



Clockwise from left: on the beach at Búzios; beach bar at Insolito Boutique Hotel; the swimming pool at Casa Brancas; Santiago Bebianno (right) and Gustavo Rinkevich, owners of Rocka



d'Azur, with late-night dinners and DJ parties planned for this season. Praia Brava (00 55 22 2623 6159; www.rockafish.com.br)

AFTER DARK
Bar do Zé has a sea-and-be-seen

INSIDER GUIDE Búzios

For Christmas sunshine, pack your bikini and head to Brazil's most stylish beach peninsula. Restaurateur **Santiago Bebianno** serves his hottest tips for the season



WINTER SUN

CHECK IN

Overlooking the stunning Ferradura beach is the

Insolito Boutique Hotel, which has great art, a funky new beach club and beautiful pool. Praia da Ferradura (00 55 22 2623 2172; www.insolito.com.br). Doubles from 840 real (about £160)

CHILL OUT Just opened is the terrace at **Casas Brancas**, one of

the more established hotels and spas in town. The sensational view makes it a perfect spot for watching the sun set over the bay while bossa nova plays in the background. Alto do Humaitá 10 (00 55 22 2623 1458; www.casasbrancas.com.br). Doubles from US\$228

DRINK New on the scene is **Anexo Praia**, which has opened with sofas in the sand on Mangueiros Bay. And this season could be your last chance to experience the cachaça (serving the classic cachaça liquor) at **Solar do Peixe Vivo**, an atmospheric restaurant

next to a colonial pousada that has recently been sold. Anexo Praia, Avinguida José Bento Ribeiro Dantas, Praia de Mangueiros (00 55 22 2623 4988; www.anexopraia.com.br). Solar do Peixe Vivo, Orla Bardot 994, Praia da Armação (00 55 22 2623 1850; www.solarpeixe.com.br)

EAT All eyes have been on our latest creation, **Rocka**, a chic wooden beach hut on Brava beach. You can hang out watching surfers, while drinking mojitos and eating oysters fresh from the ocean. The vibe is somewhere between Ibiza and Côté

atmosphere especially on full-moon nights when you should book ahead for an alfresco table. Avinguida José Bento Ribeiro Dantas 382, Praia da Armação (00 55 22 2623 4986)

SHOP Shops line the main boardwalk; try **Bar do Zé** store for great Brazilian-cool clothes, and look out for the new beach line from Panama-based Totem, stocked in **Caravans Holiday** up the road. Bar do Zé, 382 Orla Bardot (00 55 22 2623 4986). Caravans Holiday, 440, Avinguida José Bento Ribeiro Dantas (00 55 22 2623 2754)

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE The best things to do are connected to the sea: diving, kayaking, kite surfing and sailing, or surfing, which is what I'll be doing whenever I'm not at work. For diving and snorkelling, head to **Casamar** on Rua das Pedras (00 55 22 2623 2441). Rasa Beach has a number of kite-surfing schools.

DON'T MISS

I always recommend a day trip to **Ilha Feia**, which has clear waters and a small beach you can call your own if you arrive early enough. The fishermen who gather on the Sant'Anna Church pier all have boats available to hire; the best is Zezinho with his boat *Amor de Verde*.

