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Voara

Sainte Marie, Madagascar

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Rooms from **£833** per night

It is not currently possible to book this hotel through our partner sites.

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9_{/10}

Telegraph expert rating

" For the ultimate Robinson Crusoe escape it doesn't get better than this remote spot, where 'barefoot chic' acquires turbo-charged meaning. Madagascar's first new luxury hotel in six years is a laid-back retreat in which to unwind to the sound of the surf, dine by moonlight and surrender to nature's charms. "

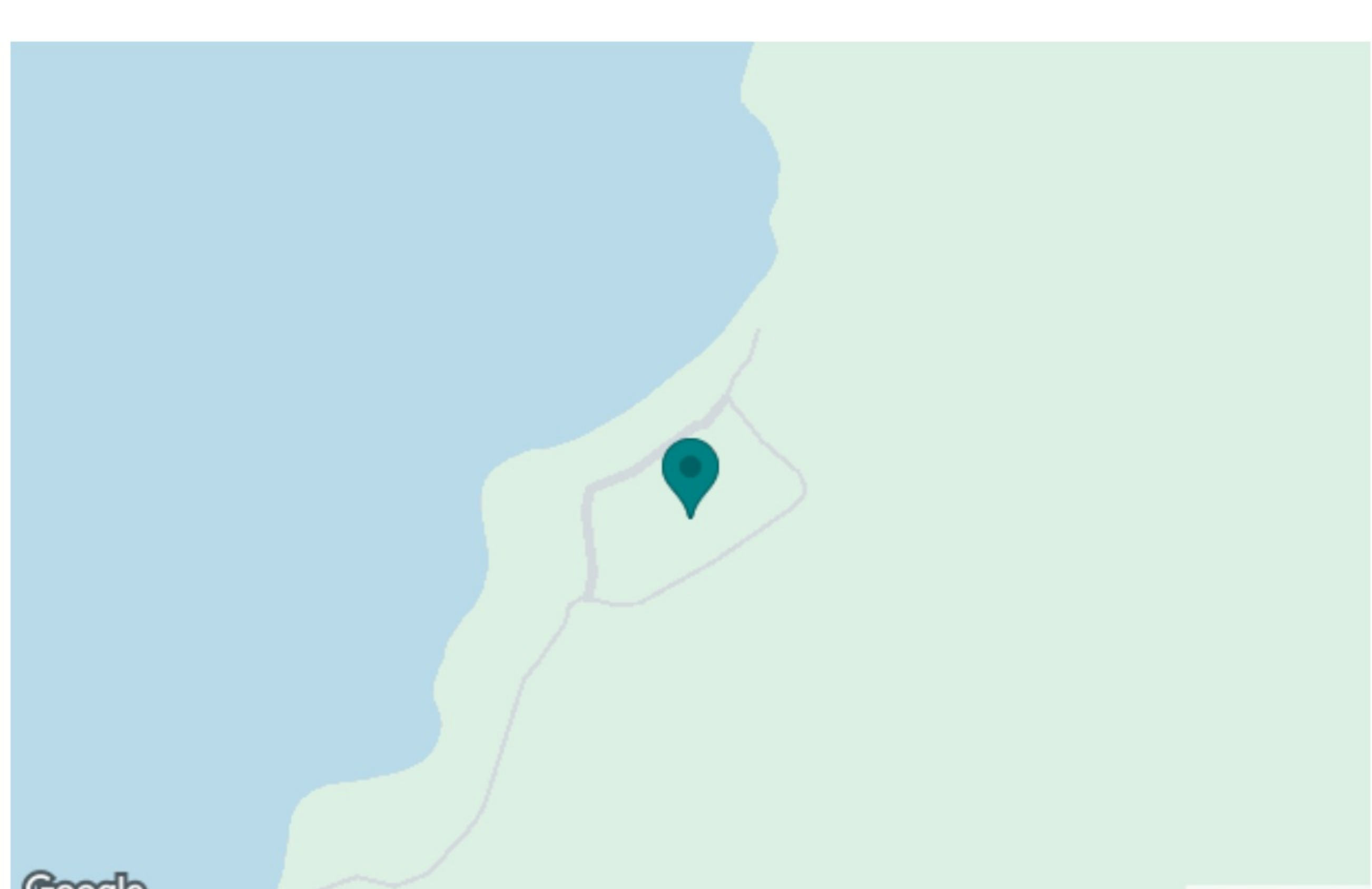
Telegraph Review

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Teresa Levonian Cole
17 January 2025 11:37am GMT

10_{/10} Location

It requires dedication to reach Voara: an hour-and-a-half's flight from Antananarivo to Ile Sainte-Marie, off the East coast of Madagascar, followed by an hour on the resort's boat (or an hour and 15 minutes by car). It does bring its rewards though – the 100-acre property, which has just eight rooms, is spread along a beach of powdery white sand that you can walk along for 90 minutes in either direction, meeting no one but the odd fisherman. Coconut palms, hibiscus and ylang ylang fringe the beach and turquoise waters lap the shore; the bungalows and main buildings reached along sandy paths and wooden boardwalks in the jungle, a skip from the water's edge.



10_{/10} Style and Character

A rustic, desert island vibe is created by the use of local materials, such as driftwood, roofs of travellers palm thatch, tree roots and woven raffia, that lend this exquisitely-designed hotel a deceptively simple rough-and-ready appearance, in keeping with the *genius loci*. Leave stilettos and glad rags behind – this is all about living in spectacular nature and accepting island life, but with luxury trappings at your fingertips.



1 of 6



7_{/10} Service and Facilities

When not out on quad bikes, surfing or deep sea fishing, diving or exploring the pirate cemetery where Captain Kidd lies buried, guests can relax with a massage in one of the Indonesian-inspired sea-front huts, or lounge at the outdoor cinema, with slices of freshly-made pizza under a starry sky.

High-speed Starlink internet is available throughout the resort, and a gym, spa with steam room, tennis court and swimming pool are all scheduled to be ready by mid-2025. Staff are Malagasy, and new to hospitality – but what they lack in experience they make up for with friendliness and authenticity, sharing tales of having seen mermaids in the hotel's sacred lake.

- Bar
- Beach
- Laundry
- Parking
- Restaurant
- Room service
- Wi-Fi

9_{/10} Rooms

Spacious bungalows are stylish and understated, with elegant monochromes and organic materials highlighted by splashes of colour in the artwork of Malagasy life by local photographer, Pierrot Men. Driftwood, raffia lampshades and floor coverings, palm thatch, tables of tree roots and petrified wood abound, this casual aesthetic contrasting with high-tech luxuries such as Dyson hair dryers, Marshall sound systems and Nespresso machines. Refreshingly, not a television in sight; who after all would want to watch a screen in a place like this. The beds, with their deep, hand-made sheep's wool mattresses, covered in crisply ironed linen sheets, are sublimely comfortable, with effective mosquito nets to protect from pesky nocturnal visitors, and integrated "Evening Breeze" air-conditioning.

Bathrooms are open to the elements, with brass fixtures and double granite basins, and are equipped with divinely fragrant, locally-made Anoka toiletries. Rooms also have a comfortable outdoor terrace on a platform of polished concrete, while occupants of the three-bedroom villa can luxuriate in their own pool.

8_{/10} Food and Drink

The rugged luxe theme continues in the dining outlets: Le Grill, serving fish, shellfish and zebu steak grilled on a fire of coconut husks, barefoot on the beach; Le Nid, a bird's nest of woven wood atop a tower, serving sushi and crudos; and the main restaurant, La Plage, whose dishes have been conjured by Alexandre Sarrion, inspired by Argentinian-European cuisine. All delicious, whether it's zebu tartare, chargrilled lobster tail with avocado, jalapeno and mango, or giant trevally with Malagasy XO sauce, thanks to fresh and local ingredients – including Malagasy caviar – with fruit and vegetables from the hotel's garden. For romantics, tête-à-tête dinners can be set up around a fire pit. Meanwhile, at his eponymous beach bar, Franco serves up the best, freshly-made Piña Coladas on the planet, in my opinion.

Breakfasts – be they of crushed avocado, poached eggs, parmesan and rocket or coconut pancakes with mango, for the sweet-of-tooth – are fresh and delicious.

8_{/10} Value for Money

Double rooms from €995 (£833) in low season; and from €1,295 (£1,084) in high. Full board.

Access for guests with disabilities?

Not suitable.

Family-Friendly?

Soft sand and safe waters make this an ideal destination for families, and a kids' club, in a quiet corner of the resort, is due to be built by mid-2025, offering a range of both indoor and outdoor activities. Extra beds from €90 (£76).

[Ambatorao, 515, Madagascar.](#)
00 261 328 901 600
voaara.com

Rooms from

£833 per night