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PEOPLE  
ARE  
TALKING  
ABOUT

TRAVEL

On the edge of the Great Barrier Reef, Australia's Hamilton Island has just welcomed **Qualia**, which is Latin for "a collection of sensory experiences." The dream project of Rosemount Estate wine magnate Bob Oatley, this luxurious beach resort on a hilly enclave is composed of 60 one-bedroom pavilions, built of natural hoop pine, with Zen-like interiors of wood, slate, and sandstone. Most have their own pool, and all come with an electric buggy to get around the resort's 30 acres. Besides every conceivable water sport, there is a spectacular spa with sunken Roman baths and a dedicated yoga and meditation pavilion. Qualia's two restaurants—supervised by French chef Stephane Rio—feature the freshest seafood and, not surprisingly, the best wine list on the Great Barrier Reef. From \$1,285, including all meals; [qualiaresort.com.au](http://qualiaresort.com.au).

**DON'T MISS:** the "Bularri Yarrol" massage.

Joining the increasing number of seductive retreats in the Indian Ocean, the **Beach House at Manafaru** debuts this month on a lush private island in the Maldives, so remote it takes a plane plus a speedboat to reach it from the main isle. An idyllic compound of 68 bungalows with open-air baths, private pools, even private butlers, the resort also has a large spa offering Ayurvedic treatments as well as an islet that doubles as a water-sports headquarters and the perfect spot for sunset cocktails. From

# sea of love

Richard Alleman seeks out the most romantic warm-weather hideaways.



**THE NEW WAVE**  
A VIEW OF  
ENDLESS BEACH IN  
THE MALDIVES.

\$785, double, with breakfast; [beachhousecollection.com](http://beachhousecollection.com).

**DON'T MISS:** the glass-floor villas with underwater views.

Closer to home, big news on the small British Virgin Island of Virgin Gorda is the opening of **Aquamare**. A mini-resort comprising three beautifully appointed five-bedroom villas—with 30-foot vaulted ceilings, private

infinity pools, and stunning views of the Sir Francis Drake Channel—Aquamare also offers private chefs, two yachts, in-villa spa treatments, and an on-site concierge to coordinate every aspect of your stay. Rates for one villa: from \$18,500 per week in the winter high season, plus 19 percent tax and service charges; [villaaquamare.com](http://villaaquamare.com).

**DON'T MISS:** swimming with dolphins on nearby Tortola.

Southeast of Virgin Gorda, the new **Hermitage Bay resort** in Antigua spreads across a 1,200-foot-long white-sand beach. Twenty-five rustic-chic cottages sport shiny wood floors, Caribbean colonial furniture in neutral shades, huge tubs, and outdoor rain-forest showers. A spa offers reflexology and Reiki massages—and golfers have *travel* >160

MUSIC

## BLUE HAWAII

Island escapist Jack Johnson returns with an intoxicating new album.



**MUSIC MAN**  
THE SINGER-SONGWRITER, IN A PATAGONIA WINDBREAKER, IN MALIBU, CALIFORNIA.

There was always music around, and I kind of got passed the torch," says **Jack Johnson** of playing Jimmy Buffett for backyard crowds throughout his Oahu childhood. Little did he know he'd eventually succeed Buffett as America's favorite island crooner. His sound track for *Curious George* debuted at number one on the *Billboard* charts. Now he returns with the soulful *Sleep Through the Static*, whose title, he says, "reminds me of Dr. Seuss."

Recorded at his new eco-friendly studio in L.A., the album features his signature acoustics and lazy grooves and was largely inspired by his family. "It's about learning to let things go. Like teaching my sons how to swim. You know, that feeling of when to hold on and when to let go." As for his gift for capturing the vagaries of romance: "Breakup songs are all from watching friends," he says. "My wife supplies me with the love songs." —LIZA GHORBANI