

CASTAWAY COMFORTS

Islands are places where poets go to dream, artists to be inspired and the rest of us to play. Jo Foley picks out the offshore havens that are anything but taxing

VENICE

Venice has provided holidays for the head, for culture and art lovers alongside historians and sybarites. This year it has also seen two spas spring up, making it a desirable destination for bodies too.

On Isola delle Rose, a sixteen-acre garden isle just a twenty-minute shuttle from St Mark's Square, the **JW Marriott Venice Resort and Spa** opened in early summer. A former clinic, it specialised in respiratory disorders aided by the gentle microclimate of the island, which is situated halfway between the lagoon and the sea (hence the air was deemed beneficial for bronchial and other sufferers). Although it closed during the war, its gardens, olive groves and orchards continued to flourish.

All the original buildings, including the Romanesque Revival church, have been renovated by architect Matteo Thun to provide accommodation, restaurants, a cooking school, a wine academy and the GOCO spa, the largest in

Venice. Exhausted from sightseeing, the weary can be catered for with a selection of therapies, treatments, massages and rituals. On offer are a hammam, eight treatment rooms, an indoor/outdoor aquatonic pool, a health club, gym and spa café. And don't miss the rooftop swimming pool for some of the best views of La Serenissima — enough to calm even the most fevered brow.

jwmarriott.com

