

# These Island Getaways Have Some of the Best-Kept Secrets in Food and Wine. And It Could All Be Thanks to the Soil

These islands are some of the best-kept secrets in the food and wine world—and they're poised to become mainstream options.

By Billy Lyons

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Island hopping isn't new, but if long walks on the beach are losing their luster, it's time to consider a vacation centered on soil. According to [Booking.com's](#) travel trends for 2020, the exploration of lesser known destinations will be a major focus for global explorers. The travel company's research found that 54% of global travelers were interested in reducing over-tourism, while 51% would change their original destination to a similar alternative if they knew it would help leave less of an environmental impact.

With eco-conscious travelers seeking out authentic, under-the-radar experiences, some of the best-kept secrets in the food and wine world are poised to become mainstream options.

## A real temptation island

Though grapes have been known to grow in places from Manhattan rooftops to the frozen tundra of Antarctica, there are certain islands where you'll find a more cohesive wine growing culture. "Rocky, well-draining, dynamic soils like those found in islands makes the grapes undergo a bit of a struggle, making them more interesting to taste," explains Brooke Mathias, wine director of the online wine club [Winc](#).

Different soils will produce different tastes, however, so booking a trip based on whether you drink red or white might be pragmatic.

For islands like Sicily, earthy and fruit-forward red wines are the way to go. "Volcanic soil reflects heat and enables good drainage, allowing the grapes to reach good levels of ripeness, even in cooler years," explains Mathias.

New Zealand, where Winc makes its Outer Sounds Sauvignon Blanc, provides a different atmosphere that's ideal for fans of acidity. "The grapes are grown on alluvial soil, [allowing] for good drainage in wet weather during the growing season and [retaining] water well in dry weather. Balancing the amount of moisture in the soil is a key component to making high quality, complex wines," notes Mathias. The Azores and Georgia's Golden Islands are a few other destinations Mathias recommends for consumers interested in checking out island-made varietals.



Dining alfresco at the Summer Kitchen at the Corinthia Palace Hotel and Spa in Malta.  
CORINTHIA GROUP

## Inland is where it's at

Matt Landau, a vacation rental expert and founder of [VRMB.com](https://www.vrmb.com), has noticed that several island destinations are focusing memorable experiences that aren't centered around beach life. "In many classic vacation rental beach destinations, these interior experiences are emerging as the new luxury," says Landau. "These restaurants, wineries, and tour providers are working harder to share their craft, which inevitably leads to more personal and intimate experiences for guests."

Not to be left out, hotels are taking notice as well. At the [Corinthia Palace Hotel and Spa](#) in Malta, executive chef Stefan Hogan makes it a point to use local Maltese ingredients and specialties like *ftira* bread on his menu. "There is definitely a shift in attitude to mass tourism and a drive to create a quality experience," Hogan says. "More importantly, there is a perceptible drive to offer an experience that considers what impact a holiday has on the limited resources that are a reality of island life."

The tastes of today's travelers are becoming increasingly focused on reality versus escapism. During an escape from the kitchen, Hogan was able to join a local tour where he had the chance to connect with producers over a meal.

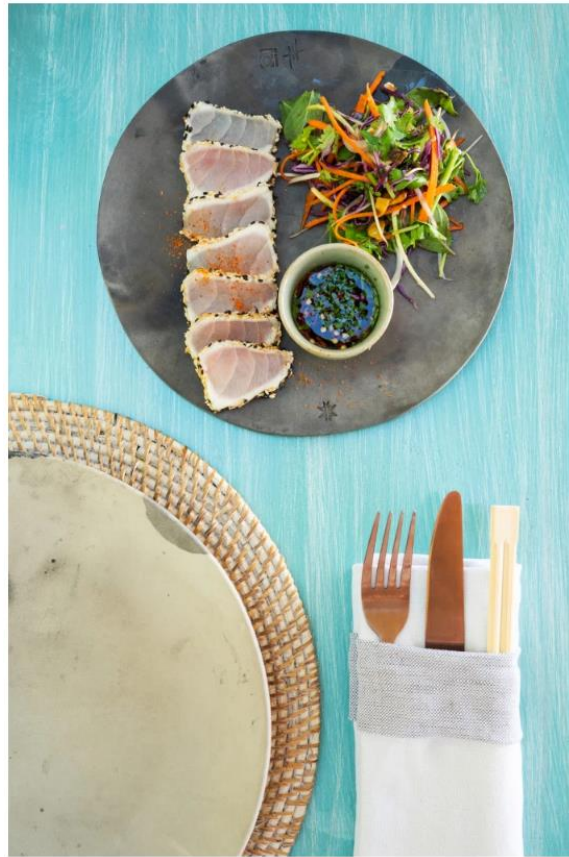


Wine barrels on Stari Grad plain, a UNESCO World Heritage Site on Hvar island, Croatia.  
GETTY IMAGES

"What was memorable is that a simple lunch offered an honest representation of a movement of young farmers that recognize that their story is worth telling," Hogan says. Travelers agree: 71% of those polled by [Booking.com](https://www.booking.com) indicated eating locally sourced produce when on vacation was important to them.

## Paradise, reinvented

Despite logistical challenges, islands producing quality food and drink isn't a new concept. Hvar, located off the coast of Croatia, is home to the Unesco-protected Stari Grad plain, the world's oldest continuously planted vineyard.



Sashimi served at Walker d'Plank restaurant at Kokomo Private Island Resort Fiji.  
KOKOMO PRIVATE ISLAND FIJI

But with 54% of Booking.com participants indicating they wanted one long trip where activities were all near one another, destinations around the world are rethinking their offerings in order to embrace travel trends. In the Pacific Ocean, [Kokomo Private Island Fiji](#) is reevaluating the secluded resort experience by offering guests produce from its own farm and hydroponics garden. Kokomo also partners with sustainable seafood company [Dock to Dish](#) for its seafood offerings.

"We're an island off an island, and that's the exciting part for me. It's where we get to redefine what we can actually do here," says Kokomo's executive chef Cory Campbell, a veteran of Copenhagen's [Noma](#). After all, life may be a beach when you're on an island, but that doesn't mean you can't explore what else is out there.

Link : <https://fortune.com/longform/new-island-vacations-food-wine-soil-environmental-impact-of-travel/>