



Inspiring ideas for 2024

EMBRACE ISLAND TIME

2 TRAVEL: Cap Karoso

18. Going the distance *Indonesia*

On a remote Indonesian island,
a new beach resort and farm is
creating a sustainable community.

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French chef Antoine Levacon crouches and plucks a sprig from a bright-green shrub in the undergrowth and passes it to MONOCLE. It's fragrant yet unfamiliar: a scent that's somewhere between basil and lemongrass. "Kemangi," says Levacon. "It's amazing. Now we have it everywhere on the farm."

Levacon gestures to another patch and a crop of small watermelons resting on the warm, dark earth. Checking on these crops is part of the daily routine of the executive chef of Cap Karoso, a hotel and resort on the island of Sumba, eastern Indonesia. The soil here is fertile and everything from papaya to edamame and even an olive tree grows on this substantial plot of land, which supplies half of the restaurant's food.

Entrepreneurs Fabrice and Evguenia Ivvara came to Sumba on holiday in 2017 and were so taken by the island that they decided to make




good on their long-held dream of opening their own resort. “We had always said, ‘After we retire, we’ll build a hotel,’” says Evguenia as we walk along the sand beside Cap Karoso. “When we came here we fell in love and felt that it had a lot of potential. The island was at the tipping point of becoming known.”

The hotel sits on the western tip of Sumba, with striking views of the Indian Ocean. The water seems to stretch out endlessly; to the west, the closest land is Africa’s distant eastern coast. This sense of remoteness is calming. Getting here requires taking a propeller plane from Bali, then hopping into a car for a drive past cornfields, water buffalo and cliff-fringed beaches.

The property’s entrance is understated. It’s only after you’re greeted at the check-in and turn a corner that the full picture comes into view, including an infinity pool, a bar overlooking a white-sand beach and the vast ocean. “We worked on creating this little unexpected moment,” says Evguenia with glee.

There are 44 rooms and 20 villas, all with private pools. Bali-based GFAB Architects gave the resort a terraced layout in a nod to rice paddies, making it fit in well with the landscape. The warm-toned interiors are trimmed with wooden furniture made by Indonesian craftspeople and almost everything in the rooms is bespoke, including the teacups from Bali’s Gaya Ceramic and the French cushion fabric. The owners picked the novels and nonfiction books on the shelves.

“Every night, people stay up late, drinking and talking, then they meet the next morning at breakfast,” says Evguenia. “Friendships and interesting discussions arise. Our guests connect and exchange ideas. We want to have a community here.” —  [capkaroso.com](https://www.capkaroso.com)

Monocle comment: Take some time off. It’s important to decompress at least once a year. And if you can do nothing somewhere spectacular, then do – your health and your work will benefit.



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