

TRUTH IN TRAVEL

CONDÉ NAST

DECEMBER 2018

Traveler

Indulge
Yourself

TEA and TEMPLES
in SRI LANKA,
HUNTING
and FISHING in
ARGENTINA,
DOG-SLEDDING
in SIBERIA, and
Yes, CHAMPAGNE
for BREAKFAST

+

Your GREEK ISLAND Hideaway



Photograph by Helmut Newton—from a shoot for the May 1964 issue of *Vogue*.

While my travel schedule is scripted within an inch of its life to minimize time away from my family and the office, I am giddy at the thought of boarding a plane with a full assortment of electronic and printed reading material, with the latest seasons of *Ray Donovan* and *Billions* locked and loaded, not to mention a secret Bieber track for which my children would ridicule me mercilessly. Where else do I get to toggle between *Us Weekly* and *Foreign Affairs* and experience the guilty pleasure of poring over celebrity cellulite on the one hand, and choking down half a century of Egyptian-American relations in a Middle East special issue on the other (with a glass of champagne at the ready)? It is that rare moment when I can look at the job—literally and figuratively—from 30,000 feet and rethink everything from workflows to story ideas. It is also the only time I allow myself little stretches to daydream and do absolutely nothing.

As Sophy Roberts writes of her trip across Siberia's frozen Lake Baikal (page 74), "To me, the ultimate luxury is having the freedom to travel widely in the first place, to parts of the world where one encounters no other tourists, where the feeling of otherness is as intense as the bite of a Siberian wind in March." In an issue dedicated to unapologetic indulgence—whether a lovers' getaway to a private island in the Maldives (page 72); Andrew Solomon's 18-day journey through Sri Lanka's mysterious and unspoiled landscape (page 92); a solo stay at the Perivolos Hideaway in the Greek Cyclades on our cover; or, yes, Roberts's literal self-exile on the Trans-Siberian Express—we keep coming back to the idea that the greatest luxury of all is solitude... whatever that means to you. For me? Just please let there be no Wi-Fi after takeoff.

Pilar Guzmán, Editor in Chief

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Solo Flight

- I had just returned to work after my second maternity leave when a friend who was starting to think about kids asked me whether I had even a moment to myself during the day. As is true for so many career-centric women, she was anticipating (and perhaps pre-mourning) the loss of her hard-won independence. Her fears were confirmed—and a prescription for another month of birth control pills undoubtedly renewed—when the only answer I could muster was “on the subway to and from work.” Alone time during those sometimes magical, sometimes delirious early days of parenthood is elusive at best. With motherhood comes the radical inversion of oneself from starring role to best supporting actor, at least for a while. That a Q train to Midtown from Brooklyn at rush hour—even one so clown-car packed that you don't even have to strap-hang to stay balanced—could constitute “alone time” underscores the relative rarity of that commodity.

So for all of the wonderful places I get to travel to for my job, it might come as a surprise that the solo plane ride often feels like the greatest indulgence. Why? Because it is only in the (still) improbable suspension of time and gravity that I give myself permission to do exactly what I want. I'll even play along when people give me that sympathetic “how awful for you” look when I tell them I have to be in Hong Kong for work for just two days and in Dubai the following week for a mere 72 hours. What I really want to say is:

Get Some Alone Time

A new wave of private-island resorts are opening in exactly the kinds of places you'd want to have all to yourself.

The Indian Ocean as seen from the Six Senses Zil Pasyon in the Seychelles.

► We know, we know. Hear the words *private-island resort* and you think: not for me. Obviously those white sand beaches are the exclusive province of unimaginative billionaires and trophy spouses bored by St. Barts. But with new resorts opening from coastal Africa to Asia (there will be five in the Maldives alone by the end of the year), a private-island vacation isn't out of the question for us mere mortals who want a bit more adventure than an infinity pool.

Retreats like the Six Senses Zil Pasyon in the Seychelles, where you can swim with sea turtles or hike through jungle in the Coco de Mer Nature Reserve, are practically made for multi-gen families, with their three- and four-bedroom villas and open-air movie nights. Of course, there's still plenty of OTT beachside luxury to be had, like at the Four Seasons Maldives, where \$38,000 a night will get you pretty much everything but island ownership. JENNIFER MURPHY

photograph by ADRIAN GAUT

Bawah Private Island, Indonesia

A part of Indonesia's largely unknown and untouched Anambas Archipelago, Bawah seems primed to become a bragging-rights destination when it opens in 2017. Thirteen empty beaches and epic dive sites are a quick ferry and a one-hour flight from Singapore, meaning you can wrap up business meetings in the morning and unwind in one of 24 tented safari-style villas for the weekend before flying back to the States. *From \$2,500 for two.*

Four Seasons Maldives Private Island Voavah at Baa Atoll, Maldives

When this seven-bedroom retreat opens this month, it's certain to be the most laze-around-and-be-spoiled experience in the Maldives. It has a dive center, a spa, and a 62-foot yacht that can take you to surf spots. Want to Napa-up the food? They'll fly in Thomas Keller. Want a celeb to join you? They'll bring one in. Seriously. *From \$38,000.*

Kokomo Island, Fiji

The cultural appeal here goes way beyond the Fijian burre-inspired design of the 21 villas (all with their own pool), which will open in mid-2017 onto the South Pacific's Great Astrolabe Reef, the fourth largest in the world and a phenomenal dive site. Guests can explore the island's archaeological site, and if you're lucky you'll come across some kava (yes, that's the alcoholic mud the locals drink). *From \$2,600.*

Six Senses Zil Pasyon, Seychelles

Once they open next year, these three- and four-bedroom villas on Félicité in the Seychelles are where you'll want to put up the family. While adults zen out in the spa's rock pool and hammocks that swing over the sea, kids can play pirate in a two-story tree house and go on treasure hunts. And when you're ready to bond, your butler can make a family swim with sea turtles happen, too. *From \$1,340.*

Thanda Island, East Africa

About 18 miles off the Tanzanian coast, it's a sanctuary with one five-suite villa—and the dugongs, whale sharks, and sea turtles that call the surrounding marine reserve home. Guests can balance indulgence (copper tub bubble baths on the beach) with conservation projects like turtle tagging. *From \$10,000.*