

TRAVEL pavilion 2017

We checked into many hotels around the world to make your reservations easier for the New Year. The following 23 we selected are the best of the best. Whether you fancy an upscale megaresort or historic or boutique hotels, you'll find that here and more. The vibe is varied too. What's your scene? Partying, nature, fitness, adventure or peace and tranquility? You're in luck no matter what. Get set for the perfect vacay.

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COURTESY OF JADE MOUNTAIN

Jade Mountain

FOUR SEASONS THE WESTCLIFF JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

Plan to stay awhile; in fact, there's plenty of room to accommodate a deep wardrobe. It's easy to make yourself at home among the well-appointed rooms, which feature original artworks commissioned from local artists and an expansive open bathroom/closet space.

Touting one of the city's best views, the property's Flames should be one of your first visits after checking into your room. The indoor/outdoor dining setting showcases a breathtaking view of Johannesburg. Come for lunch, brunch or dinner, where menu options include everything from wood-fired pizzas to traditional braai (South African term for BBQ).

Opened with a \$56 million renovation under the Four Seasons brand in 2015, the property has already become a hit with celebrity guests. Actor/comedian Kevin Hart was rumored to stay here during his *What Now?* tour along with civil rights icon and ambassador Andrew Young (fourseasons.com/Johannesburg).



OSTHOFF RESORT ELKHART LAKE, WISCONSIN

Take an amazing excursion to the heartland of America. The extraordinary Osthoff Resort, a AAA four-diamond hotel, is nestled in the charming town of Elkhart Lake in Wisconsin. This picturesque resort features typical hotel rooms, deluxe rooms and one-, two- and three-bedroom suites with the traveler's choice of courtyard, woodland or lake views. Suites and deluxe rooms include a living room, dining room, fireplace, private balcony, full kitchen and more. For the chef in you, sign on to the French cuisine workshops or cooking classes at the L'ecole de la Maison Culinary School. For relaxation and rejuvenation, make reservations at the Aspira Spa. Sacred Waters massage, Aspira Chroma Lift Facial and Indigo Journey SpaSuite are quite the experience. Whether you want to enjoy casual or fine dining, the panoramic views of Elkhart Lake are guest favorites at Lola's on the Lake (www.osthoff.com).



THE INN AT ENGLISH HARBOUR ST. JOHN'S, ANTIGUA

The Inn at English Harbour is colonial-style luxury at its best. Get in touch with your soul through spiritual healing sessions and a meditation course. When you're ready for action, there's golf, yachting, tennis and water sports. Do settle down for the fab food that explores the island's culture and its people. You will always remember dining at the Terrace Restaurant and Stone Bar. Set among the 19 acres of Antigua's National Park, you're awash in lush landscaped gardens. The atmosphere is perfect for cocktails at sunset and an al-fresco candlelit dinner (<http://www.theinnantigua.com/en/>).

SANDALS BARBADOS ST. LAWRENCE GAP, BARBADOS

Sandals Resorts are famous for many things—but its Butler Suites service raises the bar—high. Get ready for VIP treatment that you dare only dream of. When you arrive, your butler will greet you with a smile, lemongrass-scented hand towels to freshen up after your flight, and then tempt you with a cold cocktail and light bites. No worries about your luggage, of course. Forget about standing in line to check in. Your butler will handle that privately in your suite and work his or her magic to orchestrate any personal accommodation preferences. You'll get a private resort orientation. Don't be surprised when you get the offer to unpack your bags and to press your first night's clothes. When you're given a cell phone to call when you so desire, you'll know for sure you are in the very best of hands. Better still, this kind of service that you'll never forget is just beginning. (www.sandals.com/main/barbados/bd-home/).

PHOTOS COURTESY OF HOTELS



Luna Sea Inn

LUNA SEA INN BLUEFIELDS, JAMAICA

Every now and again you stumble upon a place so special it's as if you had a divine appointment. Check into the Luna Sea Inn in rural Bluefields, Jamaica, and you'll understand. If you're looking for a big fancy resort or wild nightlife, don't make a reservation. This nine-room boutique hotel on the south coast is well off the beaten path, surrounded by the sea and beauty you won't believe. Think intimate, bohemian vibe. You'll mingle with locals at the hotel's Cracked Conch Restaurant and Bar. After a major renovation and new ownership, the inn reopened this year. Mississippi transplant Dr. Linda Chidester's Southern hospitality and charm set the atmosphere. You'll feel like you have a new BFF. Come ready to eat. Chef Vinton will wow you with his culinary skills—be it conch fritters or filet mignon. Luna Sea Inn is about relaxation, but there's action nearby—the YS Falls, fishing, hiking, paddle boarding, the Blue Hole Gardens and some of the best birding anywhere. Wolde Kristos of Jamaica Birding will show you around. Explore the caverns that run through the Roaring River. Take a boat to the Pelican Bar—a mishmash of wooden sticks—a makeshift hut over the water. The only regret you'll have about your visit to the Luna Sea Inn is leaving paradise (www.lunaseainn.com).

THE BUCCANEER ST. CROIX, U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

This fabulous five-star hotel dates back to 1653. Well positioned on the eastern end of St. Croix, the 340-tropical-acre beach and golf resort is a magnificent site to behold. Stroll along three of its white, sandy beaches that include the Mermaid Beach with its Mermaid Restaurant Bar, Grotto Beach with the shoreline pool and Grotto Grill, and the secluded jewel known as Whistle Beach. Play tennis or a round of golf, jog on the nature trails or take complementary scuba lessons. Pamper yourself with salon services, massages and seaweed wraps at the Hideaway Spa. To relish the incredible ridgetop view of the property, reserve one of the Great House rooms in the historic pink main house. Consider selecting family cottage suites, luxury beachside villas known as Doubloons or the Ficus Suite. A complementary full breakfast is served to all guests at the Terrace restaurant (thebuccaneer.com).

BLUE JACK TAR PUERTO PLATA, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Escape to the enticing, calming waters and glistening, sandy beaches of this AAA four-diamond, luxury, multifaceted complex in Puerto Plata. Featuring a hotel, condos and villas, family-friendly Blue Jack Tar affords its guests some of the best in luxury vacays in the Dominican Republic. Plan romantic couples, girls only, guys only, group getaways or corporate retreats at this hidden gem. A gratis breakfast is included with each reservation. Revel in the cool swim-up pool bar, glowing Green Jack restaurant for lunch or dinner, and golf, just steps away from the beach. The hotel offers 69 deluxe rooms and six junior suites decorated immaculately. The condos boast spectacular décor, living rooms, dining rooms and full kitchens, and a few have hot tubs. The beds on the beach, ideal for a wedding or other special occasion, are extraordinary (bluejacktar.com).

MAGNOLIA HOTEL ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

Formerly the world-renowned Mayfair Hotel, this outstanding 18-story hotel in St. Louis more than lives up to its exceptional roots. Revising the glamour of the 1920s, the newly designed décor is inspired by Old Hollywood. Enjoy various complementary amenities, including breakfast, an evening reception of domestic beer and Magnolia Reserve wine, cookies and milk, and a chauffeured car for downtown attractions and events. Stay in and relax in the rooftop swimming pool, enjoy meals at Robie's restaurant or step outside and walk to nearby landmarks such as the Gateway Arch, America's Center or Busch Stadium—home of the St. Louis Cardinals (magnoliahotels.com/StLouis).

COURTESY OF LUNA SEA INN



COURTESY OF GRAND VELAS RIVIERA MAYA

GRAND VELAS RIVIERA MAYA
PLAYA DEL CARMEN, MEXICO

With towering, pristine white walls eclipsing its welcome gate, it's definitely the showstopper as you drive through Playa del Carmen's hotel zone.

The sophisticated, spacious suites make a pretty tempting case to spend your days lounging inside on white goose-down comforters and pillows or soaking in your private plunge pool (which are included in all 90 suites of the Grand Class accommodations). But you must venture out, and most definitely to their award-winning spa. Built into an empty cenote, the \$15 million Grand Velas Riviera Maya spa is the largest in Mexico and well worth the trip.

But a hard day's work of spa-ing should make you hungry, and once again, you're in luck (or in luxury). With seven fine-dining restaurants each helmed by a master chef, it seems a bit sinful for such gourmet offerings to come from an all-inclusive resort (rivieramaya.grandvelas.com).

MOON PALACE JAMAICA GRANDE RESORT & SPA

OCHO RIOS, JAMAICA

This gated, all-inclusive 700-room luxury hotel is definitely worth visiting. It's a getaway to the life of the rich and famous. The entertainment is top notch. You can see acts like Shaggy, Omi and the band Magic perform. When it comes to food, check out Momo's Oriental cuisine. For late-night action, head to the Loud bar to simply dance away to blaring '80s sounds and watch your servers lip sync and perform (www.jamaicagrande.com).



BOULDERS RESORT & SPA

SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA

This is the place to go to get away from it all. The Boulders is a beauty like you've never seen before, and with the recent multimillion-dollar renovation, it's better than ever. The Scottsdale resort's name comes from the fact that it is home to 12-million-year-old granite boulders. If you're a nature lover, you'll be in your element, and if you're not, you'll be converted. There's something to be said for being nestled among giant rocks and the landscape of the desert. Then there's the nourishment of the spa, solitude, great food, drink, moonlight bike rides or night yoga. Golfers will relish playing on the state's only Platinum Medal Award-winning golf course. Nearby you can horseback ride, hike, or soar in a hot air balloon (www.theboulders.com).



Sanctuary Cap Cana by Alsol

SANCTUARY CAP CANA BY ALSOL

PUNTA CANA, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Sometimes you deserve to splurge. A stay at Sanctuary Cap Cana is a once-in-a-lifetime thing you owe it to yourself to do. The adults only, five-star, all-inclusive is on a stretch of white sand and stunning beach. While any suite or villa will be fab, the two-bedroom Castle Island Suite is something right out of the movies. There are three indoor plunge pools, and the master bedroom's floor-to-ceiling windows bring the ocean all but literally into your room. The Blue Marlin restaurant is perched on stilts and overlooks the ocean. It is one of the most spectacular restaurant settings in the Dominican Republic. There are several other restaurants and bars on the resort along with a new 20,000-square-foot spa and fitness center (www.sanctuarycapcana.com).

PHOTOS COURTESY OF HOTELS



AZUL FIVES BY KARISMA

PLAYA DEL CARMEN, MEXICO

The newly expanded property is a must for families with small children. Sanitized highchairs are readily available around every corner, even the poolside grills, to make dining experience hassle free for parents. Plus, made-to-order baby food is a part of the property's all-inclusive plan.

WINDJAMMER LANDING VILLA BEACH RESORT

CASTRIES, ST. LUCIA

Looking for paradise? You'll definitely find it at Windjammer Landing in St. Lucia. The views overlooking Labrelotte Bay are breathtaking. Seeking serenity? The newly remodeled spa will help you reclaim your energy and reconnect with your inner soul. To keep a chill vibe going, lounge on the white-sand beach. Or if all that Zen has you pumped up, go for water sports, tennis, kayaking, snorkeling or the many excursions. Feast on the fabulous food. If you're in the mood for shredded jerk chicken or BBQ, check out Embers. If you plan to party on, hang out at Jammers Beach Bar & Grill for specialties like shrimp creole, tropical drinks and innovative cocktails. The live shows featuring limbo and fire dancers and partying with great reggae and calypso music bands are a must (www.windjammer-landing.com).



PHOTOS COURTESY OF HOTELS

The kids' clubs go beyond the basics of babysitting; the kids have their own pool, game room and even the My Gym Children's Fitness Center, which includes many of the gymnastics-style programs and activities offered through the national gym chains.

And the property will soon introduce the Nickelodeon Experience, where younger guests can enjoy character meet-and-greets, character dining and special welcomes (karismahotels.com).



GRAND HYATT KAUAI RESORT AND SPA

KOLOA, HAWAII

From the moment you step into the lobby of the palatial Grand Hyatt Kauai Resort and Spa and see sweeping views of the ocean, you know why "grand" is in the hotel's name. You immediately feel like royalty. Just wait until you go to the Anara Spa. At 45,000 square feet, it's the largest on Kauai. Take in the lush gardens, waterfalls and peaceful pools. Enjoy your treatment in open-air hale with lava rock showers and soaking tubs in a private setting. Relax to the sounds of the palms blowing, soft music and a gentle, warm breeze. Anara uses traditional healing customs to inspire lokahi—unity, harmony and balance. The resort is also known for its luau, which is an authentic Polynesian revue (kauai.grand.hyatt.com/en/hotel/home.html).



JADE MOUNTAIN ST. LUCIA

Talk about a room with a view. Owner/architect Nick Troubetzkoy definitely didn't sell you short on this aspect. Set in the cliffs, each three-walled room (with 15-foot-high ceilings) perfectly frames your panoramic view of the Caribbean Sea and St. Lucia's Piton World Heritage site.

The open-air space, void of TVs, allows you to reconnect with Mother Earth in poetic fashion, waking to an undeniably stunning sunrise and falling asleep to the soft hum of nature's soundtrack (jademountain.com).

The rooms are perfect for honeymooners. Couples can nestle away in complete privacy with every desire practically fulfilled in their suite—sun, swim and food. A personal butler, whom you can contact via resort-provided cell phones, is available for any requests. And nearly all of the 29 rooms (which Jade Mountain calls sanctuaries) include your private infinity pool. All pools are uniquely shaped, some even extending the length of the room.



The Venetian on Grace Bay

THE VENETIAN ON GRACE BAY PROVIDENCIALES, TURKS & CAICOS

Check in to the Venetian on Grace Bay and you won't want to check out. The luxury suites have all the amenities you could want: iPod docking stations, large, glass-walled shower and separate tub, huge gourmet kitchen with stainless steel appliances, granite countertops, double ovens, washer and dryer, spacious bedroom and living room and a fully furnished screened-in terrace overlooking the legendary turquoise water and white sand. Tempted as you might be to stay in luxurious comfort, the action in Providenciales is outside. Snorkel, kayak, make use of one of the bicycles on the property to ride to Saltmills Plaza, where there are restaurants, art galleries and shops. The Provo Golf Club is right across the street from the resort (www.thevenetiangracebay.com).

SAN JUAN MARRIOTT RESORT & STELLARIS CASINO SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO

When you're ready to treat yourself like royalty, check into the San Juan Marriott Resort & Center, where you'll get all the pampering you can stand. The picturesque pool has a water slide and hot tub. Wind down with the Red Coral Lounge's signature Dragon Berry Mojito and feast on traditional Puerto Rican and other fare at the oceanfront La Vista Latin Grill (www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/sjupr-san-juan-marriott-resort-and-stellaris-casino/).

THE PALMS PROVIDENCIALES, TURKS & CAICOS

The Palms is elegantly casual. The resort bills itself as the cool side of classic. No arguments there. This Turks & Caicos escape in Providenciales gives new meaning to R&R. Dine beachside under the stars at 72 West, or just relax, sitting on cozy couches by the fire pits. Whether with family or your boo, feast on the Caribbean-inspired menu, as well as light bites. Care for a swim? Take your pick of the beach or serpentine infinity pool. When you want time to yourself, the children will be happy to go to the Kids' Club. No worries if you forgot your bathing suit; the Palms has courtyard shops so nice you'll probably buy what you need and what you don't. You can't stay at the Palms without a visit to the 25,000-square-foot world-renowned spa (www.thepalmstc.com).



Zemi Beach House Resort & Spa

ZEMI BEACH HOUSE RESORT & SPA SHOAL BAY EAST, ANGUILLA

How can you go wrong when a resort's symbol is the three-point zemi stone, worshipped by Anguilla's ancient Taino Indians, who believed it to be the dwelling place of the spirit? Located on the beautiful Shoal Bay East, all of the boutique resort's guest rooms offer balconies or terraces with sea or oceanfront views. Take advantage of private chefs, in-room dining and in-room spa treatments. When you're ready to venture out, there are two pools, one oceanfront with an underwater window facing the beach, tennis courts, kayak, stand-up paddle boarding, snorkeling and, to keep the little ones occupied and satisfied, a Kids' Club. What will you likely remember most? The 15,000-square-foot Thai House that was brought from Thailand to Anguilla and is the House of Wellbeing, with a heated gobek tasi, sun deck for mud and salt body treatments, outdoor showers and vitality pool. Do yoga, meditate. It is the island's first co-ed spa. Keep the chill vibe going with a stop in the Rhum Room for small-batch rums (www.zemibeach.com).

THE MARKER
 SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

There's something about San Francisco. Maybe it's the Golden Gate Bridge, the hilly streets, the cable cars or Victorians, but there's magic there. Where the gritty Tenderloin District meets bohemian Nob Hill, you'll find the Marker. This 1910 hotel, first named the Bellevue, is a thing of beauty with its Beaux Arts style, high domed lobby ceiling, two-story French inglenook fireplace and grand marble staircase. You know San Francisco has some of the best food anywhere. The Marker's new dining concept, Tratto, is a spirited, bar-driven restaurant serving up rustic Italian fare with modern twists. Local artist Amos Goldbaum created landscape panoramic pieces for the restaurant inspired by the iconic vistas, streets and skylines of San Francisco. The Marker is near Chinatown, the theater district, Union Square, shops, restaurants, nightlife, and galleries (www.themarkersanfrancisco.com).



COURTESY OF THE MARKER



COURTESY OF WILLIAM VALE

THE WILLIAM VALE BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

Williamsburg is one of the hottest neighborhoods in New York City. The recent addition of the William Vale Hotel raises the bar. It's modern, chic. An enormous piece of art from Brooklyn-based artist Marea Zacarias makes a bold statement in the lobby. The rooms have floor-to-ceiling windows and open-air balconies with incredible views of the city. You'll love the glass-enclosed rainfall showers, contemporary furniture, lots of gray, with splashes of color like fuchsia flowers and colorful paintings. Much attention is paid to detail. Turn on the flat-screen TV and you see "Good evening" and your name. You'll appreciate the extras, like a wooden comb and nail file. When you're ready to play, the hotel is home to the city's longest outdoor hotel swimming pool (60 feet). Venture up to the 15,000-square-foot rooftop on the 22nd floor. Westlight, a restaurant and bar, offers magnificent views. Enjoy craft cocktails and treats like charred octopus skewers and crispy potato skins with caviar and yuzu hollandaise (thewilliamvale.com).