

LITTLE FLU FFY CLOUDS

A CRAZY JUMBLE OF ISLANDS IN THE WORLD'S BIGGEST OCEAN, THE SOUTH BUILD THUNDERBIRDS HIDEAWAYS. FROM FIJI'S CORAL FORESTS TO THE

PACIFIC IS WHERE PRINCE PHILIP IS IDOLISED AS A GOD AND BILLIONAIRES VOLCANOES OF TAHITI, HERE ARE THE CLEVEREST SHORES TO WASH UP ON



THE ST REGIS RESORT BORA BORA, FRENCH POLYNESIA

FOR SECLUSION AND TOP-NOTCH SERVICE

In and out. In and out. At the St Regis, there is room to breathe. Spread over 17 hectares on a private *motu* off Bora Bora, the resort never feels crowded, even when it's booked solid, which it is for much of May to October. The roomier overwater bungalows are the envy of other Bora Bora hotels (several have private pools, which are not as common as you'd expect in these parts) and even the Miri Miri Spa by Clarins is marooned on its own island. In typical St Regis style, each room has a butler to take care of any whims (from opening blinds and pouring coffee in the morning to serving cocktails and canapés on the deck in the evenings). Lay by the Oasis Pool calling for Bora Marys (like their Bloody counterparts, but with a fresh twist of watermelon juice) from the in-cabana phone, snorkel in the lagoon and eat at each of the four restaurants, including Bora Bora's only sushi bar. But for a standout supper, go to Lagoon by Jean-George Vongerichten, which has dishes such as rice-cracker-crusting tuna and one of the best wine lists in the South Pacific. **NUMBER OF VILLAS** 77 overwater, 14 beach. **GETTING HERE** A 50-minute flight from Papeete then a 20-minute boat transfer. **BOOK IT** Carrier (www.carrier.co.uk) offers seven nights B&B in an overwater villa from £4,490 per person, including Air New Zealand flights from London and private boat transfers



TIKEHAU PEARL BEACH RESORT, FRENCH POLYNESIA

FOR SCUBA-DIVING BEACH BUMS

They come to the far-flung atoll of Tikehau for the eco-glory of it all: rare pink-sand beaches, pure azure waters and a scuba-diving jackpot in the middle of what Jacques Cousteau described as one of the highest concentrations of fish on the planet. If you thought Tahiti was remote, the Tuamotus, 78 coral islets spread over an area the size of Western Europe in French Polynesia's far north-east, is *really* remote. Here the raw redux of the woven nikau, teak and coconut sanctuary somehow feels more authentic, and although not the most glossy of this mini-chain of Pearls (other bigger, swishier sibling hotels are found on Moorea and Bora Bora), it has a castaway charm of its own. And the fish! Stern-looking reef sharks. Gently gliding manta rays. Stripy mohawked lionfish. Darting shoals in every colour. The Technicolor glory of it all. Back on the surface, join Bachou Raufau, a mischievous soul who speaks an impressive number of languages, in his boat and whizz past an abandoned pearl farm on stilts to Bird Island, jumping off at this not-even-a-spot-on-the-map *motu* for a Polynesian picnic with the red-footed booby and brown noddy birds. Or meander on bikes to Tuherahera village before a Monoï Maha Rima, Tahitian for a four-hands massage in the ancient Taurumi tradition. **NUMBER OF VILLAS** 24 overwater, 13 beach. **GETTING HERE** A 55-minute flight from Papeete then a 15-minute boat transfer. **BOOK IT** Scott Dunn (www.scottdunn.com) offers seven nights half-board in a beach bungalow from £3,025 per person, including flights from London and transfers