

Driving
INSIDE

THE HOT LIST 2014

The new hotels, the foodie trends, the resorts to watch: your essential guide to next year's hippest holidays P12



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travel



Left, Maalifushi by Como, a private island resort with overwater villas, opens in the Maldives in January.
Below, Brydon and Coogan eat their way through Italy



bars. The roll call of cutting-edge designers involved reads like Wallpaper magazine's ultimate wish list: the Campana Brothers from Brazil, A-Cero from Spain and the UK's Graham Lamb. Your room might resemble a seashell or a desert oasis, and will come with a driver, a butler, a spa therapist and a chef overseen by Eneko Atxa, who holds three Michelin stars at his Spanish restaurant (see panel). And 10% of room revenue and 5% of other revenues go to the Inspirasia Foundation, which helps disadvantaged people across Southeast Asia. It doesn't come cheap, mind. The Ultimate Travel Company (020 3051 8098, theultimatetravelcompany.co.uk) has a week from £10,957.

Indian destination spa

The Vana, Malsi Estate, in Dehradun, has spa aficionados reaching for their Himalayan smelling salts. The design is minimal, with uncluttered public spaces, and rooms have floor-to-ceiling views over the pencil-straight trees of the Sal forest. Treatments are scrupulously authentic and it is the first spa to offer Tibetan therapies in affiliation with the Dalai Lama's school of traditional medicine. The food is mainly organic and entirely tasty — the chef has spent time at Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons, Ampersand Travel (020 7819 9770, ampersandtravel.com) has six nights from £2,987: five at the Vana, full-board, with five treatments, and one at the Leela Palace, in Delhi.

Cruising Asia

Be stylishly intrepid in Burma's Mergui Archipelago, which has about 800 perfect islands, and not many more tourists in any one year. You'll be on one of the area's first luxury yachts, the Meta IV, dropping anchor on empty beaches or meeting the

Moken, a seafaring tribe who will happily sell you their catch of cuttlefish. Audley (01993 838105, audleytravel.com) has a week from £2,955 — five nights, full-board, on the yacht, and two in Bangoon. B&B.

Aqua Mekong is the new 20-suite boat from Aqua Expeditions (aquaexpeditions.com; rates TBC), the company that redefined the Amazon cruise. It will sail between Cambodia and Vietnam, allowing guests to chill by the pool on its observation deck between visits to flooded emerald forests and wing-tipped pagoda temples.

Style in the Indian Ocean

It'll be handbags at dawn in the Maldives, as the fashion house Louis Vuitton goes up against a fashionista's favourite, Como. Vuitton claims that villas at its new property, Cheval Blanc Randheli, are gracefully understated, but these are the people who charge up to £3,150 for a toiletry case — restraint isn't part of their DNA. Expect lavish interiors, Michelin-starred dining and "experience alchemists" (activity co-ordinators, if you travel with a rucksack).

Maalifushi by Como focuses on dreamy island living, with bleached woods, muslin drapes and a colour palette that rarely strays from cream. It opens in January. Bailey Robinson (01488 689700, baileyrobinson.com) has a week at Cheval Blanc Randheli from £7,195, B&B, and a week at Maalifushi from £2,160, B&B.

New hideaway in the Grenadines

Pink Sands Club, on Canouan, is the sister property to Barbados's Sandy Lane, and aims to be the most exclusive address in the Caribbean, offering amazing levels of privacy and luxury. We paid an exclusive visit this month, but

next year it really gets going. Set in 1,200 of the island's 1,800 acres of wooded hillsides, it has 24 beautifully understated suites and a handful of villas. Guests have the run of 20 beaches, four restaurants, two bars, an 18-hole golf course, an 11-room spa and a spectacular kids' club. A week starts at £9,685, B&B, including business-class flights to Barbados and private jet transfers, with

Elegant Resorts (01244 897515, elegantresorts.co.uk).

Costa Rica gets trendy

We polled the world's most influential hoteliers recently, and most intend to visit Latin America in 2014. Several namechecked the newly opened Andaz Papagayo, on the Papagayo peninsula, in Costa

Rica's northwest. The design was based on an "imagined gathering of animals", so rooms look a little like an armadillo trying to mate with a coconut shell. It's more stylish than it sounds. The scenery is equally eye-catching: acres of untouched rainforest and endless empty beaches. Rainbow Tours (020 7666 1260, rainbowtours.co.uk) has a week from £1,695pp, B&B.

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