

Travel | Hotels

[City breaks](#) | [Beach](#) | [Hotel and flight](#) | [Tailor made](#) | [Find a holiday](#) | [Offers](#) | [Family](#) | [Ski](#) | [Rail](#) | [More](#) [Home](#) > [Travel](#) > [Hotels](#) > [Articles](#)

The 50 greatest hotels in the world



An hour's flight east of Bali is Sumba: an island of ancestral villages, tribal traditions and, on a forested fringe of long golden beach, Nihiwatu.

[Follow](#) By **Telegraph Travel**

7 MAY 2019 • 9:45AM

The George V, Carlyle, Cipriani, Mandarin Oriental Hong Kong, Sandy Lane... the fabulous properties that have not made our final cut reads like someone else's hot hotel list. But here at Telegraph Travel we maintain that absence makes the list grow stronger. Starting with a clean slate, our team of writers, luxury travel writers, hotel specialists and destination experts have scoured the globe to bring you only the very best. We have not accepted the status quo, the grande dames have not enjoyed their usual seat at the top table and nor have we added new properties simply for the sake of freshness.

So what do these hotel have in common? Firstly, they have each earned their place. Every hotel has been tried, tested, rated and cross-compared - and that was just to make the long-list. Secondly, they offer something extraordinary - be it location, service, style, soul, design, seclusion, facilities or romance. But above all, these are properties that will affect the way you feel. Life should be better when you check in. Welcome to *Telegraph Travel's* guide to the greatest hotels on Earth.

READ MORE

1

Love is in the air: 30 of the world's most romantic hotels

03 Jun 2019, 9:45am

2

PREMIUM **The best places for cream tea in Devon, from the traditional to the quirky**

24 May 2019, 3:30pm

3

Hotel Hit Squad: A wholesome family holiday in a Norfolk windmill put the wind in all our sails**HATTIE GARLICK**

23 May 2019, 4:40pm

4

All at sea with cricketing stars on a legends cruise

22 May 2019, 1:34pm

5

The best budget hotels in Edinburgh, from designer studios to grand mansions at an affordable price

22 May 2019, 9:45am

FOLLOW THE TELEGRAPH TRAVEL NEWS

[Follow on Facebook](#) [Follow on Twitter](#)



Cotton House Hotel

Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain

8/10 Telegraph expert rating

Renowned designer Lázaro Rosa-Violán has worked his theatrical, baroque magic on this neoclassical, 19th-century building, once home to the cotton-makers' guild. Artfully desilvered floor-to-ceiling mirrors reflect vast sprays of cotton bolls and white sofas, and a majestic 1950s suspended spiral staircase rises from the vestibule. In a year, the Cotton House has set a new benchmark for hotel design and immaculate service. In L'Atelier, a salon lined with bolts of cotton, guests can choose from swatches of super-soft fabric and ask that a tailor measure them up for a shirt. Next door, in the coffered, frescoed library, they can pull up a turquoise armchair by the fire and request a cocktail from a discreet navy-clad waitress. The Batuar restaurant does not disappoint, either, with Catalan-inspired dishes given creative pizzazz and served, in summer, on a colonial-styled terrace shaded by date palms and parasols. Upstairs, a plunge pool and daybeds offer an oasis from which to admire the spires of the Sagrada Família. Double rooms from £175.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£270 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

- [The best places and cities to visit in England](#)





Lime Wood

New Forest, Hampshire, England

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

It's all about attention to detail at this ravishing, deeply luxurious New Forest lair. Oak doors are thick; paint finishes rich; floor lights come on as you walk into the bathroom from your quietly opulent bedroom; stylised sitting rooms, one with billiard table, melt one into another, pale lemon into lilac into sage green, each with an open fire. In the sybaritic Herb House spa, guests can take in the forest views from the massive sauna and eat inspired raw food in the Raw & Cured café. Lime Wood is also home to Hartnett Holder & Co, a heaven-sent partnership between that most grounded of celebrity chefs, Angela Hartnett, and Lime Wood's own Luke Holder. Their Italian-influenced forest dishes and sharing plates are served in a richly coloured velvety dining room that's as glam as it's laid-back. It's how we want to live today, and Lime Wood has captured the mood. Its setting at the heart of 145 square miles of ancient heath and woodland only enhances its standing as the epitome of chic rural luxury. Double rooms from £315.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£345 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Mr & Mrs Smith

- [The world's most expensive hotel rooms](#)



Ett Hem

Stockholm, Sweden

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

It's not easy to offer immaculate service and be disarmingly down to earth at the same time, but staff at the 12-room Ett Hem in Stockholm's leafy embassy district manage the trick with aplomb. The name means "home" – in this case, a stylish temple to Nordic cosiness. Housed in a mansion built in 1910, the hotel's design shows how it might have looked in its day, with candlelit, parquet-floored drawing rooms furnished with contemporary and vintage Scandinavian furniture – one with a grand piano for all to play – that lead into a book-lined dining room. There are plenty of places to curl up, dine or both. The food is exceptional: the chefs – several escapees from Michelin-starred restaurants – rustle up local, seasonal meals on request (beef tartare kimchi was a favourite) in front of guests at the kitchen table. There's also a pretty conservatory, terraced garden and Swedish sauna. Each bedroom is decadent and unique, with an antique porcelain-tiled wood burner here, a vast free-standing tub there. Double rooms from £300.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£313 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Mr & Mrs Smith

- [The best spa hotels in the South of England](#)



Les Fermes de Marie

Megève, Rhône-Alpes, France

8/10 Telegraph expert rating

As Jean-Louis and Jocelyne Sibuet strolled in the mountains above stylish Megève, they were captivated by the rustic charm of the ancient timber chalets peppering the Alpine pastures. Several years

later, in 1989, the duo launched their first Megève hotel, Les Fermes de Marie, made of materials from those very chalets, transported a short walk from the heart of Megève and painstakingly restored. Reminiscent of a rural hamlet, linked by meandering footpaths and burbling streams, the nine chalets contain 70 cosy rooms and suites, three restaurants, a ski shop and the original cowshed-chic spa. In the outdoor hot tub, guests soak ski-tired legs, contemplating the blanket of snow settled over wide timber eaves, the fragrant pine swags and neatly stacked logs cut for the countless open fires that warm the hotel's restaurants, inviting snugs and free-standing chalets. The smallest of the chalets, Mont Blanc, is surely one of the world's finest suites: picture-perfect, with its own garden, a homely sitting room with a vast open fire and a romantic double room. Double rooms from £298.

[Read expert review](#)

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

- [The best hotels for spa breaks in Europe](#)



Hotel du Cap-Eden-Roc

Cap d'Antibes, Côte d'Azur, France

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

A throwback to the F Scott Fitzgerald era, this grand 19th-century mansion on Cap d'Antibes has 117 rooms and two villas with sumptuous Louis XV and XVI furnishings, gilded mirrors and chandeliers. The gastronomic Eden-Roc Restaurant has just been renovated and serves classics such as roasted sea bass and lobster with tarragon; the Grill offers Provençal-style gambas at the seafront pavilion. Set among nine hectares of landscaped gardens, there are five clay tennis courts, a Sisley spa and a seawater pool cut into the natural rock. A seafront diving board and overwater trapeze launch bathers into the Mediterranean and there is a jetty for guests arriving by boat. Best of all are the 33 beach cabins where the illustrious and

notorious come to hide: Marc Chagall used to paint on these clifftops, Roger Moore waterskied here and Johnny Weissmuller used to do his signature Tarzan yell as he dived into the sea. Double rooms from £400.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£595 per night

- [The world's best honeymoon hotels](#)



Four Seasons Hotel Gresham Palace

Budapest, Hungary

8/10 Telegraph expert rating

If service is a hallmark of a great hotel, then Gresham Palace can be said to deliver. A guest wanting to propose to his girlfriend in style asked for her to be given a wake-up call by a bell boy dressed as a Hungarian Hussar. (She said yes.) If style is another criterion, this magnificent building, originally the creation of the London-based Gresham Life Assurance Society and a meeting place for Budapest's affluent and arty, has it in abundance. A €100m renovation in 2004 brought the building back to its fin-de-siècle prime, complete with art-nouveau flourishes, zsolnay tiles and wrought-iron Peacock Gates, and added some extra Four Seasons pizzazz. When it comes to location, Gresham Palace's position on the Danube, directly overlooking the twinkling lights of the Chain Bridge, also earns it 10 out of 10. The wow factor begins the moment guests set foot in the hotel's spectacular lobby, extends to the Kollázs Brasserie & Bar and continues right through to the wake-up call the following morn. Double rooms from £240.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£360 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com



Ballyfin

County Laois, Ireland

10/10 Telegraph expert rating

One of Ireland's most lavish neoclassical houses, Ballyfin stands in its own 614-acre demesne, full of delights, including lake (with glorious new water feature), water cascade, Victorian fernery, Edwardian rockery and walled garden, not to mention the tower, which has panoramic views of the Slieve Bloom mountains from the top. A Downton-esque knot of neatly uniformed staff awaits each arriving guest, setting the tone for service that is old school, yet full of Irish warmth. The reception rooms are filled with superb antiques and paintings and there is a classically styled indoor pool and two treatment rooms. Every bedroom is gorgeous, in classic Irish country-house style. Perhaps the loveliest is Lady Caroline Coote, with its graceful Empire-style ceiling, but it's hard to choose. Five more have recently been added, making 20, from the lake-view Lady Kildare, with its delicate chinoiserie, to the subtle Indian accents of Lady Mornington. As for the food, it lives up to the surroundings. Standards are sky-high; this is the sort of place where one jarring note would spoil the show – but it never does. Double rooms from £407.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£700 per night





The Gritti Palace

Venice, Veneto, Italy

10/10 Telegraph expert rating

"If we want everything to stay as it is, everything needs to change." So says Tancredi in the great twilight-of-the-aristocracy novel *Il Gattopardo*. It could be the motto of historic Venetian grande dame The Gritti Palace, whose recent £36.5m top-to-toe restoration was designed to make everything look the same – just even more opulently stylish. One example: every sparkling teardrop pendant of every vintage chandelier was detached, repaired or replaced and polished by Murano artisans. The upgrade is most keenly felt in the 82 rooms, their antique décor and fine Rubelli silk fabrics freshened up by designer Chuck Chewning, without forfeiting any romance. Personable GM Paolo Lorenzoni is one of the best in the country – courteous, ever-present, quick to respond to problems – and the staff, in their impeccable vintage liveries, are role models in a city that doesn't always get service right. A waterside breakfast on the terrace overlooking the shimmering Grand Canal has to be one of the great Venetian experiences – it knocks a Bellini in Harry's Bar into a cocked hat. Double rooms from £310.

[Read expert review](#)

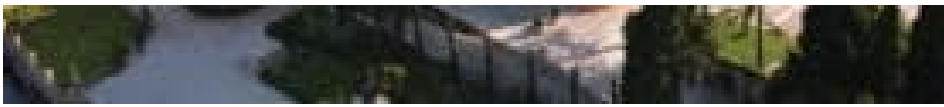
From
£739 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

- [Europe's best hotels for wedding venues](#)





Belmond Castello di Casole

Casole d'Elsa, Tuscany, Italy

8/10 Telegraph expert rating

Luchino Visconti knew a spectacular set when he saw one, and in the 1960s, at the height of his film-making fame, he chose this 10th-century hilltop Tuscan estate as his country retreat. In a land of sublime views, the 360-degree prospect over the countryside between San Gimignano and Siena is unparalleled. Four years ago, the castle and the cluster of buildings around it were converted into a hotel, while the old farmhouses scattered around the surrounding vineyards, olive groves and flower meadows have been restored as luxury villas. The owners – Timbers Resorts – have done a superb job: the 50-odd bedrooms retain their original beamed ceilings, terracotta floors and exposed stonework, while antique furniture is combined with sumptuous Italian fabrics and topnotch facilities. Ristorante Tosca – which spills into the central courtyard – hits the right note with outstanding regionally inspired dishes, homemade pastas, local meats and estate-produced olive oils and wine. An Essere Spa and a lavish pool top the list of facilities in this idyllic, immaculately run hotel. Double rooms from £382.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£568 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

- [The best hotels for wedding venues in the UK](#)



La Bastide de Gordes

Gordes, Provence, France

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

Provençal's tough past has long provided the setting for the well-heeled and tasteful. Hill-topping villages. Castles. Ramparts. Rip out the ruffians and they're ripe for luxury. Thus, the Bastide de Gordes, clamped to the cliff-side of France's most fashionable perched village. Here, among tight streets and steep stairways, be French media stars, the more discreet billionaires, and visitors for whom Provence needs cushioning into a five-star experience. The Bastide is their place. Last year's £18-million re-fit transformed a fine hotel into a world beater. It's old façades unfold down the drop, where once the ramparts were, in a series of stone terraces bearing grey-green Med vegetation, two swimming pools and sunlit hideaways. Views to the Luberon hills mesmerise. Within, 40 rooms and suites recall the sumptuous side of the 18th-century. Corridors and stairs, rich with treasures, rarely arrive at the same place twice. Manorial salons impose elegance. Young staff, dressed as if for a fête c.1912, have the bounce and smiles of a US musical comedy. And down below there is the Sisley spa. Posh eating is in the hands of Michelin-man Pierre Gagnaire; there's a cheaper brasserie along the same terrace. As you finish the rosé, replete, Provence is at your feet. It's been there a long time. It will wait. Double rooms from £141.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£333 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

- [The world's best hotel pools](#)



Belmond Hotel Splendido

Portofino, Liguria, Italy

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

Portofino is a theatrically pretty fishing village on the Ligurian Riviera, where traditional wooden boats and venerable churches sit beside mighty superyachts and shiny outposts of Pucci and Gucci. Lording over this tripperish scene is the indisputably splendid Belmond Hotel Splendido, set high on a hillside, with a glorious

wisteria-cloaked façade, terraced gardens with infinity pool, and an abiding sense that this really is one of the great hotels of Italy. Rex Harrison started it all when he bought a villa nearby in the 1950s, and although this former Benedictine monastery is now filled with photographs of its many glamorous guests, there's little stuffiness. Life here is all about a lazy lunch on the panoramic terrace, with its lemon trees and views over Portofino Bay, as genial, long-serving staff in café-crème jackets deliver dreamy dishes such as ravioli with walnut sauce and baked sea bream. The 67 charming rooms and suites are spread over five floors. Most have a balcony and sea view – perfect for throwing open the shutters on a sunny morning and feeling in love with life. Double rooms from £407.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£625 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

- [Underwater hotels: the fab five](#)



D-Maris Bay

Marmaris, Turquoise Coast, Turkey

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

Surrounded by dramatic volcanic rocks and hillsides lush with almond trees, D-Hotel Maris stands in an unblemished nature reserve and looks towards the Aegean and Mediterranean. Repeat guests know to request a harbour-facing room for the best views and to make a point of sailing those turquoise-tinted waters aboard the resort's 100ft yacht Pasa. Kayaking, diving and more can also be arranged at the watersports centre, five beaches provide variety and a spa offers refuge on rare rainy days. On summer evenings, dinner can be taken at an alfresco outpost of London's Japanese restaurant Zuma or one of five other dining options. Wherever guests end up, service is sincere, the crowd sophisticated and the atmosphere carefree. An additional bonus is that it's just a two-hour drive, or 25-minute helicopter transfer, from Dalaman airport. Double rooms from £220.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£253 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

• [Top 10: the best beach holidays in Italy](#)



Grand Hotel a Villa Feltrinelli

Lake Garda, Italy

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

Lake Como is perhaps the best known of the Italian lakes, but it's Garda that is home to the region's finest hotel. Formerly the retreat of lumber magnate Faustino Feltrinelli's sons, Villa Feltrinelli was home to Mussolini from 1943 to 1945 during the Republic of Salò. The turreted wedding-cake pink villa is immersed in eight acres of gardens shaded by olive, oak and magnolia trees on the lake's western shore. With only 21 rooms, decorated with antiques and historic prints, overnighing here is like staying at a friend's country home. On a summer's afternoon there's nothing like a game of croquet on the green, unwinding by the pool or strolling in the lemon garden. With a staff ratio of three to one, service is second to none. And with two Michelin stars, Stefano Baiocco makes creative dishes that blend prized ingredients with food from Italy's cucina povera. There's no need to dash to breakfast as it's served all day, and can be enjoyed anywhere, just as it would be at a friend's house. Double rooms from £798.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£957 per night

• [The best hotels in Moscow](#)



Four Seasons Hotel Moscow

Moscow, Russia

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

A mixture of Stalin-era design, cinematic views and contemporary Western styling have transformed this 21st-century reimagining of the former Hotel Moskva (1935-2004) into a world-class wonder. Four Seasons took over the landmark building in 2014 after a multimillion-pound reconstruction, thereby securing one of the most exclusive addresses – between the Kremlin and State Duma – in the city. This proximity to power adds to the illusion of living like a moneyed local, a notion fuelled by shimmering chandeliers, spa treatments that feature flakes of 24-carat gold, and marble-clad corridors that echo to the click of killer heels en route to the low-lit cocktail bar. The sense of hedonism reaches a climax in the Kremlin-facing suites, where the views of Red Square and St Basil's Cathedral make these the ultimate post-clubbing party pads. Double rooms from £213.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£397 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

• [The best luxury hotels in London](#)





Claridge's

Mayfair, London, England

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

If there's one hotel that would make a perfect, spoiling gift, it's Claridge's. Once the staid and stately base for royalty and dowager duchesses, it is today at a pinnacle in its 160-year history. Slip past the celebrity-spotters outside, through the revolving door and into the glacial marble-floored Front Hall, once a turning circle for horse-drawn carriages. Take the wrought-iron lift, with sofa and attendant, to your room or suite, perhaps designed by David Linley or Diane von Fürstenberg. In the wonderful chrome and marble art-deco bathroom, luxuriate in the sunken tub, which fills in seconds. See and be seen at breakfast or tea in the ravishing foyer or for champagne in the showy Claridge's Bar, or slip into Simon Rogan's sylvan restaurant, Fera, or the shadowy Fumoir for cocktails. Underpinned by continuity and depth of service, Claridge's is a ribbon-tied gift box of a gorgeous, glamorous hotel. Double rooms from £420.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£630 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

- [The most romantic Paris hotels](#)



La Réserve Paris Hotel and Spa

Paris, France

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

This Jacques Garcia-designed hotel feels more like the palatial home of a Parisian millionaire (such as its last owner, Pierre Cardin) than a

hotel. Located in the eighth arrondissement, in a row of grand Haussman-era houses, it oozes bourgeois decadence, its antique-filled living spaces walled in ruby silk, its gilded library adorned with leather-bound tomes, its floors scattered with Persian rugs. Its rooms, though, are light, luxe and considered. Walls and doors are solid and soundproofed. Lights can be turned off with one simple switch. Beds are swathed in crisp Quagliotti linen and bathrooms lined in white Carrera marble. The views, from wrought-iron balconies, are as romantic as the best in Paris: over the copper Pantheon domes towards the Eiffel Tower. Should any guest consider leaving their suite, there's a candlelit spa downstairs, slick, elegantly attired staff to arrange excursions, and fine-dining menus by hot chef Jerome Banctel to sample. It's the discreet place for high society to meet, so prices are high. But it's so deliciously French that that only response is a Gallic shrug. Doubles from £547.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£942 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Mr & Mrs Smith

- [Top 10: the best beach holidays in Spain](#)



Abadía Retuerta LeDomaine

Valladolid, Castilla y León, Spain

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

Lying in the bath, gazing across vineyards to the mountains beyond while sipping a glass of velvety Abadía Retuerta wine, is a pretty good way to sink into the LeDomaine experience. A Romanesque abbey in the Ribera del Duero region is the spectacular setting for one of Spain's most sumptuous hotels. Although it dates back to the 12th century, this is very much a 21st-century place, with a Michelin-starred restaurant in the former refectory and a spa where treatments are based on a guest's taste in wine. Although the building and the surrounding estate are vast, there are only 30 rooms and suites, mostly created from the former monks' cells, with newer options in the

stables. Members of staff outnumber guests but are invariably unobtrusive. Personal butlers are on call whenever anything is needed. The former cloister garden is now a soothing spot for languid breakfasts, while the chapter house has been turned into a bar for after-dinner drinks. The church is an intimate venue for a wedding – and no one would want to go anywhere else for a honeymoon. Double rooms from £310.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£359 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

- [Top 10: the best Lake Como hotels](#)



Finca Cortesin Hotel Golf & Spa

Malaga, Andalucia, Spain

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

It is all about cool calmness at Finca Cortesín, an Andalusian idyll where jasmine and roses scent the air. In the foothills of the Sierra Bermeja, between Marbella and Sotogrande, this is the Costa del Sol without the glitz but with a lot of understated glamour. Set in a vast estate with one of the best golf courses in Spain and a superb spa, it is actually less than a decade old but looks like a traditional country house, thanks to the renowned interior designer Duarte Pinto Coelho, who sourced antiques from Spain, Portugal, Morocco and beyond. There are 67 suites and villas with four bedrooms, all with plenty of space and peace. From the moment guests arrive, they sense that everything will be taken care of as they sink into a chair in the shade of an ancient olive tree or dive into one of the pools – there are four, including one down at the Beach Club. The Kabuki Raw restaurant has just gained a Michelin star and the Mediterranean cuisine at El Jardín de Lutz deserves one too. Double rooms from £280.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£644 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

Asia & Australia



Laucala Island

Fiji

8/10 Telegraph expert rating

This 3,500-acre private island has been owned by two multi-millionaires (Malcolm Forbes and Red Bull's Dietrich Mateschitz) who have turned a natural paradise into a holiday heaven. Amid flower-strewn forests, there's a David McLay Kidd golf course, a thatched spa in the cool jungly forest, stables of thoroughbred horses, a panoply of pools, and a dive centre with 14 boats and a submarine. Five restaurants serve delicious dishes from teppanyaki wagyu beef to exquisite morsels created using ingredients from the island's farm. With only 25 villas – the most romantic perched above crashing waves and the biggest set atop the island's peak – each guest feels as if they have the island to themselves. Every inch is looked after by 350 Fijian staff who, when they aren't smiling or proffering fresh fruit juice or a martini, are delivering warm banana cake or just-cleaned shoes before vanishing to leave you watching distant waves phosphoresce in the moonlight. Double rooms from £4,000.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£3,600 per night

• [50 of the world's most unusual hotels](#)





Qualia

Whitsundays, Queensland, Australia

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

When architect Chris Beckingham designed Qualia, the 60-pavilion resort perched on the northernmost point of Hamilton Island, his brief was to “draw the outside in”. When “outside” is the tip of the World Heritage-listed Great Barrier Reef, home to the world’s largest coral-reef ecosystem, this meant capturing the glorious natural profusion of the island. Handcrafted from wood and stone, the buildings blend into the natural terrain as effortlessly as a koala curled in a gumtree. All the exquisitely appointed pavilions face the water, with uninterrupted views over the Coral Sea, and some have their own private plunge pools. This is a self-contained haven with relaxation at its heart, so guests are provided with their own golf buggies to move around the manicured grounds between two restaurants serving fine Australian cuisine, a cocktail bar, two pools and a private beach, library and spa with a wide range of treatments. Slow mornings might be spent strolling on the beach by a glittering sea or just lying in on soft, downy beds. Double rooms from £500.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£764 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Mr & Mrs Smith

• [The best hotels in Australia](#)





Amansara

Siem Reap, Cambodia

8/10 Telegraph expert rating

Amansara was originally a 1960s French modernist villa commissioned by King Sihanouk as a summer retreat for his VIP guests. The Aman group restored the building in 2002 and later brought its signature minimalist style to bear on a spa, a lap pool and 12 new suites furnished with terrazzo floors, hardwood fittings, sandstone reliefs and private courtyard plunge pools. This refreshed architectural gem is now run with sparkling efficiency by Sally Baughen and her staff and provides a perfect sanctuary from the booming streets of downtown Siem Reap. More importantly, the hotel lies on the threshold of the Unesco World Heritage Site, home to Angkor Wat and the jungle-clad ruins of the Khmer Empire. Guests are provided with their own tuk-tuk and driver to explore the rich heritage on their minimalistic doorstep. After a day of temple-trotting, visitors are welcomed back by the cheery hotel staff with afternoon tea served to the sounds of traditional Khmer music in the swish Sixties dining room. Mid-century architecture meets 10th-century culture – a heavenly combination. Double rooms from £609.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£1,274 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Mr & Mrs Smith

• [The best hotels in Cambodia](#)



Asaba

Shuzenji, Shizuoka Prefecture, Japan

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

Bamboo forests, lakes, blossoming trees, hot-spring baths, dancing fireflies, the scent of tatami... If there is one place where the unpoetic might feel inspired to write a haiku, it's Asaba. The 15th-century family-run ryokan, on the edge of the hot-spring town Shuzenji, is just two hours south of Tokyo by train. The entrance is marked by a split cotton noren curtain hanging above a monochrome pebble entrance, behind which elegant kimono-clad staff usher guests to one of 17 minimal guestrooms. Each is designed in signature ryokan style, with tatami mat floors, sliding screens, deep cypress baths, futons, paper lanterns and asymmetric flower arrangements, as well as windows with views of pretty lakes and gardens. Guests can soak in the restorative outdoor hot-spring baths before indulging in a private in-room kaiseki dinner: a banquet of a dozen dishes fit for an emperor. The Harry Bertolia chairs in the lounge best sum up the Asaba experience – it may be rooted in heritage, but the atmosphere is fresh and modern. Double rooms from £660.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£733 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

• [The best hotels in Tokyo](#)



Mandarin Oriental, Tokyo

Tokyo, Japan

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

While the Mandarin Oriental offers sleek design mixed with cutting-edge technology and an astonishing level of intelligent service, it is the feeling of being in an aerial cocoon of calm that distinguishes this hotel. It occupies the top floors of the Nihonbashi Mitsui Tower in Tokyo's business and shopping district, with astounding views from floor-to-ceiling windows in all 179 rooms and suites. Among a dozen bars and restaurants, the classy Mandarin Bar is a favourite, while

gourmands struggle to choose between Cantonese cuisine at Sense and the Tapas Molecular Bar, where cutlery is swapped for pipettes and syringes. In the meditative 37th-floor spa and its pool, nothing but glass comes between swimmer and the sight of snow-capped Mount Fuji bathed in the red glow of sunset. Double rooms from £317.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£445 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

- [The world's kinkiest, sexiest and strangest hotels](#)



The Peninsula Shanghai

Shanghai, China

10/10 Telegraph expert rating

The Peninsula experience starts at the airport, where a customised BMW whisks guests downtown to this handsome modern take on art-deco design. Attention to detail is evident everywhere, from the beautiful mosaic floor of the 82ft indoor pool to the free international calls at the press of a button. The usual chocolate-on-the-pillow is here a multi-drawer lacquered box filled with different treats. An intuitive iPad controls lights, curtains and much else. The River Rooms are sensational: a wall of glass provides views across the busy Huangpu River to sleek towers designed by the world's leading architects. On balmy nights, there is nowhere better in the city for cocktails than Sir Elly's bar on the rooftop terrace, watching the evening light show play across buildings old and new. Unless, that is, it's time for a spin on the river aboard the hotel's own motor yacht. Double rooms from £247.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£272 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com



COMO Uma Punakha

Bhutan

8/10 Telegraph expert rating

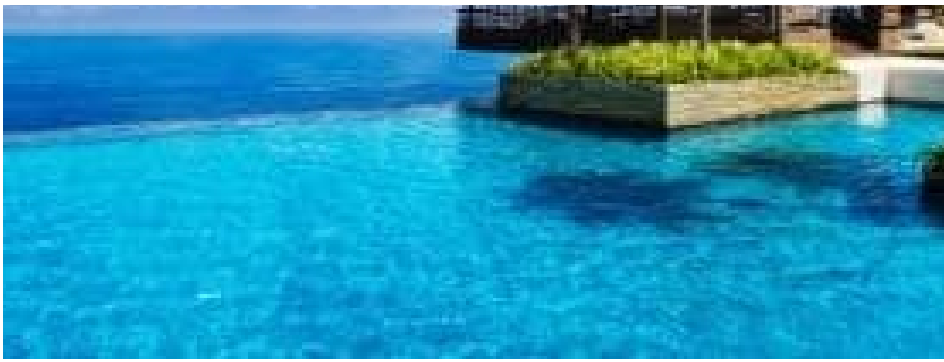
Peeling back the layers of this hotel is much like discovering Bhutan itself. Uma's ochre walls, broken by grand double doors, are reminiscent of the country's dzongs, or fortresses, albeit softened by bougainvillea, poinsettias and camellias. Pass through doors and courtyards, past smiling staff in traditional Bhutanese dress, and views of densely forested hills unfold, with terraced rice paddies cascading to the meandering Mo Chu river below. Throughout the eight-bedroom, two-villa property, floor-to-ceiling windows and low-slung cream furnishings retain the focus on the views. Traditional Bhutanese art, hand-knotted rugs from Nepal and Indian cotton bed linens complete the simple, authentic aesthetic. While the menu at the intimate restaurant is global, spanning local specialities, gnocchi, cassoulet and wagyu beef burgers, dishes are crafted from local organic produce. Best of all, the property is also available on an exclusive-use basis. Double rooms from £440.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£375 per night

• [The best hotels in Bali](#)





Alila Villas Uluwatu

Uluwatu, Bali, Indonesia

8/10 Telegraph expert rating

New arrivals here find it nigh on impossible not to whip out their smartphones and immediately try to capture the hotel's phenomenal modernist architecture and Indian Ocean views. Perched atop cliffs on Bali's peaceful Bukit Peninsula, Alila Uluwatu is all straight lines, vivid whites, shimmering blues and black lava rocks. Villas are stylish and soothing, with private pools and butlers who, depending on requests for private, discreet or indulgent service, either lavish attention or flit around like genies, leaving treats on the table or geranium face masks by the bathtub. Morning yoga sessions are invigorating, as are laps of the 164ft cliff-hanging infinity pool. At the spa, warm coconut-oil massages leave guests suspended somewhere between nodding off and nirvana. An added feel-good factor comes from knowing that this is the first hotel in Bali to receive the highest level of certification for environmentally sustainable design. Double rooms from £615.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£572 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

- [Top 10: the best five-star hotels in Hong Kong](#)



The Upper House

Hong Kong

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

The clue's in the name. This is about ascending into a realm that's more supremely stylish abode than hotel. The city's babble ceases at the Stone Curtain, an entrance wall designed by Thomas Heatherwick. Beyond, two flickering lanterns (good feng shui) light guests' path up, up, up... via escalator and lift, past scattered artworks of sinuous curve and tempting texture. Rooms – wonderfully spacious, filled with sky – begin on the 38th floor. At this height, Hong Kong's harbour is a glittering distant necklace and, depending on the room, the reach-out-and-touch mountains a vision of tranquillity. Forget the usual trimmings: there's no check-in desk, no pool or spa and the gym's tiny; there isn't even paper – guest information arrives via an iPod Touch. Elsewhere, though, the amenity bags burst with REN skincare products, there's a hidden lawn, a library with flickering fireplace, and an enveloping sense of urban respite. And, on the 49th floor, is a single, perfect restaurant called Café Gray Deluxe, a gem set in the clouds. Double rooms from £400.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£339 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

• [The best hotels in Indonesia](#)



Nihi Sumba

Sumba, Indonesia

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

An hour's flight east of Bali is Sumba: an island of ancestral villages, tribal traditions and, on a forested fringe of long golden beach, Nihiwatu. Originally a surf resort, it reopened in 2014 under James McBride, formerly of The Carlyle in New York, and soon became known for its simple luxuries and eco approach. Its villas – the largest

of which has its own pavilions, kitchen and library – have pointed thatched roofs that are typically Sumbanese, private infinity pools and bales set in gardens of banana and frangipani trees. Butlers who attend to the villas are happy to reveal their animist culture to guests, whether that’s the symbols woven into local ikat cloth or the importance of the island’s spear-throwing festival. Experiences include riding ponies into the surf, nudging a paddleboard down-river, diving, and surfing one of the world’s most famous left-hand breaks. It’s a place in which, somewhere between the sea spray and lost-world traditions, it’s possible to lose yourself completely. Double rooms from £435.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£1,013 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Mr & Mrs Smith

- [The best hotels in India](#)



The Taj Mahal Palace

Mumbai, India

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

When Indian industrialist Jamsetji Tata built this glorious Indian Gothic confection in 1903, he wanted it to be the finest hotel in India, a place of glamour and faultless service that was open to all. And it was – and it is. It may host a stream of A-list celebrities but everyone experiences the same genuine warmth and courtesy from its devoted staff. Rooms with a sea view in the original Palace Wing are the finest, reached via a magnificent cantilevered staircase that climbs five floors to the dome. Butlers arrive in a trice and never hover in the hope of a tip. The concierges have all of Mumbai at their fingertips, from the best guided tours (my tip: Mumbai by Dawn) to seats at the art deco Regal for the latest Bollywood blockbuster. And when the city and its traffic become too much, there’s no better retreat than the Sea Lounge for Mumbai street-food (in particular, bhelpuri), cucumber sandwiches for tea, or a cold glass of Indian wine as the sun sets over

the Arabian Sea. Double rooms from £160.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£89 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

• [The best hotels in Rajasthan](#)



Oberoi Vanyavilas

Rajasthan, India

8/10 Telegraph expert rating

The Oberoi's bush outpost lies just outside Ranthambhore National Park, where tigers sunbathe on old Raj ruins beneath a towering 1,000-year-old fort. Although the bedrooms are made from canvas, this is no jungle camp. Rather, it's the grandest spot in India from which to watch wildlife while being looked after by some of the country's most gracious hoteliers. Beturbaned staff, in jewel-coloured kurtas, are on hand when needed (invisible when not) to serve Indian feasts in candlelit courtyards, proffer orange-flower-scented face-towels after a safari or serve rosewater iced tea by the fringed colonial-style pool umbrellas. Naturalists offer lectures and take private safaris through the park's loveliest areas to see spotted chital deer, rich birdlife and – with luck – tigers. And the rooms are so sumptuous that it's criminal not to take time to recline on the carved four-posters, soak amid rose-petals in lion-claw baths or take tea on a silver tray while watching kingfishers diving into waterlily-strewn ponds. Double rooms from £645.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£213 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

• [The best hotels in Australia](#)



Southern Ocean Lodge

Kangaroo Island, South Australia, Australia

8/10 Telegraph expert rating

Perched above Hanson Bay, this Kangaroo Island retreat offers a ringside seat to witness the South Ocean in all its elemental glory. With no land mass between here and Antarctica to dampen the swell, waves pound its sugar-white sands – a fact that did not escape the designers of this low-rise, sensitively crafted luxe resort. The limestone-clad lobby has a wraparound screen of floor-to-ceiling glass, while views from the 21 contemporary suites, named after shipwrecks, are equally impressive. Cantilevered, with glass-walled bathrooms and sunken lounges, the design directs you to the wild exterior. The lavish 1,290sq ft Osprey Pavilion is the pick, with a hand-crafted free-standing bath offering a panorama that takes some beating. Add to this the fauna of Australia’s answer to the Galápagos, fresh native produce (foraged samphire, free-range lamb), friendly service and a fine wine list and there can be few better places to be shipwrecked. Double rooms from £1,050.

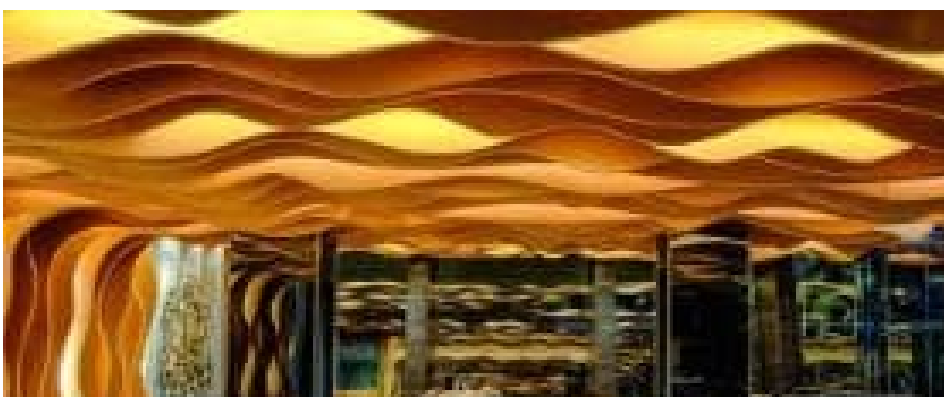
[Read expert review](#)

From
£1,005 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Mr & Mrs Smith

• [The best hotels in Thailand](#)





Iniala Beach House

Natai Beach, Phuket, Thailand

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

Two years after its opening on the sands of Natai Beach, just north of Phuket, this refined designer property has established itself as one of the most sought-after hotels in Asia. And not just because of its fantastical design – there are beds which drop from the ceiling and appear to hover above the floor, turquoise starfish-shaped sofas and Swarovski crystal-encrusted pool tables – or its exquisite dining, which is masterminded by Eneko Atxa, the youngest Spanish chef to be awarded three Michelin stars. No, it's because Iniala delivers the kind of privacy that Saudi princesses, Russian oligarchs, Californian tech giants and Hollywood royalty require. With just three three-bedroom villas, a penthouse suite and associated children's hotel, fronted by plenty of private sand, it's ideal for an exclusive buy-out. Not that the four-villa mini hotel is a gilded cage. Activities include everything from Muay Thai boxing classes with world-class coaches and otherworldly spa treatments in mother-of-pearl-clad cocoons to yachting around the ancient sea-stacks that scatter the waters of the glass-green Andaman Sea. Double rooms from £1,765.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£1,666 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

The Americas & Caribbean



Alto Atacama

San Pedro de Atacama, Chile

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

An adobe-walled wilderness lodge that is a haven of cool interiors, warm service and gourmet cooking in the heart of the Atacama, the world's highest and driest desert. Veronica Poblete, a botanist and former lecturer at Stanford University in the USA, designed the gardens around the concept of an Andean Park. The result is a calming oasis of centuries-old ceramics, modern-day geoglyphs, indigenous plants, a salt-water pool and hand-carved rock beds. Facilities include a restful spa with outdoor baths heated by water from deep underground. There are also six plunge pools dotted about the grounds, sun-loungers and a llama enclosure. The Atacama is one of the best places on Earth for stargazing and the hotel is home to an astronomical telescope atop a nearby hill. Expect top-notch gourmet cooking that embraces local produce such as guanaco, socaire potatoes, native quinoa or chanar berries. Double rooms from £535.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£845 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

• [The best hotels in Chile](#)



Mashpi Lodge

Mashpi, Ecuador

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

When this modern, minimalist, glass-walled jungle lodge opened in 2012, it changed the accommodation game in South America. Architect Alfredo Ribadeneira's "protective cocoon" would impress in a modern city; in the depths of the Andean cloudforest, it is wild, audacious and beautiful. Though only 70 miles from Quito, Mashpi Lodge sits in splendid isolation, perched on a cliff at the end of an

unsealed road. Sensitive tucked into the canopy, you don't see it till you arrive. Inside, grey tiled floors and natural hues mean nothing detracts from what guests are here to experience: the greenery that wraps around the hotel's huge walls of clear tempered glass. The 24 rooms maintain the clean design lines, featuring bamboo-and-glass décor, soft rugs and plush armchairs. Three Yaku suites are more spacious, and come with Philippe Starck baths. Days kick off with pre-breakfast birdwatching, before heading to the butterfly sanctuary, observation tower, aerial canopy ride and jungle trails. Biodiversity is breathtaking in the Chocó-Darien region; adventures completed and species ticked, a whirlpool tub, cocktail and Ecuadorian fusion food await. Double rooms from US \$1,340 (£1031) based on two sharing, including activities, meals, guiding and return shared transfers from main Quito hotels.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£719 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

• [The best hotels in Peru](#)



Inkaterra La Casona

Cusco, Peru

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

Cuzco, imperial capital of the Inca, was adopted by the conquering Spanish as the ideal location for their grandest palaces, churches and mansions. La Casona, on a beautiful plaza in the San Blas district, is thought to be the oldest colonial building in the city and was briefly the home of liberator Simón Bolívar. Carefully restored before opening in 2008 – it became Peru's first Relais & Châteaux hotel a year later – it still feels like a conquistador's private residence. The Old World dark-wood furniture, faded frescoes and antiques harmonise well with the earthy hues of Andean throws and exposed stonework. Eleven sumptuous and spacious suites overlook the plaza or inner courtyards, and all have private dining spaces as well as stone

fireplaces, heated wooden floors and marble bathrooms. Plaza Suite Two, the largest, was occupied by conquistador Diego de Almagro. The in-house restaurant serves quinoa pancakes and coca tea for breakfast and Peruvian fusion food (guinea pig confit, Andean trout in Brazil-nut tempura) for lunch and dinner. The small Yacu spa has an ecclesiastical calm. Staff are low-key, courteous to a fault, and speak impeccable English. On the doorstep is the Museum of Pre-Columbian Art and most major sights as well as many of Cuzco's best restaurants. Double rooms from £280.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£338 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

• [The most unusual hotels in the United States](#)



Amangiri

Utah, United States

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

A stone's throw from the famous Lake Powell and the invisible border between Arizona and Utah, the almost secret location of Amangiri at Canyon Point is not easy to find in this extreme desert landscape. The clever design is inspired by the rugged nature of the Utah landscape and the distinctive Entrada sandstone. Guests come here to relax around the swimming pool that curves around a rock formation or to recharge in the 25,000sq ft Aman spa with sweeping desert views and unique Navajo-inspired treatments. Executive chef Jacob Anaya translates the regional new American cuisine into an agreeable mix of light but hearty dishes, such as fish tacos, served on a private terrace with a glass of chilled Californian white. All 34 rooms and suites extend from the main building like an eagle's wing, with views over the untamed landscape from the bath or bed. The large folding windows can be completely opened on to the private terrace, with low chairs and fireplace – the perfect spot from which to marvel at the starry skies in the intensely black nights of southern Utah. Double

rooms from £1,000.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£1,689 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Mr & Mrs Smith

- [The best Northern Lights hotels](#)



Fogo Island Inn

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

Dusk, when the windows glow through the sub-Arctic gloom, is when it looks most extraordinary – like a visitation from Planet Hip. Perched on a rocky island foreshore off Newfoundland, on Canada’s Atlantic seaboard, the Fogo Island Inn draws inspiration from the remote fishing community that surrounds it. Its oblong exterior may look like a boho slice of London or New York, but is modelled on Fogo Island’s clapboard houses, while the minimalist décor is handcrafted on the island to the designs of top North American and European designers who were in turn inspired by local traditions. In the kitchen, chef Murray McDonald puts Newfoundland on a plate by using foraged berries and greens and “wild things from the North Atlantic”, and every one of the 29 suites has an ocean view and a woodburning stove. It may stand on stilts but the inn is far from aloof. In a unique example of social entrepreneurship, pioneered by local woman-made-good Zita Cobb, all profits are ploughed back into the local community. Double rooms from £468.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£1,290 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Mr & Mrs Smith

- [Top 10: the best luxury hotels in New York](#)



Crosby Street Hotel

New York, United States

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

In the heart of fabulously fashionable SoHo, but on a discreet cobblestone street, this red-brick façade and blue-lit exterior promises a flashy boutique hotel. Inside, though, it's all sumptuous elegance: soaring ceilings, dark-wood furniture, subtle grey, mauve, red and white tones, and contemporary art on the walls. The English influence in the only American hotel of the UK's Firmdale group is evident in the popular afternoon teas – steak and stilton Cornish pasties, spiced gingerbread English trifle – and in the floral-patterned wallpaper and decorative sofas of designer Kit Kemp's fresh, light-filled interiors. The 86 rooms all have floor-to-ceiling warehouse windows (the upper floors with stunning Lower Manhattan views); the second-floor Meadow Suite also has a private terrace garden. Downstairs, the spacious Crosby Bar goes from serving English breakfasts and those teas to cocktails and dinner, some ingredients coming from chef Anthony Paris's 12th-floor rooftop garden and urban chicken coop. Another highlight is the swanky state-of-the-art 99-seat cinema used for film-festival screenings and a Sunday-night film club. Doubles from £400.

[Read expert review](#)

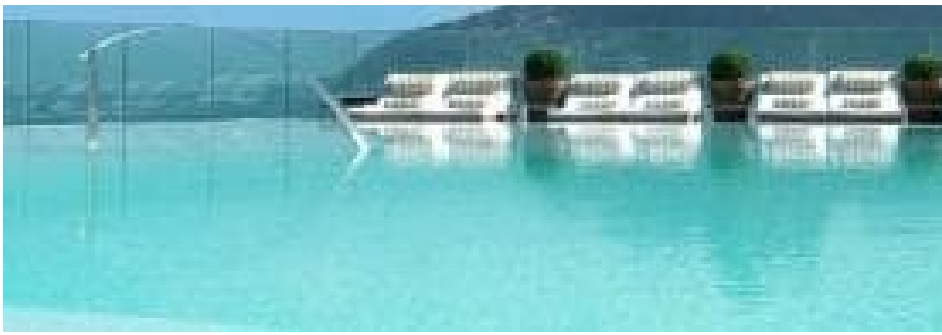
From
£580 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

• [The best hotels in Rio de Janeiro](#)





Hotel Fasano Rio de Janeiro

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

When your hotel occupies the most fashionable corner of Rio, where the sugary sands of Ipanema and Arpoador meet, there is some pressure to do justice to its location. Fortunately, it was to São Paulo's master of luxury hospitality, Rogério Fasano, that the opportunity fell to inject some much needed pizzazz into a tired Rio hotel scene. Today, the Fasano is the hotel to which everyone flocks, to witness invigorating sunrises and sunsets, to take front-row seats to the most outrageous carnival blocos and to witness action on the world's most beautiful urban beach. Inside, the sophisticated gloom of Philippe Starck's corridors is punctuated by Gaetano Pesce's voluptuous, spotlighted La Mamma chairs, while designer touches in the rooms are rendered almost obsolete by the flawless views. The hotel is crowned by a rooftop bar so in demand that Paulistanos book rooms for whole weekends to sip the moreish caipirinhas and, downstairs, enjoy the best restaurant in town, Fasano al Mare, helmed by award-winning chef Paolo Lavezzini. Doubles from £480.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£300 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

- [The best all-inclusive Caribbean hotels](#)



Belle Mont Farm

St Kitts

8/10 Telegraph expert rating

Set a thousand foot up in the rainforested hills of northern St Kitts, Belle Mont Farm opened just over a year ago and strives to be a game-changer in the world of sustainable luxury. Created by the charismatic Trinidadian entrepreneur Val Kempadoo, and built and staffed by islanders, it sits on a 400-acre organic farm, with uplifting views across to the neighbouring island of St Eustatius. The 84 wooden guesthouses designed by star architect Bill Bensley come in a grand, Caribbean-colonial style with a majestic four-poster bed, private plunge pool and outdoor bath. Activities include mountain hikes and golf (on a pioneering organic course), but the most compelling reason to visit is the groundbreaking cuisine served in The Kitchen restaurant. Here, French chef Christophe Letard is not only rethinking ways to use local ingredients such as sorrel, christophene and guava, he's also teaching Kittitians how to follow his innovative style. The result is a banquet of farm-to-table treats, including a delightful tropical breakfast served in the nursery gardens and a Sunday brunch served with free-flowing Bollinger. Double rooms from £731.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£189 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Mr & Mrs Smith

- [The best hotels in St Kitts](#)



Shutters on the Beach

Santa Monica, Los Angeles, United States

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

This is the hotel where every celebratory event could be spent, with the same cocktail in hand (a dirty martini; hold the vermouth). From the moment guests pull into the famous Santa Monica hotel driveway

there's an old-school attention to service that, unlike so many Californian hotels, never borders on overfamiliarity. A preposterously handsome, preppy young valet helps guests out of their cars and carries their bags past the collection of Hockney, Lichtenstein and Jasper Johns art works lining the walls of the living room and up to one of the 186 guest rooms. Unless they book one of the hotel's 33 ocean-view suites, some visitors may find the view disappointing. But interior decorator Michael S Smith (who also decorated the White House) has made up for this by turning even the smallest room into a miniature beach house, complete with oak floors and hand-stitched Indian throws. In any case, the best view is accessible to all, from the bar balcony, where brunch, lunch or tea can be ordered from the hotel restaurant, 1 Pico (the homemade corned beef with biscuits and gravy is out of this world) and watch the sun go down over Santa Monica Pier. Double rooms from £382.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£442 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

- [Fifty of Britain's cosiest hotels](#)



The Ranch at Rock Creek

Montana, United States

8/10 Telegraph expert rating

Investment banker James Manley saw 500 ranches before he found one that matched his wishlist. A valley to ensure privacy: check. A mountain he could ski on: check. “A cool Western town” nearby: check. He didn’t want grizzlies, rattlesnakes or cougars (though there are elk, moose, deer, less dangerous bears and wolves). The altitude needed to be not so elevated as to cause mountain sickness. And he wanted a river teeming with trout. Eventually he settled on 6,800 acres of the Anaconda-Pintler wilderness, restored its 19th-century buildings and added a granite lodge, some long cabins (the loveliest are Bluebird and Eagle’s Perch) and a row of riverfront tents. The real

appeal, however, is the activities: all the riding, shooting, fishing, archery, mountain biking and, in winter, skiing, skating, snowmobiling, sledding and sleigh rides you have the energy for are included, as are three meals a day and drinks, even in its Silver Dollar Saloon, where you sit on swivelling saddles at a bar encrusted with real silver dollars. There's nowhere better to connect with your inner Jesse James. Doubles from £1,290.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£2,019 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Mr & Mrs Smith

The Middle East, Africa & Indian Ocean



Qasr Al Sarab

Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

Thanks in no small part to its location on the edge of the Empty Quarter, a 250,000sq mile expanse of dramatic desert, this ambitious property (imagine building a five-star hotel's foundations in sand, and the logistics of water and electricity) leaves visitors with a real sense of the romance of Arabia. This is also achieved by the architecture and attention to detail shown both in the hotel's main building (beautifully lit at night) and in the fine individual villas, which command soul-enhancing views. The fortress-style structure appears like a mirage, from which one can take in the stillness and silence, momentous sunsets and black, starry nights. There are five excellent restaurants, a full-service Anantara spa and plenty of activities to choose from. Guests can also arrive by helicopter. Double rooms from £233.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£204 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com



Four Seasons Resort Maldives at Landaa Giraavaru Maldives

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

The first thing you notice is the scale, as this Maldivian island resort in the remote Baa Atoll is unusual in offering nearly two million square foot of exotic tranquillity. Plenty of room for the wide palm-lined boulevard leading to the heart of the hotel and beyond to extensive cycle paths cocooned by mature gardenia and lantern trees. Plenty of scope for privacy in the coral-fronted villas complete with traditional open-air rooms, a 39ft pool and a secluded walkway to the sugar-soft beach. Then there is the award-winning three-acre spa – a serious health centre with an Ayurvedic retreat providing up to three-week holistic programmes. Best of all are the resort’s sustainable initiatives, including a well-established turtle conservation scheme, a coral-reef regeneration programme (4,500 coral frames to date) and a pioneering manta-ray research project – all managed by a team of marine scientists. Add to this an exemplary service style led by the Zen-like calm of general manager Armando Kraenzlin and you have perfect hospitality in one of the world’s most alluring environments. Double rooms from £756.

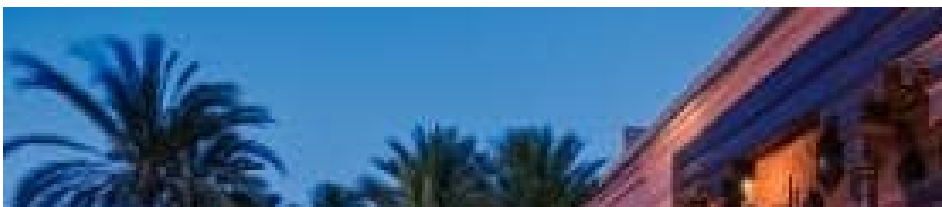
[Read expert review](#)

From
£778 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

• [Top 10: the most romantic Maldives hotels](#)





Royal Mansour Marrakech

Marrakech, Morocco

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

People don't come to this hotel for a buzz or to be part of a scene. It was built at the behest of Morocco's king, Mohammed VI, as a garden oasis and a showcase for Moroccan craftsmanship, and is a palace of calm. What sings out loud, though, is the beauty of the buildings: intricately carved domed ceilings, walls adorned with zellij tiles, elaborate stucco detail and charming, homely mud-walled riads with fireplaces, characterful bedrooms and roof terraces for sundowners. For those who do want to see other people, there's a glam cigar lounge and a cocktail bar, the best hotel boutique in Marrakech, and a cathedral-sized white spa and hammam in which to steam. Or there is exquisite food to savour: French and Moroccan morsels by the Parisian Michelin-starred chef Yannick Alléno, and a perfect breakfast served outdoors beside lemon trees, from thick orange juice and crisp French pastries to sweet Moroccan figs and honey. If you ever wanted to know how kings lived, this is where you find out. Double rooms from £550.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£1,111 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

• [Top 10: the best riad hotels in Marrakech](#)





Burj Al Arab Jumeirah

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

Ever wanted to live like an oligarch? There's nothing subtle about the Burj Al Arab, from its name (meaning "tower of the Arabs") to its bold 1,053ft -high sail-shaped structure (still, at 15 years old, this is the third tallest hotel in the world) built on its own small artificial island. Inside, all 202 rooms are duplex suites; the smallest is 1,819sq ft. The 590ft -high atrium is a showstopper. It's a combination of the luxurious rooms (with thick, heavy doors, marble floors, winding staircase, personal office with an iMac, Burj Al Arab-branded wine, massive bathrooms with whirlpool tub baths, unique and panoramic views of Dubai) and the service that makes this an exceptional place to stay. There's a staff-to-suite ratio of eight to one and every floor is equipped with a desk of two butlers, staffed 24 hours a day. They'll address you by name and escort you through the gold-plated lifts and corridors. There are nine bars and restaurants; breakfast is a choice of three enormous but very different buffets. And all the time you feel wonderfully and exhilaratingly insulated from reality. Double rooms from £1,076.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£706 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

• [The best hotels in Dubai](#)



&Beyond Mnemba Island

Mnemba Island, Tanzania

8/10 Telegraph expert rating

It takes just 15 minutes to circumnavigate this tiny island, a mile off the northeast coast of Unguja, known to most as Zanzibar. After the first lap – a blissful stroll on powder-soft sands encircling a casuarina forest that sticks up like a tuft of unruly hair – one starts to feel proprietary: a bizarre emotion but one, so staff assure, that is normal. Each of the 10 large bandas – castaway shacks hidden in the dappled forest shade, with a sandy walkway to the beach and striated blue horizon – is open to the breeze and ocean sounds. Comprising an enormous raised bedroom with steps down into a coir-carpeted lounge-cum-dining room with plush sofas, the luxury in this context feels decadent, as does the privacy – the only visitors are the delicately boned suni antelopes and, at sundown, a barefoot butler who brings cocktails and lanterns to light the walkway. Delicious meals are served while you dig your toes into the sand, and snorkelling amid gem-like fish is a few strokes from the shore. Mnemba is punted as a perfect honeymoon spot – I think it’s even better for couples seeking to reignite smouldering embers. This island is one powerful aphrodisiac. Double rooms from £1,052.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£620 per night

• [Top 10: romantic Mauritius hotels](#)



Singita Sasakwa

Serengeti National Park, Grumeti Reserves, Tanzania

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

There are dozens of safari camps as romantic as this, and sited in places as rich in wildlife. But Sasakwa isn't a camp. It's the most elegant boutique bush hotel on the African continent: a glamorous colonial-style, no-expense-spared Tanzanian outpost for those who want to see wildlife without giving up an ounce of comfort. Rooms are little villas, with plunge pools and sumptuous modern interiors by South African style gurus Cécile & Boyd. Food is as delicate and fresh as any fine-dining establishment (orange-yolked eggs benedict, Norwegian

smoked salmon, mango crème brûlée), but served under trees, on lamplit verandas or in silver-strewn dining rooms. When guests don't fancy going on safari with expert guides, there are spa rooms, tennis courts, infinity pools and, for proficient riders, fine horses on which to gallop alongside giraffe or mingle with tens of thousands of wildebeest as they snort and chomp. Or there are planters' chairs, festooned with feather cushions, from which to soak up the spectacular views of the Serengeti, and the privilege of being one of only 98 guests within 350,000 hectares of private reserve. Double rooms from £1,895.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£1,915 per night

• [The best hotels in Africa](#)



Ellerman House

Cape Town, South Africa

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

Perched high above the Atlantic, in a 1.5-acre terraced garden carved out of the Bantry Bay cliffs, Ellerman House enjoys perhaps the most spectacular location in Cape Town, a city not short on views. With just 13 rooms and suites sharing the sprawling grounds, and outsiders welcome by prior arrangement or guest invitation only, Ellerman House is also the most private hotel in the city, a secluded retreat with the kind of hushed atmosphere that suits the many regular visitors who treat it as their Cape Town home. Urbane owner Paul Harris is also one of the foremost collectors of South African art: every wall here is testament to his great eye and deep pockets. Even Harris's enormous wine collection, displayed in an innovative "wine gallery" and described by many as a work of art in its own right, is – along with the 24-hour guest pantry (chock-full with delectable home-baked savoury and sweet treats), sumptuous rooms, Cape Riviera views and intuitive service – part of the sum that sets this house apart. Double rooms from £310.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£534 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

• [The best hotels in Cape Town](#)



North Island Seychelles

Seychelles

9/10 Telegraph expert rating

It's no coincidence that Hollywood chose North as the real incarnation of Thunderbirds' Tracy Island for the film. Guests, a mixture of potentates, oligarchs, celebrities and royals, arrive by helicopter from Mahé to stay in just 11 totally private villas. They're so spacious that 10 are labelled Presidential and the biggest simply called Villa North Island. North redefines beach chic, with sumptuous natural fabrics and acres of polished driftwood furniture and doors. Guests set their own dress code, and order whatever they like from the chef. This isn't simply a smart hotel and spa beside a beach covered in fine sand the colour of spun sugar. It has some of Seychelles' best diving and fishing, kite-surfing and hiking. Nesting turtles regularly come ashore, and on the long west beach there are flying foxes, fairy terns, whimbrels and crab plovers: evidence of the owners' pledge to make it a Noah's Ark. Double rooms from £4,435.

[Read expert review](#)

From
£5,740 per night

[Check availability](#)

Rates provided by Booking.com

Contributions from Ariela Bard, Rosemary Behan, Annie Bennett, Adrian Bridge, Michelle Jana Chan, Gill Charlton, Lee Cobaj, Sally Davies, Pippa de Bruyn, Kiki Deere, Danielle Demetriou, Fiona Duncan, Tim Ecott, Lisa Grainger, Doug Gray, Gabriella Le Breton, Lee Marshall, Fred Mawer, Fionnuala McHugh, Johnny Morris,



Travel latest



The best Amazon basin cruises to book now

15:45



Why Italy's unsung northern star should be your next city break

14:45



PREMIUM

Is it time to return to Sousse? Four years after the Tunisia beach attack, we visited to find out

14:07



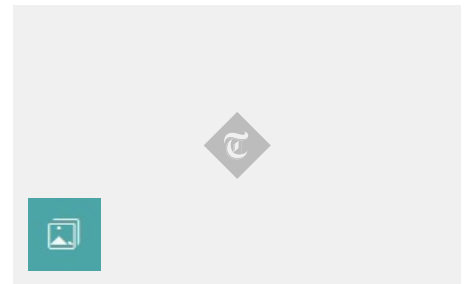
Ruins, dolphins and Dominic West's castle: the best of Ireland's newest drive

13:39



The rise and rise of Riga, the Paris of the North

12:27



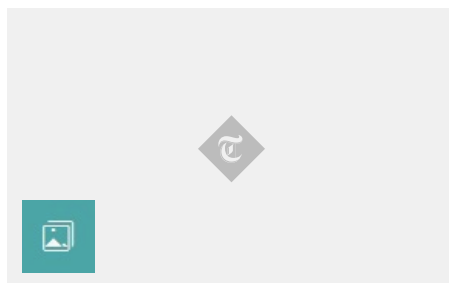
The 15 most beautiful Croatian islands

11:45

Hotel Hit Squad: The Richmond Harbour Hotel is a great finishing point for a west London-ish safari – even for territorial eastenders

MARK C. O'FLAHERTY

11:44



PREMIUM

12 scenes from famous paintings that you can actually visit

11:14

The US now wants to check travellers' social media - and it's going to cause chaos

DAVID MILLWARD

11:05





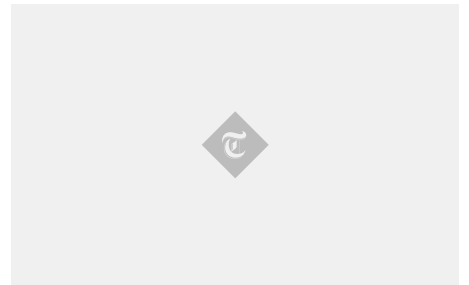
Cruise ship review: MSC Magnifica

10:31



Guitars, bars and country music stars – an expert guide to Nashville

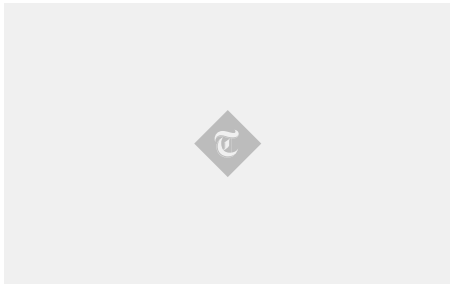
10:25



◆ PREMIUM

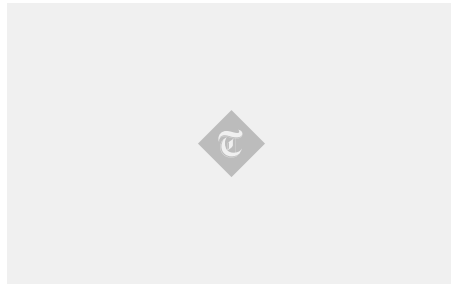
10 beautiful beaches in Majorca, from secluded coves to silky sands

9:45



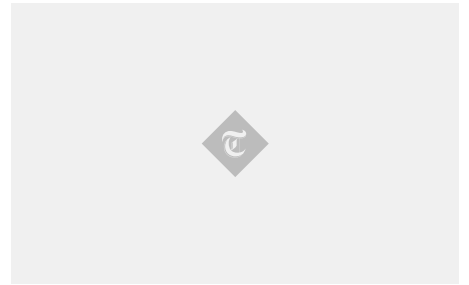
The greatest hotels in Britain for summer

9:45



48 hours in ... Melbourne, an insider guide to Australia's hipster hub

9:45



◆ PREMIUM

Where to shop in Porto for everything from salted cod to stylish soaps

9:00



How to fill your time in Buenos Aires, without spending a single peso

9:00



48 hours in ... Porto, an insider guide to Portugal's splendid second city

9:00



◆ PREMIUM

The best things to see and do in Porto

9:00



◆ PREMIUM

Eat like a local in Porto: 9 of the best restaurants in the city

9:00



◆ PREMIUM

9 of the best places for drinking and dancing in Porto

9:00



◆ PREMIUM

The best places to drink and dance after dark in Buenos Aires

9:00

