

TATLER[®]



TRAVEL GUIDE 2018





LIZARD ISLAND

GREAT BARRIER REEF, AUSTRALIA

The clever money has always been on remote Lizard Island, especially for those who prefer their resorts small and staffed by smiley, tanned boys and girls in crisp linen. Overlooking gently curved Anchor Bay, Lizard is an antidote to monster resorts – just 40 light-filled suites and villas, some with heated plunge pools and all stuffed full of La Biothétique products. Book the clifftop villa – the most lavish hideout – or, failing that, the headland pavilion. The curving frontage of fan-cooled Salt Water restaurant drops to lawns, which in turn fall away to the bay, where the thing to do is book a candlelit dégustation feast in one of the two beach cabanas. Then go night-diving at Cod Hole. For wimps, there's snorkelling over the Clam Garden, hiking the gentle 2.5-mile round-trip to Cook's Look or snoozing lizard-like in the sun with an occasional flop into the sea, followed by a Vichy shower in the Essentia Day Spa. *Double, from £1,120, full board* (lizardisland.com.au; 00 61 716 276 0104).

AND ANOTHER THING Armed with cold wine and olives, climb Chinaman's Ridge just before sunset and watch the resort slowly light up beneath you.

HOTEL ESENCIA

YUCATAN, MEXICO

REVAMP

Ensnconed in tropical fantabulousness, Esencia, a low-key beachside hideaway, has long been a glamorous retreat where guests don't even look up from their tequila as yet another Hollywood A-lister strolls past. Hard to improve upon – but they've done it. Stay in a new two-storey beach suite and you can fall straight out of bed and onto the icing-sugar sand, or gaze over the water from your terrace. The design remains stylishly simple: dazzlingly white, with dark-wood trimmings and bursts of colour from handwoven rugs and throws. And when it gets too steamy in the tub for two, there's the alfresco shower to cool off in. Spend your days on the water or being pummelled in the Mayan-inspired spa. Then head to the new Beach Restaurant under its lofty palm roof, where the Greek star chef mixes Peruvian, Japanese and Mexican flavours. Ceviche essential; shoes optional. *Journey Latin America* (journeylatinamerica.co.uk, 020 8600 1881) offers three nights as part of a 12-night trip, from £4,000 including breakfast, flights and transfers.

AND ANOTHER THING Swim, snorkel or scuba in one of the nearby ancient limestone sinkholes.

