

Condé Nast

Traveler

TRUTH IN TRAVEL

MAY 2004

100
best new
hotels
in the world!

* including 21 under \$200

66
new
restaurants
from São Paulo to Sydney

2004

HOT LIST

30
new bar
scenes
from Boston to Beijing

England's
Wonderful Wild West
Great Getaways in the
Bahamas



U.S.A. \$4.50
Foreign/Canada \$5.50

Hot
2004

Call it *A Thousand and One Nights*—*Condé Nast Traveler* style. We bedded down in every one of this year's notable new hotels to bring you our global guide to the best: **100** properties in 42 countries, including 21 under \$200

This year's Hot List—our biggest ever—is literally all over the map: 42 countries (from Antigua to Uruguay) on six continents (sorry, Antarctica). Prices range from the sublime (\$57 a night) to the ridiculous (\$2,675). And hotel size runs the gamut from the truly petite (just one suite) to the strapping (1,310 rooms). How do we do it? Thousands of hotels open annually worldwide. We make it our business to evaluate each and every one. The most promising are visited—incognito, of course—and sized up for their location, look, and service. Of these, 100 made the cut—each an instant classic. Fully a fifth of this year's listings are under \$200 a night—good news, indeed, given the weak dollar. And as usual, we provide the tools to glean the most from your stay, from when to go and which room to book to an at-a-glance guide to the amenities on offer. Is there a pampering spa? A breathtaking beach? Round-the-clock room service? Only one thing is certain: With 100 hotels, there's something for absolutely everyone.

Una Hotel Vittoria, in Florence's up-and-coming San Frediano district.

AUSTRALIA

Moog Hotel, Sydney

AUSTRIA

Le Meridien, Vienna
Palais Coburg, Vienna

BAHAMAS

Four Seasons Resort Great Exuma,
Emerald Bay

BRAZIL

Fasano Hotel, São Paulo

CANADA

Hôtel Le Germain, Toronto

CARIBBEAN

Carlisle Bay, Carlisle Bay, Antigua
Sofitel Nicolas De Ovando, Santo
Domingo, Dominican Republic

CHILE

Ritz-Carlton, Santiago

CHINA

Commune by the Great Wall, Yanqing
County

COSTA RICA

**Four Seasons Resort at Peninsula
Papagayo**, Guanacaste Province

CZECH REPUBLIC

Aria Hotel, Prague

DENMARK

Hotel Skt. Petri, Copenhagen

ENGLAND

Barnsley House, Barnsley
Hotel Felix, Cambridge
The Grove, Chandler's Cross
Malmaison, London
Number Sixteen, London
Whatley Manor, Malmesbury
Hart's Hotel, Nottingham

ESTONIA

Three Sisters Hotel, Tallinn

FRANCE

Domaine des Andéols, Apt
L'Hermitage Gantois, Lille
Hi Hôtel, Nice
Palais de la Méditerranée, Nice
Hôtel Le A, Paris
Plaza Paris Vendome, Paris
Villa Marie, Ramatuelle

FRENCH POLYNESIA

Bora Bora Nui Resort & Spa, Bora Bora

GERMANY

Ku'Damm 101, Berlin
Ritz-Carlton, Berlin
25 Hours, Hamburg

GREECE

Hotel Grande Bretagne, Athens

ICELAND

Hotel Budir, Budir
101 Hotel, Reykjavik

INDIA

Park Hyatt, Goa
Aman-i-Khas, Rajasthan

INDONESIA

Kayumanis, Bali
The Mansion, Bali

ITALY

Continente, Florence
Una Hotel Vittoria, Florence
Villa La Vedetta, Florence
Park Hyatt, Milan
3 Rooms, Milan
Methis Hotel, Padua
Il Palazzetto, Rome
Residenza Napoleone, Rome
Vigilius Mountain Resort, South Tyrol
San Clemente Palace, Venice



The Rest of the Best
For reviews of the 87 properties not on the pages immediately following, see page 254.

JAPAN

Grand Hyatt, Tokyo

JORDAN

Four Seasons Hotel, Amman

LATVIA

Hotel Bergs, Riga

MALDIVES

Cocoa Island, Cocoa Island

MEXICO

One&Only Palmilla, Los Cabos
W, Mexico City

MOROCCO

Les Jardins de la Koutoubia, Marrakech

MOZAMBIQUE

Quilálea, Quilálea Island

NEW ZEALAND

Otahuna Lodge, Tai Tapu
Delamore Lodge, Waiheke Island
Glass House, Waiheke Island

POLAND

Hotel Rialto, Warsaw

PORTUGAL

Hotel Olisippo Castelo, Lisbon

SAUDI ARABIA

Four Seasons Hotel at Kingdom Centre,
Riyadh

SCOTLAND

Glasshouse, Edinburgh

SEYCHELLES

North Island, North Island

SOUTH AFRICA

Kwandwe Ecce Lodge, Eastern Cape
The Outpost, Kruger National Park
Singita Lebombo/Singita Sweni,
Kruger National Park

SPAIN

Gran Hotel La Florida, Barcelona
Hotel Omm, Barcelona
Convent de la Missió,
Palma de Mallorca

SWITZERLAND

La Réserve, Geneva
Greulich Hotel, Zurich

THAILAND

Metropolitan, Bangkok
Costa Lanta, Koh Lanta
The Racha, Koh Racha
JW Marriott Phuket Resort and Spa,
Phuket

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Mina A'Salam, Dubai
**Residence & Spa at One&Only Royal
Mirage**, Dubai
Chedi Muscat, Muscat, Oman

UNITED STATES

Montage Resort & Spa,
Laguna Beach, California
Ledson Hotel, Sonoma, California
Four Seasons Hotel, Miami, Florida
The Raleigh, Miami Beach, Florida
Le Meridien, Minneapolis, Minnesota
The Alluvian, Greenwood, Mississippi
The Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada
Wentworth by the Sea,
New Castle, New Hampshire
Inn of the Five Graces,
Santa Fe, New Mexico
El Monte Sagrado, Taos, New Mexico
Mandarin Oriental, New York, New York
The Maritime, New York, New York
Inn at Price Tower, Bartlesville, Oklahoma
Hotel Icon, Houston, Texas
The Magnolia, Houston, Texas
Hotel Valencia Riverwalk,
San Antonio, Texas
Watermark Hotel and Spa,
San Antonio, Texas
Four Seasons Resort,
Jackson Hole, Wyoming

URUGUAY

Cipriani Punta del Este Resort, La Barra

WORLDWIDE



Queen Mary 2

KEY TO SYMBOLS

☎ = Bar/lounge ☉ = Beach ☎ = Gym
☉ = Pool ☉ = Spa ☎ = 24-hour room service

INDIA

Aman-i-Khás, Rajasthan

 The Amanresorts group makes its first Indian foray with this elegant tented camp just outside Ranthambhore National Park, home to some 40 endangered tigers. The unique mix of nature and Mogul ruins—as well as Aman's signature pampering (Poornavandana ayurvedic oil massage, anyone?)—makes frigid pre-dawn safari wake-up calls worthwhile. Six white pyramid-roofed guest tents conceal the leather and mahogany nouvelle-colonial decor; despite billowing canvas walls, accommodations come with king-size beds, hot showers, flush toilets, marble bathtubs, electric lights, and air-conditioning. Three more tents house a spa, a library, and a dining salon in which chef Jonathan Phillip serves delicate lamb curry with pomegranate seeds and cardamom-carrot pudding. A pool will be added for the 2004–05 season. When to go: October through February for mild weather (closed July–Sept.). Which room to book: Tent 6 is the most private (800-477-9180; www.amanresorts.com; doubles, \$2,300 for four nights, including meals: )



The tented spa at Amanresorts' first Indian outpost.

hot
2004 list

The Raleigh's Art Deco fantasy pool was a favorite of Esther Williams's.

The Raleigh makes more polished efforts seem crass

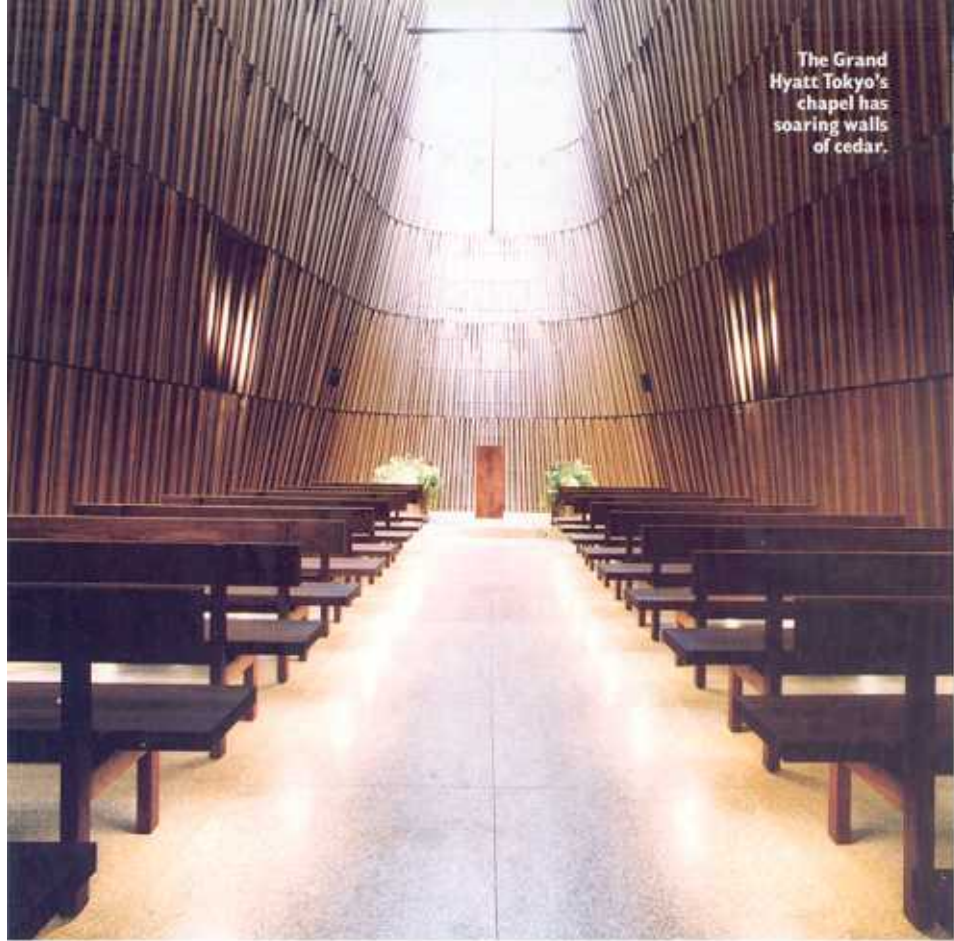
PHOTOGRAPH BY L. J. JAMES

JAPAN

Grand Hyatt, Tokyo

 Ideally situated within Roppongi Hills, the city's latest chic dining-and-shopping address, the Grand Hyatt provides a luxurious refuge between visits to the world's second-largest Louis Vuitton store and the fifty-third-floor Mori Museum, where modern art seems to float among the clouds. Natural woods and a soaking tub that overflows in the *ofuro* style (decadently flooding the immediate area) create a Zen-temple ambience in all 389 rooms. Long waits for the Shunbou restaurant pay off with gargantuan yet succulent vegetables accompanying the famed Tsukiji Fish Market's finest catch. Work it off in the red-granite pool by only-in-Tokyo celebrity designer Super Potato.

When to go: Cherry-blossom season (late March–April). **Which room to book:** Any on the west side for views of Mount Fuji (813-4333-1234; tokyo.grand.hyatt.com; doubles, \$306–\$431; ☎). 🍷 🍴 🛀 🚿 🛏



The Grand Hyatt Tokyo's chapel has soaring walls of cedar.

The view of Rome from the Wine Academy's rooftop terrace.



ITALY


Il Palazzetto, Rome

 The International Wine Academy—replete with a wine bar, a restaurant, sitting rooms, and terraces—now has a quartet of luxurious guest rooms. The four-story turn-of-the-century Palazzetto was renovated by Roberto Wirth, owner of Rome's Hassler Villa Medici Hotel. Extravagant beds are dressed in shimmering printed velvet, linen sheets, and tiers of silk-taffeta pillows, and the minibar is well stocked with Italian wines. Bathrooms have double sinks and separate showers and tubs. Breakfast, in fine weather, is served on a terrace that's practically suspended over the Spanish Steps. As for typical hotel conveniences (room service et al), you're mostly on your own, at least until management formalizes these highly erratic amenities.

When to go: When the academy has a program that interests you. **Which room to book:** No. 1 receives the most light (39-06-699-0878; www.wineacademyroma.com; doubles, \$315–\$435; ☎). 🍷

UNITED STATES

The Raleigh, Miami Beach

 The French-inflected Raleigh is like France itself: effortlessly chic, impossibly seductive, and occasionally vexing. Other South Beach hotels offer slicker service and surfaces, but the toniest design pedigree can't confer what The Raleigh, thanks to new owner André Balazs, now has in spades: soul. Yet by no means is it for everyone. The eclectic lobby borders on the threadbare, though it quickly makes more polished efforts seem crass (the eight-stool alcove Coffee Bar is especially winsome); the refurb of its 104 rooms won't be done till December; and the

comme ci comme ça service is still being brought to heel by a team from New York. But if you're looking for a hotel redolent of old Miami, and hands-down the most beautiful pool—and crowd—on the beach, you'll forgive the flaws and bask in the glow of something money can't buy: heartfelt hospitality.

When to go: Thanksgiving through Christmas for the most reliable weather. **Which room to book:** All are being masterfully remade; try to snag one that's done (305-534-6300; raleighhotel.com; doubles, \$295–\$475; ☎). 🍷 🍴 🛀 🚿 🛏



Those under the age of 26 are
entitled to lower room rates



The in-the-round reception desk at 25 Hours.



Vigilius is reachable only by cable car.

ITALY

Vigilius Mountain Resort, South Tyrol


Located high in the Alps and reachable only by cable car, Vigilius is a slice of paradise at 5,000 feet. Whether soaking in the tub, dining on Northern Italian cuisine in the elegant restaurant, eating South Tyrolean fare on the terrace, doing laps in the indoor pool, or even relaxing in the sauna, you will be astounded by views of pine-covered peaks and celestial snow-capped mountains. All 41 open-plan rooms have a freestanding stone wall that separates the living and bath areas. The meditation room and the Paradise Garden are spectacular settings for yoga, quigong, and just recharging. On average, there are 300 days of sun a year in the South Tyrol, and the restaurant provides a hearty picnic for Nordic walking, mountain biking, and other outdoor sports with or without a guide.

When to go: The mountains are dazzling summer and winter; the hotel closes for two weeks in November for cable car maintenance. **Which room to book:** Deluxe doubles have better views than similar-sized superior doubles (39-0473-556600; www.vigilius.it; doubles, \$243–\$486; 📞).



The Grove's erstwhile stables now house a pool.

The Grove: Photograph by Fritz Kopp



Queen Victoria once weekended here



ENGLAND

The Grove, Chandler's Cross


 The Grove's architects have deftly integrated an extensive new wing—accommodating 211 rooms, a glib restaurant, and a lavish meeting space—into the remnants of a grand mansion where Queen Victoria once weekended and which itself contains 16 suites. The original stables house a second restaurant (there's yet a third), a gym, a stunning pool done in glittering black tile, a subterranean spa, and the pro shop for The Grove's 18-hole golf course. Although the postmodern touches—hollow Lucite tables filled with rural oddments, for instance—are a trifle labored, the high-quality furnishings, lighting, and service are beyond reproach. When to go: May through September. Which room to book: Any overlooking the golf course and parkland (44-1923-807-807; thegrove.co.uk; doubles, \$294-\$392). 



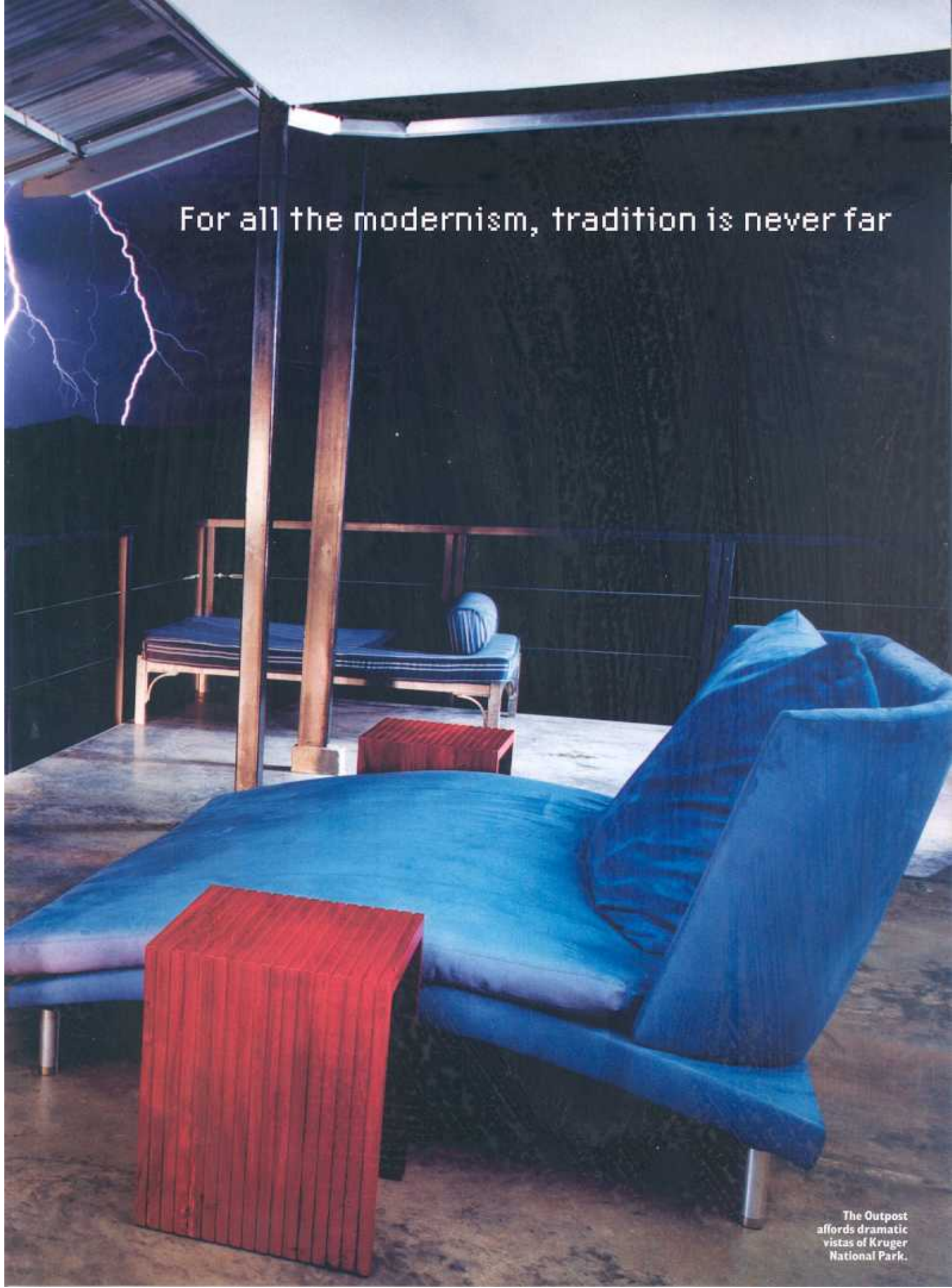
SOUTH AFRICA

The Outpost, Kruger National Park

Clean lines and contemporary open spaces make the most of the magnificent views from the 11 bungalows, raised on stilts and connected by a walkway to the main reception area, the bar, and the lap pool. Retractable walls of mesh and canvas on three sides allow guests to take in the 180-degree spectacle from their immaculate white bed, blue-suede daybed, or rounded bathtub. Meals are on a par with the owners' renowned Sides restaurant, in Johannesburg. For all the modernism, tradition is

never far. The Outpost lies in the middle of a 60,000-acre parcel of Kruger National Park that was reclaimed, after the fall of apartheid, by the once-displaced Makuleke tribe. Its members staff the lodge, earn ten percent of the takings, and will own it entirely in 20 years. When to go: The drier months (April-Aug.) for best game viewing. Which room to book: No. 12 affords the most privacy (27-11-341-0282; www.theoutpost.co.za; doubles, \$1,060, all-inclusive; .



A photograph of a modern lounge area on a balcony at night. The balcony has a dark wooden railing and is supported by several vertical wooden posts. In the foreground, there is a large, low-profile blue sofa with a matching ottoman and a red, textured side table. In the background, there is another blue sofa with a matching ottoman and a red, textured side table. A bright lightning bolt is visible in the dark sky in the background.

For all the modernism, tradition is never far

The Outpost
affords dramatic
vistas of Kruger
National Park.

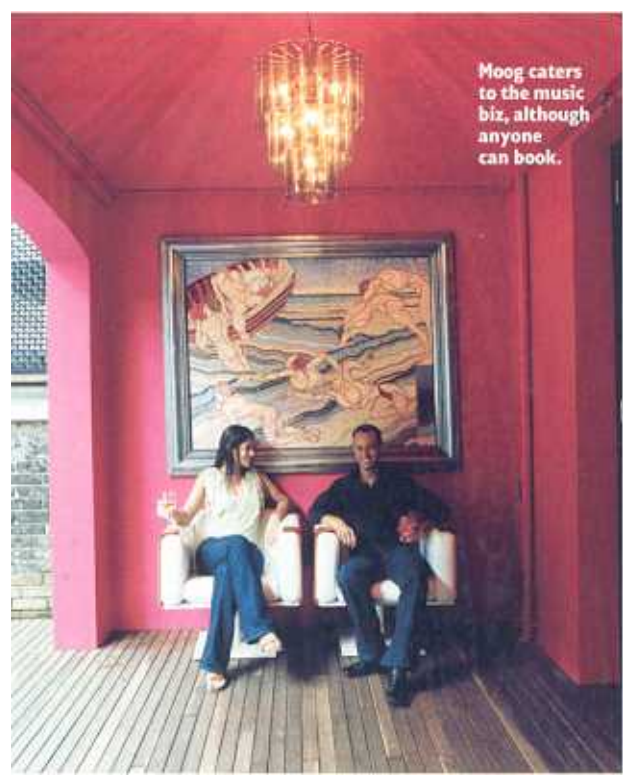


2004 list

A U S T R A L I A

Moog Hotel, Sydney

The one-suite Moog promises much: “Imagine being the only guest in the world’s coolest hotel.” The reality delivers—and then some—in the form of fantastically funky furniture, custom-made carpets, and every toy a visiting rock star might expect: a private gym, two enormous bathrooms, a freestanding soaking tub in the master bedroom, a flat-screen TV with a CD/DVD player and Sony PlayStation 2, and an outdoor plunge pool, from which guests can view films and cable TV that are projected onto an adjacent wall. Room service is not round-the-clock, and a 24-hour butler and the hotel’s Jaguar XJR100 are extra, as is use of the recording studio. It’s all very rock ‘n’ roll, but you’ll like it. **When to go:** Summer (Dec.–March). **Which room to book:** There’s just the one (61-2-8353-8200; www.mooghotel.com; \$780; ♿). 📺 📶 📶 📶




F R A N C E

Domaine des Andéols, Apt

With the opening of Domaine des Andéols, the Luberon, preferred Provençal playground of A-list Parisians, finally has a world-class hotel. Owners Olivier and Patrizia Massart left the exteriors of the old stone structures intact but created dramatic new minimalist interiors, with ample comforts, such as flat-screen TVs, CD players, and fully equipped kitchens (the better to make the most of Apt’s Saturday market). A sauna, a hammam, and an indoor pool form the low-key spa (massages are available), and an infinity-edge pool overlooks olive groves and vineyards. Best of all, since there are only nine *maisons* (two with private pools), this place has a nearly unrivaled sense of intimacy. **When to go:** The Luberon is lovely from February through November. **Which room to book:** The Maison du Voyageur, with its private pool and garden and sublime views (33-4-90-75-50-63; domainedesandeols.com; doubles, \$433–\$909). ♿ 📶 📶 📶






Top: Photograph by Rick Lee. Bottom: Photograph by Thomas Loof



Pivoting
porthole
windows
stud the
facade of the
aply named
Maritime.

UNITED STATES

The Maritime, New York City

This canny repurposing of a former maritime union hall in west Chelsea is shipshape indeed: The focal point of every cruise ship cabin-like room is a five-foot porthole window facing the Hudson River. All 120 accommodations are minuscule, and yet have every imaginable amenity, due to built-ins that offer ample storage, an expansive work area with a flat-screen TV, and tiny illuminated cubbies on either side of the bed in lieu of night tables. The bathrooms, though not much bigger than a phone booth, are surprisingly sybaritic thanks to a ceiling-mounted showerhead the size of a pie plate. The informal hipness of the South Seas-inspired lobby serves as a welcome counterpoint to the preening and posing endemic to most high-style hotels. There are two restaurants: La Bottega, a cozy trattoria surrounding a 10,000-square-foot terrace, and Matsuri, an out-of-this-world subterranean Japanese eatery. In fact, the only thing rocking this boat is needlessly claustrophobic hallways—painted an unfortunate cobalt blue and already the worse for wear. When to go: Spring or fall. Which room to book: The higher the floor, the better (212-242-4300; themaritimehotel.com; doubles, \$245–\$265;   

Reviews continue on page 254.