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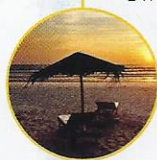
101 BEST  
HOTELS  
WINTER



## JOSE FONSECA'S Goa

### FIRST THING I DO

Drive to Yab Yum, right on Ashwem Beach - a beautiful little place where we have stayed for the past eight years.



### FAVOURITE SPOTS

La Plage restaurant, a five-minute walk down the beach, or Babu Huts for sundowners. My favorite outing is to Oliver and Kitten Musker's home on the river near Old Goa, for supper and music on the lawn; they organise small gatherings that cost about £35 a head.

### I CAN'T DO GOA WITHOUT...

A floaty kaftan by Malini Ramani.



### TOP TIP

There is a market in Mapusa every Friday where you can buy gorgeous fabrics.

### I'D RATHER NOT TELL YOU ABOUT...

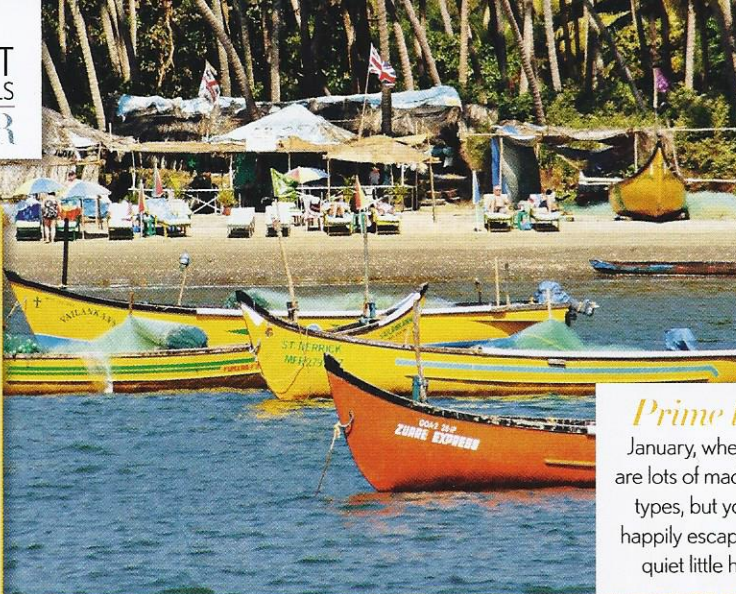
My favourite shop, Rangeela in Calangute, which sells cotton kaftans, belts and jewellery.

### FELLOW GUESTS

It is such a gathering of the English; we always bump into friends. One of the nicest places is Elsewhere, four small houses in north Goa - other fans include India Langton, Sophie Paget Steavenson, and Florence St George.

Jose Fonseca is the co-founder of Models 1

From top, Florence St George and India Langton



### Prime time

January, when there are lots of madly social types, but you can happily escape to this quiet little haven.



## Ahilya by the Sea GOA, INDIA

How do you improve on the perfect view? Build the perfect villa to enjoy it from, of course. North Goa's Coco Beach has long been blessed by the Trindade family's Indo-Balinese property, for years one of the state's most beautiful private homes. And now, thanks to a marriage between the Trinidades and the royal Holkars of Madhya Pradesh, it's been transformed into one of India's loveliest boutique hotels. Perched on a rocky, palm-fringed promontory, Ahilya by the Sea has eight antique-furnished rooms looking out on to charming Dolphin Bay. The luscious pool is shaded by an overhanging banyan tree and the whole place is sun-kissed and lush-gardened - an elegant celebration of location and homely lavishness. What joy: to take a sunrise dip as the fishermen haul their catch below; to end the day feasting on prawn curry in the candlelit night. **BOOK IT** Double, from £220, including breakfast (ahilyabythesea.com; 00 91 11 4155 1575).

## FALL FOR IT

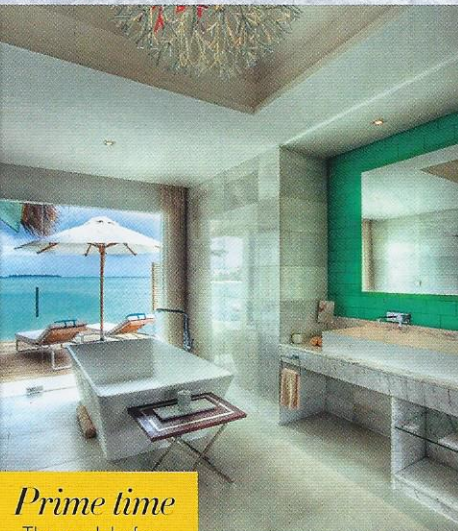
Like nature? Us too, which is why we heart this waterfall one-piece by Jessica Russell Flint, £215. [lilliputandfelix.com](http://lilliputandfelix.com)



## Niyama

HAA DHAALU ATOLL, MALDIVES

It's often said that you can't please all of the people all of the time, but Niyama has a bloody good go at it. Just to give you an idea, the seaplane from Male to the Dhaalu Atoll has both honeymooners and harassed parents (with kids in tow) on board. Upon arrival, the honeymooners are whisked off to Chill, Niyama's original island, while the parents are ferried to Play, the new addition complete with a sensational Scott Dunn kids' club (including a mini waterpark, a cinema and dolphin-watching trips). Families can hunker down in beach villas with huge terraces, and the babysitting service means parents can flee to Chill for some R 'n' R (or, if they're feeling up to it, to the underwater nightclub). There are seven restaurants to choose from - including the recently opened Nest, which is up in the trees - and the minibars are huge fridges with complimentary ice cream. For the ultimate bucket-and-spade experience, Niyama has it nailed. **BOOK IT** Susie Freeman Travel (susiefreemantravel.com; 01488 668821) offers seven nights from £1,530, including breakfast, flights and transfers.



### Prime time

The week before February half-term: hot, quiet and - shhh - cheaper.



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