

ON THE WATER

PORTS, PROMENADES AND PERFECT VIEWS



RAY OF LIGHT

With budget airlines providing flights to La Rochelle, the charming French harbour of Île de Ré is becoming increasingly busy. So get ahead of the crowds and book a weekend at the new **Villa Clarisse**, which opens in May down the road from **L'Hôtel de Toiras**, its sister hotel. Both have port-side locations in Saint-Martin but Villa Clarisse offers a more intimate stay with just 10 rooms, each decorated by Pierre-Yves Rochon. Hotel de Toiras (00-33-5 46 35 40 32; www.hotel-de-toiras.com) has doubles from £112. Villa Clarisse (00-33-5 46 35 40 32; www.villaclarisse.com) has doubles from £146.



SOUTH SANDS

BRITISH BEACH RETREATS

For fresh seafood and fine sea views, try **South Sands** (01548-859000; www.southsands.com), a new boutique hotel which opened last season just outside Salcombe in Devon. It is beautifully designed yet low-key, and boasts the services of seafood maestro

Mitch Tonks. Beach Suites with terraces sleep up to six people, with space for entertaining. Doubles cost from £120 per night. Alternatively, in Dorset, **Alexandra Hotel** in Lyme Regis (01297-442010; www.hotelalexandra.co.uk) is a well-placed gem a short coastal stroll away from Mark Hix's famed Oyster & Fish House.



LAKESIDE LODGINGS

1. Villa Feltrinelli, Italy Aristocratic opulence on Lake Garda's western shore. *Doubles from £750. Call 00-39-036 579 8000; www.villafeltrinelli.com*

2. La Reserve, Switzerland Sumptuous suites with views of Lake Geneva and Mont Blanc. *Doubles from £750. Call 00-41-22 959 5959; www.lareserve.ch*

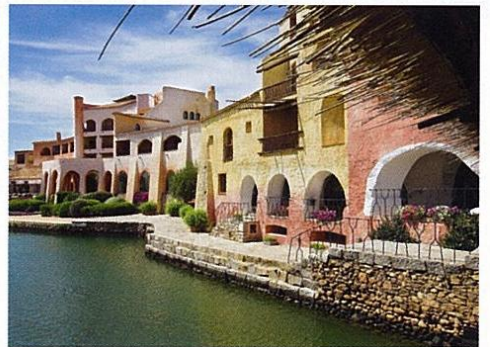
3. Gilpin Hotel and Lake House, England Home comforts and hot tubs in the Lake District. *Doubles from £290, with dinner. Call 01539-488818; www.gilpinlodge.co.uk*



DESTINATION PROFILE

PORTO CERVO, SARDINIA

After 50 years of designer-label desecration Porto Cervo, a dazzlingly glamorous cove in northern Sardinia, has a new champion. One man has vowed to restore its authenticity by a process that could be termed 'reverse gentrification', with a particular emphasis on local cuisine. The man is Andrea Brugnoli, who aims to 'bring back the perfume of bread in Porto Cervo' by way of a new promenade – parallel to the ostentatious boardwalk – where traditional artisans can sell their produce. It took Brugnoli six years to bring the promenade to life (this is its second season), and each of the 30 or so retail units are conscientiously built using local materials. The



main square boasts a mozzarella bar called Mozz'Art serving some of the freshest buffalo mozzarella we've ever tasted, Spazio Rossana Orlandi, a chic lifestyle store, as well as MdM, a small design museum. So far, so Sardinian, but some international flavour did sneak its way in last summer, in the form of a pop-up of the London bar Boujjs, a Ruinart champagne bar and Yoba, a Parisian lingerie boutique. There is also talk of a Milanese fusion restaurant serving sushi and Brazilian food. So the traditional Sardinian theme somewhat comes and goes. But identity crisis aside, the Promenade du Port has plenty going for it and it's still early days. **Leo Bear Promenade du Port** (www.promenadeduport.com) opens for the summer season in May. **Seasons** (01244-202000; www.seasons.co.uk) offers seven nights at Hotel Cala di Volpe from £2,735 per person including half-board, flights from London and private transfers.