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ON THE HORIZON

Its rich wildlife, beautiful coastline and relaxing atmosphere make Noosa a dream destination

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just for couples

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British actor recalls
his top set locations





BAHAMA HOUSE

Harbour Island, The Bahamas

LOCATION: Harbour Island has long been a mecca for fashionistas seeking sunshine – and the opportunity to climb the social ladder – and this new A-list retreat couldn't be better placed. Located in town, just 100 metres from the jetty at Government Dock, you can be off the boat and into a kaftan in minutes. The only downside is Bahama House doesn't have direct beach access.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS: The entrance to Bahama House is very discreet; a white-washed door tucked down a side-street. As soon as you step into the courtyard – a riot of palms and pink bloom – and you catch a glimpse of the property's saltwater pool you know you're in for a treat.

THE FACTS: Originally built in the 1900s by a boating family, the property has recently been revamped by luxury adventure travel company Eleven Experience (which also offers experiences in Iceland and the US). The property's 11 rooms are spread across three houses, ideal for large groups or families seeking luxury and privacy in equal measure. A team of cooks, barmen, housekeepers and managers are on site keeping every leaf and cushion in place.



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Activities are arranged on an hour-to-hour basis depending on what you feel like doing: bone-fishing, picnicking, shopping or simply reclining on a cane chair by the pool. Want a massage? No problem. They'll have 'Brilander' (native to the island) Claudine there within the hour.

A GOOD BASE FOR: Foodies, Bahama House is a stone's throw from the island's best restaurants and bars. It's also great for shopping with India Hicks' legendary boutique Sugar Mill just down the road.

Getting to Pink Sands beach (one of the best beaches in the world) is easy too – just five minutes away by golf buggy.

WOW: So many wows. Where to start? First, the interior design. Bahama House has gone for it with a wildly elegant scheme: parrots, pineapples, starfish and coral colours all artfully combined to glamorous effect. The bedrooms are pretty as a peach featuring canopied beds, rattan rugs and plantation-style shutters. Some look out across the clapboard

rooftops of Harbour Island and others have views of the property's palm-filled gardens. Second wow: the food. Chef Niki cooks deliciously naughty Bahamian fare – everything is cooked from scratch and served al fresco on the terrace or in a candlelit dining room. Menus are written on a chalkboard: 'blackened red snapper with confetti jasmine rice' or 'Bahamian five-spice Cornish hen with island slaw'. The coconut French toast for breakfast is a must. Third wow: just how utterly non-hotel-like the place is. This is proper next-level luxury – for travellers who want to be islanders. It's a place to call home.

BOOK IT: Standard double rooms start from \$440 including breakfast. British Airways flies from London to Nassau from £706 and Southern Air flies from Nassau to North Eleuthera (the closest airport) from £75.

ELEVENEXPERIENCE.COM

Leo Bear