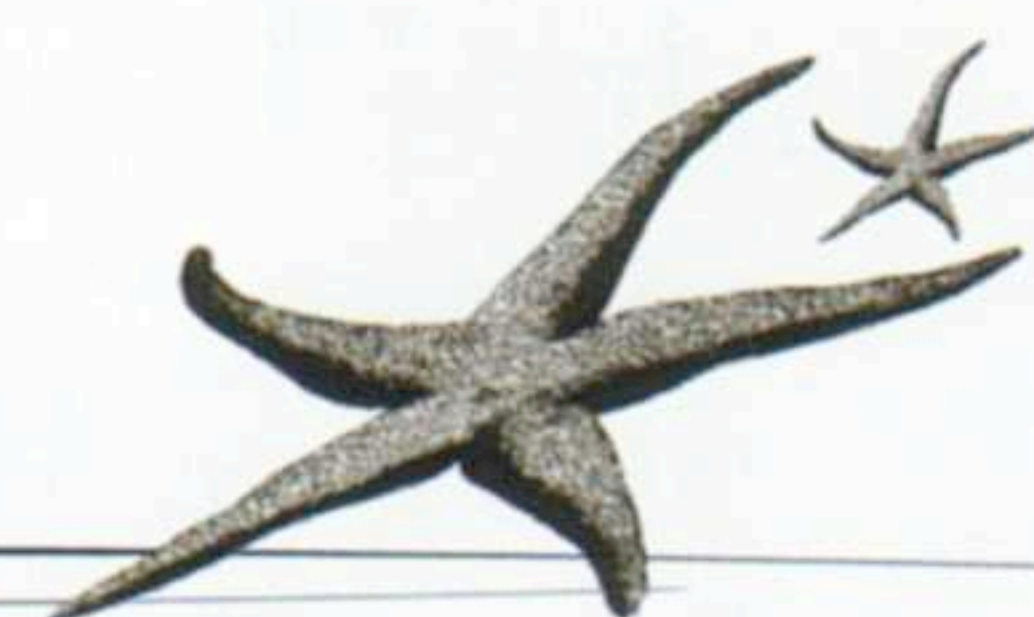




Action



BIG WAVES ON WAIKIKI

Once the sport of countercultural Californians who saw dropping in (that is, plummeting from the top of a wave) as a way of dropping out, surfing now attracts film stars and CEOs who swap board rooms for long boards in order to de-stress, get fit and escape to nature. Although the rustic beach huts have been replaced by top-notch hotels, Hawaii is still the sport's spiritual home. The Halekulani Hotel (www.halekulani.com) is a stylish 453-room hideaway on Waikiki Beach that has two nearby surf schools: Ty Gurney (www.tygurneysurfschool.com) and Hawaiian Fire (www.hawaiianfire.com). While endless sunshine and big waves are the main appeal for thrill-seekers, Halekulani's vast guest suite, designed by couturier Vera Wang, means you don't have to live like a beach bum.

BELOW THE SURFACE ON BAZARUTO

At first glance out your plane window, Bazaruto Island off the east coast of Mozambique looks like any other Indian Ocean landscape: fine white sand, grass-roofed beach villas nestled in the dense shoreline jungle, and crystal-clear waters. But the excitement beneath the calm surface is what attracts scuba divers to this island: wild dolphin encounters are frequent, as are sightings of dugong, turtles, manta rays, sharks and many species of neon-coloured tropical fish. When you're ready to exchange flippers for flip-flops, you can enjoy the rustic luxury of Indigo Bay Resort (www.indigobayresort.com) on Bazaruto's west coast. Robinson Crusoe-style beach chalets give adventurous castaways a chance to enjoy this unspoiled country at sea level, and get ready for another day below the waves.

POLO ON ANOTHER PLANET

Rugged, remote and breathtaking, New Zealand is perfect polo territory – especially in the rolling coastal hill country on the west coast of the North Island. Players from all over the world converge on Westward Downs Farm (www.newzealandpoloholidays.co.nz), owned by New Zealand Polo Internationals Alex and Steve Parrott. On this dedicated polo ranch, all-inclusive holidays can be tailored for riders of all levels. Or, for those happiest on two legs, other activities ranging from surfing and tennis to clay pigeon shooting are available nearby. Accommodation is hosted by the Pitts family at Amberwood, the adjacent luxurious homestead where Audrey presents *cordon bleu* home cooking. This is polo without the pretensions – and it might just be your idea of heaven.

SAILING IN SUNNY SEAS

Learn to sail your own yacht and you'll go places few people ever see – from deserted Greek islands to forgotten spits of sand in the Indian Ocean. Just getting to grips with all things nautical is a holiday in itself. Abercrombie & Kent Private Travel at Harrods can arrange and book everything from short courses to comprehensive holidays, all in the world's most luxurious locations. Whether you prefer the calm Mediterranean or the windswept British coast, they'll seamlessly organise all your travel. You'll learn everything from basic safety, knots and navigation to advanced techniques and racing tactics – it all depends on what you want to do and how much experience you have. Abercrombie & Kent Private Travel's range of exclusive private villas make the ideal post-cruise destination. But by the time you're done, you'll be ready for another day below the waves.