

Condé Nast Traveller

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MALDIVES
SPECIAL
INSIDE

THE LAST WORD IN TRAVEL
MAY-JUNE-JULY 2021 | ₹200

INDIAN EDITION

INDIA'S 50 BEST VILLAS

The perfect
staycations to book

★★★

THE HOT LIST

The world's best
new hotels

★★★

BEYOND THE THEPLA

Gujarat's little
known cuisines

*Family
first*

50 incredible experiences
with the kids across India





50 TOP VILLAS IN INDIA

Your new vacation destination is a gorgeous villa in the middle of nowhere, on the edge of cliffs, on the banks of a river, by the beach, in the heart of a cardamom plantation. India's incredibly diverse landscapes are now dotted with architectural masterpieces, quaint cottages, centuries-old lovingly restored bungalows, and state-of-the-art structures. They are private, yet spare no creature comforts, with menus to rival the best 5-star restaurants. Luxurious spaces that spill into emerald green gardens, with mist that winds through verandahs, halls that echo with the sound of waves, and midnight feasts under starlight—welcome to the 50 top villas in India, just a click away on MakeMyTrip, Airbnb, Saffronstays, Isprava, Vista Rooms, Booking.com and more.

Compiled by **Rituparna Som**

 Number of rooms |  Pet-friendly |  Wheelchair-accessible |  Swimming pool |  WiFi

HAMPTON'S TWILIGHT, SIOLIM GOA

The largest villa in the gated community of Marsierra-By Jaglax Homes, The Hampton's Twilight offers both luxury and privacy. The compact apartment is done up in soothing colours and soft lights, with a magnificent chandelier occupying centrestage. Its highlights include a pool with a private deck as well as a terrace deck with a bar and shaded hot tub. There are many cosy lounging areas, a fully stocked kitchen and a loft for extra guests. A team of chefs can be called upon to prepare meals, and bartenders for cocktail nights. A concierge team can help curate travel experiences for those seeking a taste of Goa. —JL

marsierra.in; book via *Airbnb*. ₹26,999 per for the entire villa

🏠 3 | 🚗 No | ♿ No | 🍷 Yes | 📶 Yes

THE RAIN, ALLEPPEY KERALA

The Rain is located on the banks of Punnamadā Kayal, an extension of the Vembanad Lake. The bedrooms and the living room look out onto an infinity pool and the lake, lulling guests into a state of blissful calm. Mornings and afternoons can be spent exploring the surrounding area, with bird sanctuaries, a beach and lighthouse and ancient temples and churches for company. Evenings are reserved for barbecues by the poolside, sundowners in the Jacuzzi, and lavish local fare served under the stars. —RS

therain.co.in; book via their website and *Vista Rooms*, *MakeMyTrip* and *Booking.com*; ₹39,000 for the entire villa

🏠 4 | 🚗 No | ♿ Yes | 🍷 Yes | 📶 Yes

THE ZEVOG VILLA, KASALI HIMACHAL PRADESH

This chalet-style villa built in the 1990s is a welcome respite for city-weary souls. Nearly every part of the property commands majestic vistas of the mountains. The design is eclectic and interspersed with pops of colour—be it the living spaces with vibrant furniture, the outdoor terrace or the sunlit glass room with its cheerful interiors. Apart from a recreation room for kids, there is a Jacuzzi and a sun deck you can laze on. —Arzoo Dina

Old Kasali Road, Parwanoo Kasali Road, Kasali 173204; book via *Vista Rooms*, *MakeMyTrip* and *Booking.com*; ₹39,000 for the entire villa

🏠 4 | 🚗 No | ♿ No | 🍷 No | 📶 Yes

MARARI VILLAS, ALAPPUZHA KERALA

Imagine staying in a 100-year-old house with all modern creature comforts and within close proximity of a pristine beach. This collection of three villas, each with its own private pool, includes a century-old traditional Kerala wooden house.

The property specialises in curating experiences—whether it's for a romantic getaway or activities for a group interested in exploring Kerala. Everything is geared to make you want to stay on, especially the delicious food—there is a weekly Kerala 'Sadya' feast on Wednesdays, and barbecues every Sunday. —RS

mararivillas.com; book via their website, *MakeMyTrip* and *Booking.com*; ₹10,000 onwards per night per (1 bedroom) villa, dependent on packages

🏠 3 villas (2 with one bedroom; one with 2 bedrooms) | 🚗 No | ♿ Partial | 🍷 Yes | 📶 Yes

BOUGAINVILLEA, MUMBAI MAHARASHTRA

Upcycled furniture, elegant wooden four-poster beds and a quiet understated luxury dominates the look of this Mumbai villa owned by actor Mandira Bedi. Located in Madh Island, Bougainvillea's sole purpose is to let you unwind with the sound of waves in the distance. Designed by Bedi, the villa's rooms are all themed around colour—with bursts of bright blues, reds and yellows. Repurposed saris and Banarasi fabrics provide design accents. You don't have to indulge in activities, unless it's a walk by the beach. All meals are prepared by an in-house cook. —RS

Bougainvillea Bungalow, Erangal Beach, Madh Island, Mumbai, Maharashtra; book via *Airbnb*; ₹40,000 for the entire villa

🏠 4 | 🚗 Yes | ♿ Yes | 🍷 Yes | 📶 Yes

VAYU RETREAT, NAINITAL UTTARAKHAND

Vayu Retreat is best described as that home in the hills that most urban dwellers envision in their retirement dream. Ideal for a family getaway, this villa surrounded by forested hills is built in wood and stone. The hosts have added vibrant personal touches and plenty of nooks and corners to unwind with a book or watch birds from the villa's large glass windows. Gajeb, the in-house chef, cooks delicious homestyle food with

seasonal and local ingredients. Outdoor activities include day trips to Mukteshwar Valley, picnics by the stream and nature walks. —ST

vayuretreat.com; book via their website, *Vista Rooms*, *Booking.com* and *MakeMyTrip*;

₹23,750 per person per night

🏠 4 | 🚗 No | ♿ No | 🍷 No | 📶 Yes

VILLA MAGNOLIA, ALIBAUG MAHARASHTRA

The entrance to Villa Magnolia with its grand stone Ganesha sets the vibe of the home. Vintage accents, a traditional Indian swing, solid wood diwans, and plantation-style chairs lend the space a distinct look. The house is surrounded by swaying palms, bright bougainvillea, and fragrant frangipani trees. Each of the five bedrooms come with elegant four-poster beds and plush bathrooms. The rooms open into the garden while the verandahs with views of the surrounding hills make for great sundowner spots. A lovely outdoor pool hugs the porch and is perfect for a leisurely swim. —AK

Mehta Wadi, Zirad Pada, Samaj Mandir, Alibaug, Maharashtra; book via *Isprava*; ₹46,530 for the night for the entire villa

🏠 5 | 🚗 No | ♿ N/A | 🍷 Yes | 📶 Yes

TOYA TOYA, KOZHIKODE KERALA

Imagine waking up to views of swaying coconut palms and a tranquil river right in your backyard. This rustic villa located on the banks of the Chaliyar River in Kozhikode offers just that—a serene escape surrounded by lush greenery. The open living spaces extend into the outdoors. Rooms open up to river views and benches dot the property for you to sit back and enjoy the languorous pace. Earthy tones define the interiors along with artworks collected by the owners during their travels. The piece-de-resistance is the 'catch-of-the-day' installation featuring wooden fish sculptures hand-painted by friends and family. After a long day of exploring the city, walking a spice trail or kayaking along the river, soak yourself in the Jacuzzi with the gentle sound of the river for company. Or head nearby to any of the traditional Ayurveda centres for a massage to soothe your senses. —AD

Pantheerankavu, MP Road, Kozhikode, Kerala; book via *Vista Rooms*, *Airbnb*, *Booking.com* and *MakeMyTrip*; ₹21,000 for the entire villa

🏠 3 | 🚗 No | ♿ Yes | 🍷 No | 📶 Yes

Facing page, clockwise from top: sunset at Seclude, Lansdowne; loungers at the beach near Marari Villas in Alappuzha; understated elegance defines the decor at Villa Branco