

Special Advertising Feature

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Hot Hotels ‘26



The year ahead looks exciting with more hotel openings than ever for every kind of traveler. Sarah Miller was on the inside track at ILTM 2025, the industry’s leading travel fair.

For those looking for a last-minute ski break in Europe, the following have just opened: Artfarm (the team behind The Fife Arms in Braemar) launched Chesà Marchetta, a 13-bedroom hotel and 46-cover restaurant in Switzerland’s Engadine, Sils Maria. In Gstaad, Ultima Collection welcomed guests to its luxury chalet’s eight bedrooms, wrap-around terrace, private spa with hammam and sauna, snow room and lap pool. In France, Rosewood Courchevel Le Jardin Alpin became the brand’s first alpine resort with 51 rooms and suites. And in Italy, ready for Cortina’s Winter Olympic Games, came The Carlton, Milan, from Rocco Forte Hotels, on Via Della Spiga—ideal for mixing culture with sports.

~ Winter ~

The expansion of major brands into Europe continues with the opening of the Corinthia Rome in February. This 60-key hotel is housed in the restored former seat of Italy’s Central Bank, a neoclassical palazzo dating back to 1914. Highlights include an Italian restaurant by renowned chef Carlo Cracco. The opening of Hyatt Regency Rome Central marks the brand’s first hotel in Italy. Situated in central Esquilina, a vibrant historic district, it has 238 rooms, including 20 suites, spread across six floors.



RAH GILI MALDIVES

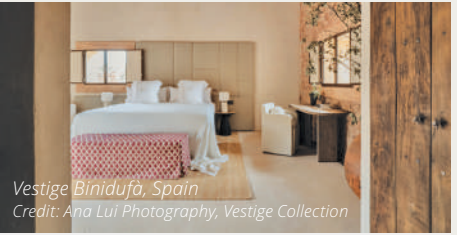
It also has Rome’s largest rooftop with 360° wrap-around city views and a 20-meter swimming pool. For those looking to linger longer in the Eternal City, Casa J.K. Place Roma will open with 13 one- to three-bedroom branded residences in a 17th-century palazzo on Via del Prefetto. In February, The Newman opens in Fitzrovia, London, with 81 rooms and suites paying homage to the locale’s artists, writers and poets of the past. And the first Six Senses in the UK finally opens as Six Senses London, with the first Six Senses Place—a private members’ concept.

Away from the hustle and bustle, The Set Collection will welcome Shinta Mani Wild and Shina Mani Angkor at the end of February. New hospitality group SIX & SIX PRIVATE ISLANDS launches two properties in Maldives—the first, RAH GILI MALDIVES, opens in February with 74 private, pool villas next to an exclusive dolphin sanctuary. The second, DON MAAGA, opening at the end of 2026, will be a more extravagant expression of luxury. Moving to the lush hills of Kerala, tulān Clinical Wellness is a sanctuary of healing and transformation that opens in February with 65 suites and 14 treatment rooms immersed in rewilded forests, medicinal gardens and regenerative waters. In Rwanda, The Pinnacle Kigali opens in January and South Africa’s fashion designer, Thebe Magugu, makes his debut in hospitality on January 31 with the Thebe Magugu Suite at Mount Nelson, A Belmond Hotel, Cape Town. Capella Kyoto, designed by architect Kengo Kuma, opens on Yamatoji-dori, in the historic Miyagawa-chō district, with 89 rooms—including 29 suites, six of which have private Onsens. Closer to home in February, Ailla Mayakoba opens on Mexico’s Mayan Riviera. The retreat spans 60 acres of mangroves and freshwater canals, with 182 guestrooms, suites and villas.

~ Spring ~

In March, The Cooper, situated along South Carolina’s Cooper River, opens with 191 airy guest rooms and suites in the vibrant heart of the Charleston peninsula. In neighboring Virginia, Preferred Hotels & Resorts’ Boar’s Head Resort opens the 19th-century Birdwood Mansion, following its transformation into a seven-room luxury boutique hotel, set in 12 acres of Boar’s Head Resort & Birdwood Mansion’s grounds. Kimpton Tres Rios Riviera Maya opens late spring in a nature park on Mexico’s Caribbean coast.

But it is Europe that takes center stage this season. Conrad is poised for a big year with the opening of Conrad Athens, The Illisian, and Conrad Corfu, creating brand presence in Greece. Preferred Hotels & Resorts’ Serras Sevilla, near Seville Cathedral, is a 43-room hotel and gateway to the city’s cultural legacy. Preferred Hotels &



Vestige Binidufa, Spain
Credit: Ana Lui Photography, Vestige Collection

Resorts’ Gran Hotel Claridge Granada, housed in the historical Plaza de Villamena, brings the Spanish city’s rich heritage to life in April with 70 rooms, steps away from the Granada Cathedral and Alhambra. In the Balearics, Mandarin Oriental Punta Negra opens in Mallorca with 131 rooms all within easy reach of Palma de Mallorca and marks the brand’s 150th anniversary. On Menorca, Vestige Binidufa launches on May 26 with 11 suites, and is the second property to open on the shared 800-hectare estate. On the same day, in Portugal, Na Praia, a 113-key hotel, opens just beyond Comporta. Further north, Kimpton Quinta da Marinha Cascais opens with 198 rooms, of which 10 will be suites, and a spa.

One of Valetta’s first luxury boutique hotels, Romégas, opens in Malta’s capital, situated in a restored 500-year-old palazzo. Its 23 rooms and suites afford sepiá city views.

In Italy, Villa San Michele, A Belmond Hotel, with the most iconic view of Florence, reopens on April 28 with 39 rooms and suites following an 18-month renovation. Also opening in April is Orient Express Venezia at Palazzo Donà Giovannelli in Italy. Originally built in 1436, it has 47 guestrooms, suites and apartments and is situated in Cannaregio. Prestigious French hotel collection Aïrelles (whose St. Tropez property is the next *White Lotus* location) opens Aïrelles Palladio, Venezia on April 1. In May, Cavallino Bianco Caorle-Venezia opens on the Adriatic as a five-star resort with 101 luxury suites, and a private beach. In May, Villa Timeo in Taormina, Sicily, opens as an exclusive 21-room residence steps from the legendary Grand Hotel Timeo, A Belmond Hotel. Villa Timeo offers views of the sea, Taormina and its ancient Greek amphitheater. In Greece, the 39-key all-suite oceanfront Luura Cliff opens in Paros in May under the Ennismore portfolio. The big news in London is the opening of Waldorf Astoria London Admiralty Arch—with chefs Clare Smyth and Daniel Boulud as partners.

In France, Château La Commaraine opens in March as a five-star hotel in Pomard village, 2.5 miles from Burgundy’s wine capital, Beaune. The 37-room property sits within the vineyards on an estate spanning nine acres. On April 24, COMO La Beauvallon reopens a Belle Époque grand dame near St. Tropez, which has hosted luminaries from Winston Churchill to Audrey Hepburn. On May 1, Zannier Ile de Bendor opens on the private seven-hectare French island of Ile de Bendor. First brought to life in 1950 by anise apéritif pioneer, Paul Ricard, its Provencal-style village will reopen as an elegant 93-key boutique hotel, across three locations on the island.

In the Middle East, Rosewood AMAALA, in Triple Bay, will set a new standard for sustainably led hospitality with 110 keys plus 26 branded residences. Tivoli La Vie Muscat opens in Oman with 79 rooms, 100 serviced residences and rises above the 18-hole LA VIE Club Golf Course. In Africa, Anantara Kafue River Tented Camp opens in Zambia with 12 spacious tents, including a 600-square-meter Presidential Villa.

Special Advertising Feature

ILTM

Reserve in Limpopo, South Africa, a rewilded conservation-led retreat. Accor’s newest brand, Emblems Collection is putting its flag on Rimrock Banff, in the Canadian Rockies, after a transformative renovation.

~ Fall ~

Preferred Hotels & Resorts’ Hotel Metropole Geneva, Switzerland opens in September after a multi-phase renovation. Overlooking Via Veneto, Rosewood Rome, built within three historic buildings, including the former Banca Nazionale del Lavoro (BNL) HQ, has 155 keys, including 50 suites. Hotel Alexandra debuts with 81 bedrooms in the Roman District of Ludovisi near Piazza di Spagna, Fontana di Trevi and Villa Borghese. Six Senses Milan, with 69 guest rooms, including 16 suites, and interiors by Tara Bernerd, opens in the Brera artistic quarter. In London, Ennismore opens the urbane Delano.

In the Middle East, Rosewood Red Sea with 149 guest rooms and suites, will open on Shura Island, Saudi Arabia, one of the most regenerative destinations in the world. Regent Jeddah Corniche, a first for the brand in the Middle East, offers uninterrupted views of the Corniche, Jeddah’s Formula 1 racetrack and the Red Sea. Over in Oman, The Malika’s three sites are an opportunity to explore Oman’s heritage, culture and natural beauty in one journey. Each site has 15 tented pavilions, complete with dining, spa facilities and infinity pools—the first of its kind in Oman to offer year-round accommodation. The new global community, Discover Collection, opens its first property Discover Collection Ras Amud in Oman in October followed by Discover



The Malika, Oman

Collection Lemomo, Kenya, in December. Later in the season, Kimpton’s boutique style comes to the UAE, for the first time, in Dubai. This season sees a new chapter for Vestige Collection, as it launches four new destinations in northern Namibia. At the end of the year, South Africa’s Shambala Private Game Reserve’s new Zulu Camp will offer encounters with the Big Five, Zulu culture and the landscapes of the Waterberg. And, in Botswana, Singita Elela opens in the Okavango Delta with eight circular camps surrounded by 400 acres of rich, diverse wildlife.

Further east, the opening of InterContinental Pokhara Begnas Lake marks the brand’s debut in Nepal. Situated on a forested hill with lake views, it has 80 rooms and every detail tells a Himalayan story. KAIA’s first resort will open on the Koh Phangan, Thailand, with 31 ocean-facing tented suites and four two-bedroom pool villas. Set in the coastal town of Beaufort-sur-Mer, the 33-room boutique hotel reimagines a 1960s seafront building. Moving north to the Dutch port city of Rotterdam, the 231-room Kimpton De Post Rotterdam opens in the 1921 POST building, in the heart of the city.

Also launching this summer, is the Reuben Brothers’ development of an iconic building—the former In and Out Military club due to open as Cambridge House Auberge in Mayfair, London. Dukes London completes its refurbishment while for those looking for retreats, The Gallivant Littlestone Beach opens in Kent, on an acre of sand dune, with 13 bedrooms and a Nordic spa. Wildhive Eshott Hall is a 17th-century manor, near Amble, Northumberland, which also has 10 of Wildhive’s signature wild cabins in the grounds.

Opening in June, Kivurua Plains Lodge is a new star on Kenya’s safari circuit. Set on a private concession bordering Amboseli National Park, this all-suite property affords views of Mount Kilimanjaro. Further south, The Claremont Collection launches Sandringham Private Game



Six Senses Milan, Italy

Shoe designer Christian Louboutin opens his second property in Portugal, Vermelho Lagoa, a transformation of an existing 32-room hotel into an intimate 10-suite property. Preferred Hotels & Resorts’ Hotel California Paris, France, near the Champs-Élysées, reopens after a refurbishment of the original Valley California Paris, built in 1925. In the Loire Valley, Preferred Hotels & Resorts’ Le Relais d’Amboise will be the only five-star hotel in Amboise, with 64 rooms and suites, and a spa in the old ‘trogolodyte’ caves. Nordelaia Sur Mer will bring understated luxury to the French Riviera. Set in the coastal town of Beaufort-sur-Mer, the 33-room boutique hotel reimagines a 1960s seafront building. Moving north to the Dutch port city of Rotterdam, the 231-room Kimpton De Post Rotterdam opens in the 1921 POST building, in the heart of the city.

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June sees the opening of La Réserve Firenze, a 15th-century palazzo on Via Santo Spirito, in Florence’s Oltrarno district. In the north of Italy, The First Cortina by The Pavilions Hotels & Resorts opens in August in Cortina d’Ampezzo. Also opening is Borgo Pignano Florence, a restored 15th-century villa and sister property to the renowned Borgo Pignano in Tuscany. Borgo Pignano Florence has 11 historic buildings set in 12 acres—remarkable for a city location.

On the sports front, significant hotel renovations are taking place across Bermuda prior to the Apev Group Bermuda SailGP (May 9 to 10) and 54th biennial Newport Bermuda Race (June 19 to 28), while from June 3 to 8, EXPLORA 1 will be docked at Port Hercule, Monaco, for FORMULA 100 GRAND PRIX DE MONACO 2026. Bonjour Québec is also promoting Winterrap, encouraging visitors to discover the benefits of embracing winter activities. The Road Less Traveled

Responsible Tourism

Responsible tourism is now a central driver of travel decisions. In 2026, eco-conscious luxury is set to flourish. Groups such as Beyond Green, part of Preferred Travel Group, curate a portfolio of hotels aligned with the U.N.’s Sustainable Development Goals; its latest members include Borneo Eagle Resort, Malaysia, and The One Palácio da Anunciada, Portugal. Italy stands out for its climate leadership, from Il Borro’s renewable energy initiatives to Locanda Le Piazze’s water-conservation efforts. Borgo dei Conti Resort also launches a Bioenergetic Park, in which time among trees that generate positive electromagnetic fields, will enhance wellbeing.



Awasi Atacama, Chile
Credit: Oreste Mac Adam

Journeys on the Go

By Boat

Three of the top 10 trends in Virtuoso Luxe Report 2025 are boat related: ocean cruising, river cruising and expeditions cruising. In March, Four Seasons Yachts is launching its first vessel, Four Seasons I, followed by the Orient Express Corinthian’s maiden voyages across the Mediterranean, Adriatic and Caribbean in June. Also setting sail this summer is Explora Journeys’ EXPLORA III, featuring designs by Patricia Urquiola for the vessel’s Owner’s Residence. Regent Seven Seas Cruises launches its latest ship, Seven Seas Prestige, in December, and just announced The Concierge Collection 2027 – 2028, offering three-night pre-cruise stays at some of the world’s finest hotels in the Global Hotel Alliance (GHA) portfolio. Reservations are now open for Crystal’s third annual Wellness at Sea® retreat in August, starting with Vancouver-San Diego (August 17 to 24), then San Diego-Guayaquil, Ecuador (August 24 to September 5). PONANT is offering voyages to the Austral Lands/Valdes Peninsula (February to March), and North Pole (July to August), followed by the arrival of the brand’s latest ship, Le Jacques Cartier, in the Austral Lands for the winter season. Looking ahead, Oceania Cruises’ 1,390-guest ship, Oceania Sonata, launching August 2027, is now on sale. Potential residents can also buy a place on Crescent Seas’ multi-residence vessel, The Ocean (2031).

“Today’s discerning guests are seeking experiences with greater depth and purpose – journeys that allow time to unfold generously rather than rush by”

Anna Nash, President, Explora Journeys

Inland, bookings are open for Abercrombie & Kent’s 32-suite Nile Seray and launching in September, in the Peruvian Amazon, is the majestic 15-suite and Beyond Amazon Explorer. By 2030, eight new ships will be introduced to Europe’s rivers by AmaWaterways, including AmaSofia (Rhine/Danube, spring 2026).

By Rail

This year marks luxury rail travel’s golden era. Venice Simplon-Orient-Express, A Belmond Train, journeys, as part of the Villeggiatura by Train 2026 series, for the first time between Paris and the Amalfi Coast. Returning this year is the Culinary Series on Eastern & Oriental Express, A Belmond Train. Chef André Chiang curates menus on board this Singapore-Malaysia journey. From May 10 – 16, the same luxury train is partnering with The Datal Langkawi, Raffles Singapore and Save Wild Tigers, to offer Tiger Express, a journey through Malaysia supporting vital tiger conservation. A Tastes of Scotland Culinary Series debuts on The Royal Scotsman, A Belmond Train, in May.



Venice Simplon-Orient-Express
Credit: Alice Mesquita

Bookings are expected to open in Q1 2026 for Saudi Arabia’s ultra-luxury train, Dream of the Desert, scheduled to launch this December.

By Car

Luxury automotive experiences this year include the inaugural ‘Ananitra Concorso Roma’, which debuts in April, unveiling collector cars, Italian design and five-star Roman hospitality. Next up is The Peninsula Hotel’s Driving Experience in Scotland this September, starting at The Peninsula London before heading to the Scottish Highlands, with three nights at a 300-year-old Baronial castle at Loch Ness.

By Air

A&K Private Jet Journeys is seeing a 60% surge in bookings, while Bellavia Aviation Services has expanded its ‘remote access’ portfolio with new itineraries in the Aegean and Ionian islands.

by Cressi Sowerbutts and Florence Marling



Jean-Michel Cousteau Resort, Fiji

and solo travelers alike. If a destination wedding or significant birthday is due, Villa Baulieu (part of the Aïrelles Private Maisons Collection) near Aix-en-Provence, France offers an enchanting setting of lavender fields, vineyards and dining. Design lovers will marvel at Kokomo Private Island, Fiji, with 21 sunrise villas and five hilltop Grand Residences primed for multi-generational travel. Travelling alone? Almanac Palais Vienna welcomes solo travelers with a Gula Sha workshop and Belvedere Museum ascent, while in Florida, U.S. Amrit Ocean Resort & Residences, Singer Island, offers personalized wellness retreats focused on mindful movement. Solo travelers are in safe hands at Raffles Singapore, while enjoying meetings during limo transfers and Afternoon Tea. Raffles has future openings in Jeddah, Shanghai and Tokyo, expanding its network. Club Avandra should be on the radar of every female solo traveler, a new travel club offering community and bespoke trips for women.

Travel Trends 2026



Grand Resort Bad Ragaz, Switzerland

Purposeful Travel

Wellness continues to take center stage. In March, Four Seasons Resort Maldives at Kuda Huraa, in partnership with Emma Kunz Institute, will unveil URJA Naturopathy Island, a groundbreaking wellness site pairing naturopathic principles with modern scientific expertise. Bookings are now open for the new longevity program at Verdura Resort, a Rocco Forte Hotel, Italy, and Grand Resort Bad Ragaz’s Tamina Health Center in Switzerland.

In Gaudin, Spain, the Arrigo Programme is hosting the next iteration of the Women’s Wisdom retreats between June 19 to 25. Across the Atlantic, in the U.S., Waldorf Astoria New York debuted the world’s largest Guerlain Wellness Spa, a 22,000-square-foot site, last October. This spring Faena New York is launching the 17,000-square-foot Tierra Santa Healing House. In the culinary scene, Switzerland’s celebrated Badrutts Palace is marking its 130th anniversary with two restaurant pop-ups, the second of which is led by Chilean chef Rodolfo Guzmán of Boraço in Santiago, February 18 through March 1). Paying homage to local produce, Casa di Langa, Casa del Mulino and Villa Sangiovese in northern Italy are offering exclusive wine and truffle tasting experiences. In London, The Cadogan, A Belmond Hotel, will unveil a new British bistro and bar this spring.

At the intersection between art and travel

“2026 is the year of live tourism, where significant cultural moments will determine where and how we travel – the experience will outshine the destination”

Robin Stangroom, CEO, The Set Collection

is the fifth edition of Alula Arts Festival, Saudi Arabia (until February 14), and Orient Express’ 100 Years of Art Deco is showing in Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris (until April 26), while Sotheby’s new HQ in NYC’s historic Breuer Building is now open to the public. Bringing the arts to the forefront of the guest experience, Royal Mansour Casablanca is offering a three-hour urban art tour, curated in partnership with local non-profit Alouane Bladi, alongside the brand’s flagship Royal Mansour Marrakech’s art therapy sessions.

Others are offering more hands-on destination experiences, such as the expansion of Ailla Hotels & Resorts’ educational offering, from baking traditional pão at Ailla Diwa Goa, India, to uncovering salt farming and weaving traditions at Ailla Seminyak, Bali. And, ahead of the anticipated completion of Sagrada Família this June, Almanac Barcelona is transforming its top floor into The Art Floor, a living gallery and artist-in-residence program.