

Hideaway Report[®]

JANUARY 2019

SINCE 1979

Traveling the world in search of truly enchanting places

View from our plunge pool at
Nihl Sumba, Sumba Island, Indonesia,
our 2019 Hideaway of the Year

EDITORS' CHOICE AWARDS 2019

In 2018, Hideaway Report editors flew more than 190,000 miles, visited 27 countries and stayed in 112 hotels, of which 58 were recommended. The highlights of the year are reflected in this special Editors' Choice issue.

Each January, we have the pleasure of recalling our travel experiences over the previous 12 months and drawing attention to a number of particularly memorable hotels and resorts. To be considered for our annual Editors' Choice Awards, properties

must be relatively small in size, possess strong personalities and demonstrate a consistent devotion to personal service. Once, sophisticated hideaways existed chiefly in North America and Western Europe. But today superior levels of comfort, stylish design, polished service and refined cuisine can be found on every continent. In 2019, we will continue our enviable task of circling the globe in order to seek out the very best that the world of travel has to offer.

Hideaway Report editors travel anonymously and pay full rate for all lodging, meals and related expenses.

Since the launch of the Hideaway Report in 1979, featured hotels and restaurants have been selected on a completely independent basis.

For comments and inquiries, please email membersuccess@hideawayreport.com.

HIDEAWAY OF THE YEAR

NIHI SUMBA

Sumba Island, Indonesia



THE ISLAND OF SUMBA lies 250 miles east of Bali and for centuries it was practically unknown. In the late 1980s, surf enthusiast Claude Graves discovered a wave on its southwestern coast, a 300-yard-long curl of turquoise water that is now regarded by the cognoscenti as one of the best left-hand breaks in the world. Graves built a shack, which turned into a bohemian surfing resort. This subsequently found favor with wealthy people drawn to a refuge close to the end of the world. One such guest was the New York-based investor J. Christopher Burch. In 2012, he purchased the 550-acre property. Since then, Burch has invested a reported \$30 million to build 27 villas with 38 rooms, all with private pools. Other innovations have included a spa complex and an equestrian center.

Nihi Sumba is connected by a network of paths and steps, laid out beneath a canopy of spreading trees with buttress roots and dangling creepers. Our duplex villa was accessible through

a traditional gateway that opened into a private garden with a jade-green plunge pool. A teak deck led into a glass-sided lounge. Upstairs, we found an air-conditioned bedroom that opened onto a wide balcony with a freestanding brass tub and an astounding view along a mile and a half of tide-swept sand, edged by aquamarine sea and backed by forested hills.

Although there are few places that are more perfectly suited to complete indolence, Nihi Sumba provides an exhaustive list of activities, a significant proportion of which involve horses or surfboards. Other diversions include yoga and meditation, paddleboarding, jungle hikes to waterfalls and lagoons, and deep-sea sportfishing. The place will not appeal to everyone. It is hard to get to. And in general, it is best suited to people who are fit and active. But there is nowhere else quite like it. If ever a \$2,000-a-night resort could be accurately described as “cool,” then this is it.

ROOM: READ MCKENDREE
AERIAL: TÂNIA ARAÚJO
PHOTOS BY: HIDEAWAY REPORT EDITOR