

Pretty YOUNG THINGS

NEW HOTELS THAT NOT ONLY
CAPTURE THE TRAVEL ZEITGEIST,
BUT PAMPER AND THRILL
IN EQUAL MEASURE
BY AMBER GIBSON



INTERCONTINENTAL SHANGHAI WONDERLAND Songjiang District, Shanghai, China

InterContinental's 200th global property also happens to be the world's first underground hotel, built in an abandoned quarry in the city suburbs. It took more than 12 years, \$300 million, and 41 newly patented engineering solutions to bring this to life, and the results push the boundaries for what a luxury accommodation can be.

The glass waterfall, cascading cliffs, and convex and concave guest room wings hug the rock face in a harmonious yin and yang design (concept and facade by JADE+QA, led by British architect Martin Jochman), connecting city and nature and revitalizing an overgrown eyesore into a tranquil fantasy world an hour west of a city of 24 million.

"We took some big risks because it was totally unknown," Jochman related to *Forbes* in January. "The hotel comes out of nature." His firm refers to the project as the world's first "groundscraper."

Sixteen of the 18 floors are underground and two are actually underwater. There are 336 rooms and suites, including six underwater suites that have their own saltwater aquariums. Above-water rooms feature balconies, from which you can catch a nightly water and light extravaganza that puts the dancing fountains at the Bellagio Las Vegas to shame.

Guests can also kayak around the quarry, which has been filled with water, or go rock climbing, scaling almost 290 feet of cliff face. They can even zipline across the quarry at the theme park just next door. The resort's helicopter pad sits right in the middle, ensuring that you'll be the center of attention upon landing. Then grab a cocktail at steampunk-themed Quarry Bar before a hydrating body scrub and massage at An Spa. When it's time for dinner, choose between underwater restaurant Mr. Fisher for seafood or Cai Feng Lou for Chinese delicacies.

Rates start at \$509. Chen Hua Road No. 5888, Songjiang District, Shanghai, ihg.com/intercontinental/hotels/us/en/shanghai/shghe/hoteldetail

MANDARIN ORIENTAL, CANOUAN

Carenage Bay, Canouan Island, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

The first Mandarin Oriental in the Caribbean opened its doors last July after taking over Pink Sands Club and making some epic additions. For starters, there are seven new Italian-design patio villas to accompany the colonial era-inspired suites, enhanced butler service, and fully renovated and re-concepted spa and restaurants. The resort's private jet will pick you up in Barbados and whisk you away to this remote island paradise, just five square miles in size.

Start the day with French toast and mango butter before hiking up Mount Royal, Canouan's highest peak. Take in the panoramic views and decide where in the Grenadines



archipelago you'd like to explore. There's great deep-sea fishing and snorkeling (scenes from *Pirates of the Caribbean* were filmed nearby), and golfers and sailors will appreciate the Tom Fazio-designed championship golf course and luxury super-yacht marina. Relaxing at The Spa at Mandarin Oriental Canouan is another enticing option; elaborate rituals there envelop the entire body in coconut, ginger, and frangipani. There are also traditional Asian massage techniques and craniosacral head massage to induce sweet dreams.

Diverse restaurants feed earthly appetites, including pan-Asian cuisine at the lively open kitchen at Asianne. There's pan-seared snapper with chili-tossed pineapple, tandoori spiced lamb rack, and refreshing frozen matcha parfaits. Tides Bar + Grill focuses on local delicacies like conch salad, lobster ravioli, and salt-baked whole reef fish caught by local fishermen. Or pick your favorite soft sandy beach for a private dinner, courtesy of Castaway, enjoying a customized menu for dinner or breakfast. Perhaps sea urchin omelets paired with Laurent Perrier Champagne?

Rates start at \$1,600. Carenage Bay, Canouan Island, St. Vincent & Grenadines, mandarinoriental.com/

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MIRAVAL AUSTIN

Austin, Texas, USA

Hyatt made a big move in 2017 by purchasing Miraval and poured millions into transforming the former Travaasa Austin into a sister property to the original Miraval in Tucson. There are now 117 rooms and suites (up from 70), and the spa has been hugely expanded as well, from 10 to 30 treatment rooms. Treatments use botanicals harvested by guests from the on-site farm, and are inspired by the healing power of nature (the resorts sits on 220 acres in the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve). Head to dinner in your bathrobe after a Tibetan bowl massage, crystal energy healing, or Vasudhara (Thai massage while floating in water).

The Miraval ethos of mindfulness remains the same and Miraval Arizona loyalists will recognize the in-room meditation accessories and signature activities like cardio drumming and floating meditation. Water activities on nearby Lake Travis—like kayaking, stand-up paddleboarding, and fly-fishing—are unique to Austin, as is the 10-acre farm and flock of chickens laying eggs for breakfast.

A spiffy new culinary center, in partnership with Williams-Sonoma, offers classes on bone broth preparation, plant-based BBQ, knife skills, and chocolate appreciation. Its executive chef bakes his own bread every morning, and the tea selection is impressive (ask to see the off-menu cakes of vintage pu-erh). Adventurous eaters will enjoy the interactive five-course tasting menu at the chef's counter, but you can also get a hearty burger at the bar.



As wellness resorts go, Miraval is more mindful than medical, more fun and free-flowing than bootcamp-ish. Choose your own adventure, and you won't be bored. Later this year, a third Miraval is scheduled to open in the Berkshires.

Rates start at \$509 per person, double occupancy, including all meals and many on-site activities. 13500 FM2769, Austin, Texas, miravalaustin.com



Following a four-year closure for complete restoration, this property re-opened a year ago in the bohemian Saint-Germain-des-Prés neighborhood, grander and more elegant than ever. Originally opened in 1910, the refits preserve the spirit and charm of the Left Bank while offering the modern amenities travelers require. This is where James Joyce wrote *Ulysses*, and Picasso, Matisse, and Josephine Baker were all regulars. General Charles de Gaulle honeymooned here as a young officer before World War II.

A quarter of the 184 rooms are now suites, including seven specialty suites and two penthouses. Wellness is a priority, and signature spa treatments at Akasha Holistic Wellbeing Centre improve circulation, fight jet-lag, and relax the muscles and mind. The sauna, steam room, jacuzzi, and 17-meter long swimming pool are excellent by Parisian standards. Plus, complimentary fitness classes range from HIIT to yoga to shadow boxing—just what the doctor ordered to work off the calories from the hotel's many excellent restaurants.

Dine al fresco in the new internal courtyard adjacent to the Saint Germain salon with its colorful glass roof, or opt for traditional French fare at the new Lutetia Brasserie; Chef Gérard Passadat earned three Michelin stars in Marseilles, and this is his first Parisian address. Enjoy a glass of Champagne at Bar Joséphine (the Taittinger family are the hotel's new owners) under the historic fresco, followed by live jazz and



blues (with a smoke chosen by the cigar sommelier) in the intimate Bar Aristide.

Rates start at \$975. 45 Boulevard Raspail, Paris, hotellutetia.com



WALDORF ASTORIA BEVERLY HILLS

Beverly Hills, California, USA

This sterling property approaches its two-year anniversary this summer and just keeps getting better. It opened with a splash as Beverly Hills' most glamorous new build, and is still one step ahead of the fierce neighborhood competition in just about every regard, from the rooftop pool to the exquisite food.

This may be one of legendary interior designer Pierre-Yves Rochon's most impressive projects to date, a contemporary take on Art Deco motifs that's refined yet relaxed. With just 119 rooms and 51 suites (and only 18 rooms per floor), the hotel feels spacious and residential—a sense that's amplified by the floor-to-ceiling windows and private balconies big enough to enjoy breakfast—with sun-kissed views of the Hollywood Hills as a backdrop.

The Rolls-Royce house car will even run errands so you have time to get ready for dinner at Jean-Georges in your marble bathroom. It's easy to eat healthfully here, with top-quality seafood and meat prepared simply on the wood-burning grill accompanied by fresh local produce.

Technology is integrated smoothly, with a personal concierge available via text and an Alexa device in the room to ensure your car is ready the moment you step out the door. But when it's time to escape the barrage of technology, flee to the confines of La Prairie Spa for a facial with caviar (different from the caviar served with sea urchin and crispy potatoes that you had last night at dinner) or 24 karat gold. It's hard to imagine a place like this not feeling ostentatious, but the Waldorf Astoria Beverly Hills makes unnecessary luxury seem natural.

Rates start at \$815. 9850 Wilshire Boulevard, Beverly Hills, California, waldorfastoriabeverlyhills.com 



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