

TRAVEL CONFIDENTIAL

THE NAKED TRUTH—FROM GUIDES, WAITERS, MAIDS, FLIGHT ATTENDANTS, AND MORE

Condé Nast Traveler

TRUTH IN TRAVEL

MAY 2013

HOT LIST 154 BEST NEW HOTELS IN THE WORLD

INCLUDING 62 UNDER \$300

PLUS

35 BLISSFUL SPAS

**AUSTRALIA'S
SEXIEST CITY**
(NO, IT'S NOT SYDNEY)

**BRAZIL'S
SWEETEST BEACH**
(A REAL BEAUTY IN BAHIA)

**NEW YORK'S
NEW RIVIERA**
(THRILLS ON THE WATERFRONT)

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Hot HOTELS

Hot LIST EXTRAS

LOOK FOR THE FOLLOWING ITEMS THROUGHOUT THESE PAGES:

THE HOTTIES

Thirteen hotel details we loved this year. Starting on page 71.

THE PREDICTORS

A designer, architect, restaurateur, spa maven, and hotshot Hollywood director (turned hotelier) on what's next for luxury lodging. Starting on page 60.

THE INNOVATION REPORT

Four hotels, from New York to Stockholm, that are making their own rules. Starting on page 100.



DOWNLOAD OUR DIGITAL EDITION FOR A STUNNING PHOTO PORTFOLIO OF THIS YEAR'S 23 HOTTEST PROPERTIES—THEN VISIT CONDENASTRAVELER.COM/HOTLIST FOR PHOTOS OF EVERY HOTEL, STANDOUTS FOR FOOD AND HISTORY, AND A WHOLE LOT MORE. SEE PAGE 14 FOR DETAILS.

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Hub Porteño, Buenos Aires

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Kingsford Homestead, Kingsford
Park Hyatt, Sydney
QT, Sydney

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Ritz-Carlton, Vienna
Topazz, Vienna

66 BELIZE

El Secreto, Ambergris Caye

66 BHUTAN

Uma Punakha, Punakha Valley

66 BOTSWANA

Duma Tau Camp, Linyanti Wildlife Reserve

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Botanique Hotel & Spa, Campos do Jordao

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Hangar Eco Village & Spa, Easter Island
Surazo, Matanzas
Palacio Astoreca Hotel, Valparaiso

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Four Seasons Hotel, Guangzhou
Tai O Heritage Hotel, Hong Kong
Four Seasons Hotel Pudong, Shanghai
Twelve at Hengshan, Shanghai

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Casa San Agustín, Cartagena

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Kurá Design Villas, Uvita

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Falkensteiner Hotel & Spa Iadera, Zadar

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Eden Roc, Cap Cana

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Café Royal Hotel, London
Dorset Square Hotel, London
InterContinental Westminster, London
South Place, London

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Mama Shelter, Marseille
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Dorado Beach, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve, Dorado

99 QATAR

St. Regis, Doha

99 SCOTLAND

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Glencoe House, Glencoe

100 SERBIA

Metropol Palace, Belgrade

100 SINGAPORE

W Singapore-Sentosa Cove, Singapore

100 SLOVENIA

Vander Urbani Resort, Ljubljana

100 SOUTH AFRICA

Madikwe Safari Lodge, Madikwe Game Reserve

100 SOUTH KOREA

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Alpina Gstaad, Oberort
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The Siam, Bangkok
Sofitel So, Bangkok
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110 UKRAINE

Fairmont Grand Hotel Kyiv, Kiev

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Hyatt Capital Gate, Abu Dhabi
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Palihotel, Los Angeles, California
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Rancho Valencia, Rancho Santa Fe, California
Inn at the Presidio, San Francisco, California
Mandarin Oriental, San Francisco, California
James Royal Palm, Miami Beach, Florida
St. Regis Bal Harbour Resort, Miami Beach, Florida
SLS Hotel South Beach, Miami Beach, Florida
Nantucket Hotel & Resort, Nantucket, Massachusetts
Wythe Hotel, Brooklyn, New York
Conrad, New York, New York
The NoMad, New York, New York
21c Museum Hotel, Cincinnati, Ohio
The Attwater, Newport, Rhode Island
Weekapaug Inn, Westerly, Rhode Island
Heywood Hotel, Austin, Texas

116 VIETNAM

InterContinental Danang Sun Peninsula Resort, Danang
An Lam Saigon River Private Residence, Ho Chi Minh City
Banyan Tree, Lang Co

is not. Though immersed in nature, you will not have to relinquish such luxuries as sophisticated, contextually relevant interiors (a clever spin on the intrepid explorer aesthetic), blue cheese and fig quiche and delicate almond tartlets at teatime, and informal wine-tastings before dinner. **If only:** It were possible to swim. **The room to book:** If traveling with friends or teens, request the Family Suite—two tents linked by an entrance deck (27-11-807-1800; tents from \$936). ●

BRAZIL

Botanique Hotel & Spa, Campos do Jordão

AAA The specs: Eleven villas and six suites in the Mantiqueira Mountains, 100 miles north of São Paulo. Amenities include personal butler service, guided birding expeditions, and beds with 600-thread-count sheets. **The look:** Rural Brazil for the 0.01 percent. It has a pitched-roof contemporary design with 120-year-old reclaimed wood beams, chocolate slate from a local mine, natural stone, bespoke mahogany furniture, and glass walls that overlook expansive kitchen gardens and forested hills. **The experience:** Your personal butler will show you to your room and help arrange activities such as horseback riding and lessons in capoeira (Brazilian martial arts)—or leave you free to wander the winding paths to the rock-lined pool after presenting you with a loaner smartphone on which you can call for service at any hour. Meals are a particular highlight, served in a ridgetop restaurant with 180-degree views, the better to appreciate locally inspired dishes like pupunha-palm-heart ravioli with mushrooms and *rucupá* reduction. Enjoy an artisanal *cochaço* or a 1957 Dunhill cigar as a pianist plays a few tunes. **If only:** Meals came with complimentary wine, in keeping with the luxury price. **The room to book:** If not the huge double villas then Xilema, a corner suite in the main lodge with a superb view over the valley and green hills (55-12-3797-6877; doubles from \$1,261). ●●●●●

CAMBODIA

Shinta Mani, Siem Reap
▲ 855-63-761-998; doubles from \$300. ●●●●●

CANADA

La Ferme, Baie-St-Paul
▲ 418-240-4100; doubles from \$145. ●●●●●

Ritz-Carlton, Montreal
AAA The specs: A four-year, \$200 million face-lift of Montreal's grande dame with 129 freshly conceived rooms in downtown's Golden Square Mile. **The look:** Turn-of-the-century grandeur. The exterior of the neoclassical 1912 building gives you an idea of the old-world atmosphere inside, where the Palm Court is a Gilded Age fantasy: cat-delabras, marble fireplace, oil portraits, and trompe l'oeil ceiling of

Hot HOTELS

THE HOTTIES

THOSE LITTLE DETAILS THAT ELEVATE OUR FAVORITE NEW HOTELS FROM LIKABLE... TO LOVABLE. ON THESE PAGES, THE 13 HOTTIES OF 2013.



1 ¹³ Best Signature Cocktail

The frozen coconut mojito at El Secreto in Belize, which looks healthy (its green color comes from muddled mint and lime juice) but tastes decadent.

2 ¹³ Best Healthy Power Breakfast

The extravagant organic buffet at Le Kaila, in Méribel, France, which includes honey on the comb, artisanal jams, and herbal supplements in glass vials.

3 ¹³ Best Bath-Time Product

The bars of herbal soap made in-house by Palacio Nazarenas in Cuzco, Peru, which are hand-cut from a big brick and brought to your room at check-in.

4 ¹³ Best Ice-Cream Flavor

The homemade African roibos ("red bush") herbal tea ice cream served at Singita Mara River Tented Camp in Tanzania's Serengeti National Park (pair it with the roibos-infused shortbread).

palm trees and birds. The creamy beige rooms bring you back to 2013 with electronic controls for everything, polished hardwood floors, and the occasional burst of color. **The experience:** Distinguished gray-haired couples and Montreal's movers and shakers fill Maison Boulud (yet another new Canadian outpost for the celeb chef), where they breakfast on haute rustic dishes like baked eggs with duck confit, while families splash around in the indoor saltwater pool. **If only:** The athletic facilities were better—the pool and gym, though pleasant, are small and can feel cramped. **The room to book:** The one-bedroom King Suite nets you 830 square feet with a living room and fireplace—perfectly cozy for freezing winter nights (514-985-0464; doubles from \$520). ●●●●●

Four Seasons Hotel, Toronto

AAA The specs: A 55-story, \$500 million glass tower standing above the boutiques and cafés of Toronto's posh Yorkville neighborhood. The first 21 floors house 259 guest rooms; floors 23-35 devoted to luxury condos. **The look:** Über-polished and somewhat austere, with huge dark wood columns and 1,700 commissioned pieces of art (check out the overhead installation resembling giant dandelions). The taupe- and-beige color scheme and stone floors lend a somewhat chilly atmosphere to public spaces; rooms are softer, with flowered fabric headboards and sweet little framed prints of Canadian wildlife. **The experience:** Four Seasons' new flagship property, replacing a tired concrete bulk around the corner, is a clear departure from the old-fashioned, out-of-date original. The sleek Daniel Boulud restaurant is a magnet for Toronto's upwardly mobile, and the 30,000-square-foot spa is the largest urban one in the Four Seasons chain. **If only:** You could connect more than one laptop to the hotel's Wi-Fi without paying an additional fee. **The room to book:** Anything on the tenth floor and above—any lower and

you might face another building (416-964-0411; doubles from \$480). ●●●●●

Shangri-La Hotel, Toronto

AAA The specs: A glittering 66-story glass tower in central Toronto, equidistant from the city's entertainment and financial districts. The hotel's 202 rooms occupy the first 17 floors, while the top 49 floors are for private residences. **The look:** Urban Zen. Subtle East Asian elements (a black-and-white Japanese watercolor here, a blue-and-white chinoiserie vase there, orchids everywhere) dot the property, which feels illuminated and airy (thanks to a soaring lobby space with plenty of blond wood and travertine stone (and the occasional pop of magenta from a silk pillow or a rug). Guest rooms are painted in soft cream, and the floor-to-ceiling windows that overlook the Toronto skyline create a cheery atmosphere, even on overcast winter days. Enormous bathrooms are swathed in veined marble and include the now almost ubiquitous TV in the mirror. **The experience:** It may attract a business crowd, but the Shangri-La has all the necessities for a city vacation, including indoor cabanas surrounding a whirlpool, a gorgeous hammam spa, and the excellent lobby-level restaurant, Bask, which focuses on Canadian-sourced seasonal fare. For those in search of a more raucous evening, chef David Chang's first non-U.S. Momotoku outpost is attached to the hotel. **If only:** There were space for a drink in the lobby lounge at night, which turns into a local hot spot once the sun sets. **The room to book:** One looking south (facing Adelaide Avenue) on a top floor, for views of the CN Tower and the water (647-788-8888; doubles from \$515). ●●●●●

CARIBBEAN

Sugar Beach, a Viceroy Resort, St. Lucia

▲ 758-456-8000; doubles from \$440. ●●●●●



ART AND SOUL
Mexico City's Downtown showcases the city's artistic riches.