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FAMILY

TARTARUGA HOUSE AT VAMIZI, MOZAMBIQUE

Set in the northern Quirimbas Archipelago, a scattering of 32 tiny, mostly uninhabited islands, Vamizi isn't exactly a place to nip to for a weekend. From Dar Es Salaam or Johannesburg it's a two-and-a-half-hour flight, then a short hop in a small plane over villages, ramshackle fishing dhows, gin-clear seas – and occasionally a whale.

But once you've landed on the little strip cut into the mangroves and kicked off your shoes, the getting there is forgotten. The main lodge and the hotel rooms are currently being refurbished, so settle straight into the thatched and stone cottages that make up Tartaruga, the newest of six private villas. It's set at the edge of a white, shell-strewn beach, with a swimming pool and sunbeds in the centre, and kids' bunkrooms and grown-up suites arranged behind. The housekeepers and butler, trained at Vamizi's eco-hotel, couldn't be more smiley: serving lobster for lunch, as well as just-picked salads and fresh mango smoothies; organising barbecues on the beach and Champagne cocktails by the pool. For the energetic, there are kayaks on which to go out exploring, fishing trips to bring back tuna (conjured into sashimi later), diving excursions and snorkelling. Spa therapists can be called to administer coconut massages and salt body-scrubs; and there are hammocks and shaded daybeds on which to while away the hours, and outdoor candlelit baths in which to wallow and gasp at the Milky Way, lit up with shooting stars.

BOOK IT Sleeps 14. *Steppes Travel* (+ 44 843 636 8435; www.steppestravel.com) offers five nights from £15,980 based on two adults and two children, full board, including flights, transfers and activities

