

ANDREW HARPER'S
Hideaway Report
online
JANUARY 2012

Grand Awards 2012

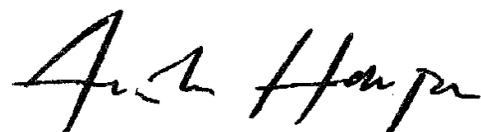


editor's letter

JANUARY 2012 — Each year, I have the pleasure of recalling my travel experiences over the previous 12 months and singling out a number of hotels and resorts for special recognition. To be considered for our annual Grand Awards, a property must be relatively small and possess a distinctive personality. It is also required to demonstrate a consistent devotion to personal service. I do not evaluate hotels by means of a checklist. Rather, I rely on 30 years of experience and my intangible summary impression. Some of our award winners are more lavish than others and provide a wider range of facilities. However, all offer the traveler comfort, warmth and charm, as well as a spirit of sincere hospitality.

In 2011, I was thrilled to find sophisticated hideaways in countries as unexpected as China, Panama and Ecuador. But it also was a good year for classic European destinations such as Rome, Corsica and the south of France. Although my primary purpose is to discover hideaways, I have also singled out the most distinguished Grand Hotel and Grand Resort that I encountered in the past 12 months. And in this issue, you will find a wide range of additional award categories, such as Best Cruise, Best Spa and Best Family-Friendly Resort.

At the end of each year, I am always amazed by the extent of the ground I have covered. But travel is an addiction, fortunately a benevolent one, and the conclusion of one year's globe-trotting merely fires me with excitement for the next.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Arch Hampen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "A".

contents

JANUARY 2012

Grand Awards 2012

HIDEAWAY OF THE YEAR

- 6 Southern Ocean Lodge, Australia

NORTH AMERICA

- 10 Ocean House
12 Glenmere Mansion

CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA

- 14 Panamonte Inn
16 Hotel Plaza Grande

CARIBBEAN

- 18 Jumby Bay
20 Hôtel Le Toiny

AFRICA

- 22 Sasaab
24 Elsa's Kopje

EUROPE

- 26 Casa Manni
28 La Coquillade
30 The Yeatman
32 Domaine de Murtoli

ASIA AND PACIFIC

- 34 Amanfayun
36 Four Seasons Hangzhou
38 Wolgan Valley Resort
40 The Louise

GRAND HOTEL & RESORT

- 42 Trump International
Hotel Chicago
44 The Resort at Pelican Hill

The Resort at Pelican Hill

NEWPORT, CALIFORNIA

GRAND RESORT



Sequestered south of Los Angeles in the hills between Newport Beach and Laguna Beach, The Resort at Pelican Hill looks, from a distance, like a slice of Tuscany transplanted beside the Pacific. Its 504 acres of grounds have been landscaped with groves of olive, cypress and fig trees.

Pelican Hill is actually two hotels in one. There are 204 Bungalow accommodations south of the main building, set at different levels to ensure privacy and memorable views. Then there are 128 Villas to the north, in two-, three- or four-bedroom configurations with full kitchens and butler service, plus a dedicated pool and clubhouse. These are separately gated and have become popular with Hollywood notables in search of discreet getaways.

The bungalows come as single rooms, or as one- or two-bedroom suites with combined living and dining areas. Our single room proved airy and bright, with a gas fireplace set in a handsome limestone chimney, and a comfortable sitting area adjacent to an expansive terrace. The spacious bath had granite counters, a walk-in shower with a stone bench, and a soaking tub.

The centerpiece of the resort is the Coliseum Pool, a perfect circle 136 feet in diameter, made all the more eye-catching by 1 million blue-glass tiles. Pelican Hill's formal restaurant is *Andrea*, in the main building, where the focus is on Northern Italian cuisine. Standout dishes from our dinner included a superb pasta of pumpkin ravioli with parsley pesto, and a roasted pork loin with seasoned sliced potatoes.

Tom Fazio designed the 36 holes at Pelican Hill's two championship golf courses. Also notable is the resort's 20,000-square-foot spa. Overall, this is a well-managed resort in a lovely setting.

THE RESORT AT PELICAN HILL Bungalow Room, from \$495; Bungalow Suite, from \$745; Two-Bedroom Villa, from \$695. 22701 Pelican Hill Road South, Newport Coast, CA 92657. Tel. (800) 315-8214 or (949) 467-6800. pelicanhill.com





THE
COLISEUM
POOL IS A
PERFECT
CIRCLE
136 FEET
IN DIAMETER
MADE
ALL THE
MORE EYE-
CATCHING
BY 1 MILLION
BLUE-GLASS
TILES.