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# Top 10 Romantic Hideaways

Caipirinhas & log cabins

By [Ethan Gelber](#)

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## Ilha Grande, Brazil

Two hours south of Rio de Janeiro's blistering bluster, you enter a softer world. Just off the Green Coast, tranquil, tropical, blissfully vehicle-free Ilha Grande ("Big Island") is a crag-spined nature preserve of pristine protected rainforest, secluded lagoons, waterfalls, salt marshes, mangroves . . . and 106 beaches. The 90-minute ferry trip from the



The arrival bay at Abraão, surrounded by the island's steep, verdant slopes. (Ethan Gelber)

mainland's Angra dos Reis or Mangaratiba to Abraão—Ilha Grande's commercial hub, with fewer than 500 inhabitants—is a glide halfway into lovers' castaway fantasies. To slip fully into oblivion, hike from Abraão or boat directly to the more remote communities of Araçatiba, Sítio Forte, Bananal, Saco do Céu, Vermelha, or Itaguaçu. All have an assortment of relaxed *pousadas* (guest houses). Days are easy: In a two-seater kayak or by foot along any of the 16 signed trails, head off with snorkels and masks in hand, weighing anchor at your pick of any number of private sandy inlets. For the less sedentary, scuba dive the shoals of the nearby smaller islands, or scale the 3,221-foot heights of Pico do Papagaio ("Parrot's Peak"). Then, as the rhythm of day recedes, unwind with nothing but a chill *caipirinha* and one another to twist your screws.

## Prescott, Arizona

Known locally as "Everyone's Hometown," Prescott, Arizona, is tucked into the mountains northwest of Phoenix. Once a territorial capital, it retains a curiously suave, preserved Victorian-Midwestern feel melded with that straightforward take-it-as-it-comes quality of the Southwest.

Where better to slip into anonymity and minister to a little private holiday decadence? It is, however, Prescott's proximity to the natural and recreational resources of Prescott National Forest that makes it the perfect launch pad for a seductive escape. If a rousing selection of local B&Bs doesn't suit, why not try the 15-year-old Forest Service "[Rooms With a View](#)" program? The hikes to and from (and

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time spent in) these remote perches are sure to get your pulses racing, as will some of the area's famous rock climbing and bouldering sites, particularly those in the Granite Mountain Wilderness.

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Ethan Gelber, a freelance travel writer based in New York City, most appreciates the world from the saddle of his bicycle.

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