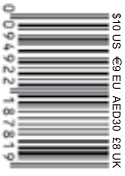


DESTINATIONS OF THE WORLD

news

Essential travel intelligence

September 2018



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TURISMO SPORT**

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ABU DHABI

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BAY WATCHING AT
SIX SENSES NINH VAN BAY

ADDRESS TO IMPRESS

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With unequalled views of Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, The Ritz-Carlton Abu Dhabi, Grand Canal is a world away from your daily stresses and strains



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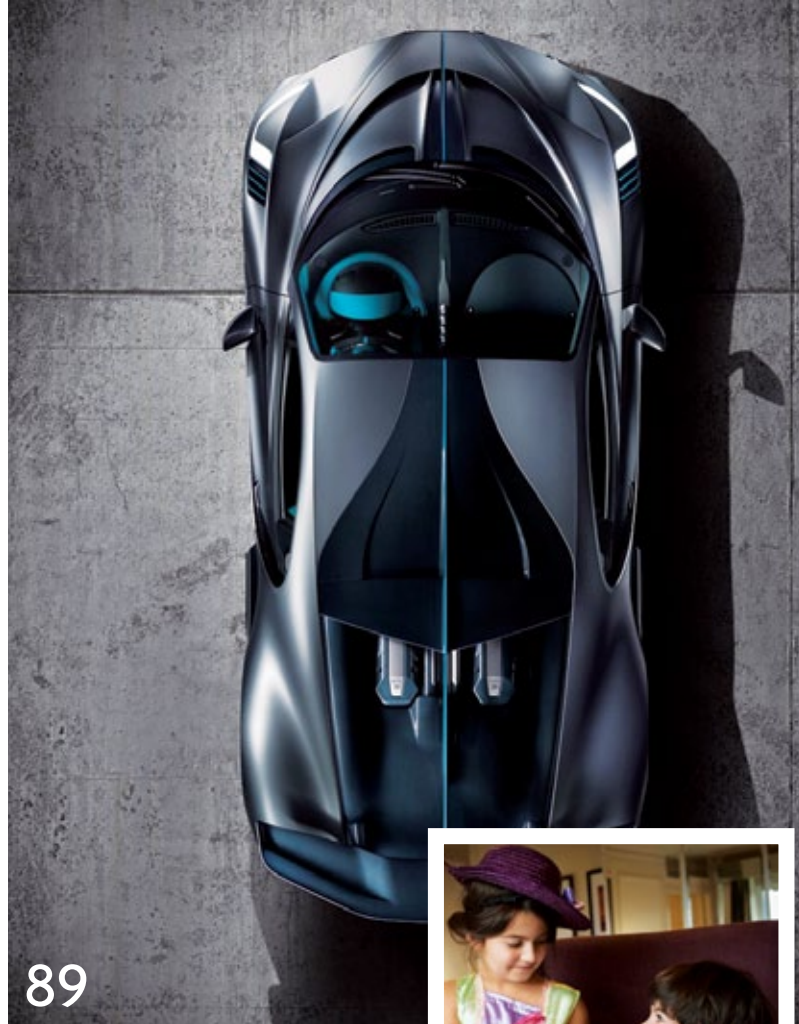
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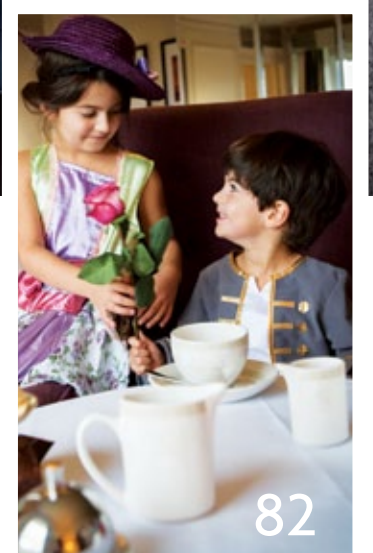
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A BRIGHT NEW LIGHT FOR PARIS

THE RENAISSANCE PARIS VENDÔME Hotel has reopened its doors following a multi-million dollar makeover that has breathed new life into the 1st arrondissement boutique. French interior designer Didier Gomez has taken inspiration from the nearby fashion houses and jewellers of the Rue Saint-Honore, which have helped the neighbourhood garner the reputation as one of the most exclusive in Paris.

The 97 guestrooms and suites have been given a bright, modern look, with striking pieces of art on the ceilings. On the ground floor, new-look cocktail bar Balagan recaptures Paris' 18th Century style, with red velvet banquettes, light pink curtains and a marble bar surrounded by stage lights creating a sultry, boudoir effect. The new lobby lounge, Le Studio, will host events focused on music, gastronomy, mixology and art, and the L'Atelier venue provides a blank canvas for private tailor-made events.



DESIGNER DINING AT BVLGARI MILANO

ITALIAN CHEF DI MODA NIKO ROMITO HAS BROUGHT his award-winning brand of contemporary Italian cuisine to Bvlgari Hotel Milano, with the opening of Il Ristorante Niko Romito. The Milan flagship of the Bvlgari Hotels collection is the latest to welcome an outpost of the restaurant, which is the result of a yearlong partnership with the Abruzzo-based chef, whose Reale restaurant holds three Michelin stars.

The chef describes the menu as, "a great gastronomic grand tour of the best of Italian cuisine," offering updated versions

of classic Italian dishes made with a touch of genius that has earned Reale a place on the San Pellegrino World's 50 Best Restaurants list.

Modern interpretations of classic dishes like lasagne and tiramisu give Romito an artistic license to create spectacular looking plates that befit the city's most elegant hotel; dishes curated from the same menu that appears at the restaurant's branches in Dubai, Shanghai and Beijing.

FLYING HIGH WITH THE LANESBOROUGH

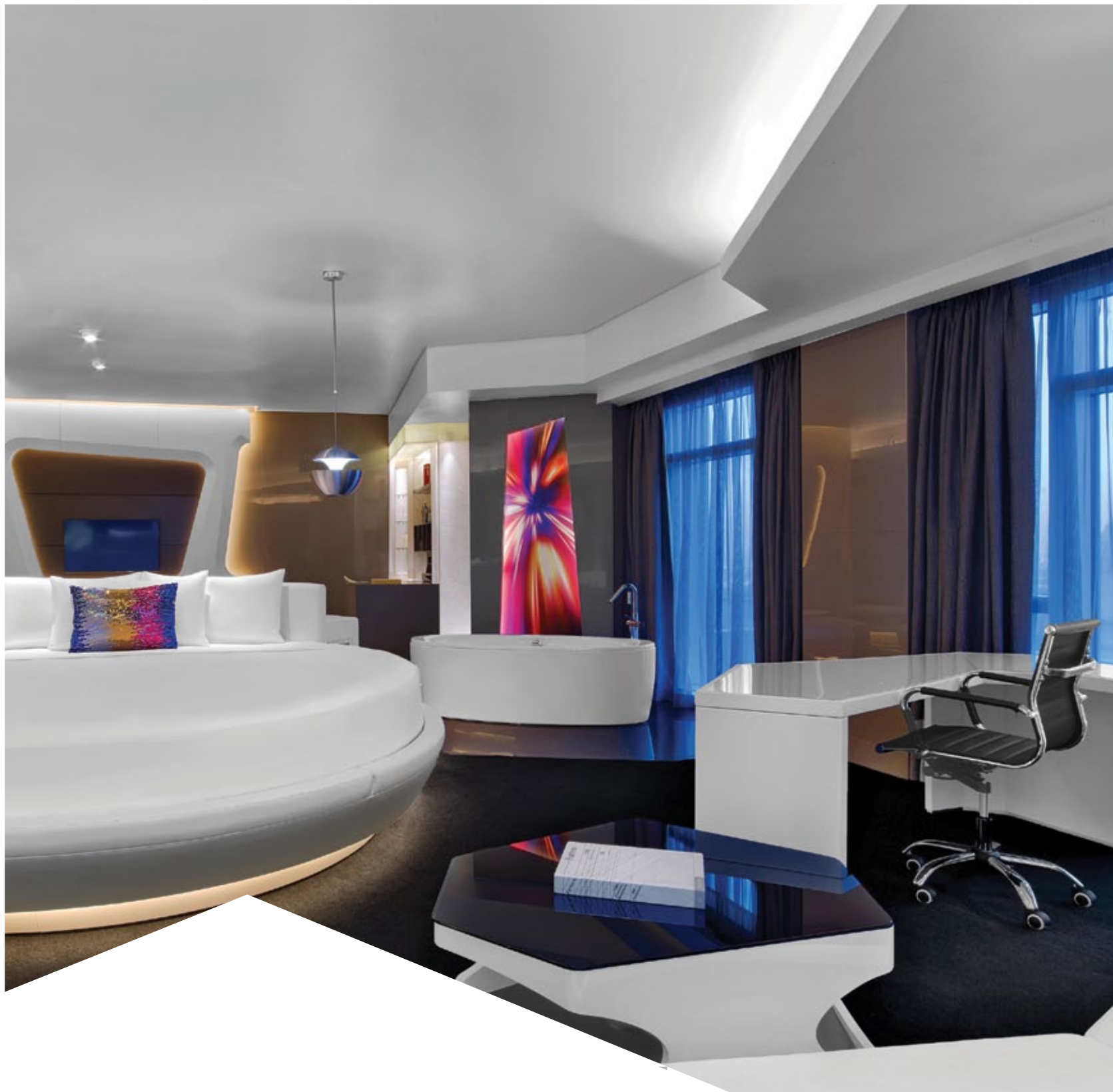


DRIVING AROUND THE UK CAPITAL CAN AT TIMES BE CHALLENGING, with congestion charges, bus lanes and maniacal cyclists making the streets of London a health hazard for hapless drivers. Sometimes you just want to escape it all and take to the skies; an idea made possible at The Lanesborough.

After spending an indulgent night relaxing at the Oetker Collection hotel, guests will be escorted by chauffeur-driven Mercedes S-Class beyond the city-limits to the fabled Goodwood Estate, home to some of the most prestigious motoring experiences in the UK. On this occasion, the motor involved will be attached to the single-propeller engine of a Spitfire aircraft.

After lunch and a pre-flight briefing to discuss your preferences – a leisurely flight to enjoy the scenery or a more dynamic experience with some aerial acrobatics – you will roar into the skies above East Sussex towards Beachy Head, flying at speeds of up to 300 mph, and taking the controls for a few heart-racing minutes to become part of aviation history.

The £9,000 (US \$11,715) price tag includes a night at The Lanesborough, transfers to Goodwood, lunch for up to four guests and two 20-minute Spitfire flights, each of which will be immortalised in a personalised 360-degree video.



LIVE LIFE TO THE FULLEST

Get ready to be wowed by a cosmopolitan take on hospitality. Soaring above the arterial Sheikh Zayed Road and the Dubai Water Canal, V Hotel Dubai, Curio Collection by Hilton rewrites the script on lifestyle. Ideal for business and play, V sets the stage for a lifetime of memories in the city of life. Live life to the fullest, just the way we do.

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CURIO COLLECTION BY HILTON

THE HEART OF DUBAI:

SWEDISH PALACES, SEAHORSE VILLAS AND SECOND HOMES



MALDIVIAN STYLE LUXURY ISLANDS, THEMED AROUND EUROPEAN NATIONS, LOCATED IN THE ARABIAN GULF – HAVE WE REACHED PEAK DUBAI?

WHEN THE EXQUISITELY AMBITIOUS THE HEART of Europe project was announced, many believed the concept designs were too lofty to see the light of day, but several years since the Kleindienst Group broke ground in The World archipelago, we've been given a glimpse of how some of the accommodations and facilities will look and feel. Construction work across the cluster of six islands will eventually culminate in an other-worldly leisure destination, consisting of five-star hotels, high-end residences, retail attractions and air conditioned outdoor streets – with year-round snow in certain themed locations. But one particular corner of the project has already been completed.

Following a showcase of the upcoming the adjacent Floating Seahorse villa, the first Sweden Beach Palace at Sweden Island was unveiled during a recent media tour led by Josef Kleindienst, Chairman of Kleindienst Group, who showcased the ultra-high-end property as part of the project to pioneer the freehold second home market in

the UAE. The nine lavish multi-storey pleasure palaces will be joined by one super-sized version, set in the landscaped, lush surrounds of Sweden Island, with each property boasting its own private section of beach, as well as a fully-owned piece of the marine area plot, including a private coral reef.

The first seven-bedroom Sweden Beach Palace is entirely en-suite and five of the palaces will be fitted out with luxurious Bentley Home interiors, while the remaining properties will be bespoke to the individual owners. Each property will incorporate a full gym and fitness centre including weights, cardio machines and stretching area, while the standout relaxation features include the Swedish temperature-controlled sauna, massage and spa room for therapy treatments, plus an extra special snow room that can be set as low as minus 5 degrees Celsius. This brings residents the health benefits of traditional Swedish hot and cold therapy.

“The Heart of Europe is a unique and ambitious project

aiming to develop Dubai's luxury freehold second home market in an idyllic island location,” said Josef Kleindienst. “Catering to residents and visitors who are looking for a dynamic, cultural experience, our developments at The Heart of Europe will boost tourism in the UAE. It will also offer investors the opportunity to choose from a range of high quality holiday properties that will be part of a vibrant touristic destination that includes hotels, restaurants and world-class attractions,” the chairman added.

The chairman also revealed that the palaces could cost in the region of AED 100 million, with freehold deals already in place. The project will be home to 4,000 units in total, 1,000 of which have already been sold – 40 of which could be handed over by the end of 2018, by which time the five-star Portofino Hotel is expected to be fully operational.

www.thoe.com

ONE YEAR ON: A NEW ERA BEGINS IN ST BARTHS



LAST YEAR'S HURRICANE SEASON WROUGHT HAVOC ON MUCH OF the Caribbean, causing billions of dollars worth of damage to resorts stretching from Miami to Venezuela. For the more optimistic of hoteliers, the light at the end of the tunnel was the opportunity to rebuild and rejuvenate. On the French island of St. Barths, which bore the full impact of Hurricane Irma, many of the island's most sought-after luxury escapes are preparing to open their freshly-painted doors.

First to welcome jet-setters is Hotel Le Toiny St Barth, the ultra-elegant Relais & Châteaux hideaway on the island's Côte Sauvage, (Wild Coast), which returns with eight new villa suites, a new bar and a new swimming pool at the Toiny Beach Club, in October. The club itself was added during a major multi-million dollar renovation in 2016, instigated by owners Reverend Charles and Mandie Vere Nicoll, who acquired the resort the previous year. The new one and two-bedroom suites bring Le Toiny's portfolio up to 22 luxurious accommodations spread across 42-acres of palm covered beachfront, featuring private terraces and infinity pools looking out towards the ocean, and a coastal chic aesthetic created by London-based interior designer Lady Bee Osborn.

On the north-eastern corner of the island overlooking the spectacular Anse de Grand Cul-de-Sac, the Contreras family's Le Sereno St Barth remains true to its motto, "Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose," literally: the more it changes, the more it stays the same. French design legend Christian Liaigre who led the original design of Le Sereno was brought back in to oversee the reconstruction, with a mandate to preserve the essence of the resort and capture the spirit of St Barths life. New Grand Suite Plage Sud rooms feature private gardens with

outdoor bathtubs and direct beach access, plus Liaigre-designed furniture and four-poster beds looking out to the ocean. Including the resort's three signature four-bedroom Villas and a new raft of Bungalow Piscine rooms overlooking the iconic swimming pool, Le Sereno is now home to 39 guestrooms, as well as a brand new spa and retail boutique, and completely reimaged dining spaces. At the other end of the island, Cheval Blanc St-Barth Isle de France has received the personal attention of French designer Jacques Grange, who has infused 19 new rooms and suites with a mixture of French West Indies style and the refined French elegance for which Cheval Blanc is known. Landscape designer Madison Cox has created a tropical garden around the resort, with artist Jean-Michel Othoniel's sculpture The Constellation of Pegasus, at its centre. A new family club, Le Carrousel, creates bonding moments between parents and kids, while two new restaurants celebrating the produce of the French Riviera and the Atlantic Ocean, face the breath-taking Baie des Flamands and the Caribbean beyond.

One of St Barths most legendary hotels, Eden Rock – St Barths will also reopen in December, following a major renovation led by owner Jane Matthews. All 39 of the rooms and villas have been refurbished, and two new suites complete with private pools have been added. Three brand new suites at the top of the resort will open next year. Part of the prestigious Oetker Collection of hotels, Eden Rock features an expanded art collection, a new Eden Being Boutique, and the new Remy Room and Bar, dedicated to aviator Remy de Haenen, who opened the hotel – and in doing so, introduced tourism to St Barths – in the 1950s.

Main & right pic: Eden Rock – St Barths. Left: Le Sereno.



PRIVATE ESCAPES WITH FOUR SEASONS AND NETJETS

SOMETIMES, BOOKING YOUR PRIVATE JET TRAVEL and luxury hotel can be a chore. To alleviate the tedium, Four Seasons has teamed up with NetJets to offer three ready-made packages that combine a stay at one of three Four Seasons resorts with private jet transfers from 5,000 airports around the world. The tailor-made packages to resorts in Anguilla, Orlando or the Bahamas are designed to offer simple off-the-shelf escapes, but they are completely customisable via a dedicated concierge.

Guests staying at Four Seasons Resort and Residences Anguilla, which has a collection of one- to five-bedroom villas and private residences to choose from,

could opt for a private island picnic, a horseback ride on a deserted beach, or a beach bar hopping tour with a local guide. In Orlando, add-ons include private cooking classes with executive chef Fabrizio Schenardi, tailor-made wellness experiences, or a half-day practice session at the Tranquilo Golf Club.

In the Bahamas, The Ocean Club offers the chance to take a boat ride to a nearby sand-bank for lunch served by a private butler, diving expeditions, or a deep-sea fishing tour followed by dinner and a cocktail-making class.

The bespoke packages can be arranged for groups of up to 14 guests, for stays of at least three nights and can be booked via www.fourseasons.com.



HATS OFF TO W PANAMA

SPEND A LONG WEEKEND IN PANAMA AND YOU WON'T WANT TO LEAVE;

the gorgeous beaches, dense rainforest and coffee-covered mountains conspiring with the buzz of Panama City to create an intoxicating destination experience. Guests staying at W Panama City can take a little slice of paradise home with them, thanks to a new capsule collection of Panama hats created in partnership with milliner Gigi Burris. Three stylish designs were created after the New York designer spent a week visiting the Panamanian capital, exploring the historic Casco Viejo neighbourhood, taking in the Panama Canal and visiting the indigenous Emberá Quera tribe, known for their fabric artistry. The W Panama hat collection – including Canal, Quera and Mangrove – start from US \$395 and can be bought via W Hotels' online store, www.whotelsthestore.com.

RITZ-CARLTON DREAM TEAM IN NYC

ANY GOOD CHEF WILL TELL YOU THAT IT'S THE QUALITY of the ingredients that determine how successful a dish will be. When the ingredients are The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company, interior design firm Yabu Pushelberg, Uruguayan architect Rafael Vinoly and New York's ultra-trendy NoMad neighbourhood, the results promise to be special. Part of a US \$500 million mix-use tower at the corner of Broadway and 28th Street, The Ritz-Carlton New York, NoMad will feature 250 rooms and suites and 16 branded residences overlooking downtown Manhattan and the Empire State Building when the project is complete in 2021. The hotel promises a rooftop bar, public garden and green terraces, plus signature Ritz-Carlton touches such as a fine-dining restaurant, club lounge and spa.



Debut | September

HOT HOTELS, CHIC BOUTIQUES AND EXCLUSIVE NEW RESORTS
HERE'S OUR PICK OF THE WORLD'S MOST LUXURIOUS NEW LAUNCHES



THE CHEDI LUŠTICA BAY

Luštica Bay Marina, Tivat, Montenegro

Montenegro's ever-evolving coastline has just been adorned with another jewel. The Chedi Luštica Bay Hotel is a world-class addition to one of Europe's exciting new superyacht destinations, with 111 rooms and suites, two restaurants, two bars, a high-tech conference and business centre, a wellness spa with indoor pool, a private beach and a heated outdoor infinity pool. Set on the waterfront of Montenegro's Trašte Bay along the Luštica peninsula, within the coastal town of Luštica Bay, the five-star hotel sits between the front line of the marina and the rolling coastal hillside and is the first of our seven hotels to take pride of place within Luštica Bay.

+382 32-661-266

www.lusticabay.com/the-chedi

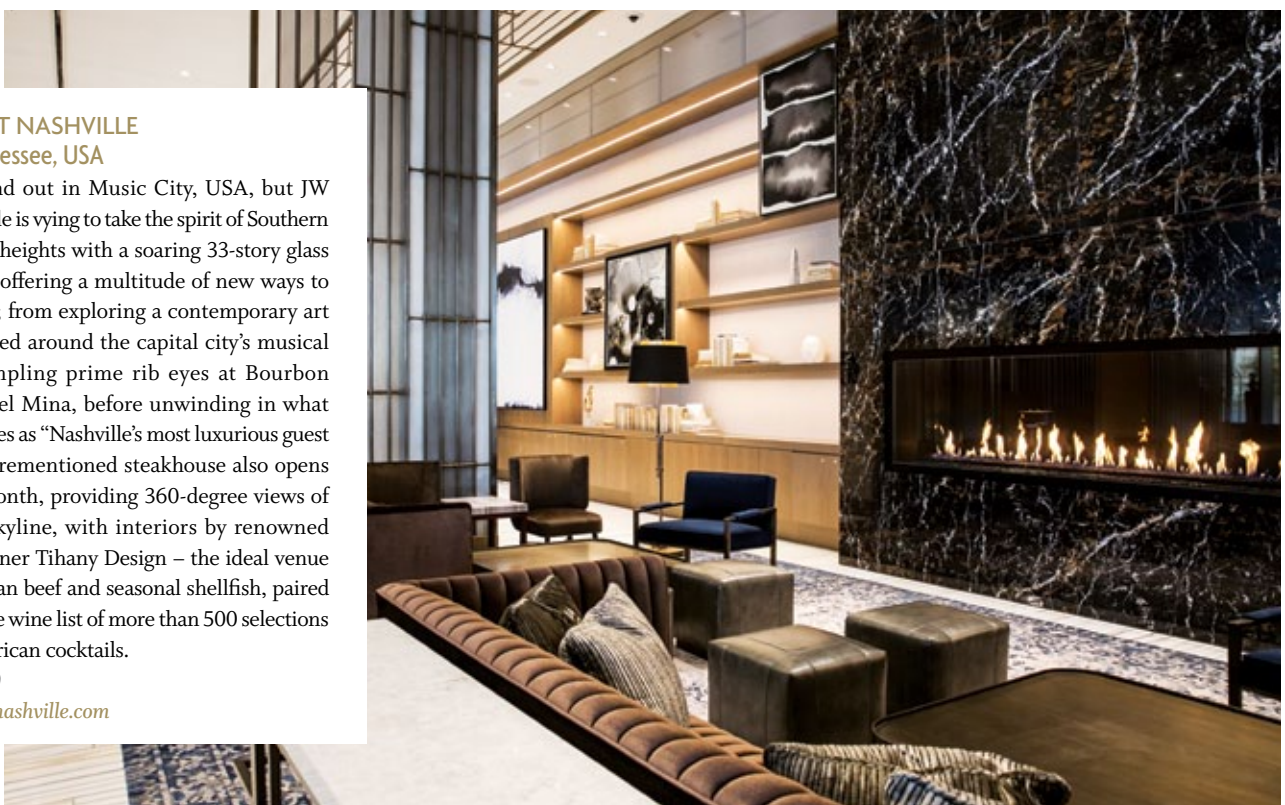
JW MARRIOTT NASHVILLE

Nashville, Tennessee, USA

It's hard to stand out in Music City, USA, but JW Marriott Nashville is vying to take the spirit of Southern comfort to new heights with a soaring 33-story glass tower property, offering a multitude of new ways to explore the city; from exploring a contemporary art collection themed around the capital city's musical heritage to sampling prime rib eyes at Bourbon Steak by Michael Mina, before unwinding in what Marriott describes as "Nashville's most luxurious guest rooms". The aforementioned steakhouse also opens its doors this month, providing 360-degree views of the Nashville skyline, with interiors by renowned hospitality designer Tihany Design – the ideal venue to enjoy American beef and seasonal shellfish, paired with an extensive wine list of more than 500 selections and classic American cocktails.

+1 615-291-8600

www.jwmarriottnashville.com





MÖVENPICK ASARA RESORT & SPA HUA HIN
Hua Hin, Thailand

Featuring a collection of 96 private suites and pool villas, Mövenpick's latest Thai debut is just 10 minutes from the centre of Hua Hin, one of East Asia's top beach destinations, a mere two hours from bustling Bangkok. The expansive 120sqm suites provide open spaces in the form of large balconies or terraces featuring day beds, as well as bathrooms with indoor and outdoor rain showers and bathtubs, while the one- and two-bedroom villas span 150 and 200sqm, respectively, with outdoor decks and private plunge pools. But for the ultimate tropical getaway, the 400sqm two-bedroom beachfront villa offers three separate pavilions, its own private beach area. For fitness and relaxation, the property offers the Asara Spa, as well as a modern, well-equipped fitness room, private outdoor infinity swimming pool and resort gardens ideal for peaceful strolls.

+66 32-547-555

www.movenpick.com



W KUALA LUMPUR
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

If you close your eyes and picture Kuala Lumpur, it's a safe bet that the Petronas Twin Towers will come into frame. The iconic landmark is the emblem of Malaysia's underrated capital and is now a celebrity neighbour of the city's latest five-star opening, W Kuala Lumpur. The 150-key property spans nine floors with all the funky, vibrant design flourishes and dynamic lifestyle programming that the W brand is so famous for. Another key part of the offering is the brand's 24-7 Whatever/Whenever service, which is how guests can discover tips and insights such as local dining hot spots and hidden nightlife gems.

+60 3-2786-8888

www.starwoodhotels.com/whotels



SEPT
28-30

2018 RYDER CUP
Le Golf National, France

The 42nd Ryder Cup, held in the Parisian suburb of Saint-Quentin-en-Yveline, will be the second Ryder Cup to be held in Continental Europe, after the 1997 contest, which was held in Spain. Since the first official Ryder Cup in 1927, the event has not only become the most coveted team prize in golf but also one of the world's greatest sporting events. One of the top VIP packages will host guests at Garonne Pavilion, overlooking the approach and green of the 17th hole with catered tables of eight, 10 or 12. Price from €1,425 per person, including a complimentary bar throughout the day, access to a dedicated viewing balcony and a commemorative gift.

www.rydercup.com



SEPT
6-10

SEPTEMBER Diary

Fast cars, smashed aces and eclectic festival events – this month's essential diary dates cover a wide gamete of interests and locales, from movies in Venezia to classic cars in Cali

DODGEBALL SUPERCAR RALLY
London to Croatia

When you've got time, money and tarmac to burn, you enter the Dodgeball Supercar Rally and join some like-minded adventure lovers on a scintillating road trip from London to Croatia. This year's adventure takes in some of the best sights and open roads that Europe has to offer, winding through the Swiss Alps, with an overnight stop at the famous Italian Lakes, the Venice Film Festival, Slovenia and the stunning coast line of Croatia. Previous journeys have featured everything from super yacht parties, shut down runways, F1 circuits, behind-the-scenes tours of supercar factories and much more.

www.dodgeballrally.com



A FASHIONABLE FOURSOME

New York Fashion week (6 – 12) ■ London Fashion Week (14 – 18) ■ Milan Fashion Week (18 – 24) ■ Paris Fashion Week (24 – Oct 2)

While haute couture has a storied history in Paris, France, the fashion week phenomenon truly began in the Big Apple in 1943, when American buyers were shown alternatives to transatlantic styles during the war. More than half a century later, the fashion world revolves around the “Big Four” events, with a growing roster of key events in the likes of Dubai, LA, Rome, Shanghai and more. The quintessential quartet kicks off in New York, New York with five hotly tipped debuting designers; Marina Moscone, Nanushka, Kozaburo, Studio One Eighty Nine, and Christopher John Rogers.

www.fashionweekonline.com



CONTEMPORARY ISTANBUL 2018

Istanbul, Turkey

Contemporary Istanbul's 13th edition kicks off with a preview date of September 19, bringing together once again leading contemporary galleries, artists and collectors from Turkey and around the world. “CI” successfully instigated ‘A Week Full of Art’ during its 2017 outing and this month's event will see a wider and richer program to create another unique visual art scene within the city, with anticipated crowds of more than 80,000. The event is held at Istanbul Congress Center (ICC) and Istanbul Convention and Exhibition Centre (ICEC) and will include artworks from both established and emerging galleries, bringing a regional and international focus to the dynamic contemporary art scene in Istanbul.

www.contemporaryistanbul.com

PROMOTIONAL FEATURE





GET THE DRIFT: FLOAT INTO BEACH SEASON AT DRIFT BEACH DUBAI

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR IN DUBAI WHEN THE MERCURY STARTS TO TAKE A dip in the thermometer – and everyone wants to take a dip in the pool. That long, sweltering summer is dwindling and the UAE is fast becoming a blue-skied balmy paradise, so fix your play list, grab you sun block and head over to One&Only Royal Mirage.

DRIFT Beach Dubai has now reopened for its second season, with the return of its idyllic infinity pool, fine dining options and a wine list featuring a wide selection of southern French rosé. The sublime aquatic venue is open throughout the day, before twinning the twilight sunset with a chill-out soundtrack.

The DRIFT Restaurant also returns with Chef de Cuisine Maxime Le Van and his team's much-loved take on classical Provençal cuisine, perfectly paired with a strong wine list. The DRIFT business lunch is back, too, offering a light and refreshing midday menu in an inspiring lunchtime setting. Simply casual, there's never a bad day to spend time at DRIFT, surrounded by the sounds of trickling water, refreshing drinks, delicious food, and time well spent with friends under the sun.

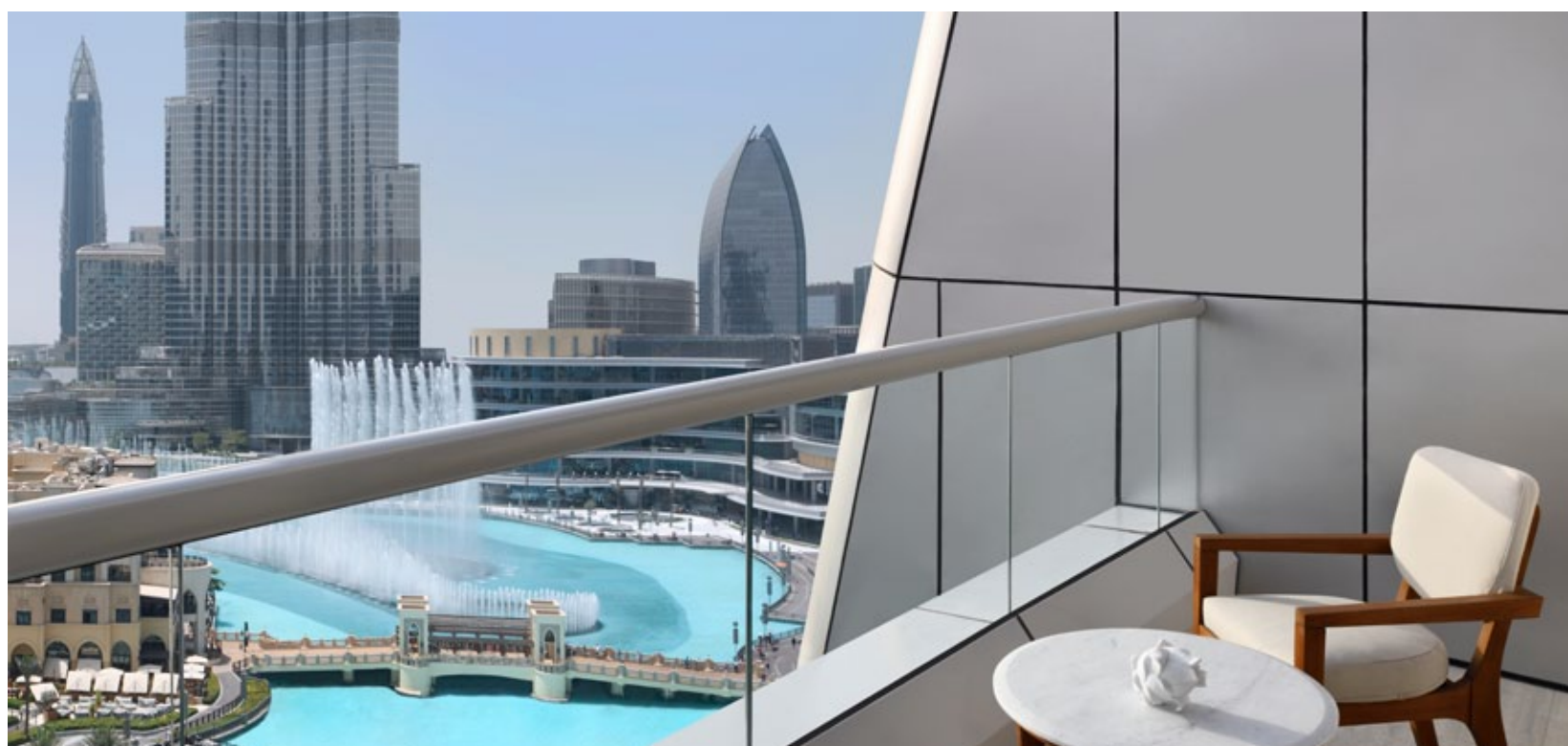
“DRIFT has attracted a loyal following of guests who opt for our classic laid-back vibe and effortless-chic hideaway setting,” explains the venue's general manager, Guillaume Ferraz. “Our elegant simplicity, stunning design and unparalleled facilities are what makes DRIFT the ideal venue for sun seekers and lunch goers who appreciate the finer but simple things in life.” The bespoke beachside hangout first launched last November, blending luxury seafront chic with a casual ambience that makes for a blissful day in the sun.

The private venue features a stunning infinity pool, overlooking one kilometre of prime beachfront and lush landscaped surroundings offering panoramic views of Palm Island Bay and Dubai's unforgettable skyline. Under the artful direction of Chef de Cuisine Maxime Le Van, DRIFT Restaurant and Bar showcases an innovative take on classic Provençal cuisine. The emphasis on the finest organic ingredients, freshness and simplicity delivers a culinary indulgence, complemented by an innovative cocktail menu curated by award-winning mixologist Eric Ballard. www.driftbeachdubai.com / 04 315 2200



COMFORT HAS AN ADDRESS

With a weekend staycation experience at Dubai's luxurious **Address Downtown** and an exclusive interview with General Manager Caroline-Jane Houston, Steven Bond discovers that this isn't just another luxury hotel in Dubai, it's the rebirth of an icon





When it comes to the luxury hotel scene in Dubai, there's always a new kid on the block. The emirate's own "Visit Dubai" website lists an immense 126 five-star properties, with a handful of newcomers poised to join the party before the skies light up for the launch of the eagerly awaited Expo 2020 event – so it's unsurprising that many of us are left talking about the weather, instead of "just another luxury hotel in Dubai".

But when you're faced with an embarrassment of riches, so to speak, there's always something that stands out; a gem of such quality that it's set apart. In this case, Dubai has been enriched by the re-emergence of the glistening Address Downtown, an iconic property that opened this summer after a lengthy hiatus, with an inspired reimagining as a lifestyle property, with a light and fresh aesthetic from toe to tip.

HOME AWAY FROM HOME

It's been a brief few years since the flagship Address property closed its doors, yet the hotel's exterior

architecture is unchanged and unblemished, maintaining its lofty, futuristic appearance, adjacent to the capacious Dubai Mall and facing the soaring Burj Khalifa beyond The Dubai Dancing Fountain. What's emerged from the proverbial chrysalis is a transformation that's entirely on the inside.

Entering the 220-room property feels a bit like walking into a dream home, if you can picture *that one* in all the magazines that seems just too good to be true. Well, aside from the 63 storeys and legion of attentive staff. Expect to be bombarded with beaming smiles upon arrival, and during the entire stay, from the warm welcome of the valet team to the attentive check-in team, starting your stay on a high note, fitting for a 302-metre tall building.

The lobby is illuminated with natural rays bouncing off the light-toned walls and oversized (yet somehow subtle) artworks. The public areas are truly gallery-esque, with scores of exquisite pieces adorning the walls, adding pops of texture and colour throughout, with a level of thought and attention given to the décor that was highlighted by none other than Caroline-Jane Houston. The hotel's General Manager, an incredibly esteemed figure in the world of hospitality, also explained the labour

of love behind the hotel's reopening, updates and revived appearance.

LOVE TRANSFORMS

"I think for everybody involved in the project, it really was a personal investment. It wasn't just a job. It was a true love, everything about this hotel," she explained, in her Irish lilt, revealing that the US-based art curator was flown in to personally place each item, working in tandem with the interior design team, New York's Meyer Davis, to establish the look and feel of the hotel, both day and night.

In the pursuit of a refreshed identity, beyond the décor, the Address Hotel opted to rework the interior and, in doing so, remove the pre-existing ballroom. But Caroline-Jane elaborated a little on the hotel's evolved DNA: "We use the word lifestyle but what does it actually mean? It means different things to different people, but the intent and purpose has always been accessibility."

"I believe that we are the trendsetters – we have always been the trendsetters when we opened this hotel," she adds, documenting some of the key changes in the building's layout; moving the gym

— VENETIAN —
— PEARL —

For a dose of *la dolce vita* in the UAE,
The Ritz-Carlton Abu Dhabi, Grand Canal
is as magnificent as its Italian muse
— the aquatic city of Venice





“ON THE BALCONY, A PAIR OF SUN LOUNGERS INVITE YOU TO BASK FOR A WHILE, AND MAKE THE MOST OF THE ELEGANT VANTAGE POINT.”



Opener: a majestic view of Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque. Clockwise from top: preparing a feast at Li Jiang; stunning chandeliers; shucking a fresh catch of oysters; al fresco fine dining with a view of Maqta'a Creek.



INSPIRED BY ITALIA

There's an entire Wikipedia page dedicated to cities with the nickname "Venice of the East". From Basra to Bangkok, a total of 41 cities have garnered the comparison, no doubt via some kind of aquatic affiliation. Coastal cities are often intrinsically defined by their relationship with their watery surroundings and Abu Dhabi is no different, boasting a total of 215 islands off the UAE coastline, with a handful composing the bulk of the UAE capital itself. If there were to be a "Venice of the Gulf", there would be no contender.

It was fitting, then, that five years ago we welcomed the opening of The Ritz-Carlton Abu Dhabi, Grand Canal, a luxury behemoth that lives up to its name – a truly grand hotel on the aquatic divide between the largest of Abu Dhabi's islands and the mainland. Designed with Venice in mind (yes, the original Italian one), the main architectural elements of the 447-key hotel form a crescent that faces the water, surrounded by lush, manicured grounds, which are home to some of the most lavish accommodation options; four plunge pool villas, 28 garden houses and 53 garden suites. The range curved row of towers vary in size and dimensions, connected along the second storey, but boasting Italian floral flourishes throughout.

ROOMS WITH A VIEW

Our recent stay was in a Deluxe Room, with a spacious balcony peering across the central garden area, immense pool and soft sand beach. Perched on the eight floor of the central lobby portion of the hotel, the guest room opens up into a modest hallway leading to a pristine marble bathroom with a double sink, separate rain shower and soaking tub, and further ahead into the living area, connected to the bathroom via some shutters, which allow you simultaneously

enjoy a bubble bath while gazing through the balcony across the room.

The 42sqm abode is ideally sized for two adults, with ample wardrobe space in the corridor, centrally positioned king size bed and facing cabinet decked out with a storage safe, 42"-inch TV, iPhone dock and coffee making facilities. There's a desk, for those conducting business, and a lavish chair, with leg support for anyone who needs to kick back in the comfort of the room, with its soft hues and wooden furnishings. On the balcony, a pair of sun loungers invite you to bask for a while, and make the most of the elegant vantage point.

A MULTITUDE OF MENUS

One of the areas clearly visible from the room is Venetian Village (www.venetianvillage.ae), a unique dining destination with an eclectic range of outlets, linked by a Renaissance-inspired central plaza, with winding cobblestone streets for a vintage charm. The variety on offer is truly varied, spanning global cuisines at Punjab Grill and La Brasserie, the vibrant Barfly by Buddha-Bar, and Al-Fanar, the one of the UAE's few authentic traditional Emirati dining experiences. The Wi-Fi friendly micro village obviously has a seasonal ebb and flow, and is poised to flourish once again during winter, as locals and tourists alike flock to outdoor venues for dinner, drinks and revelry.

While Venetian Village shares the same real estate as The Ritz-Carlton, the Adriatic inspired foodie heaven is not operated by the hotel, which vaunts its own spectacular fine dining options, with a total of eight sumptuous outlets that will propel your palette halfway around the globe. None are arguably as enticing as Li Jiang, a signature Southeast Asian restaurant with an open kitchen where diners can watch chefs prep a range of dishes, from dim sum, to noodle soups and



A TASTE OF CONTEMPORARY

Caption

Colombia

From vibrant Amazonian rainforests to verdant, mountainous savannas, Colombia's biodiversity not only produces some of the world's most unique ingredients, but also inspires culinary flair. Simon Harrington visited Bogotá's much lauded **LEO** to find out more.





Caption

Red-faced and breathless, I find myself negotiating yet another of the capital’s steep, cobbled laneways, hoping to stumble upon the city’s famous Monserrate cable car, an attraction that whisks visitors 500 metres above the city. The fact that Bogotá already sits atop a hulking montane savanna, at an altitude of 2,600 metres, was something I had grossly neglected to consider – and I was feeling the altitude. After a rocky cable car ride, and with each breath nearing a wheeze, I pause on the steps of a 17th-century church perched on the mountain. At this elevation, I couldn’t feel further from the oppressive swell of the city. And the city couldn’t feel less significant.

Despite its sprawling nature, the capital is dwarfed by its surrounding mountains, plateaus and savannas; each painted in a different shade of green and observed by an eternally blue sky. For a country plighted by conflict and bloodshed through the years, it’s a view that represents a world of peace and possibility. Beyond the confines of the city, it’s my first true glimpse of contemporary Colombia.

A FEMME WITH FLAVOUR

It’s also the first image that comes to mind when speaking with chef Leonor Espinosa, at her famed Bogotá restaurant, Leo – ranked number 18 in Latin America by The World’s 50 Best Restaurants 2018. “Colombia has great potential on an international scale because of our incredible biodiversity. From our oceans to our rainforests, there is a world of culinary discovery at our fingertips,” she says.

Better known as Leo, the internationally acclaimed chef is more than qualified to comment on Colombia’s culinary potential. Not only was she recognised as one of Colombia’s 20 best leaders in 2015, and as Latin America’s Best Female Chef 2017, but she is an on-going advocate for preserving food traditions, local production and sustainable practices through organisations like the Leo Espinosa Foundation (FUNLEO). This insatiable desire to work closely with local farmers and producers across Colombia, while demonstrating a passion for ancestral techniques, is mirrored in her 16-course taster menu, aptly dubbed “Ciclo-Biome”.



Chef Leonor Espinosa De La Ossa



Babilla, chontaduro, aji negro huitoto

Eat

LEO
 CENTRO INTERNACIONAL, BOGOTÁ, COLOMBIA
 +57 1-286-7091
www.restauranteleo.com



Langostillo, limón mandarino, basket pepper, leche de coco



Mighty fine views from Monserrate in the centre of Bogotá



Indio, salsa trifásica, cubio, chugua



The vibrant city of Bogotá at night

I am sampling the menu at the chef's trendy, minimalist flagship property in the upmarket Centro Internacional district of Bogotá – an area where sharply-dressed business people rub shoulders with Latin America's A-listers. Taking a seat in the bright, modern restaurant, my dining partner and I are expertly guided through the menu by maître d' and head waiter, Jerson, who offers a succinct and practiced description of each course. It is soon apparent that a story is being told; the dining experience doubles as a geographical gastronomic exploration of Colombia. From the exotic arazá and camu camu fruits – sourced sustainably from the country's tropical rainforests – to Amazonian black pepper, ponche (wild rodent meat) and caiman from rural wetlands, each dish is a celebration of its origin.

The fare is stunningly aesthetic; something that Leo, with a background in contemporary art, is deliberate about. In her eyes, presentation is as important as taste. Standout dishes include indigenous limonero ants, served with yoghurt cheese and native potato, local duck meat with corn flatbread and succulent seasonal white fish with páramo leaves and copoazú. There's a hint of the traditional in every course, but it remains a world away from the comparatively bland and unimaginative ajiaco (potato and corn soup), arepas (corn cakes) and aborrajado (fried plantains with cheese) that the country has become known for.

TRUST THE PROCESS

Through the course of the meal, I am educated on Colombian ingredients, cooking techniques and the diversity of its landscapes. It is not only fascinating, but bubbles with potential. So why is it that the country has never been truly recognised on an international scale, like some of its closest neighbours? "The process is different in the likes of Peru and Mexico," explains Leo. "Firstly, they have always had access to ingredients. Here, the war 50 years ago meant we could not explore other regions of the country to discover ingredients. This is a relatively new thing for us." The chef goes on to explain that her menu is about balancing gastronomic exploration with tradition, and that additional challenges come in changing the mindset of local people – particularly in rural areas. "Many people still need to be convinced that there are alternatives to the traditional food they eat every day."

The idea of balance and changing mind-sets is not only apparent in the culinary explorations of Leonor Espinosa, but represents a much broader socio-political shift in Colombia. For a country once held hostage by aggression and warfare, times are changing. And with this change comes a new wave of experimentation and expression, in everything from music and art to fine dining. It is the likes of Leo that lead this charge, and I have little doubt that the mantle will be assumed, and further innovations inspired, by her example. ✂

The St. Regis
Saadiyat Island
Resort, Abu Dhabi



Jumeirah at Etihad Towers Abu Dhabi



Hilton Capital Grand Abu Dhabi



Yas Viceroy Abu Dhabi



Shangri-La Hotel, Qaryat Al Beri



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DESTINATIONS OF THE WORLD

A black and white portrait of Emyr Thomas, a man with short hair and glasses, wearing a suit and tie. The portrait is the background of the entire page. At the top, there are two diagonal stripes: a yellow one and a brown one. At the bottom, there are two diagonal stripes: an orange one and a brown one.

EMYR THOMAS

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A RIVIERA CELEBRATION

WHERE: One&Only The Palm, Dubai

WHEN: Until December 23

Feel and indulge in the Riviera vibe at One&Only The Palm, while enjoying a complimentary breakfast for two, a couple of cocktails with tapas at 101 Dining Lounge, one Guerlain 60-minute massage and a Guerlain Beauty Lift or Radiance Facial. The Dubai Riviera Celebration Package has to be booked by December 20 and is valid when you stay three nights or more – but anything less would be a travesty.

www.oneandonlyresorts.com/one-and-only-the-palm-dubai



SUMMER WITH SOFITEL

WHERE: Sofitel Jeddah Corniche, Saudi Arabia

WHEN: Now

Located in the vibrant North Corniche area of one of Saudi Arabia's most progressive cities, Sofitel Jeddah Corniche provides unrivalled Red Sea views, a mere 25 kilometres from King Abdulaziz International Airport. When it comes to service, warm Saudi hospitality meets European efficiency, with a 24-hour butler service for guests staying at any of the 64 exquisite suites with the inviting "My Bed concept" beds – and why not check out the Opera Suite? Boasting a sea view, the 155 square-metre two-bedroom suites are the hotel's finest. Guests who opt for the "Embrace Summer" offer can also avail 20% off their stay with breakfast included, plus a 20% discount voucher on selected restaurants. What's more, new and current Le Club AccorHotels Members enjoy an extra 10% off.

www.sofiteljeddahcorniche.com



SEPTEMBER
Essentials

This month's selection of luxury items are bursting with colour, evoking the vibrant continent of Africa and creatures great and small

Compiled by: Anna Zhukov

RED AND GOLD

In a graphic interplay of reds and golds, a marriage of the golden desert sands and ocher earth of Africa, Terres d'Or ("golden lands") recalls the motifs of Kente fabrics from Ghana and Kasai velvets as part of the Tresors d'Afrique collection.

www.chaumet.com

A SYMPHONY OF CURVES

The deep red of pigeon's blood rubies and the intense light of yellow sapphires contrast on a supple necklace (right), a bracelet, a secret watch, long earrings (far right) and five rings (below), each a symphony of curves and interlacing.

www.chaumet.com



FROM GOLDEN LANDS

The roundness of ovals, cabochons, sugar loaves and ruby beads caresses the skin with fluidity, sublimating the wearer's sensuality.

www.chaumet.com



FAIRYTALE PRINCESS

Once upon a time there was a king who had 12 beautiful daughters. One of whom was Princess Eos, immortalised in this resplendent clip of pink and mauve sapphire diamonds, part of the Quatre contes de Grimm collection.
www.vancleefarpels.com



MY HEART IS IN SAVANNAH

How does a lazy little monkey cross the savannah? He climbs on the back of a zebra, of course – while the flamingos play and the giraffe roams. These exquisite animal brooches were designed by Evans Mbugua for Chaumet.
www.chaumet.com



SERPENTI MISTERIOSI

Inspired by the cultural revolution and the creative excitement of the roaring '80s, the Serpenti Misteriosi Pallini watch boasts the seductive charms of the serpent with intense colours and powerful design.
www.bulgari.com



MEISA LA MÉSANGE

Part of the Nature Triomphante collection, the “feathered friends” Meisa la Mésange bracelet is paved with yellow, green and blue sapphires, lapis lazuli and diamonds, on white.
www.boucheron.com



THE RETURN OF A CLASSIC



THE ICONIC ASTON MARTIN DB5 IS BACK, thanks to a unique collaboration between Aston Martin and EON Productions, the company that produces the James Bond films.

A series of 25 Goldfinger DB5 continuation editions will be created for customers by Aston Martin Works and EON Productions. The special edition motors will be based on Bond's legendary car from 1964 and built at the carmaker's Newport Pagnell branch – the original home of the DB5 – authentic reproductions of the DB5 seen on screen, with some sympathetic modifications to ensure the highest levels of build quality and reliability – but probably without the rocket launchers.

Andy Palmer, President and CEO of Aston Martin, said: "The connection between Aston Martin and James Bond is something of which

we are very proud and it is remarkable that the DB5 remains the definitive James Bond car after so many years. To own an Aston Martin has long been an aspiration for James Bond fans, but to own a Silver Birch DB5, complete with gadgets and built to the highest standards in the very same factory as the original James Bond cars? Well, that is surely the ultimate collectors' fantasy. The skilled craftspeople at Aston Martin Works and the expert special effects team from the James Bond films are about to make this fantasy real for 25 very lucky customers."

So while there's not likely to be any projectiles, the cars will actually include some functioning gadgets such as the iconic revolving number plates, made famous in the 1964 smash hit, Goldfinger. The gadgets will

be co-developed with Oscar-winner Chris Corbould, special effects supervisor for much of the Bond franchise. Officially sanctioned by Aston Martin and EON Productions, all the Goldfinger edition cars will be coated in Silver Birch paint – just one specification – in keeping with the original.

Paul Spies, Managing Director at Aston Martin Works, added: "The connection between Aston Martin and James Bond originated more than half a century ago. Creating 25 Goldfinger DB5 continuations and working with EON Productions and special effects supervisor, Chris Corbould, is something truly unique and a real career highlight for everyone involved here at Aston Martin Works."

Each Goldfinger DB5 continuation car will be priced at £2.75m with first deliveries in 2020.

“THE BEST CAR IN THE WORLD”

The Rolls-Royce ‘Silver Ghost’ was the motor car that established Rolls-Royce’s reputation as ‘The Best Car in the World’. In celebration of this defining heritage, Rolls-Royce has created a limited collection of just 35 Bespoke Ghosts, named the ‘Silver Ghost Collection’.

Matthew Butt, Product Manager – Ghost, Rolls-Royce Motor Cars, commented, “Careful consideration has been paid to the Collection’s defining features. References extolling the past are skillfully hand-crafted into Ghost’s interior and exterior, creating a contemporary homage which speaks as much of today’s great brand as the original Silver Ghost does of its day. This is a truly remarkable Collection.”



DID YOU KNOW?

ASTON MARTIN HAS ANNOUNCED THE FORMATION OF A NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH RM SOTHEBY’S. THE PARTNERSHIP GOT OFF TO A GREAT START WHEN THE BEAUTIFUL 1963 ASTON MARTIN DP215 GRAND TOURING COMPETITION PROTOTYPE WENT UNDER THE GAVEL AT PEBBLE BEACH FOR AN ASTONISHING \$21,455,000.

ESSENTIA: THE NEXT GENERATION GENESIS

FOLLOWING ITS CONCOURS DEBUT AT Concorso d’Eleganza Villa d’Este in May, the Genesis Essentia Concept appeared alongside the most beautiful cars in the world at this year’s Monterey Classic Car Week.

Essentia is the brand’s first battery electric vehicle.

As a capable, thrilling sports car designed to counter the complexities of a modern lifestyle, Essentia offers serenity, clarity and beauty.

“Monterey Car Week is a prime opportunity for our team to reach one of the most influential global luxury markets,” said Manfred Fitzgerald, Executive Vice President and Global Head of the Genesis Brand. “After showing Essentia at auto shows on three continents, we are thrilled to present it to the most discerning concours attendees in the world.”



BUGATTI PRESENTS THE SUPER CAR OF SUPER CARS

THE DIVO1 WAS REVEALED AT THE EXCLUSIVE automotive event “The Quail: A Motorsports Gathering” in Monterey, California, where Bugatti presented its latest model as a world premiere. With the Divo, the French luxury brand has developed a super sports car tuned for agility, nimbleness and optimum handling performance on winding roads. It is powered by Bugatti’s iconic eight-litre W16 engine with a power output of 1,500 PS. Its maximum speed is limited to 380 km/h (236 mph). The Divo can lap the Nardò handling circuit in southern Italy eight seconds faster than the Chiron.

“When I took up my position at Bugatti at the beginning of the year, I soon learnt that our customers and fans were waiting for a special vehicle which would tell a further story for the brand in addition to the Chiron,” said Stephan Winkelmann, President of Bugatti Automobiles S.A.S. “The Bugatti team was also very eager to implement a project like this.”

The series will only consist of 40 vehicles. Upon the start of presentations to selected customers, the strictly limited small series, with a net unit price of €5 million, sold out immediately.





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