

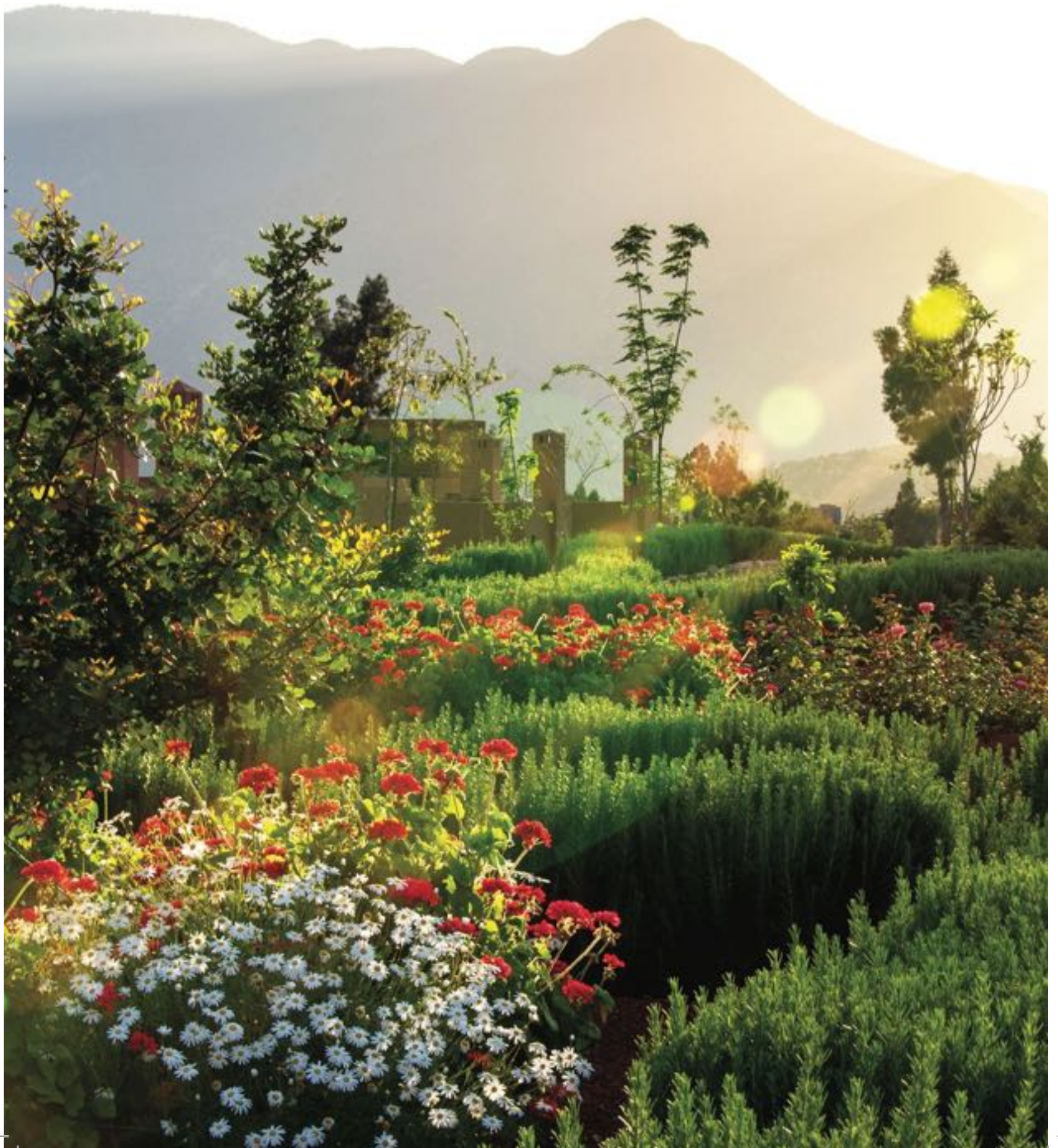
HOTELS

GET A ROOM

A HOST OF TOP-END HOTELS, INCLUDING UPGRADED OLD FAVOURITES AND NEW ENTRANTS, ARE COMING ON STREAM THIS YEAR, REPORTS [LAURA HOLT](#)



From properties that invite us to explore undiscovered lands to those that impart a sense of history – or even deliver us into the high-tech age – we check out the latest and grandest hotels around the world →



Whether your clients want to experience ultimate luxury on one of southeast Asia's new private island resorts or witness the splendour of Paris's restored grande dames, this year's portfolio of new hotels promises big things.

Among the tranche of top-line trends is the emergence of hotels touting famous names. First up was the opening last month of the Joan Miró Museum Hotel (en.hoteljoanmiro.com) in the Majorcan capital Palma. The hotel is a short walk from the celebrated Pilar and Joan Miró Foundation, once used by the Catalan artist as a workshop, and offers art-themed rooms, inspired by the surrealist's work and original paintings lent by the Miró family, who gave their approval to the project.

Over in the US, the CalNeva Resort & Casino (calnevaresort.com) also promises "the rebirth of a legend" when it opens on May 26. Formerly owned by Frank Sinatra and renowned as Nevada's first casino, its reopening follows a multimillion-dollar refit. Overlooking Lake Tahoe, on the California-Nevada border, it once welcomed Sinatra's famous friends, including Rat Packers Dean Martin and Sammy Davis Jr. Ol' Blue Eyes famously had secret tunnels built beneath the casino to enable his coterie to move around undetected, and JFK and Marilyn Monroe allegedly liaised there. Whatever the truth, three restaurants, a shore-side

infinity pool, a casino and spa – plus tours of the underground tunnels – are expected.

HERITAGE HOTELS

More broadly, hotels with heritage are once again back in vogue, especially in Paris, where the Ritz relaunch, following a €200m refurbishment, is hotly anticipated, if a couple of months delayed due to a fire (ritzparis.com).

"This Paris icon has been closed since 2012," explains Rupert Radford-Hardy of The Leading Hotels of the World (lhw.com). "They've acquired an adjacent building to house the world's first Chanel spa and reconfigured the original 160 bedrooms to create a smaller, more spacious 71 rooms and 71 suites. The famous peach towels are also returning – César Ritz always believed that peach was more flattering on a lady's skin."

Now owned by Egyptian businessman Mohamed al Fayed, it's understood that the transformation is an attempt to gain the coveted "Palace" status from the French tourism authority, which has so far eluded the Ritz. In 2017, the equally grand and equally snubbed Hôtel de Crillon is also expected to reveal its transformation (crillon.com).

Other hotels tapping into the heritage trend are the Fort Bishangarh outside Jaipur, which is getting the full Alila makeover ahead of a planned opening later this year (alilahotels.com/fortbishangarh). Meanwhile, over in Sydney, The Old →



TOP: Joan Miró Museum Hotel
CENTRE: CalNeva Resort & Casino
BOTTOM: Fort Bishangarh
OPPOSITE: L'Amandier, Morocco



Left: The Katamama, Bali

Clare Hotel (theoldclarehotel.com.au) has also recently emerged from the shell of two heritage-listed buildings – the Clare Hotel pub and the Carlton & United Breweries administration building – in the Australian city’s stylish Chippendale neighbourhood, with restaurants by Jason Atherton and Sam Miller, Noma’s former executive chef.

PRIVATE ISLANDS

Alila is also spearheading another of this year’s trends by opening a private-island resort on one of Cambodia’s offshore idylls. The Alila Villas Koh Russey (kohrussey.com), in the southeast Asian nation’s Koh Rong archipelago, is expected towards the end of the year, not long after Bangkok-based brand Akaryn launches the exclusive Arovada by Akaryn (akaryn.com/arovada) spa resort on another Cambodian island – Koh Krabey – in June.

Before that, though, the Thai hospitality group is opening The President by Akaryn (akaryn.com/president) in the Laotian capital Vientiane in April, signalling that these lesser-visited



Old favourites continue to prosper, with Bali advancing its luxury hotel drive



southeast Asian destinations are becoming more open to upmarket tourism.

Elsewhere in Asia, old favourites continue to prosper, with Bali advancing its luxury hotel drive with the opening of The Katamama (the-katamama.com) this month. The all-suite retreat is the first hotel from the owners of the much-loved Potato Head Beach Club, and they plan to launch two more properties in beachfront locations in Bali in 2018-19. Located in Seminyak, The Katamama will have a cutting-edge, design-led feel and the first

international restaurant by Australian chain MoVida.

BUSY SRI LANKA

When it comes to destinations showing a lot of activity, Sri Lanka is top of the pile. The country continues to boom in its post-civil war climate, with a spate of recent openings led by home-grown hotel group Uga Escapes. Having opened four resorts across the island since 2010, it has unveiled its latest project, Chena Huts (ugaescapes.com/chenhuts), in a seven-acre patch of wilderness between Yala National Park and the Indian Ocean. As the name suggests, guests sleep in luxurious huts with private plunge pools. Excursions range from leopard spotting to whale watching.

Close by, Wild Coast Lodge (resplendentceylon.com) – the third property from Sri Lanka’s Resplendent Ceylon, owners of the Ceylon Tea Trails resort and Cape Weligama – will also bring a luxury camping-style setup, centred around a series of tunnel-like tents, to Yala later this year. →

TOP: Anantara Peace Haven Tangalle Resort, Sri Lanka
BOTTOM LEFT: L'Amandier, Morocco
BOTTOM RIGHT: Four Seasons Hotel Bogota, Colombia



Considering Anantara launched its second property on the island in January (tangalle.anantara.com), around the same time as the bohemian Owl and the Pussycat (otphotel.com) opened close to Galle, it's fair to say that Sri Lanka's hotel industry is flourishing.

AFRICA AND LATIN AMERICA

In North Africa, Morocco continues to attract developers, though increasingly they seem to be expanding beyond the saturated market in Marrakech. L'Amandier (lamandierhotel.com) is currently soft-opening in the Ouirgane Valley, 36 miles south of the city, with just six suites, overlooking the Atlas Mountains, plus two luxurious rooftop penthouses to come later in the year. Meanwhile, Banyan Tree is preparing to open on the country's northernmost coast by launching a Moorish-inspired, all-villa retreat on Tamouda Bay in July (banyantree.com).

South Africa also looks promising for 2016, with the launch of Leeu Collection's five-star Leeu Estates (leeucollection.com), in the wine and food hub of Franschhoek on 15 June. Meanwhile, to the west, The Silo will also be revealed in Cape Town come December by South Africa's Royal Portfolio (theroyalportfolio.com/thesilo). The property is set to invigorate the V&A Waterfront, as it emerges from the husk of a six-floor former grain silo, that will also include the new Zeitz MOCAA (Museum of



Contemporary Art Africa), which is set to rival the likes of Tate Modern and MoMA.

In the safari world, the trend continues towards increasingly remote and upmarket tented camps with two openings this month: The Highlands in Tanzania (asiliaafrica.com), far away from any other camps in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, and the Loisaba Tented Camp in Kenya's newly-formed Loisaba Conservancy, which is exclusive to guests of the Elewana Collection (elewanacollection.com).

Developments in Colombia also seem to be picking up pace, following Avianca's relaunch of non-stop flights



between Bogota and Heathrow in 2014. Four Seasons has just opened its second property, the Four Seasons Hotel Bogotá (fourseasons.com/bogota) in the capital, and over on the Caribbean coast, Morgan's is due to launch its Delano brand in colourful Cartagena (morganshotelgroup.com), as its first outpost in South America.

AT HOME

There's plenty of activity at home too. In Gloucestershire, the 16-room Painswick (thepainswick.co.uk) is among the properties that Alastair Sawday's team (sawdays.co.uk) is excited about. "It's been bought by the Calcot Collection, of →

RIGHT: Amanemu hotel, Japan
BOTTOM (FROM LEFT): The Pig at Combe; Arrive hotel; and the Canyon Ranch Wellness Resort, Turkey



Calcot Manor and Barnsley House,” says UK editor Tom Bell. “We expect it to be open before Easter and with slightly more accessible prices.”

Other headline-grabbing openings at home include Robin Hutson’s latest Pig hotel, near Combe in Devon (thepighotel.com/at-combe). “It’s the one that everyone is waiting for,” says James Lohan, co-founder of Mr & Mrs Smith (mrandmrsmith.com). “I don’t know if they’re going to top what they’ve already done, or evolve the model, but from the look of the building, I think it’s going to be the most beautiful Pig yet.”

TECHNOLOGY AND WELLNESS

This year also looks set to be hot on technological advances too, with the sixth employee of Facebook, Ezra Callahan, launching the new Arrive hotel (arrivehotels.com) in Palm Springs. A property for the digital age, it will feature 32 rooms decked out with Apple TVs but no telephones, as all services will be SMS-based. In dispensing with traditional hotel services, check-in will take place in the bar and staff will multitask jobs.

If your clients are keen to unplug on holiday, then they’re in luck, according to Serdar Kutucu of Design Hotels (designhotels.com). “The whole wellness trend will go a stage further this year, beyond simply offering a pool or spa, towards more-mindful experiences that make guests feel healthy and happy –



things that help people really slow down and rebuild their routines.”

Two new hotels will answer that need. “The idea of ‘optimal wellness’ has been pioneered by US brand Canyon Ranch since 1979,” explains Radford-Hardy of LHW. “With properties in Arizona and Massachusetts, it is due to take its first step outside the US with Canyon Ranch Wellness Resort (canyonranchdestinations.com) on the Turkish Riviera in July.”

As part of the wider Kaplankaya development (kaplankaya.com) near the village of Bozbuk, which will be organised into five “zones” designed by

architects such as Foster+Partners, expect to see this swathe of the Turkish coast transformed into a year-round luxury travel destination, as the project nears completion in 2019.

In the Far East, Aman has also just opened Amanemu (aman.com) in central Japan. Located in Ise-Shima National Park, the ryokan-style resort celebrates the country’s onsen culture with a private hot spring in each of the 24 suites and four villas, as well as an extensive Aman Spa.

So whether your clients want to plug in or tune out, go historic or stay high-tech, 2016’s new properties promise to make it a vintage year for luxury hotels. ●