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The World's Coolest Eco Pools

8 MINS

Hotels and hospitality groups are turning to sustainable pools and even ponds to make an environmental splash with eco-conscious travellers

BY LIZA FOREMAN APRIL 8, 2026

he modern traveller faces a pools paradox: the desire for luxury amenities like heated pools alongside growing environmental consciousness. Hotel swimming pools traditionally consume vast

This new wave of innovative hoteliers is reimagining the hotel pool as an opportunity for sustainability rather than an environmental liability. From natural swimming ponds filtered by plants to sophisticated heat-recovery systems and solar heating, eco pools are becoming a competitive advantage for conscious travellers seeking resorts that balance indulgence with environmental responsibility.

Here are our top ten picks leading the way in eco pool innovation.

Bio-Hotel Stanglwirt, Austria



Family-run for over 400 years, award-winning Stanglwirt is renowned for its crystal-clear Kaiserquelle spring water and a guest list that included Jane Goodall, no less. At the heart of its 'water worlds' offering is a 517 m² natural swimming lake, clad in local stone and native plants, and kept pristine by a chemical-free filtration system. The dramatic indoor rock pool, built with 750 tonnes of stone from the Wilder Kaiser Mountain range and fed directly from a monitored spring, flows through a grotto into a heated outdoor eco pool at 32 °C with sweeping Alpine views.

channeled through heat pump technology to naturally warm the pools, biomass heating for the resort is fuelled by bark waste from local sawmills; and 100 per cent CO₂-free hydroelectric power supplies clean electricity. It's little wonder that the world's favourite primatologist chose this alpine haven for a little R&R. From €530 per night. staybeyondgreen.com

Finca Can Marti, Ibiza



Since 2009, Can Marti – a rustic eco hotel located in and around a 400-year-old Ibicencan farm house – has pioneered Ibiza's first natural swimming pool, adapting Bioteich's Swiss technology to the island's unique climate. This innovation addresses Ibiza's severe summer water shortages, driven by high tourist volumes, limited freshwater sources, and depleted aquifers. Unlike conventional pools that require complete annual water changes, its natural pool only needs occasional topping up thanks to its organic cleaning system.

The sustainable filtration utilises volcanic pebbles and plant-root filtration, with a cascade that ensures continuous water flow. This natural mechanism optimises pH and oxygen levels while reducing evaporation without the use of chemicals. Surrounding plants enhance purification while supporting an ecosystem that controls mosquito larvae naturally. The Ibiza-specific adaptation incorporates sugarcane, which purifies water through its roots while producing biomass used as supplementary animal feed. From 230 euros per night for a suite. canmarti.com



Heckfield Place is a luxurious Georgian manor house hotel set within a magnificent 400-acre estate in the rolling countryside of rural Hampshire, England, just an hour from London.

At this country retreat, guests can experience the joy of wild swimming in the estate's Lower Lake. This natural swimming spot offers deep, clear waters embraced by majestic trees and bordered by lush grassy shores—a perfect balance of untamed nature and thoughtful curation. For those new to wild swimming, a teacher can offer guided experiences, while experienced swimmers can enjoy solitary communion with the natural environment, embodying Heckfield Place's commitment to authentic, restorative experiences. From £650 per room per night. heckfieldplace.com

Hotel Das Rübezahl, Germany



This boutique Bavarian retreat demonstrates that luxury and sustainability can coexist harmoniously. The hotel utilises a sophisticated heat recovery system that repurposes waste heat from cold storage to warm both their outdoor eco pool and whirlpool. Combined with an on-site photovoltaic system that generates power from the sun and a modern combined heat and power plant, Das Rübezahl generates 85 per cent of its energy needs internally. Guests enjoy heated pools at a comfortable 30-32°C with panoramic views of the Alps, while the hotel maintains its commitment to resource conservation.

The hotel has 300,000 bees in their apiary over six bee colonies. Guests can go on a tour with beekeeper Sebastian during their stay. The Rübezahl bee house is 10 minutes' away from the hotel and offers a fantastic view of Neuschwanstein Castle and the breathtaking mountain scenery.

hotelruebezahl.de

Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel, Peru



Located in the cloud forest near Machu Picchu, this luxury hotel features a natural spring-fed eco pool integrated with the surrounding environment. The pool is designed with sustainability principles in mind, avoiding the conventional resource-intensive systems of many hotel pools.

Inkaterra is known for its commitment to ecological practices across its properties and is recognised by the United Nations as the world's first 'climate positive' hotel brand, with its facilities designed to work in harmony with the natural Andean cloud forest setting. From \$498 plus taxes per night for a superior double room. reservations.inkaterra.com

Les Trois Rois, Basel, Switzerland



One of Europe's oldest and most illustrious city hotels – former guests include Napoleon Elizabeth II, Pablo Picasso, and Thomas Mann – Les Trois Rois has been perched on the banks of the Rhine for more than 300 years. The five-star hotel has embraced the city's famous swimming tradition rather than building a conventional pool. Upon request, guests receive specially designed waterproof swimming bags to participate in the centuries-old tradition of Rhine swimming – floating downstream with the current while personal belongings remain dry.

This approach eliminates the resource-intensive maintenance of pools while offering an authentic local experience that connects guests with Basel's cultural heritage and natural environment. Guests can warm up after their dip in a new Seijaku spa that has opened in an extra wing overseen by local architects Herzog & de Meuron, offering Japanese-inspired wellbeing and an icy plunge pool, not to mention feasting afterwards at the hotel's famed in-house restaurant, Le Cheval Blanc. From 564 euros per night. lestroisrois.com

Muxima-Aljezur, Portugal



At Muxima, a converted single-story farmstead near Aljezur, southwest Portugal, guests can enjoy a stunning, large natural swimming pool that has become a highlight of the property. The natural eco pool features chemical-free water that's purified through ecological filtration systems, offering swimmers a refreshing alternative to chlorinated pools. Surrounded by the tranquil Portuguese countryside, the pool provides a perfect balance of wild swimming sensibilities with the convenience and safety of a designated swimming area. From 215 euros per room per night.

muxima-aljezur.com

NaturHotel Outside, Matrei in Osttirol, Austria



Nestled within Austria's Hohe Tauern National Park, NaturHotel Outside exemplifies the marriage of luxury and sustainability. This family-run establishment, with the young couple Alessa Konrad and Daniel Ganzer at the helm, is passionate enough about sustainability to invest €250,000 (AED 1.23m) in a revolutionary system for one of four pools at this Alpine getaway. The heated outdoor eco pool has been specially designed to empty after 30 minutes of non-use, during non-peak hours. It refills in just 11 minutes upon the press of a button.

Facilities at this peaceful indoor-outdoor spa include the first Deferegger healing brine bath, which, at around 600,000 years old, is one of the oldest and most effective healing waters in the world. From East Tyrol, the water provides regeneration and relief with its constant 35°C and mineral-rich composition. For sauna lovers, there are five different saunas. The relaxation rooms with mountain views are designed with local natural materials, such as Swiss stone pine and larch. The four star hotel's facilities now include a newly designed 1,000 m² spa garden with an extended natural pool.

hotel-outside.at

Singita Lebombo Lodge, Kruger National Park, South Africa



Located in a water-scarce region within South Africa's iconic Kruger National Park, Singita Lebombo approaches pool sustainability as a conservation imperative. The lodge's lap pool and plunge pools adjust energy consumption based on usage patterns. An off-grid thermodynamic heat pump powered by a solar array provides pool heating during cooler months, while specialised eco pool covers minimise both water evaporation and heat loss. Cartridge filters eliminate the need for backwashing, saving water during cleaning and preventing environmental contamination by chemicals. From \$2,600 per person per night. [safari.com](https://www.safari.com)

Yorkshire Spa Retreat, England



Nestled in the picturesque Yorkshire countryside, on the edge of the North York Moors National Park, natural pool specialists Biotop's innovative wild swimming pond at the Yorkshire Spa Retreat offers a harmonious blend of natural design and ecological engineering.

Unlike conventional pools, this self-cleaning ecosystem uses specialised plants and microorganisms to naturally purify the water, eliminating the need for harsh chemicals. Swimmers enjoy crystal-clear waters surrounded by carefully curated aquatic vegetation that creates both visual beauty and biological balance. The pool's design incorporates natural stone features that seamlessly integrate with the landscape, making each swim in this eco pool feel like an immersion in nature.

The Biotop experience extends beyond swimming, forming the centerpiece of a comprehensive wellness journey. After a refreshing dip that stimulates the body's natural systems, guests can transition to complementary thermal experiences including the Hydrotherapy Pool, Himalayan Salt Sauna, and Herbal Steam Room before relaxing in the luxury lodge or Shepherds Huts all set within eight acres of rolling parkland. From £535 per week for a two bedroom lodge. yorkshire-spa-retreat.co.uk



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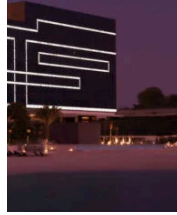
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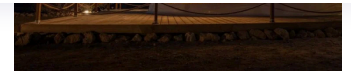
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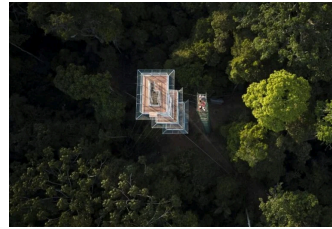
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