



The 17m pool offers views across Kalamar Bay, with your holiday soundtrack streamed through Sonos speakers

Turkish delight: paradise found in search for the ultimate villa

With a private sea deck and water taxi, this Bond villain's lair is the best villa **Jeremy Lazell** has seen in the past 25 years

You have to kiss a lot of frogs to find your prince when reviewing villas for a living. There was a gîte in Provence that dripped with flies, a farmhouse in Tuscany that rumbled whenever a lorry went past and a house in Zakynthos where the maid's son kept throwing kittens into our pool.

Then, last month in southern Turkey, we found "the one". Perched on a lonely hillside outside Kalkan, the Boat House is a ludicrously lovely five-bedroom villa with an infinity pool overlooking Kalamar Bay and steps down to a private sea deck. It is a prince among frogs; a king among clowns — in short, it's the best villa I have seen in 25 years of writing reviews.

For starters there's that location. High enough on the hill to catch cooling sea breezes, the villa is 100 steps from the sea deck via a private path shaded by vines and heavy with the scent of mimosa. But you're too far from Kalkan to walk, you quibble? True, the 30-minute hike is about 29 minutes too long when summer temperatures hit the high 30Cs, but taxis only cost £3 a pop and take five minutes.

Not that you'll bother with taxis, because the Boat House has its own water taxi. Yes, you read that right — send a WhatsApp message to Fatih, the boatman, and minutes later you're cruising to dinner in Kalkan marina with the wind in your hair, a smug grin across your lips and sickening selfies plastered all over Insta — it feels like a Duran Duran video from 1982, and it's worth the villa's hefty price tag on its own.

If the water taxi is pure Simon Le Bon, the villa itself is a Bond villain's lair. Terraced over three floors, it has acres of sliding floor-to-ceiling glass, a downstairs cinema, Nintendo Wii and table tennis table, marble tiles and air conditioning throughout. The kitchen has an ice machine, a Nespresso coffee machine and frother, and almost psychotically sharp chopping knives.

Not that you'll spend any time indoors, because the outside spaces on each level are ridiculously plush. There are double

daybeds and hanging cushioned nest chairs for two, sofas under billowing sail shades and a dining table for ten.

Then there's the pool, 17m long and gazing out across Kalamar Bay from its infinity edge, with a dozen sunloungers and umbrellas and bougainvillea splashing vivid pinks and purples across the small leafy garden. Excellent wi-fi means you can stream music through the outdoor Sonos speakers — 14 hours a day of Kanye West wasn't the most relaxing holiday soundtrack, but the teens were happy.

Is there a downside? Well, the nearest shop is a ten-minute uphill schlep, which doesn't sound much until you tackle it in 38C heat with your flip-flops sticking to the tarmac. And the occasional power cut wasn't ideal. But I'm clutching at straws. This is a cracking place, managed by an excellent Suffolk-based agency whose owner, Martin Bligh, has a villa in Kalkan and whose Kalkan rep, Umut, was a charming, instantly responsive answer to our various needs.

So what did we do with our week? Well, not much, inevitably. Who needs beach clubs when you've got your own sea deck? While friends, also in Kalkan that week, went canyoning and kayaked from nearby Kas to the sunken ruins of Kekova, we read books by the pool and listened to yet more Kanye.

Of course we did hit Kalkan, haggling for "genuine fake" Gucci at the Thursday market, cuddling stray cats and dogs and dining on rooftops overlooking the sea (top tip: Mey & Meze). And we made it to the Roman ruins of Patara, sitting alone at sunset at the top of the 1st-century theatre while goats munched the grass below and ghosts whispered from the marshes. "Anyone fancy a boat trip?" I asked the teens at one point. "There isn't time," said the eldest, slapping on the factor 30 and gazing out to sea.

On our final evening we swam to Kulube beach club, a 30m breaststroke from our sea deck across a bath-warm turquoise cove. We sipped ice-cold Efes beer under an ancient pine and played cards as the sun sank over the bay. "Where you stay?" the owner, Hussein, asked. "Boat House," I said, nodding at the hill. "Ooh! Best villa in Kalkan," he said. "Best in the world," I replied. I was half-joking, but it's not far off the mark.

Jeremy Lazell was a guest of the Turquoise Collection (theturquoisecollection.com), which has one week at the Boat House from £7,500. Fly to Dalaman or Antalya from Glasgow or Edinburgh with Jet2, easyJet, Corendon or Tui



The Boat House has terraces on three floors