

Sweet Dreams in the Land of the Incas



Exploring Luxury Peru

Posted on October 1, 2018

I've seen lots of beautiful hotels in my years as a travel journalist, but the Palacio Nazarenas in Cusco is the only one that took my breath away and also made it easier to breathe. Thin air in this super high city commonly causes altitude sickness, so the luxury property provides in-suite oxygen-enriched air.

I learned this from Francisco, our personal butler, who also told me that the room my husband and I were in was in the section of the hotel that dates from the 17th century. The stone fountains, arched passageways, and the campanile over the entrance reflect its past as a Carmelite nunnery. He also pointed out murals on adobe walls that were painted with egg whites and a lawn studded with pieces of Inca stone. I personally liked the spacious suites, heritage ambience, and quiet of the "Z Collection" area, but this Belmond (formerly Orient Express) hotel also offers modern rooms facing a heated swimming pool.

Near Machu Picchu

Less than 50 miles away, the Belmond Sanctuary Lodge offers an entirely different kind of luxury: a priceless location adjacent to



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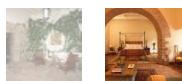
Machu Picchu. Most visitors stay in the town of Aguas Calientes and take a 30-minute bus ride back and forth to the UNESCO World Heritage site, but guests at Sanctuary Lodge can enter in the morning before the first bus arrives and go back and forth to the hotel during the day.



Belmond Sanctuary Lodge is set in a priceless location adjacent to Machu Picchu

I'll never forget being at the site when it opened at six a.m. and walking around in a light drizzle until the clouds parted just in time to see the sunrise. Sanctuary Lodge has just 29 rooms and two suites, and my advice would be to secure a room here and plan the rest of your Peru itinerary around those dates. That's what our planner at Ancient Summit did, and we were very glad.

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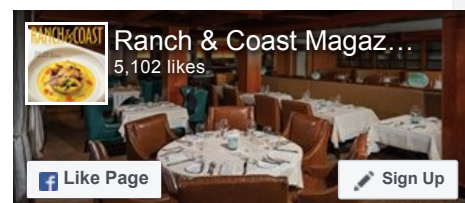


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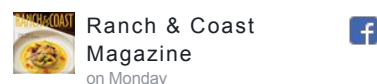
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2018 Rock & Roll Hall of Fame inductees **The Moody Blues** will perform November 2 at an exclusive concert for Wine D'Vine at the **Hyatt Regency La Jolla**. The event benefits Walden Family Services' programs for foster youth. The iconic English band is a pioneer of symphonic rock and has sold more than 70 million albums worldwide since 1964, including 18 multi-platinum and gold albums. Gala co-chairs are Vicki and Chris Eddy and Micki Olin and Reid Abrams; Ranch & Coast's Andrea Naversen serves as emcee.





Belmond Palacio Nazarenas dates from the 17th century

If you opt not to stay at Sanctuary Lodge, the Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel in Aguas Calientes is nestled on 12 acres in the cloud forest where hotel staff lead nature walks and birdwatching excursions.

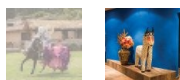
The Sacred Valley

Many Peru visitors spend the night before going to Machu Picchu in the Sacred Valley, and the lucky ones stay at Sol y Luna Lodge & Spa, a member of the luxury hotel group Relais & Chateaux. At this rustic-chic inn, 43 adobe casitas are connected by winding paths and surrounded by gardens. Colorful folk art enlivens the property.



Rustic chic casitas are connected by winding paths

At Sol y Luna, I discovered a library, a gift shop stocked with local handcrafts, and a beautiful spa. I also happened upon a handsome wine cellar with a table set for an upcoming wine dinner. Food at Sol y Luna is “an interpretation of the local gastronomy” and changes seasonally. The biggest surprise was an on-site stable of 20 Peruvian Paso horses that are available for guests and visitors to the property to ride.





Sol y Luna hosts a daily show demonstrating the elegance of their Paso horses

Lima

I'm not sure what I was expecting from Lima, but it's far tonier than I'd imagined, exuding a San Francisco-like sophistication. If you only need a bed for a quick overnight stop, Wyndham Costa del Sol at the airport is a good choice. However, if you can linger longer, I highly recommend Hotel B, a chic little spot that would be very much at home in the City by the Bay. Built in 1914, the Belle Époque mansion was originally a seaside vacation home for two families. By 1991, the families were gone, and more recently it was transformed into a 17-room boutique hotel, now a member of the Relais & Chateaux group. Guests can choose between the original section with lofty ceilings and classic tile bathrooms or seven contemporary rooms in a new wing. My favorite part is the charming breakfast atrium, but I also enjoyed the handsome library where afternoon tea is served, and the roof deck with an ocean view.



At Hotel B in Lima, guests relax on the ocean view roof deck

Hotel B is in the Barranco neighborhood, Lima's artsy district, so it's only natural that the décor includes a large, eclectic art collection, as well as antique and heirloom furnishings. We found several cute art galleries and crafts shops in the area. Dédalo, a chic store selling contemporary Peruvian crafts, home decor, clothing, jewelry, and art, is set in an early 20th-century mansion, and we enjoyed the charming café on the back patio. Several

colorful pieces of Peruvian folk art from Las Pallas, another shop, now decorate our La Jolla walls.

Even though Lima is at sea level, Hotel B still took my breath away.

Elizabeth Hansen

Belmond: Photography courtesy of Belmond Sanctuary Lodge & ADAMS / HANSEN STOCK PHOTOS Sol y Luna: Photography courtesy of Sol y Luna Hotel B: Photo courtesy of Hotel B

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