

VOGUE

APR

MICHELLE OBAMA

HOW THE FIRST LADY AND THE PRESIDENT ARE INSPIRING AMERICA

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PEOPLE ARE TALKING ABOUT

TRAVEL

MYTHIC PARADISE

PRIVACY AND CHARM COME TOGETHER
IN A HILLTOP VILLA IN CORFU.

PERFECT PERCH
A VIEW OF THE
IONIAN SEA FROM
THE VILLA IRITI.

Foster-trained architect Dominic Skinner. Ceramics from Vietnam and Cambodia, Moroccan lanterns, and Mexican furniture fill the rooms, while the soft wall colors—off-white and greige with a hint of green—were mixed by the artist-owner herself. Besides enjoying spectacular views from the French windows and charming terraces, couples can loll by the private pool, hike and bike in the surrounding hills, or drive fifteen minutes down to Corfu's best beaches, such as Agni, home to some of the area's top tavernas. Just be sure to get back to the villa in time for your own private sunset. Rates at Villa Iriti start at \$2,330 a week, double, including maid service; sjvillas.co.uk; 011-44-20-7589-4390.

—RICHARD ALLEMAN

If the northwestern edge of Greece, Corfu has seduced everyone from Poseidon, who, so the story goes, named the island for the nymph Korkyra, to twentieth-century writers Lawrence and Gerald Durrell. Today its mountain-backed northeast coast is

home to royals, Rothschilds, and Russian oligarchs, whose hillside villas look out on the Ionian Sea. Newly available for rental is *Villa Iriti*, a dreamy little gem designed to accommodate two guests in chic seclusion. Having worked on such impressive properties as Clarence House, the official

residence of Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall, as well as the prince's country estate Highgrove, British specialist painter Gail Arnold took two years to update what was once a stone fisherman's cottage, bringing on board British garden designer Jennifer Gay and Norman

MUSIC THE RIGHT NOTE

"I'm basically a covers band," **Jessie Ware** deadpanned before slipping into a hypnotic rendition of "What You Won't Do for Love" for an intimate audience at the Box in New York this winter. Self-mocking quips, cheeky asides—if the British chanteuse's sensuous tenor someday fizzles, a second act in stand-up could be in the cards.

Luckily, the 28-year-old Brixtonite is just warming up, coming off a smash U.S. tour and two Brit Awards nods, and with a Mercury Prize-nominated debut, *Devotion*, dropping Stateside this month. "I'm still getting to know my audiences," Ware explains over a mid-flu season bowl of chicken soup. "I've had men vogueing in Washington, and I've gone platinum in Poland."

Connecting with others comes naturally to this middle child of a BBC-reporter father and a social-worker mother, whose stash of Cole Porter cassettes kept the young, show tune-loving Jessie absorbed. The same couldn't be said for her childhood classical-singing lessons ("They didn't really

suit me, because all I wanted to do was jazz standards"). After reading English at Sussex, Ware briefly went into journalism before getting a gig as a backup vocalist in London's dance-music underground. With an affinity for headstrong female soloists—Tin Pan Alley's scating divas; *Ed Sullivan*-era Streisand; late-disco Grace Jones—and a commanding range, she's invited comparison since striking out on her own to everyone from Sade to Adele. But, in pairing her ballads with the synth stylings of album coproducer Dave Okumu, Ware's clearly interested in creating a sound that's uniquely her own, from the velvety eighties throwback "Running" to the percussion-pounding paean to best friends, "Wildest Moments." It's a hard-soft tension that translates to Ware's shape-shifting silhouettes: body-conscious columns by night, amorphous Margiela by day. "It's evolved a bit," she says of her style, "but I always want to have my mother like what I'm wearing."

—JULIE BRAMOWITZ

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STRONG SUIT
THE BRITISH
SONGSTRESS IN
A CHLOÉ JACKET
AND A MAXFOWLES
TUXEDO SHIRT.