



WORLD'S BEST AWARDS '09

HOTELS ISLANDS CITIES AIRLINES, CRUISES + MORE

20 to Watch

To qualify for a World's Best Award, a hotel or company must receive a minimum number of votes from Travel + Leisure readers. We predict that the 17 hotels, plus the spa, the car rental agency, and the airline listed below will make Travel + Leisure's World's Best lists in the near future.

—*Edited by Catesby Holmes, Sarah Khan, and Shira Nanus*

NAME

Amantaka Luang Prabang

LAOS

Luang Prabang—one of this year's World's Best Cities—is the site of the latest Amanresort, a collection of French colonial-style buildings (nine of which are UNESCO World Heritage structures). Each of the 24 suites has a private plunge pool and outdoor dining pavilions; the public areas include an art gallery and a spa offering Southeast Asian techniques.

The Augustine

PRAGUE

Luxury hotelier Rocco Forte spread the 101 cubist-inspired guestrooms of his latest property among seven historic buildings in central Prague. Don't miss the best suite, which is set the 13th-century St. Thomas Monastery.

Borgo Santo Pietro

ITALY

Local antiques and hand-painted murals accent the seven unique rooms at this villa, built in the early 13th century. Its extensive gardens—whose fruits and vegetables go straight into the onsite restaurant—epitomize Tuscany's farm-to-table trend.

Fontainebleau

MIAMI

The famous hotel that defined Miami Beach in the 1970s is back after a \$1 billion renovation. The key stats: 11 restaurants and lounges, a 40,000 square-foot-spa, 1,054 guest rooms, and countless oceanfront pools.

Hotel Metropole Monte-Carlo

MONACO

Europeans are rediscovering this prestigious 146-room Cote d'Azur property, which was completely overhauled by French architect Jacques Garcia. Joel Rubuchon's influence is felt here, too. His first Japanese venture, Yoshi, is located on the ground floor.

JW Marriott Guanacaste Resort & Spa

COSTA RICA

A secluded expanse of picture-perfect Pacific coastline is only one of the remarkable features at this recently-opened resort. The 310 spacious rooms (all boasting oceanfront balconies) are also surprisingly affordable.

La Mamounia

MARRAKECH, MOROCCO

Lips are sealed regarding the details of Jacques Garcia's three-year total renovation of this Moroccan palace-turned-luxury hotel, which reopens later this fall. But given his work at Monte Carlo's Hotel Metropole, we expect that the property will shine.

Montage Beverly Hills

LOS ANGELES

On a prime swath of Los Angeles real estate, this new Spanish-style 201-room hotel mixes old-Hollywood style with sophisticated modern glam.

Leela Palace Kempinski Udaipur

INDIA

Consider arriving by boat to this regal retreat in Udaipur, this year's World's Best City (known as the Venice of the East). Eighty rooms are dressed in traditional Rajasthani fabrics and handicrafts, and all offer views of Lake Pichola.

One & Only Cape Town

SOUTH AFRICA

This urban waterfront property showcases regional motifs (African woods; local artwork) while revealing vistas of Table Mountain and two private islands offshore. Other notable details: It's One & Only's first South African venture, and Nobu and Gordon Ramsay have made the hotel the site of their African debuts.

Park Hyatt Shanghai

CHINA

Set in Shanghai's World Financial Center, this 174-room property offers avant-garde interiors, a spa with soaring city views, and a serene respite from the chaos 80 stories below.

Shangri-La Vancouver

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Six months before the 2009 Winter Olympics, Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts opened its first North American hotel, with 119 rooms that average 600-square-feet—by far the largest in the city.

Standard New York

NEW YORK

Andre Balazs' fourth Standard hotel New York's newest architectural icon—it's cantilevered above Manhattan's Meatpacking district and the renovated High Line.

St. Regis

MEXICO CITY

The Cesar Pelli-designed interiors of this conical glass skyscraper—spectacularly located on the tree-lined Paseo de la Reforma—lend it a feel that's simultaneously solid and airy, and the oversized windows in its 189 rooms feature unparalleled views of Mexico City.

Viceroy Anguilla

Kelly Wearstler-designed interiors set the stage for this secluded escape along 3,200 feet of pristine white-sand beachfront; amenities include private oceanview pools, gourmet kitchens, a two-story spa, five restaurants, and Viceroy's renowned hospitality and pampering.

W South Beach

MIAMI

Miami's first W property is a major departure for the brand: all 312 spacious guestrooms provide ocean views and are done in various shades of white and grey (as opposed to purple and slate). The hotel's restaurant, an outpost of the cult-favorite Mr. Chow, opens this summer.

Wynn Encore

LAS VEGAS

The newest resort in Steve Wynn's collection is less Las Vegas glam and more luxurious desert oasis. Case in point: The sunny casino has glass walls that look out onto verdant gardens and pools.



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