

LUXURY HOTELS: 10 OF THE VERY BEST



Thinking about some comfortable room with gorgeous view and amazingly fluffy pillows? Are you spoilt enough to demand only the best? There are hundreds of luxury hotels but which one is on the top? Conde Nast Johansens selected among their Conde Nast Johansens Award Winners the 10 of the very best hotels. Let's see if you can cope with the luxury. Brought to you by Tourism-Review.com.

10. Grace Bay Club, Turks & Caicos Islands

Located on 11 acres of white sand beach, this luxury all-suite hotel offers the ultimate in pampered relaxation. The Resort, divided into three separate sections for discerning travellers of all tastes include: the adults-only hotel area with private restaurant, bar and swimming pool, the family friendly villas with their own restaurant bar and pool, in addition to the uber-luxe estate with a complete set of exclusive amenities. The lavishly designed penthouse suites, with stunning turquoise ocean views, are a celebrity favourite with an outdoor Jacuzzi, infinity-edge balcony and personal concierge services. Indulge at the Anani Spa while the little ones partake in Kidstown Eco-Activity Program. Savour Caribbean-infused tapas and tropical cocktails in the chic lounge or at the Infiniti Bar, the Caribbean's longest bar, before dinner by the sea at the gourmet Anacaona. The ultra-luxurious Estate at Grace Bay Club is the newest addition to their award-winning portfolio.

9. Ponta dos Ganchos, Brazil

Clear blue water and lush green fauna surround this adults-only resort. All meals are included in the rates, and the restaurant closes after the last guest has retired for the evening. The gourmet kitchen serves regional Catarinese cuisine at lunch and international fare for dinner, while the well-stocked bars offer over 200 wines, fine liquors and various Cuban cigars. For a truly memorable evening, savour an evening meal on a private island served by your very own waiter. Scuba diving in the Marine Reserve and diving lessons with instructors, qualified by the P.A.D.I., can be arranged but for those who simply wish to kick back, there is a wide selection of D.V.D.s that can be viewed in the resort's cinema or in your very own bungalow. Alternately, spend some time in the Dior Spa.

8. Hotel Bel Air, California, USA

With its pink stucco structure, intimate courtyard areas and iron terraces, Hotel Bel-Air reflects the essence of sophistication. Enveloped by 12 acres of verdant gardens, the 91 rooms, including 39 suites, are individually appointed and have private entrances from the lush gardens or fountain courtyards. Most bathrooms include double marble sinks, large showers and spacious bathtubs, some feature tiled patios, wood-burning fireplaces and Jacuzzis. A popular venue for private parties and weddings, the recently-opened Palm Room boasts a plasma monitor, pocket doors to create breakouts, two fireplaces and a private patio with fountain. Exquisite meals are served in the restaurant and alfresco on the terrace while the wood-paneled bar provides inviting surrounds.

7. Esparanza, Mexico

Situated atop the bluffs of Punta Ballena, overlooking two private beach coves on the Sea of Cortez,

this modern Cabo San Lucas resort combines luxurious amenities with traditional Baja style. All ocean-view rooms have outdoor terraces, original handcrafted furnishings and beautiful local artwork. Your stay in a Luxury Suite is complete with private butler services. The regional cuisine at El Restaurante, with its expansive wine and tequila menus, is not to be missed, carved into the ocean bluffs with multi-level stone terraces that flow down to the ocean's edge. After a day at the private beach, pamper yourself at the spa, or enjoy a rejuvenating hand and foot massage by the pool.

6. Middlethorpe Hall Restaurant & Spa , North Yorkshire, UK

This imposing William III house stands in 20 acres of gardens and parkland overlooking York Racecourse. Originally built in 1699 for Thomas Barlow, a wealthy merchant, Middlethorpe Hall was for a time the home of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, the 18th-century diarist. It is now an immaculately restored example of its period renovated by Historic House Hotels. Each room is filled with period furniture and paintings, and the beautifully decorated bedrooms and suites are located in the main house and 18th-century courtyard.

5. Ynyshir Hall, Ceredigion, Wales, UK

Ynyshir Hall is so much more than just a country house nestled in the heart of idyllic Welsh countryside: it's a rich and cultured hospitality experience. Rebelliously non corporate in style and atmosphere, this Relais & Châteaux hotel was once owned by Queen Victoria. Creative flair is apparent throughout, particularly in the stylish décor, stunning paintings, and uniquely styled bedrooms. For example, the "Hogarth" room is dramatically styled in red silk and midnight blue and features a four-poster bed with sweeping views across the broad gardens. The pinnacle is the dining room, decorated in duck-egg blue, which is the perfect venue to grace the imaginative cuisine of Ynyshir Hall's 'true' artistic genius: head chef Shane Hughes. Dishes can include Welsh lamb and Welsh Black beef, farmhouse cheeses and locally sourced seafood, often enhanced with such wild ingredients as wood sorrel, samphire and wild garlic.

4. Mallory Court, Warwickshire, UK

Surrounded by 10 acres of attractive gardens Mallory Court boasts a stunning backdrop across the beautiful Warwickshire countryside, a stone's throw from Stratford-upon-Avon and Warwick Castle. Sip champagne on the terrace before heading off to the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, and for those who don't wish to venture far, cosy up beside log fires. Tailor-made menus are available at the restaurant, however, why not simply put your diet on hold for an evening and enjoy the roasted Skye scallops, chicken with Avruga caviar, braised shoulder and roasted fillet of Lighthorne lamb followed by hot passion fruit soufflé!

3. Quinta da Bela Vista, Madeira, Portugal

It is a joy to stay in this traditional house, with its tall, green-shuttered windows overlooking Funchal Bay and exotic gardens. Guest rooms are comfortable with classical furnishings. Enjoy an apéritif in the cheerful bar or on the sunny terrace while choosing between the elegant restaurant serving fine food and the best wines or the more informal dining room.

2. Barcelo la Bobadilla, Andalucia, Spain

Following a major extension, this beautiful hotel now has 70 bedrooms filled with unique touches and modern facilities such as plasma TVs and playstations by parents' request, in the family rooms. All rooms have views across the Granada Hills. El Cortijo offers a variety of regional dishes, and the spa is an opulent, welcome addition. Jump on a bike, horse, quad-bike or buggy to see the area.

1. Relais la Suvera, Tuscany, Italy

Created in 1989 by the Marchess Ricci and his wife Principessa Eleonora Massimo, this luxurious hotel is composed of 4 ravishing houses surrounding a romantic courtyard. Exquisite rooms and stunning new suites are packed with antiques and the family art collection. You can feast on Tuscan dishes served in the hotel's restaurant and relax in the recently expanded spa.

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