the anonymity of the Quirimbas Archipelago to the max. The master bedroom leads on to a private beach, while a viewing tower makes for perfect stargazing. Plus the staff can arrange castaway picnics.
vamizi.com
British Airways flies to Maputo on a codeshare with South African Airways via Johannesburg.

BEACHSIDE VILLAS



ARTISTS STUDIO SPAIN

Sleeps two, one room
From £595 per week
This little villa has a big past; it was built in the 16th century as a farmhouse and then left to ruin until recently, when it was converted into a large, open-plan studio for two (although up to four can stay as there's a sofa bed). Outside is a garden and terrace.
trujillovillas.es
British Airways flies to Madrid from London Heathrow and London City.

TORRE SPONDA POSITANO

Sleeps two, one room
From £2,045 per week
As you might expect from a former watchtower, the views of the Amalfi coast from Torre Sponda are spectacular. A miniature pool on the terrace overlooking the bay is shared with two other apartments.
cvvillas.com
British Airways flies to Naples from London Gatwick.

THE SMALLEST VILLAS

DAMIA WINDMILL SANTORINI

Sleeps two, one room
From £430 per night
For a quirky getaway by the sea, Damia was once a windmill so the quarters are all close and curved. As it's perched on a cliff top, the private balcony gives panoramic views of the whole island and boat-filled bay below.
bluevillascollection.com
British Airways flies to Santorini from London Heathrow.

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