

# Travel

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**'Lions amble past the fire pit and I see a cheetah polish off his supper yards from the tent'**  
Sarah Marshall stays at a luxury camp in the Serengeti

COURTESY OF DESIGN HOTELS

## 1 Nature Eco Residences, Santorini



# 30 best new hotels for 2021

A Ritz in Spain, a palatial retreat at Versailles and a Pig in West Sussex. **Susan d'Arcy** has the pick of next year's openings

## EUROPE

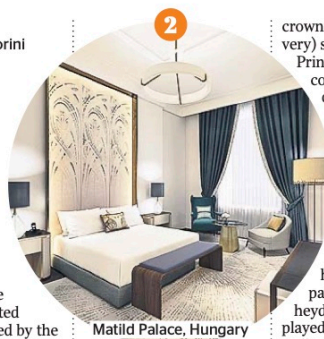
### 1 Nature Eco Residences Greece

Santorini is Europe's honeymoon capital but it's not just newlyweds who need some rose-tinted romance right now — so this eco-hideaway, opening in May, feels timely. It hits the spot for warmth, with an earthier mood board than the typical Cyclades white-on-white starkness and has panoramic views of the all-important caldera. Better still, it's not in tourist-trap Oia, first stop for selfie-obsessed couples, but in quieter Akrotiri, where sharp-elbowed, mood-killing photographers are rarely spotted.

**Details** B&B doubles from £253 (designhotels.com). Fly to Santorini

### 2 Matild Palace Hungary

If you've been to Budapest, you already know this belle époque beauty down on the Danube beside Elizabeth Bridge. It is a city landmark whose wedding-cake interiors have been given some 21st-century attitude thanks to cutting-edge art and contemporary furniture. The drama continues upstairs, where the 11 bedrooms have handcrafted bedheads and bathrooms inspired by the country's famous thermal spas. The



Matild Palace, Hungary

crowning glory is the Duchess, its (not very) secret rooftop bar named after Princess Maria Clotilde, who commissioned the palace and demanded a speakeasy drinking den on the roof to entertain her artist friends.

**Details** B&B doubles from £386 (marriott.com). Fly to Budapest

### 3 Villa Igiea Italy

The renowned hotelier Rocco Forte loves Sicily and he has had his eyes on this seaside-meets-city palazzo in Palermo for years. In its heyday the art nouveau masterpiece played host to Greta Garbo and Grace Kelly. From June — courtesy of some ▶



# 22 Travel

► Forte fairy dusting — that bygone glamour is back with a bang, particularly in the hotel's frescoed bar. The parquet floors, Sicilian tiles and Carrara marble bathrooms in the 104 bedrooms have also been spruced up, but there was no need to tamper with their heartwarming views that tumble down to the Tyrrhenian Sea.

**Details** B&B doubles from £465 (roccofortehotels.com). Fly to Palermo

## 4 Oku Balearic Islands

This newcomer, arriving in May, sits neatly in the pine-clad hills just above the bay of Cala Gracio, where you'll find Ibiza's loveliest beaches and best sunsets — the perfect accompaniment to its brand of boho luxury. There's an organic wholesomeness to the natural stone and reclaimed oak in the 189 rooms that makes you want to roll out your yoga mat, yet in true White Isle style there's plenty of opportunity to detox too. A resident DJ keeps the vibe jumping at the pool, which at 50m is the longest on the island, and San Antonio's nightlife is within walking distance.

**Details** B&B doubles from £275 (okuhotels.com). Fly to Ibiza

## 5 Casa Pacha Balearic Islands

Ibiza's mega-club Pacha has decamped to its quieter neighbouring island of Formentera to open a hotel that swaps decadent beats for healthy hedonism. The 14-room property launches in April on photogenic Migjorn Beach with an aesthetic that is raw rather than roar. That means sun-bleached fabrics, polished concrete floors and tropical plants. Mindful "happenings" include sunset rituals and fire dances, but if that is too tame, guests have complimentary entry to Pacha on Ibiza too.

**Details** B&B doubles from £300 (casaformentera.com). Fly to Ibiza

## 6 Hotel Ritz Spain

Madrid's Hotel Ritz tells you that César Ritz merely cut his teeth in London and Paris, and Madrid's Ritz is the pinnacle of his holy trinity. Their grande dame, a stone's throw from the Prado and Thyssen-Bornemisza museums, has been under wraps for three years while undergoing a £100 million renovation and its March opening is eagerly awaited by locals and visitors alike. The hotel's 153 rooms have been given a contemporary polish, but the revitalised Palm Court is causing the most buzz — its original glass dome, hidden for the past 80 years, is being reinstated, making this the place for a supreme people-watching afternoon tea.

**Details** B&B doubles from £560 (mandarinoriental.com). Fly to Madrid

## 7 Palacio de Canavezes Portugal

The Douro Valley may be known for its wine, but its water has fans too and in the 1900s Portuguese royalty enjoyed dipping in its mineral-rich thermal springs. From May Gordon Campbell Gray, a master of low-key minimalism, provides the base for sampling those liquid assets in style once again. His 52-room wellness resort is all about the healing H<sub>2</sub>O. Water is a central pillar of its medical clinic, which focuses on baths and hydrotherapy massages. The restorative spring water is blended into the spa's lotions and fills the outdoor pool, which overlooks a languorous swish of the River Tamega.

**Details** Doubles from £260 (campbellgrayhotels.com). Fly to Porto

## 8 Hotel Castello di Reschio Italy

Waking up in this 11th-century castle is like strolling in your very own fairytale. Count Antonio Bolza and his family bought it in 1994 as a romantic ruin with a woebegone 3,700-acre estate attached. After a blood, sweat and far-too-many-years restoration, their hilltop fortress outside Perugia welcomes its first guests in April. Interiors are entrancing, filled with covetable furniture by the count's son Benedikt, an internationally famous designer. The estate has also been nursed back to its best so you can spot wild boar, roe deer and even porcupines.

**Details** B&B doubles from £610 (reschio.com). Fly to Florence

## 9 Revivo Wellness Resort, Château de Fiac France

Revivo operates one of Bali's best spas, but this chateau in Tarn, southwest France, offers the same excellence minus the jet lag. The emphasis is on brain as well as body so expect neurobics workouts for your grey matter, meditation to boost neuroplasticity and art therapy for cognitive creativity, while your food plan will be personalised from a DNA screening. Elsewhere the earthy tones and floral fabrics of the 16 elegant bedrooms should boost your mood, and since the hotel's 200-year-old wine cellar has been transformed into a curative salt cave, there will be no losing brain cells to the demon drink either.

**Details** B&B doubles from £250 (revivoresorts.com). Fly to Toulouse

## 10 Grand Universe Lucca, Autograph Collection Italy

Lucca has always played second fiddle to nearby (and overrated) Pisa, but the arrival of the first luxury hotel in its old town might just change the fortunes of this charming medieval walled city. The Grand Universe opened last month with 55 sharp-lined modern bedrooms, knockout views from its rooftop bar and some cute heritage nods. Lucca was the birthplace of Puccini, so the hotel has employed an in-house composer, ready to create a short piece of music inspired by your sparkling personality.

**Details** Doubles from £226 (marriott.co.uk). Fly to Pisa

## 11 The Woodward Switzerland

The renovation of this post Haussmann-style mansion on the shores of Lake Geneva is top-notch. Pierre-Yves Rochon, the design guru behind George V in Paris, is in charge of rearing the 26 swanky suites for its spring opening. They will come with flamboyant touches such as marble bookcases, as well as views of Mont Blanc. The food will be just as noteworthy given it is by Michelin-starred Joël Robuchon. Wellness is by Maison Guerlain and even its swimming pool will make a splash. At 21m it's the longest in the city.

**Details** Doubles from £1,270 (oetkercollection.com). Fly to Geneva

## 12 Mob House France

The philosopher turned hotelier Cyril Aouizerate, who co-founded the Mama



8 Hotel Castello di Reschio, Italy



Shelter brand, hates the words "hipster" and "boutique", which is ironic given they neatly describe his latest project. Mob House opens in April in the increasingly gentrified Paris suburb of St Ouen in the northern arrondissement of St Denis with 100 rooms that mix smart Italian furniture with flea-market finds and views of the Sacré-Coeur. There's a 25m pool in the garden and a restaurant overseen by an as yet unnamed renowned chef offering classics such as ragout for as little as a fiver. Let's hear it for égalité and fraternité.

**Details** B&B doubles from £175 (mobhotel.com). Fly to Paris

## 13 MarBella Elix Greece

MarBella's two Corfio resorts have carved out a reputation for being among the Med's best affordable luxury stays. Their new mainland stablemate won't let the side down when it opens in April. It shares the same high design values and emphasis on great dining, with a fresh fuss-free modernity for its 146 rooms and four restaurants covering the Med's

Various international and domestic travel restrictions are in place. For the latest information, see gov.uk



HEINZ TROLL; JAKOS GRAPOW; PHILIP VILE



### 13 MarBella Elix, Greece



### 3 Villa Igilea, Italy



performers' costumes, where the Vietnamese cuisine based on 100-year-old recipes hits all the right notes. **Details** B&B doubles from £515 (capellahotels.com). Fly to Hanoi

### 19 Azumi Japan

It takes someone of the calibre of Adrian Zecha, who founded the super-exclusive Aman chain, to take on the challenge of reinventing the ryokan. His contemporary version of the traditional inn opens in March on Ikuchijima island in the Seto Inland Sea, nicknamed Japan's Mediterranean because of its sunny climate and turquoise waters. The hotel is built round a 140-year-old family home, with Zecha adding modern drama to the serene, light-filled bedrooms by surrounding their private gardens with eye-catching cedar fencing. In keeping with the ryokan's community ethos meals will be taken communally and the hotel's bath house will be open to local people. A must-do detour for those bound for the delayed Olympic Games. **Details** B&B doubles from £530 (azumi.com). Fly to Osaka

### 20 Hutton Brickyards United States

The post-Covid yearning for countryside is not unique to the UK. New Yorkers are also upping sticks and their dream destination is the Hudson Valley for its fine art, fine dining and even finer festivals. From April this country estate opens on 73 riverfront acres in Kingston, the valley's creative capital, with 31 Shaker-chic cabins that have corrugated iron roofs, tongue-and-groove walls and woven flags to raise to signal a room-service request. Similarly civilised pursuits include archery and croquet. **Details** Room-only doubles from £145 (salthotels.com). Fly to New York

### 21 Six Senses Botanique Brazil

While we head to Brazil's beaches in summer well-heeled Brazilians make a beeline for Campos do Jordao in the Mantiqueira Mountains, hungry for its pure pine-scented air. Six Senses' eco-resort, opening in early 2021, keeps indoors authentic too. The seven suites are decked out with indigenous warm woods and have floor-to-ceiling windows for maximum impact. Activities include classes in capoeira, the Afro-Brazilian martial art, plus hiking and horse riding through forests and valleys, while spa guests can forage for botanical herbs to use in their treatments. **Details** B&B doubles from £334 (sixsenses.com). Fly to Sao Paulo

### 22 Soho Beach House Canouan Grenadines

The Caribbean's playful take on barefoot luxury aligns exactly with the UK's favourite party-hard hotelier so it's surprising that it has taken Soho House more than 20 years to find a home here. That said, Canouan Island is the perfect match. It's as drop-dead gorgeous as the group's supermodel fans and even more exclusive than its sister-island Mustique. The 40 whitewashed bedrooms open early in 2021, within an easy sashay of a pearl-white beach where you might swim with turtles in water that's so Tiffany blue it could be the Maldives. **Details** B&B doubles, rates TBC (sohohouse.com). Fly to Barbados ▶

culinary bases. It also has a peachy setting near Parga overlooking the sublime sands of Karavostasi beach. **Details** Half-board doubles from £121 (marbella.gr). Fly to Preveza

### 14 Aïrelles Château de Versailles — Le Grand Contrôle France

For the first time the third estate can stay at France's grandest palace, Versailles — or at least in the château's former, equally lavish finance ministry in the grounds. Guests will have out-of-hours access to the site as well as electric boats and golf carts to help them to explore its 2,500 acres. They will also be able to join behind-the-scenes palace tours to see rooms such as Louis XVI's dressing room and Marie Antoinette's private library, usually off-limits to day visitors. Sleep is probably the last thing on their minds, but when they must, the 14 rooms are so excessive they'd bring a smile to Louis XVI's face — four-posters, antique furniture, authentic chandeliers. The hotel opens next year with the chef Alain Ducasse producing suitably OTT menus, including a Marie Antoinette afternoon tea with plenty of you know what. **Details** B&B doubles from £1,525 (aïrelles.com). Fly to Paris

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Hotel Ritz

### 15 Arthaus Beirut Lebanon

Art lovers Nabil and Zoe Debs have already turned their homes in Windsor, Megève and Havana into culture-focused guesthouses. The fourth property in their collection was always going to be special: this 18th-century mansion in Beirut has belonged to Nabil's family for generations, but then it ended up opening on August 4, the day an explosion ripped through the city, killing 200 people. The couple have regrouped, repaired and will reopen next month with 25 eclectically decorated bedrooms and an underground lounge offering the inside track on the local arts scene. **Details** B&B doubles from £165 (arthausinternational). Fly to Beirut

### 16 Bethlen Estates Romania

Transylvania is Europe's last true wilderness and until now something of a desert for stylish accommodation. This curation of meticulously restored houses in the medieval village of Cris gloriously rectifies that situation. Their crisp interiors are layered with urban sass thanks to designer furniture, Tom Dixon lights and sculptural staircases. Outside remains timeless, with the Carpathian Mountains' untamed forests, glacial lakes and Renaissance castles on the doorstep. **Details** B&B doubles from £225 (bethlenestates.com). Fly to Targu Mures

### LONG HAUL

### 17 Patina Maldives

For years the Maldives was tourism's WC Fields — the comedian who joked that anyone who hates children can't be all bad — but the destination is becoming increasingly family-friendly. Those with 2.4 in tow should check out Patina, which opens in April. It sports the understated decor synonymous with the archipelago but here it comes with complimentary ice cream, free loan of bikes, snorkelling kit, stand-up paddleboards and kayaks and even one gratis dive lesson per child. Nights are rounded off round a communal campfire with an endless supply of marshmallows to toast. **Details** B&B villas from £1,450 sleeping three, including transfers and evening cocktails (patinahotels.com). Fly to Malé

### 18 Capella Hanoi Vietnam

Bill Bensley's whimsical Alice in Wonderland interiors have made him the darling of the design world and he hasn't held back with his latest project, steps from Hanoi's Opera House. Riffing off the city's mischievous opera-goers from the Roaring Twenties, the 47 bedrooms dazzle with art deco detailing, accessorised by more than 1,000 pieces of musical memorabilia. The theme continues with the Diva's Lounge bar serving Twenties-inspired cocktails, and Backstage restaurant, draped in