

SUMMER 2009: GREATEST DEALS EVER

Condé Nast Traveler

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A \$25,000
DREAM
TRIP
Page 22

TRUTH IN TRAVEL

MAY 2009

EUROPE
ON SALE
CRUISING
CLASSIC CITIES

HOT LIST WORLD'S TOP NEW 140 hotels*

50 Restaurants

50 Spas

35 Nightclubs

*including 43 under \$250

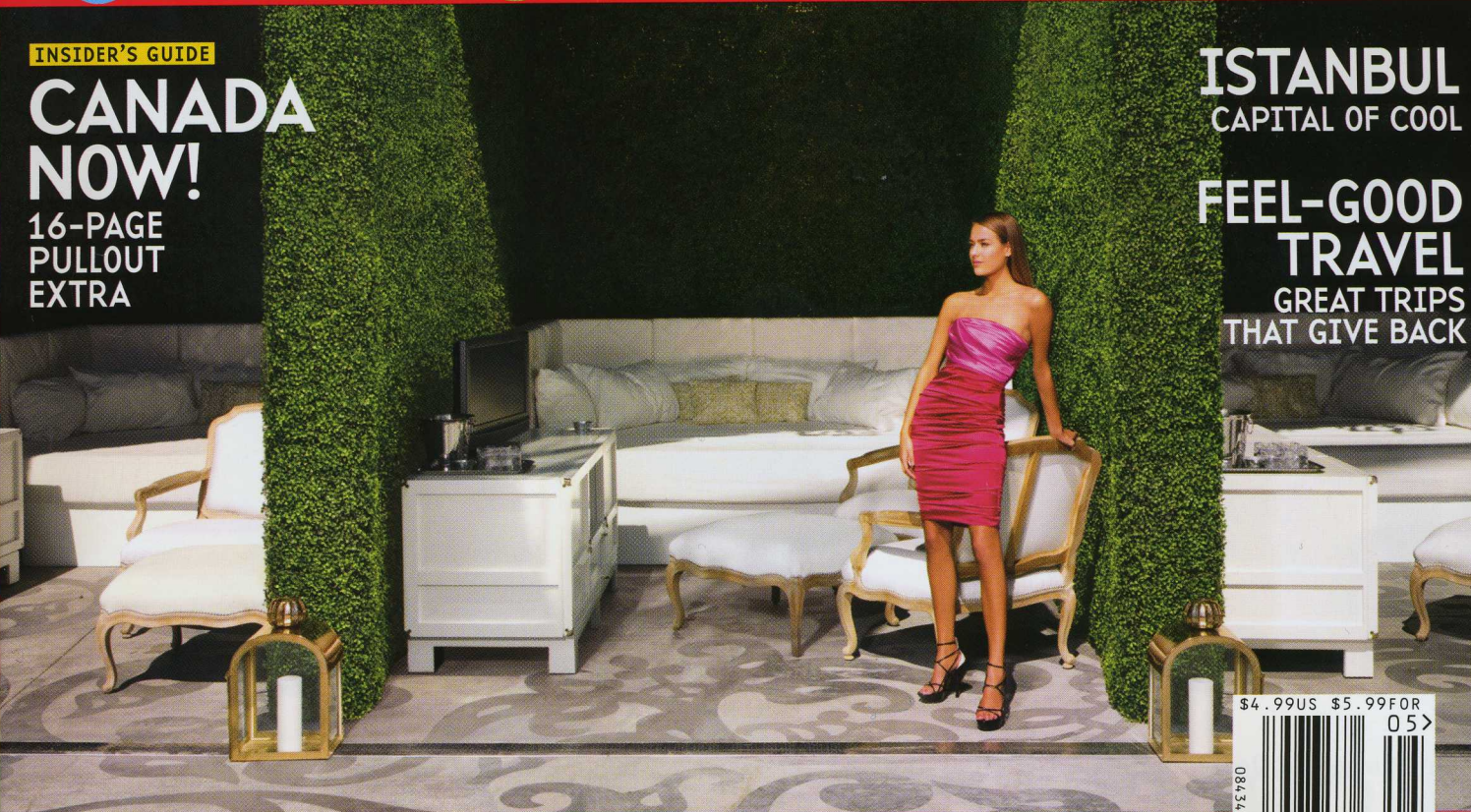
INSIDER'S GUIDE

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Condé Nast Traveler presents

THE THIRTEENTH ANNUAL

HOT

LIST

2009

THE YEAR'S 140 TOP NEW HOTELS*

*including 43
UNDER
\$250 A NIGHT

Consider it a silver lining: Hot hotels continue to open in record numbers despite the recent economic overcast, and many are more affordable than ever. Of the thousands that made their debut in the last year, we checked into the most promising—incognito—measuring up the service, trying out the beds, and sampling the food. The 140 properties that passed our scrutiny make up the largest Hot List yet, proving that the standards for excellence haven't slipped; in fact, they've only risen. Spanning 53 countries (including new-to-the-list destinations Israel, Mongolia, Peru, Slovenia, and Zimbabwe), they range in size from a three-pavilion hideaway an hour north of Sydney to a 2,034-room high-rise on the Vegas Strip, and in room rates from \$89 at an invitingly accoutred Palm Springs hot spot with a pool straight out of a David Hockney print to \$2,050 for a sprawling safari tent in northern Botswana. Such bright choices make the forecast easier to weather.

ARGENTINA

CasaSur Art Hotel, Buenos Aires
 Jardin Escondido, Buenos Aires
 Valle Perdido Estate Winery, Neuquén
 Posada Puerto Bemberg, Puerto Libertad
 Loi Suites Chapelco Hotel, San Martín de los Andes

AUSTRALIA

Pretty Beach House, Bouddi Peninsula
 Southern Ocean Lodge, Kangaroo Island
 Inter-Continental Melbourne The Rialto, Melbourne

BELGIUM

Kempinski Hotel Dukes' Palace, Bruges

BOTSWANA

Xaranna Tented Camp, Okavango Delta
 Zarafa Camp, Selinda Reserve

BRAZIL

Hotel Santa Teresa, Rio de Janeiro

CAMBODIA

The Sothea, Siem Reap

CANADA

Shangri-La Hotel, Vancouver

CARIBBEAN

Peninsula House, Dominican Republic
 Mount Cinnamon, Grenada
 Cap Maison, St. Lucia

CHILE

Kunza Hotel & Spa, San Pedro de Atacama

CHINA

Aman at Summer Palace, Beijing
 Hotel G, Beijing
 Opposite House, Beijing
 Park Hyatt, Beijing
 Banyan Tree Sanya Resort & Spa, Hainan Island
 Mandarin Oriental Sanya, Hainan Island
 Ritz-Carlton, Sanya, Hainan Island
 W Hong Kong, Hong Kong
 Four Seasons Hotel, Macau
 Crosswaters Ecolodge & Spa, Nankunshan
 Park Hyatt, Shanghai

COSTA RICA

JW Marriott Guanacaste Resort & Spa, Santa Cruz

CZECH REPUBLIC

Buddha-Bar Hotel, Prague
 Kempinski Hybernská, Prague

DENMARK

Nimb Hotel, Copenhagen

EGYPT

Al Tarfa Desert Sanctuary Lodge & Spa, Dakhla Oasis

ENGLAND

St. Moritz Hotel, Cornwall
 Grosvenor House, London
 St. James's Hotel and Club, London

FRANCE

Hotel 28 à Aix, Aix-en-Provence
 Regent Grand Hotel, Bordeaux
 Le Couvent des Minimes, Mane
 Mama Shelter, Paris

GERMANY

The George, Hamburg

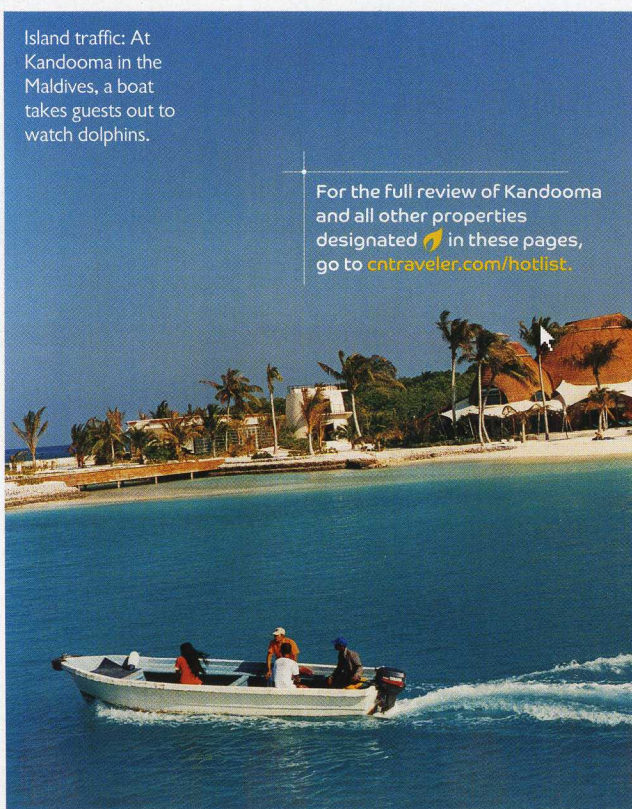
GREECE

Anemi Hotel, Folegandros
 Santorini Grace, Santorini

INDIA

Neeleshwar Hermitage Hotel, Northern Kerala
 Pashan Garh, Panna National Park

Island traffic: At Kandooma in the Maldives, a boat takes guests out to watch dolphins.



For the full review of Kandooma and all other properties designated in these pages, go to cntraveler.com/hotlist.

Fateh Garh, Udaipur
 Nadesar Palace, Varanasi

INDONESIA
 Komaneka at Bisma, Bali
 St. Regis Resort, Bali
 Hotel Tugu, Lombok

IRELAND
 Cliff House Hotel, County Waterford

ISRAEL
 Hotel Montefiore, Tel Aviv

ITALY
 Villa Marina Hotel & Spa, Capri
 Four Seasons Hotel, Florence
 Hotel Palazzo Gattini, Matera
 Romeo Hotel, Naples
 Donna Camilla Savelli Hotel, Rome
 Borgo Santo Pietro, Tuscany
 Castiglione del Bosco—Il Borgo, Tuscany

MALAYSIA
 Gayana Eco Resort, Kota Kinabalu
 Temple Tree at Bon Ton Resort, Langkawi

MALDIVES
 Kandooma, South Malé Atoll

MAURITIUS
 Four Seasons Resort Mauritius at Anahita, Beau Champ

MEXICO
 Capella Ixtapa, Ixtapa
 St. Regis Resort, Punta Mita

MONGOLIA
 Terelj Hotel, Gorkhi-Terelj National Park

MOROCCO
 AnaYela, Marrakech
 Dar JL, Marrakech

THE NETHERLANDS

CitizenM Schiphol, Amsterdam

OMAN

Al Bustan Palace, Muscat

PERU

Las Casitas del Colca, Colca Valley
 La Casona Inkatera, Cusco

PHILIPPINES

Abacá, Mactan Island

PORTUGAL

M'AR de Ar Aqueduto, Évora

QATAR

W Doha Hotel, Doha

SCOTLAND

Hotel du Vin, Edinburgh

SEYCHELLES

Four Seasons Resort, Mahé

SINGAPORE

Crowne Plaza Changi Airport, Singapore

SLOVENIA

Kempinski Palace, Portoroz

SOUTH AFRICA

Cape Grace, Cape Town
 Dock House, Cape Town
 Tintswalo Atlantic, Hout Bay
 AtholPlace, Johannesburg

SPAIN

ABaC Restaurant & Hotel, Barcelona
 Murmuri, Barcelona
 Finca Cortesin, Caseres
 Aguas de Ibiza Spa & Resort, Ibiza

SRI LANKA

Tintagel, Colombo

SWEDEN

Lydmar Hotel, Stockholm
 Fjällnäs, Swedish Highlands

SWITZERLAND

LeCrans Hôtel & Spa, Crans-Montana
 Dolder Grand, Zurich

THAILAND

Le Méridien, Bangkok
 Veranda Chiang Mai, The High Resort, Chiang Mai
 Le Méridien Chiang Rai Resort, Chiang Rai
 Anantara Resort & Spa, Phuket

TURKEY

Four Seasons Istanbul at the Bosphorus, Istanbul
 Park Hyatt Istanbul—Maçka Palas, Istanbul
 Witt Istanbul Suites, Istanbul

UGANDA

Clouds Mountain Gorilla Lodge, Bwindi Impenetrable National Park

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

The Address, Downtown Burj Dubai, Dubai
 Atlantis, The Palm, Dubai
 Desert Palm, Dubai

UNITED STATES

InterContinental Montelucia Resort & Spa, Paradise Valley, Ariz.
 Montage Beverly Hills, Beverly Hills, Calif.
 London West Hollywood, Los Angeles, Calif.
 SLS Hotel at Beverly Hills, Los Angeles, Calif.
 Resort at Pelican Hill, Newport Beach, Calif.
 Ace Hotel & Swim Club, Palm Springs, Calif.
 Sè San Diego, San Diego, Calif.
 Cavallo Point, Sausalito, Calif.
 Bardessono, Yountville, Calif.
 Westin Riverfront Resort & Spa, Avon, Colo.
 Capella Telluride, Telluride, Colo.
 The Regent, Bal Harbour, Fla.
 Viceroy, Miami, Fla.
 Fontainebleau, Miami Beach, Fla.
 Mondrian South Beach, Miami Beach, Fla.
 Mansion on Peachtree, Atlanta, Ga.
 Avia, Savannah, Ga.
 Royal Hawaiian Hotel, Honolulu, Hawaii
 The Blackstone, Chicago, Ill.
 Dana Hotel and Spa, Chicago, Ill.
 Hidden Pond, Kennebunkport, Me.
 Mandarin Oriental, Boston, Mass.
 Hotel Ivy, Minneapolis, Minn.
 Encore Wynn, Las Vegas, Nev.
 Encantado, Santa Fe, N.M.
 Greenwich Hotel, New York, N.Y.
 Thompson LES, New York, N.Y.
 The Nines, Portland, Ore.
 Hotel Saint Cecilia, Austin, Tex.
 Stoneleigh Hotel & Spa, Dallas, Tex.
 Arctic Club Hotel, Seattle, Wash.
 Four Seasons Hotel, Seattle, Wash.
 Donovan House, Washington, D.C.
 Iron Horse Hotel, Milwaukee, Wis.

ZAMBIA

Toka Leya Camp, Mosi-Oa-Tunya National Park

ZIMBABWE

Singita Pamushana Lodge, Malilangwe Wildlife Reserve

KEY TO SYMBOLS

☪ = Bar/Lounge ☪ = Beach ☪ = Free Wi-Fi ☪ = Gym ☪ = Pool
 ☪ = Spa ☪ = Hot Spa 2009 ☪ = 24-Hour Room Service
 🔥 = Hot 🔥 = Hotter 🔥 = Hottest

For the full reviews of hotels designated go to cntraveler.com/hotlist

Resort at Pelican Hill, Newport Beach, California

Hot Any property with a pool named The Coliseum deserves comparison to an overblown theme hotel. So it's all the more surprising that Pelican Hill relies on old-fashioned grace rather than razzle-dazzle. The resort perches high above Newport Beach and the design relies on exquisite workmanship and earthy materials. Rooms flaunt rustic wood-beamed ceilings and towering limestone fireplaces, while the patios are shaded by mature olive trees. But they're certainly not without their mod cons: plasma-screen TVs, Bose speakers, and coffee machines that even a member of Mensa would struggle to master. The gargantuan Coliseum is a round body of water with an outer edge that seems to plunge into the Pacific. At the northern Italian Andrea Restaurant the osso buco melts in your mouth. **When to go:** The views are more stunning in autumn and winter, when there isn't fog or clouds along the Orange County coast. **Which room to book:** Bungalows on the western edge of the peninsula (on Via Capri and on Via Dome) look across the golf course to the ocean (949-467-6800; pelicanhill.com; doubles, \$695). 🍷🏊📺📶🏠🛏🛀🔥🔥🔥

Ace Hotel & Swim Club, Palm Springs, California

Hot Rather than the usual Rat Pack retro or duffer chic, this hip oasis is a slightly rugged desert escape. The Sahara-circa-1950s decor features walls covered in tent canvas (and matching bedspreads), steamer trunks (which store extra pillows), striped Berberesque robes, magazine racks stuffed with vintage *National Geographic*, and a clock/MP3 player that appears to be World War II surplus. Bathrooms could be bigger, and the water takes a while to get hot, but that just adds to the illusion of being far, far away. The grounds of this onetime Howard Johnson motor lodge have been transformed into a garden of mature palms and olive trees, with outdoor fireplaces. The King's Highway restaurant, a former Denny's, now serves Middle Eastern cuisine with a California edge. Despite its petite size, the spa offers an awesome array of treatments, while the sprawling pool is framed by royal palms, rocky outcrops, and snowcapped peaks. David Hockney, eat your heart out. **When to go:** Early January's Palm Springs Film Festival is the best time for star gazing (extraterrestrial and otherwise). **Which room to book:** Rooms in the "100" block face the pool and the mountains beyond (760-325-9900; acehotel.com; doubles, \$89-\$259). 🍷🏊📺📶🏠🛏🛀🔥🔥🔥

Sè San Diego, San Diego, California

Hot Though the Sè is very much a visual feast—with a massive bronze front door, a grand staircase framed by faux sand dollars, lamps covered

in gray stingray, an entire wall at the spa covered in tiny green Chinese teacups—it's more than just a pretty face. The staff seem to be genuinely thrilled to help you, and the 184 rooms, in a steel-and-glass building perched atop a Victorian-era structure, are small but well appointed. Yet the thing that really sticks in your mind (and belly) is the complimentary breakfast in bed with chocolate croissants, serrano ham and melon, and granola. All of this from chef Christopher Lee, whose Suite & Tender restaurant is surf and turf with a twist: pork belly and scallops, hamachi fish tacos, carpaccio of Kobe beef. The spa, too, is a pleasant surprise—especially the harem-style lounge, where you can curl up with a good book (or another warm body). **When to go:** The adjacent Gaslamp District rocks year-round. **Which room to book:** Suites in the northwest corner (rooms 909, 809, 709, etc.) have balconies overlooking the rooftop pool and downtown San Diego (619-515-3000; sesandiego.com; doubles, \$379-\$600). 🍷🏊📺📶🏠🛏🛀🔥🔥🔥

Cavallo Point, Sausalito, California

Hot 415-339-4700; cavallo.com; doubles, \$270. 🍷🏊📺📶🏠🛏🛀🔥🔥🔥

Bardessono, Yountville, California

Hot Being green has never felt as good as it does at Bardessono, whose main assets are its stumbling distance from more Michelin stars than any Paris pied-à-terre, paired with the atmosphere of an agrarian retreat. After check-in, done via a staffer's hip-slung electronic tablet, it's a short walk to the hotel's four courtyards, where stone walkways curve alongside meandering streams. Each of the 62 rooms comes with a patio and a two-person tub; a few also have outdoor showers. A rooftop lap pool with cabanas overlooks the hotel's own grapevines. The modernist architecture makes use of salvaged cypress wood, weathered steel, and reclaimed tufa stone, while the lobby ceiling is constructed of redwood wine barrel staves. Sustainability is key in the restaurant, as well, where simple preparations rely on locally sourced meat and fish and produce from the hotel's own gardens. The only sign of opulence having lost out to eco-friendliness is in the stiff recycled-material couches, which rustle like packing peanuts when you sit down. **When to go:** May, when the vineyards are outlined in wildflowers. **Which room to book:** Nos. 413 and 414, on the second floor of the quietest courtyard (707-204-6000; bardessono.com; doubles, \$700-\$900). 🍷🏊📺📶🏠🛏🛀🔥🔥🔥

Westin Riverfront Resort & Spa, Avon, Colorado

Under \$250 970-790-6000; westin.com; doubles, \$129-\$499. 🍷🏊📺📶🏠🛏🛀🔥🔥🔥

Capella Telluride, Telluride, Colorado

Under \$250 970-369-0880; capellatelluride.com; doubles, \$195-\$380. 🍷🏊📺📶🏠🛏🛀🔥🔥🔥

The Regent, Bal Harbour, Florida

Hot 305-455-5400; regenthotels.com; doubles, \$325-\$375. 🍷🏊📺📶🏠🛏🛀🔥🔥🔥

Viceroy, Miami, Florida

Hot 866-781-9923; viceroymiami.com; doubles, \$270-\$300. 🍷🏊📺📶🏠🛏🛀🔥🔥🔥

Fontainebleau, Miami Beach, Florida

Hot With its iconic Miami Modern architecture and guests like Frank Sinatra and Elvis Presley, the Fontainebleau created a buzz when it opened in 1954. Now, a three-year renovation has put the 1,500-room beachside behemoth back on the map, with an over-the-top "what recession?" atmosphere and new adjacent towers housing rooms, 11 restaurants, and a \$50 million spa. As a one-stop entertainment complex, the resort lives up to its billing—although the service will have to improve to keep up with the number of guests. All the large rooms, which fill four towers, come with 20-inch iMacs (from which you can make restaurant and spa reservations) and very comfortable beds. On-site distractions include the lobby nightclub, Liv; a series of high-end shops; and a gargantuan complex of pools that includes the see-and-be-seen original. Architecture buffs will enjoy the historic Morris Lapidus details—like the bowtie-motif marble floor and the famous staircase to nowhere, which allowed women to make a grand entrance. **When to go:** After the New Year holiday, when Miami remains balmy. **Which room to book:** In the original Versailles tower, which is close to the resort's restaurants and spa, ask for an Atlantic Ocean view (305-538-2000; fontainebleau.com; doubles, \$309-\$439). 🍷🏊📺📶🏠🛏🛀🔥🔥🔥

Mansion on Peachtree, Atlanta, Georgia

Under \$250 404-995-7500; mansiononpeachtree.com; doubles, \$199-\$349. 🍷🏊📺📶🏠🛏🛀🔥🔥🔥

Avia, Savannah, Georgia

Under \$250 866-644-2842; aviahotels.com; doubles, \$209-\$279. 🍷🏊📺📶🏠🛏🛀🔥🔥🔥

Royal Hawaiian Hotel, Honolulu, Hawaii

Hot This 529-room landmark spent the past couple of decades chugging along on the fumes of nostalgia. When the iconic property opened in 1927, it became a retreat for film stars, presidents, and the early jet-set. Now, after a much-needed \$50 million restoration, the so-called Pink Palace has reclaimed its past glory. Although not every problem can be resolved—it's still incongruously wedged between a sprawling Sheraton resort and the depressing Royal Hawaiian shopping pavilion—the facade has been refinished, and the impeccable interiors are an inspired blend of textiles, artwork, and woodwork that pay tribute to the hotel's heritage while remaining fresh and

KEY TO SYMBOLS

🍷=Bar/lounge 🏊=Beach 📺=Free Wi-Fi 🏠=Gym 🛏=Pool 🛀=Spa 🔥=Hot Spas 2009 🕒=24-hour room service 🔥=Hot 🔥🔥=Hotter 🔥🔥🔥=Hottest

For the full reviews of hotels designated **Hot** go to cntraveler.com/hotlist