

THE 2015

Hot List

The world's best new hotels, and 15 reasons they'll make you want to pack your bags now.

What makes a new hotel today graduate from an of-the-moment scene to an enduring icon that defines a city? "It's not just about design—people often mistake the way a place looks for the way a place feels," explains André Balazs, who first made our annual Hot List in 1999 for The Mercer. "I live at the Chiltern Firehouse—I've slept in every room. I have to because if I don't, I can't tell whether even the littlest details—like the brightness of a reading light—are right." What we've learned from the best hoteliers is that focusing this intensely on the smallest things isn't as obsessive as it sounds: As travelers become more sophisticated, luxury must become more intuitive. Offering butler service because that's what's expected of a five-star hotel ultimately reads as soulless (unless, that is, it's absolutely seamless and unintrusive) and is in some ways less impressive than the quiet replenishment of the right brand of toothpaste by invisible hands. This year, after poring over the intel of our staff and contributors—who vetted more than a hundred recently opened hotels and resorts, from West Africa to Miami—we found that what stands out are the properties which combine old-school extravagance and service with just the right measure of modernity. You might even think of them as the new cultural touchstones. The 60 hotels that follow and the details that make them special—we've given you 15 as a jumping-off point—are a reason unto themselves to board a plane right now.



Bahia Vik José Ignacio, Uruguay
A ten-suite main house and 11 art-filled bungalows sprawl across the dunes of Uruguay's José Ignacio coastline, 12 miles northeast of Punta del Este.

bahiovik.com; from \$800. ●



Viña Vik, Chile
High design and high-profile contemporary art mix in the 22 suites here—all the more impressive for their setting, overlooking 11,000 acres of vineyards in the Millahue Valley.

vinavik.com; from \$1,200. ●



BAHIA VIK JOSÉ IGNACIO, URUGUAY

It's the Modernist Beachside Dream

Ramshackle cabanas—part surf shack, part weekend home—have long been a feature of the sparsely populated eastern coast of Uruguay, 100 miles from the capital, Montevideo. But Bahia Vik, which opened in January amid the dunes of José Ignacio, the chic seaside town near Punta del Este, puts a new twist on this regional architecture. The

main building has ten suites, and there are an additional 11 stand-alone villas scattered across the sand. Inside, the two- to four-bedroom homes are coolly luxurious, with original artwork, skylights, and soaking tubs big enough for two. But the greatest feature, of course, is having the surf right outside your door.

—Paul Brady

Hotelier Carrie Vik on her travel philosophy: *“Lots of people travel to many, many places, but what everybody seems to be looking for is something unique—where they’re learning by being in a destination. It’s about the location, but it’s also about the culture.”*



Counterclockwise from top: A beachfront villa with an Atlantic Ocean view; oversized bathrooms have deep soaking tubs and rainfall showerheads; four swimming pools face the water.

