

SMART TIPS FROM OUR 129 TRAVEL EXPERTS

# TRAVEL + LEISURE

THE STYLE AND CULTURE ISSUE

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AMAZING  
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GOES FAR)**

# INSIDER



A guest room at the new Kelly Wearstler-designed Viceroy Anguilla. Clockwise from above left: A villa exterior; design details; one of the hotel's infinity pools.

## THE SCOOP: HOTELS

In the first installment of our newest column, T+L's discerning special correspondent, **Shane Mitchell**, highlights the 10 stylish hotels (city sanctuaries, sandy getaways, and more) where she hopes to lay her head next.



**Chic Sleeps** Clockwise from top left: Inside La Mamounia, redone by Jacques Garcia, in Marrakesh; the new Prince's Lodge suite at the Connaught Hotel, in London; Mediterranean views at La Réserve Ramatuelle's restaurant lounge, outside St.-Tropez; a bathroom in Hong Kong's Upper House.

**B** EING A RESTLESS SPIRIT DOES NOT MEAN I SLEEP poorly in a strange bed. On the contrary. I've slept well everywhere—whether a dirt-floored safari tent in Kenya's northern frontier or the opulent Vera Wang Suite at Oahu's Halekulani. Carefree outposts that don't object if I arrive a little disheveled appeal just as much as palaces for hire, and I will always choose quirky style over copycat chic. What counts in my much-stamped passport? Smart details by inventive designers, authentic cultural leitmotifs, and real soul. In fact, I always hold my breath for a moment as the key slides into the door of my room—it's the genuine anticipation of having expectations met when the next place I will spend the night is revealed. Here, my new obsessions.

It takes more than Wi-Fi and fresh paint for a classic hotel to stay *au courant*, but a few properties have recently been updated with panache. Closed for three years, **La Mamounia**

([mamounia.com](http://mamounia.com); doubles from \$760) glows again thanks to Jacques Garcia, known for gems like Paris's Hôtel Costes. The maximalist designer chose a garnet tone as the Marrakesh palace's signature color; it shines on the grand piano in the Majorelle Gallery and reappears on the fleet of Jaguars and Range Rovers parked outside. Every time I check in to the **Connaught Hotel** ([the-connaught.co.uk](http://the-connaught.co.uk); doubles from \$791), new surprises reaffirm it as my essential London address. On my last visit, the stodgy American Bar had been reincarnated as a lustrous cocktail lounge; the new Prince's Lodge (Room 518), an apricot-hued snuggery, has a walnut four-poster bed carved by Afghani artisans.

When on the hunt for new boutique hotels in Europe, I call the impeccable Lulu Townsend of Chic Retreats. Her portfolio is devoted to independent properties that she personally vets, so I was thrilled when she tipped me off about the 11-room **Maison Delaneau** ([maisondelaneau.com](http://maisondelaneau.com); doubles from \$314), >>



**Edinburgh, All Dressed Up** From left: The Rosa Suite at Hotel Missoni Edinburgh, the first hotel by the Italian fashion house; Cucina, the hotel's restaurant, done in Missoni prints; the exterior of the hotel.

a minimalist “love shack” in the middle of Antwerp. Those Belgians sure are naughty: there are handcuffs in the mini-bar. On a recent search for a sunny hideaway in the French Riviera, I avoided traffic in St.-Tropez and instead dropped in on Design Hotels’ **La Réserve Ramatuelle** ([lareserve-ramatuelle.com](http://lareserve-ramatuelle.com); doubles from \$852). This grouping of cream beachfront villas and suites with restrained beige and ocher interiors near Pampelonne would please Coco Chanel. **Il Salviatino** ([salviatino.com](http://salviatino.com); doubles from \$1,062), the latest Tuscan villa turned hotel, features a curious element: its Affresco Suite, where Italian craftsmen restored a Bruschi fresco, is accessed by a secret passage through the library. Heading north, stony gray Edinburgh never struck me as fashionable, but that’s about to change. At the **Hotel Missoni Edinburgh** ([hotelmissoni.com](http://hotelmissoni.com); doubles from \$347), the colorful Rosita Missoni brings a wild palette (fuchsia and turquoise walls; patterned bed throws) to the Royal Mile.

Equally stylish is Hong Kong’s art-focused **Upper House** ([upperhouse.com](http://upperhouse.com); price not available at press time) from Swire Hotels, a young company best known for last year’s cutting-edge Opposite House, in Beijing. In his positioning of large-scale works by top Asian sculptors, local designer Andre Fu reinterprets feng shui. In my opinion, the most compelling reason to come here is the view of the harbor from the 49th-floor Sky Lounge.

Then there’s reality-TV doyenne and hotel designer Kelly Wearstler, whose acid colors, layering of texture, and graphic

effects appeal to connoisseurs of her retro Hollywood aesthetic. At the **Viceroy Anguilla** ([viceroyanguilla.com](http://viceroyanguilla.com); doubles from \$695), on an island I love for its barefoot elegance, Wearstler has found a subdued vocabulary, using tons (literally) of stonework—pink coral; Bardiglio marble—to offset driftwood light fixtures. Local designers are featured in the boutique, including jeweler Ilka Harrigan, who makes tropics-inspired bangles.

Hotelier Rafael Micha has wickedly good taste and throws the best parties south of the border. The sexy scenesters who fill his rooftop bar at Condesa DF, in Mexico City, will certainly follow him to Acapulco for the opening of **Hotel Boca Chica** ([hotel-bocachica.com](http://hotel-bocachica.com); doubles from \$95). Micha commissioned artist Claudia Fernandez to scour estate sales for Modernist collectibles; she also picked up finds at La Lagunilla, my favorite flea market in Mexico. Reissues of Jean Prouvé’s Midcentury desk chair grace guest rooms, but the best seat in the house may be in the *palapa* bar, where Acapulco Sunrise cocktails are served.

There’s a preppier party happening on Florida’s Redneck Riviera at the **Postcard Inn on the Beach** ([postcardinn.com](http://postcardinn.com); doubles from \$119) by Steve Hanson, the restaurateur behind Dos Caminos and Wildwood Barbeque, in St. Petersburg, Florida. No doubt Hanson’s laid-back joint—surfboards in the rooms, a photo booth in the lobby—will be the playground for the yachting crowd that descends on St. Pete each winter. I’m packing my Top-Siders now. +



#### MUST HAVE

Jeweler Alexis Bittar’s Lucite hibiscus brooch, exclusively for Kauai’s new **St. Regis Princeville Resort**. Some of the proceeds benefit a local preserve. [starwoodhotels.com](http://starwoodhotels.com); brooch \$345.

#### SHANE'S MUST-DO LIST

#### MUST MEET

William Ole Siara, multilingual Masai cultural ambassador and guide at **Cottar’s 1920 Safari Camp**, adjacent to Masai Mara National Reserve, Kenya. [cottars.com](http://cottars.com); doubles from \$780 per person per night.

#### MUST TASTE

The turndown gherkin left on the pillow at Design Hotels’ **Lux 11**, in Berlin. [designhotels.com](http://designhotels.com); doubles from \$206.



#### MUST USE

**Hotel Fasano São Paulo’s** key-card booklet with a built-in walking map of the city. [fasano.com.br](http://fasano.com.br); doubles from \$640.

#### MUST DRINK

The Spice Market, a Jack Daniels whiskey cocktail infused with cardamom at the Blvd, the bar at the **Beverly Wilshire, A Four Seasons Hotel**. [fourseasons.com](http://fourseasons.com); drinks for two from \$34.