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Sommario/riassunto	From Charles Darwin's enlightening voyage to the Galapagos Islands to moat-encased prisons incarcerating the world's deadliest prisoners, islands have been sites of immense scientific, political, and creative importance. An inspiration for artists and writers, they can be lively centers of holiday revelry or remote, mysterious spots; places of escape or of exile and imprisonment. In this cultural and scientific history of these alluring, isolated territories, Stephen A. Royle describes the great variety of islands, their economies, and the animals, plants, and people who thrive on them.