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## OPEN-DOOR POLICY

The interiors feature woven shades and contemporary furnishings. For a similar look, try Brown Jordan's Fusion collection and the Kudlik pendant by Axo Light. Opposite: A private bridge leads to this quintessential island getaway.



# ISLAND OASIS

*Just off the coast of Mauritius stands  
a secluded sanctuary completely  
open to the elements and solid as a rock*

BY KERRY N FISCHER PHOTOGRAPHS BY RUSSELL SMITH





**S**tretching out across the Indian Ocean from the northeast coast of Mauritius, a narrow, paved bridge beckons the eye toward a remote, sun-soaked island where clusters of tall pines and palm trees envelop an idyllic wood-and-stone bungalow. The tropical oasis is home to Tatiana Schaub, a real estate investor from Paris who renovated the structure with organic materials, contemporary furnishings, and open walls that seem to blur the line between what's indoors and out. "I can stay here for an entire week without crossing back over the bridge once," she says.

Originally built as a *garçonnière*, or bachelor's residence, Tatiana's home—dubbed L'ilot—has been in her family for more than 30 years. It first belonged to her uncle, who would often invite Tatiana over from Mauritius to spend holidays with his eight children. "He would sing opera while the kids caught crabs and *bigorneaux* [periwinkles] on the rocks to use in fish soup," she recalls. Back then, beach houses

## WILD BLUE YONDER

L'ilot owner Tatiana Schaub (below) made sure the sprawling seas were visible, and accessible, from all sides of the island. Below, left: For similar chaises, try Giati's Tessuto lounge.



did not come with the creature comforts they have today. "L'ilot was a very simple place—its claim to fame being a noisy generator!"

Born on Mauritius to a French mother and a Russian architect father who designed many of the island's first hotels, Tatiana has a more than passing interest in architecture and design. As an adult, she absorbed art and design in the trend-setting city of Paris, but memories of the tropical island kept calling her back. "I went to school in Paris and built my career in real estate investment there, but I came back to Mauritius as often as I could," she says. "It's always been the serene antidote to my fast-paced life in France."

Tatiana's dream of regularly commuting between the two became a reality when the opportunity arose to buy her uncle's house from her cousin. "My overriding desire was to create a beach house with a firm connection to its surroundings," she says. Due to wear and tear from storms and age, the entire home had to be rebuilt from scratch. Tatiana





**ORGANIC EATS**  
Modern Philippe Starck chairs pull up to a linen-topped table in the dining room. A bright red vase provides a pop of color against the neutral tones of bamboo, concrete, and wood.



## NEUTRAL TERRITORY

Pale blue curtains complement the earthy tones of the bedroom's palette. Re-create the look with two-tone Hampton curtains from Horchow and walls in Pratt & Lambert's Muffin Tan and Anamite.



## RENT THE ISLAND!

The villa and private island of L'ilot are available for vacation rentals year-round. For more information and to reserve your stay, visit [lilot.biz](http://lilot.biz) or e-mail [info@lilot.biz](mailto:info@lilot.biz).



entrusted local architect Edouard Koenig and Paris-based architect Gabriel Guenoun with the task, opting for a structurally sound design that would honor the island's natural environment. "I loved the simplicity of L'ilot," she says, "so I wasn't after a sophisticated look as much as I was a mix of good-quality natural and rough materials that would age well in a subtropical climate prone to hurricanes."

When it came to finishes, flow, and requirements of the new space, Tatiana looked to the surrounding landscape for inspiration. "I love the way natural materials change over time, so instead of plastic or aluminium, I opted for wood for the door and window frames," she says. Inside, she chose simple white concrete floors throughout, imbuing a sense of modern industrial style that juxtaposes well with the rustic feel of the dark, wood-beamed ceilings and bamboo-clad curtains. The living space extends to the outdoors via walls that fully retract, inviting guests out to lounge on seaside wood-planked decks or sandy beaches.

The home's decor marries imported designs with local craftsmanship to reflect the casual yet modern aesthetic of its structure. Tatiana



### WATER WORLD

The aqua-tinted waters surrounding L'ilot influence the aura of the interiors, including the light-filled bath (above).

For a similar look, try the Vox vessel sink from Kohler.

worked with local decorator Amélie Montocchio, who designed many of the furniture pieces in the house and sourced the rest from iconic modern brands such as Philippe Starck and Driade. "She understood my love of natural colors and understated style," says Tatiana. Sleek furnishings in warm, earthy brown, beige, and white fill the open plan of the interiors, mirroring the palette of their surroundings. Subtle pops of red in several rooms provide a unifying theme.

Throughout the house, Tatiana blended childhood memories (old family photographs) and her love of the natural world (stones, wood, and shells picked up on her travels) with a sharp style that complements, rather than detracts from, the beauty lying beyond L'ilot's doorstep. "Whenever I walk in," Tatiana says, "I feel the magic of my childhood together with a deep sense of contentment that comes from living in harmony with the outdoors." 🌿