

BEAUTIFUL HOTEL DESTINATIONS

Somewhere along the way, hotels have become rightful destinations on their own. Here are some luxury hotels scattered across the globe that should be on top of your bucket list, post-pandemic.

BY HIRANMAYI AWLI MOHANAN



Arctic Bath

📍 Norrbotten County, Sweden

There's something mystical and unbelievable about the Northern Lights — one of the few things that actually have to be seen to be believed. The Arctic Bath, situated under the northern lights in the winter of the Swedish Lapland offers an unparalleled experience, leaving minimal environmental footprint behind. The setting of this hotel is one that is almost concocted out of a dream, a blanket of snow as far as the eyes can see which prompts sledding drawn by huskies, a floating sauna of unique architecture and nature at its best. Although the great outdoors await, you can also stay in and revel in the hyper-hygge cabin — each featuring pale timbers soft pastel colours and modern Scandinavian furniture. Choose from the stilted land cabins or the free-floating water cabins. The former is spread over two floors with a loft-like layout, boasting a spiral staircase that leads to a mezzanine bedroom and dramatic double-height windows, while the latter, connected to land by a walkway locked in place by the ice in winter and buoyed by the river in summer. Take a cold bath under the nacreous sky, which is part of the nether region's culture. Often paired with a warm sauna, the cold baths can help ease sore and aching muscles and some say it helps your central nervous system.

arcticbath.se



The Siam Pool Villa Courtyard

📍 Bangkok, Thailand

There's no need for hyperbole to describe The Siam as its Pool Villa suites have been known to make guests gasp as they step into their own lush private courtyard, intimate pool and a beautifully decorated room with accents of cream and black, glossily-tiled bathrooms and art deco antiques (vintage posters, travel trunks, gramophones) filling the fabulous interior. Channelling a Jazz Age ambience and interior, you're transported into a different realm, despite being strategically located in the heart of bustling Bangkok and minutes away from the places of interest. The needful is available at this hotel, from a spa, screening room, speedboat, cookery school and to a boxing ring for budding Thai boxers.

thesiamhotel.com/pool-villa-courtyard

Borgo Santo Pietro Casa dell'Unicorno

📍 Tuscany, Italy

Situated in the heart of the Tuscan countryside, Borgo Santo Pietro is a 5-star boutique hotel and estate, encompassing Michelin-starred restaurants, a holistic spa, organic skincare range Seed to Skin, commercial property design and construction PN Homes, bespoke yacht Satori, and the extensive working farm it calls home. Just like the mythical being it takes its name from, Casa dell'Unicorno is a fairytale of sparkling silvers, cool greys and blue velvet armchairs. Expansiveness is the theme of the hotel's suites, extending beyond the spacious living area through two French doors, to the beautifully walled-in manicured private garden with a fireside patio. Open the other set of French doors to reveal a direct access to the hotel's exclusive Mediterranean courtyard, dotted with sun lounges and citrus trees. The relaxed elegance continues into the bathroom which gazes out into the secret garden of hedges and trees.

borgosantopietro.com



Huka Lodge

📍 Lake Taupo, New Zealand

Huka Lodge, crowned as one of the top retreats in New Zealand is a haven for gourmet, adventure and outdoor lovers. Set in Taupo, home to New Zealand's largest lake in the heart of the volcanic North Island, this 1920's heritage hotel was a mere fishing lodge. Encapsulated by lush, green grounds beside the Waikato River and cascading Huka Falls, it prides itself in being an adventurous gourmet getaway, offering al fresco dining under the stars and makes a great base for skiing in winter, with the North Island's premier slopes, undulating amid volcanic cones, a short hop from Taupo. The private cottages here are designed to provide the ultimate Huka Lodge hospitality. The four-suite Owner's Cottage and its companion, the Alan Pye Cottage, named after Huka's founder are both perfect venues for exclusive house parties for family and friends. These cottages feature an Arts and Crafts section, as well as your own infinity and spa pools, a stone pavilion with outdoor dining table and fireplace, and a private chef and butler on call.

hukalodge.co.nz



Cayo Espanto

📍 San Pedro, Belize

The private island that is Cayo Espanto channels a luxurious Robinson Crusoe vibe, featuring two-floored, two-bedroomed Casa Estrella that captures the feeling of staying in a glamour-drenched tree house. Here, open-plan living areas, cream cushioned wicker furniture and a panoramic ocean view contribute to the amazing ambience. Floor-length turquoise shutters line three of the house's four walls, allowing you to configure the balance of inside or outside space as you see fit. For a more lavish setting, Casa Aurora has the largest pool while smaller, more private villas such as Casa Ventana open out to the sea on their own wooden pontoon.

aprivateisland.com