

Condé Nast

# Traveller

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TWO ON MALLORCA



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JANUARY 2008 £3.60

OUR GUIDE TO THE BEST HOTELS IN THE WORLD  
**THE GOLD STANDARD**

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## Where to stay



Far left, in front of the hotel is a sculpture called *Fire and Water*. Left, a room in the main house

**The weekender** The Vineyard at Stockcross, Berkshire

## Starry, starry knight

**WHAT IS IT?** A cream-coloured, bow-fronted, 18th-century hunting lodge with modern extensions housing the spa, restaurant and additional bedrooms. Despite the noticeable lack of a garden, it offers a country-house hotel experience within striking distance of London, with a firm emphasis on the 'fusion of food and wine'.

**BEHIND THE SCENES** For owner Sir Peter Michael, a founder of Classic FM, The Vineyard is an opportunity to indulge his love of wine, food and art. Sir Peter bought the property (then operating as the Foley Lodge Hotel) in 1996 and reopened it in 1998 as a 'restaurant with rooms'. Its success prompted the addition of more bedrooms in 2004. The Vineyard, whose name refers to Sir Peter's winery in northern California, stocks more than 2,000 wines and showcases almost 1,000 original paintings,

sketches and sculptures from his private collection: pride of place is given to *Fire and Water*, a sculpture by William Pye, which greets guests on arrival. The main house is chintzy and comfortable, with lots of big armchairs and sofas to flop into; the newer areas are more contemporary in style.

**EAT** Executive chef John Campbell and head chef Peter Eaton create dishes in which ingredients are harmoniously combined without losing their individual flavours. The emphasis is on local ingredients (crayfish and watercress from the River Kennet; blackberries, sloes and mushrooms from the surrounding fields and hedgerows), with an inspired twist. A signature starter of salmon *mi-cuit*, marinated in vanilla, cooked at a low temperature and partnered, unusually, with foie gras, was superb. Turbot, served on pork belly and pickled white cabbage

with a zingy ginger-and-lemongrass foam, was paired by the sommelier with an Austrian wine, Schloss Gobelsburg Grüner Veltliner Renner; it was an inspired choice. Desserts were light in feel and long on flavour. A tiny mango sorbet topped with a tiny cucumber sorbet and surrounded by a cucumber-and-lime consommé was a fantastic finale. Awarded its second Michelin star this year, the restaurant is already deserving of a third.

**SLEEP** The 49 rooms vary from old-fashioned in the main house – four-poster beds, brocaded curtains, tasselled cushions, heavy wallpaper and rather dated green-marble bathrooms – to modern in the new wing's split-level Atrium Suites, with cooler colours and separate showers in the bathrooms (all have Molton Brown toiletries).

**WHO GOES THERE** Ozzy and Sharon Osbourne are regular guests. It is well placed for the racecourse at Newbury, and its proximity to London guarantees a steady flow of middle-aged, high-income gourmets.

**BEST THING** The food alone makes it worth a visit, but the spa is also outstanding, with its truffle and chocolate therapies and huge, circular pool.

**WORST THING** Even with the sculptures and art displays, the outside space is dominated by a car park, lending the hotel an unfortunate but inevitable 'motel' dimension. Some of the older bedrooms are a bit cramped.

**PRICE** Doubles from £125. The three-course à la carte dinner menu costs £68 per person; 10-course tasting menu £88 per person **MARY LUSSIANA**

**THE VINEYARD AT STOCKCROSS**, STOCKCROSS, NEWBURY, BERKSHIRE (01635 528770; WWW.THE-VINEYARD.CO.UK)

## SUITE TALK

**PERU** An 11-suite hotel, **Inkaterra**

**La Casona**, has just opened in a 16th-century mansion in the UNESCO World Heritage city of Cusco. Modern features such as plasma-screen TVs have been sensitively accommodated amid the historic frescos and fireplaces, and stays are claimed to be carbon-neutral. 0800 458 7506; www.inkaterra.com. Suites from £300

**INDIA** Four Seasons makes its first foray into India this month with the **Four Seasons Hotel Mumbai**. The

ultra-modern, 33-storey glass building has the city's largest Presidential Suite and is just a five-minute walk from the shopping malls of Phoenix Mills and Atria. 00 800 6488 6488; www.fourseasons.com/mumbai. Doubles from £247.50

**THAILAND** **Alila Cha-Am**, right, is among the first luxury resorts to open in Cha-Am, on the coast not far from Hua Hin. Thai architect Duangrit Bunnag designed the 79 understated rooms, which have



rain showers, hammocks and home-cinema systems. There's also a spa, two restaurants and a bar

destined to attract the hip crowd. 00 66 32 473193; www.alilahotels.com/chaam. Doubles from US\$188

**VERBIER** **Chalet L Raphael Verbiere**, a new mansion with nine double rooms and a spa, is now available to rent. A private chef, beauty and health assessments, ski passes and airport transfers are included. Guests also have exclusive use of a pool, vodka bar, cigar club and hair salon. 00 41 227 322828; www.l-raphael.com. From £90,000 per week **EMILY MATHIESON**