

# Travel

Travel Home | Features

## Wanderlust: Hotel opening hopscotch

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The Temple House, Chengdu

Rare is the week that passes without someone offering to join me on the road, sometimes even begging to carry my bags or 'take notes for you'. I appreciate the allure of my lifestyle, naturally, but I have a rolling Tumi suitcase and I scribble just fine, thanks.

Rather than receiving assistance with my luggage, my job is secure so long as I maintain a single strategic advantage: access to information. In between transcontinental jaunts I spend considerable time on research and reaching out to my thoughtfully crafted global network. That keeps me ahead of the pack about soon to open hotels and related developments that make it worth leaving behind my dog, Poptart, and turning my back on our home's rather spectacular sea view. Though a good journalist never reveals her sources, with this fortnight's column all you aspiring baggage handlers and stenographers can reap the rewards of my recent research, too.

This year, Chengdu stands out as China's city on the rise with a slew of destination-worthy hotels on the verge of opening some very fancy doors. London-based architects Make wrap a three-dimensional woven façade – inspired by the city's weaving tradition – around The Temple House ([swirehotels.com](http://swirehotels.com)) and also manage to incorporate the 1,000-year-old Daci temple and a restored Qing Dynasty courtyard into aspects of the 100-room hotel. Swire's third 'House' hotel opens this month, which will keep us busy until Six Senses Qing Cheng Mountain ([sixsenses.com](http://sixsenses.com)) opens its sustainable timber doors later this year to reveal 113 whitewashed suites in the unspoiled bamboo forest near Qingcheng, the birthplace of Taoism.

To stay ahead of the travelling pack, one could focus entirely on Bali in the coming months. Already generating buzz is the recently opened Ritz-Carlton, Bali ([ritz-carlton.com](http://ritz-carlton.com)) with its glass tower overlooking the Indian Ocean, which serves as a lift between the clifftop and beachfront levels of this 313-room compound along the island's southern coast in Nusa Dua. In the Culinary Cave, chefs teach guests to recreate the kitchen's flavours back home, while design-minded guests will find love at the Wedding Chapel, a striking series of interlocked oval arches at the water's edge. Travel writers are already lining up to check-in to the American brand's next attraction, Mandapa, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve ([ritzcarlton.com](http://ritzcarlton.com)) with 60 suites and villas sprawled along the

Ayung River Valley. Keep an eye out, too, for Alila Seminyak ([alilahotels.com](http://alilahotels.com)), an imposing modernist address designed by Singapore's URBNarc, Philippe Starck's 12 villa concept, The Stairs Bali ([thestairsbali.com](http://thestairsbali.com)), just steps off Seminyak Beach, and The Chedi Club Jimbaran ([ghmhotels.com](http://ghmhotels.com)) by the late Indonesian designer Jaya Ibrahim.

If you want to compete in this field, you'll need to keep an eye focused further afield as well. I already beat you to Inkaterra Hacienda Urubamba ([inkaterra.com](http://inkaterra.com)) and its two dozen designer casitas scattered among the pepper trees, cacti and wild flowers of Peru's Sacred Valley, and am packed for La Fiermontina ([lafiermontina.com](http://lafiermontina.com)) at the edge of Lecce's Baroque old city, in Italy's southeastern Puglia region. Designed by Pugliese architect Antonio Annicchiario, the 16-room refuge of pietra Leccese stone opened in June with star-pinnacled ceilings, Italian furnishings and pietra di Trani flooring. Who's that with a friendly wave from the swimming pool within the sculpture garden and olive grove? Me, welcoming you in my wake.