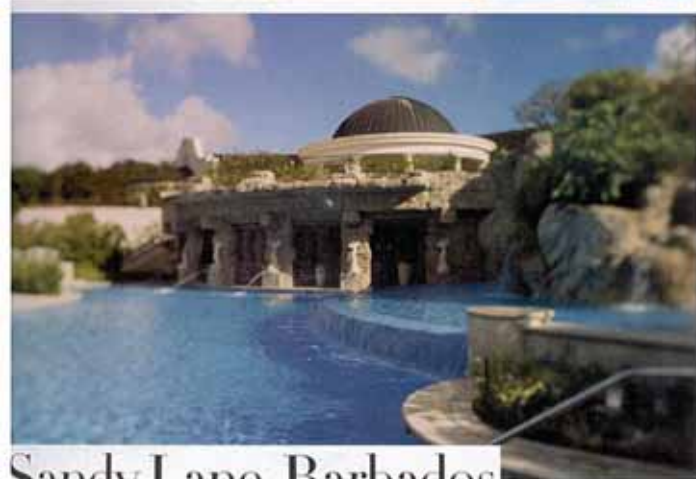


the Maldives, with two islands connected by a 500-metre bridge, so there's no shortage of facilities and activities to keep you busy and seemingly endless amounts of soft white sand. Not only are there seven restaurants (including fine teppanyaki beach-side dining at the Koko Grill), two spas and a first-class watersports centre, but you also don't have to go far to see what the Maldives is all about - the Conrad's house reef is a magical underwater world of iridescent movement and colour.

**WOW FACTOR** The Ithaa Undersea restaurant - spotted eagle stingrays glide by as you eat.

**FLIGHT TIME** From 10 hours via Malé.

**GC** Kuoni (01306 747008; kuoni.co.uk) offers seven nights B&B in a Deluxe Beach Villa from £2,779 per person, including flights and seaplane transfers.



## Sandy Lane, Barbados

There are few places on earth that so fully encapsulate the idea of island opulence as Sandy Lane in St James. Since the 1970s, it's been a favourite with A-listers - from Joan Collins to Beyoncé. A recent multi-million-pound revamp included the refitting of the spa, the introduction of hi-tech features such as speakers on room balconies and a new colour scheme - everything from the toiletries to the towels are now embellished with the pink and white SL monogram. The hotel is more popular than ever. With its impeccable service and beautiful scenery (including a perfect

stretch of white-sand beach), you'll be hard pressed to find a more romantic setting. Just five days here will leave you feeling like a truly spoilt A-lister yourself.

**WOW FACTOR** The dazzling selection of fruit and pastries at the out-of-this-world breakfasts.

**FLIGHT TIME** Eight hours 45 minutes.

**GC** Sandy Lane ([sandylane.com](http://sandylane.com)) offers a Honeymoon in Paradise package for five nights B&B in a Luxury Ocean Room from £4,531 per person, including a Bentley transfer, candlelit dinner, spa experience and catamaran cruise. British Airways (0844 493 0787; [ba.com](http://ba.com)) flies from £499 return.

## The Sarojin, Phuket, Thailand

Manicured lawns and calm pools surround a huge, ancient ficus tree. Sunloungers and draped pavilions frame a 25-square-metre infinity pool. The only sounds are birds twittering and the soft trickle of the lily ponds. Peace pervades. The Sarojin, set in 10 acres of gardens, with a palm-fringed, seven-mile-long white-sand beach on the Andaman Sea. The luxurious 56 residences have double baths and some have plunge pools. The food is top notch - fine dining at Ficus restaurant, or Thai fare at beachfront eatery The Edge. But what really sets The Sarojin apart is its tailored, once-in-a-lifetime experiences: elephant trekking; mangrove canoeing; or a Thai cookery class under a waterfall. On the days when these activities seem too much effort, you can lounge by the pool, hit the Pathways spa and then rock up for dinner on the beach under a starlit sky.

**WOW FACTOR** Call on the 'imagineer' concierge to plan your dream excursion.

**FLIGHT TIME** From 13 hours 15 minutes via Bangkok.

**GC** Trailfinders (0845 050 587; [trailfinders.com](http://trailfinders.com)) offers a nine-night trip to Thailand, with two nights at Shangri-La Hotel Bangkok and seven nights at The Sarojin, from £1,989 per person, including Thai Airways flights, transfers and a Thai Dinner Experience for two.

