

Off Panama's Caribbean Coast, a New Stay Perched Above the Treetops

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A Curvaceous Treehouse Off the Coast of Panama



Left: At Nayara Bocas del Toro resort, located on an island off Panama's Caribbean coast, guests can choose between staying in a treehouse or an overwater villa. Right: An egg-shaped door leads into the treehouse's enclosed bedroom. Courtesy of Nayara Resorts

By Ella Riley-Adams

The first glimpse you get of the Nayara Bocas del Toro resort, approaching by boat (the only way to approach), is a line of thatched-roof villas perched over the water and backed by mangroves. There are 16 villas in all, occupying a private island off the Caribbean coast of Panama. Some have plunge pools, but snorkel sites abound right off the shore, where you're likely to spot squads of iridescent squid, platter-size stingrays and bright yellow damselfish. Though the luxury eco-resort opened in 2021, it relaunched as a Nayara Resorts property in 2022 and, as of this January, guests craving even more privacy can choose to stay in a newly built treehouse nestled amid greenery. Designed by Elora Hardy, the creative director of the Bali-based architecture firm [Ibuku](#), the treehouses, which sleep two, are largely built from wood excavated from the Panama Canal. (Forests were flooded as part of the canal's construction.) "When you submerge wood in water for that long, it gets stronger, and it weathers in beautiful ways," Hardy says. A spiral staircase leads up to an enclosed bedroom that's entered through an egg-shaped door. The upper level is open so that guests can listen to the full symphony of the island, including birdsong, crickets and rain pelting the domed bamboo roof. Equally relaxing, says Hardy, is sleeping in a room with abundant curves, which the designer says mimic nature and our own bodies far more than right angles do. *From \$1,140, all inclusive, [bocasbali.com](#).*